91 Prefixes

A With adjectives

Un-, **in-** and **dis-** are some of the prefixes used with adjectives, usually to give a negative meaning.

You will already know some of these adjectives when they are used without negative prefixes. The glossary explains the words you are less likely to know.

un-	*He's **unqualified** to drive that car.* *They chose an **unknown** actor for the part.* *I'm **unfamiliar** with this keyboard.* *It was an **uncharacteristic** mistake.* *The workers have called an **unofficial** strike.* *The project is still **unfinished**.*
in-	*Ben is **incapable of** making a decision.* *I'm afraid this passport is **invalid**.* *The food was **insufficient** for our needs.* *They got divorced because they were **incompatible**.* *The treatment of some refugees is **inhuman**.*
dis-	*The Prime Minister will fire any **disloyal** ministers.* *One **disobedient** child was removed from the class.*

GLOSSARY

unqualified	not having the right knowledge, experience or qualifications to do sth OPP **qualified**
uncharacteristic (of sb/sth)	not typical of sb; not the way they usually behave OPP **characteristic**
unofficial	does not have permission or approval from sb in authority OPP **official**
invalid	not legally or officially acceptable OPP **valid**
insufficient	not enough for a particular purpose OPP **sufficient**
incompatible	Two people who are **incompatible** are very different from each other and not able to work or live happily together. OPP **compatible**
inhuman	lacking the qualities of kindness and pity
disloyal (of sb) (to sb/sth)	not loyal or faithful to your friends, country, etc. OPP **loyal**
disobedient	failing or refusing to obey OPP **obedient**

SPOTLIGHT *un-* and *under-*

There is a difference between **un-** and **under-**. An **unemployed** person doesn't have a job; an **underemployed** person doesn't have enough work to do, or not all of their skills are not made use of. Other examples are **uncooked** and **undercooked**, or **unpaid** and **underpaid**.

1 ***Un-, in-,* or *dis-*? Cover the table and complete the words.**

1 ____known	4 ____obedient	7 ____finished	10 ____familiar
2 ____capable	5 ____characteristic	8 ____loyal	11 ____compatible
3 ____human	6 ____valid	9 ____employed	12 ____sufficient

2 **Match the adjectives on the left with the nouns on the right.**

an unofficial	an incompatible	an invalid	insufficient
an unqualified	a disobedient	inhuman	an unfamiliar

ticket	money	dog	couple
conditions	name	strike	teacher

.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....

3 **Complete the dialogues using a word beginning with *un-, in-, dis-,* or *under-*.**

1 The family were cruel and treated him like a slave. ~ I know, it was _____.
2 Did you know the performers? ~ No, they were all _____.
3 Has she got a job? ~ No, she's _____.
4 What were the vegetables like? ~ OK, but a bit _____.
5 Have they completed the roadworks? ~ No, they're still _____.
6 Does she know what she's going to do? ~ No, she's _____ of making a decision.
7 Is it voluntary work? ~ Yes, it's _____.
8 It's very unusual for Moira to make that mistake ~ Yes, very _____.
9 Do you know the town? ~ No, I'm _____ with the area.
10 It was awful of Teri just to walk out and leave us with no support. ~ Yes, it was very _____.

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B With verbs

These prefixes can be used with some verbs, with particular meanings. You will already know some of these verbs when used without a prefix.

mis-	= badly; incorrectly	**misunderstand** **miscalculate** **mislead**	**mistreat** **misjudge**
re-	= again	**rewrite** **reassess** (e.g. the cost of sth, an exam candidate)	**redo** (e.g. a piece of work)
un-	= doing the opposite of sth	**unwrap** (e.g. a present). **undo** (e.g. your jacket) **unwind** (e.g. a bandage)	**unpack** (e.g. a suitcase) **untie** (e.g. your shoelaces)
over-	= too much	**overcharge** (e.g. in a shop) **overestimate** (e.g the amount of food you need) **oversleep** (= sleep longer than you want) **overdo it** (= work too hard)	

GLOSSARY	
mistreat	treat a person or animal in a cruel, unkind or unfair way
misjudge	form a wrong opinion about a person or situation, especially in a way that creates a problem
mislead	give sb the wrong impression and make them believe sth that is not true
unwind	open up/out sth that has been wrapped into a ball or around sth

4 Cross out the wrong answer.

1 I think he was **mis**_____.	**a)** treated	**b)** advised	**c)** led
2 Could you **un**_____ this for me?	**a)** charge	**b)** wrap	**c)** tie
3 I think I **over**_____ him.	**a)** estimated	**b)** charged	**c)** calculated
4 I shall have to **re**_____ what I have done.	**a)** write	**b)** judge	**c)** assess
5 I **over**_____ this morning.	**a)** bought	**b)** did it	**c)** slept
6 She completely **mis**_____ me.	**a)** judged	**b)** understood	**c)** believed

5 Circle the correct form(s). Sometimes both words are possible.

1 He ***miscalculated / mistreated*** the length of the room.
2 I'm going to ***redo / rewrite*** my essay.
3 When I get to the hotel, I will ***unpack / unwrap*** my suitcase.
4 I think she completely ***misled / misunderstood*** what I said.
5 I'm trying to ***untie / unwind*** the string from around this post.
6 I ***overcharged / overdid it*** this morning, and now I'm worn out.

6 Complete the sentences.

1 I'm going back to that shop: I think they _____ me for those earrings.
2 They _____ me when they said they would help; they've done nothing really.
3 I love seeing the children _____ their presents on their birthdays.
4 The doctor asked me to _____ my shirt and sit on the bed.
5 I thought Ben couldn't do this job but I was wrong; I _____ him.
6 I can't stand seeing people _____ animals.
7 We _____ the time it would take, and so we arrived an hour early.
8 I need to _____ the policy because it clearly isn't working.

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS