

Negative prefixes

We add a prefix such as **in-** or **un-** or **dis-**, **im-**, **il-**, **non**, **ir-** etc. to the beginning of adjectives, adverbs and verbs to give them the opposite meaning.

For example,

- Before "r" one has to use "ir" irreparable;
- Before "l", use "il" illogical;
- Before "t", use "dis" distrust; distasteful
- Before "c, b or s" use "un or in" uncomfortable/unbelievable and incomplete/incredible/insanity;
- Before "p", use "im" impossible
- Before "m", use "im" immature, immortal
- Before "h or f", use "un" unhappy/unfettered;
- Before a noun, use "non" non-smoker, etc.

Exercise 1

Write the negative form of these words by adding a negative prefix: "un-", "dis-", "ir-", "il-", "in-", or "im-".

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|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 ____ comfortable | 2 ____ patient | 3 ____ honest | 4 ____ lucky |
| 5 ____ formal | 6 ____ possible | 7 ____ popular | 8 ____ lock |
| 9 ____ appear | 10 ____ agree | 11 ____ legal | 12 ____ polite |
| 13 ____ like | 14 ____ logical | 15 ____ convenient | |

Exercise 2: Write the negative form of these words by adding a negative prefix:

"un-", "dis-", "ir-", "il-", "in-", or "im-".

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| 1 ____ frequent | 6 ____ believable | 11 ____ relevant |
| 2 ____ mature | 7 ____ approve | 12 ____ dependent |
| 3 ____ legible | 8 ____ curable | 13 ____ responsible |
| 4 ____ moral | 9 ____ familiar | 14 ____ accurate |
| 5 ____ regular | 10 ____ grateful | 15 ____ resistible |

Exercise 3: Fill in negative prefixes to form the OPPOSITE of each of the adjectives below. In some cases, more than one pre-fix is possible.

___ acceptable	___ accurate	___ adequate	___ agreeable	___ approachable
___ appropriate	___ bearable	___ compatible	___ complete	___ conscious
___ contented	___ convenient	___ credible	___ decisive	___ desirable
___ discreet	___ excusable	___ experienced	___ faithful	___ flexible
___ frequent	___ grateful	___ healthy	___ helpful	___ hospitable
___ legal	___ legible	___ legitimate	___ literate	___ logical
___ mature	___ moral	___ mortal	___ obedient	___ organised
___ passive	___ patient	___ perfect	___ personal	___ polite
___ probable	___ readable	___ regular	___ resolute	___ responsible
___ respectful	___ sane	___ satisfactory	___ satisfied	___ sociable
___ sufficient	___ variable	___ visible	___ willing	

Exercise 4: Complete the sentences by adding the correct pre-fix for each word.

- 1 It's rather ___polite if you don't say 'Please' a lot in English.
- 2 My parents are extremely generous with their time and money. They are very ___selfish.
- 3 If the traffic is bad, it'll be ___possible to get to the match on time.
- 4 It's ___legal to drive along that street; it's for pedestrians only.
- 5 My mum thought a burglar had been in my bedroom, but it's always really ___tidy.
- 6 It was completely ___responsible of you to go away for the weekend without telling us.
- 7 Mike's pretty ___happy about going on holiday with his girlfriend's parents.
- 8 I never know when to expect the post. It's so ___regular.
- 9 Taking a large suitcase on a waling holiday is a bit ___practical

