

# 105 Forming nouns

## 1 Nouns that end in -er, -or, -ant/-ent and -ist

These nouns are often people and their jobs  
(e.g. *a teacher, a dentist*):

| VERB OR NOUN      | +         | = PERSON/JOB              |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| teach drive build | -er       | teacher driver builder    |
| visit act         | -or       | visitor actor             |
| assist study      | -ant/-ent | assistant student         |
| art journal cycle | -ist      | artist journalist cyclist |

Some nouns that end in -er are things, not people:  
*cooker* = a machine that cooks things  
*photocopier* = a machine that makes copies



## 2 Nouns that end in -ese, -(i)an and -ish

These nouns are often nationalities and/or languages. They are also used as adjectives:

| COUNTRY                     | +      | = NATIONALITY / LANGUAGE / ADJECTIVE |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|
| China Japan Portugal        | -ese   | Chinese Japanese Portuguese          |
| Italy Russia Hungary        | -(i)an | Italian Russian Hungarian            |
| England Spain Poland Sweden | -ish   | English Spanish Polish Swedish       |

! The names of some languages and nationalities do not follow these patterns  
(e.g. *The Netherlands* → *Dutch*, *Greece* → *Greek*, *Thailand* → *Thai*).

## 3 Nouns that end in -ment, -(t)ion, -ation and -sion

We make these nouns from verbs:

| VERB                  | +      | = NOUN                             |
|-----------------------|--------|------------------------------------|
| move argue govern     | -ment  | movement argument government       |
| communicate educate   | -ion   | communication education            |
| produce               | -tion  | production                         |
| examine invite inform | -ation | examination invitation information |
| discuss decide        | -sion  | discussion decision                |

## 4 Nouns that end in -ness, -ity and -ance/-ence

We make these nouns from adjectives:

| ADJECTIVE                    | +     | = NOUN                          |
|------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| happy dark ill               | -ness | happiness darkness illness      |
| able active national         | -ity  | ability activity nationality    |
| important distant            | -ance | importance distance             |
| independent different silent | -ence | independence difference silence |

The spelling often changes when we add letters to a word that ends with a vowel or -y:  
*cycle* → *cyclist*, *study* → *student*, *decide* → *decision*, *argue* → *argument*, *happy* → *happiness*

## Practice

- 1 Match the words in A with the letters in B to make ten more nouns. You need to change the spelling in some of them.

A visit active art China dark drive  
educate examine govern Poland study

B -er -ation -ent -er -ese -ion  
-ish -ist -ity -ment -ness

- |                  |         |         |          |
|------------------|---------|---------|----------|
| 0 <i>visitor</i> | 3 ..... | 6 ..... | 9 .....  |
| 1 .....          | 4 ..... | 7 ..... | 10 ..... |
| 2 .....          | 5 ..... | 8 ..... |          |

- 2 Complete the sentences. Use nouns formed from the words in brackets ().

- 0 Elizabeth is studying *Japanese* at university. (Japan)
- 1 Is Billy better after his ..... yet? (ill)
- 2 The bus hit a ..... as it was turning the corner. (cycle)
- 3 Misha speaks Polish and ..... (Hungary)
- 4 We need to buy a new ..... for the kitchen. (cook)
- 5 I heard a really interesting ..... on the radio. (discuss)
- 6 When did your country get its .....? (independent)
- 7 I can understand ..... but I can't write it very well. (Portugal)
- 8 What is the ..... between New York and Los Angeles? (distant)

- 3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Complete the notice with nouns from this unit. The first two letters of each noun are given.

### Tranley Adult (0) *Education* Centre CURRENT JOBS

- **Art (1) Te**..... Are you a good (2) ar.....? We need someone to teach art on our painting course (Tuesday and Thursday evenings).
- **(3) Ex**..... **manager**. We need someone to organise tests and examinations at the centre. We have more than 600 (4) st..... here, so there are a lot of exams to organise each year. You should have at least five years' experience in adult education.
- **Teaching (5) As**..... This job involves helping teachers on our (6) co..... course. The course helps people to communicate in writing and speech and to discuss different topics (You will have your own (7) di..... group). Good (8) En..... is necessary for this job.
- **Bus (9) Dr**..... We need someone to drive people to swimming classes at the local swimming pool. You should have a driving licence.

For more (10) in..... about hours, salary, etc., please ask at reception.

- 4 Complete these sentences. Use nouns from this unit. Change the words in brackets () if necessary, so they are true for you.

- 0 I think watching television is (~~an interesting~~ *a boring*) ..... *activity*.....
- 1 I think ..... is (a beautiful) language.
- 2 My favourite ..... is (Picasso).
- 3 In my country, shop ..... are usually (polite and friendly).