Derivatives

The opposites of many English words are formed by adding a negative prefix to the words. The most common negative prefixes are **un-**, **in-**, **dis-** and **mis-**.

- Most words that derive from the same root take the **same** negative prefix as the root word:
  approve ➔ ***dis****approve* *approval* ➔ ***dis****approval*
  approving ➔ ***dis****approving* *approvingly* ➔ ***dis****approvingly*
- Sometimes verbs, nouns, adjectives or adverbs deriving from the same root form their opposites with the addition of **different** negative prefixes:
  comfort ➔ ***dis****comfort* (noun) *comfortable* ➔ ***un****comfortable* (adjective)
  fortune ➔ ***mis****fortune* (noun) *fortunate* ➔ ***un****fortunate* (adjective)
  equal ➔ ***un****equal* (adjective) *equality* ➔ ***in****equality* (noun)
- Some words of the same category (verbs, nouns or adjectives) deriving from **one** root form **two** opposites - using two different negative prefixes - but with a difference in meaning:
  able (adj) ➔ ***un****able* (=not able), ***dis****abled* (=handicapped)
  informed (adj) ➔ ***un****informed* (=not informed), ***mis****informed* (=wrongly informed)
  used (adj) ➔ ***un****used* (=not used), ***mis****used* (=wrongly/badly used)

un + adjective/adverb ➔ the opposite adjective/adverb

attractive ➔ **un**attractive
attractively ➔ **un**attractively

un + noun (related to adjective) ➔ lack of the quality described by the adjective

certain ➔ **un**certain certainty➔ **un**certainty

BUT: able ➔ **un**able
ability ➔ **in**ability, **dis**ability

un + verb ➔ doing the reverse of what the verb describes

lock ➔ **un**lock dress ➔ **un**dress

in + adjective/adverb/noun (related to adjective) ➔ the opposite of the original word

efficient ➔ **in**efficient efficiently ➔ **in**efficiently efficiency ➔ **in**efficiency

- The prefix **in-** changes to: ***il-*** *before* ***l-****: legal* ➔ ***il****legal*
  im- *before* ***m-*** *and* ***p-****: mature* ➔ ***im****mature*
  patient ➔ ***im****patient*
  ir- *before* ***r-****: rational* ➔ ***ir****rational*
- The prefix **in-** is **not** used to form opposites of **verbs**.
- The prefix **in-** is not used to form opposites of words beginning with **in-**:
  interesting ➔ ***un****interesting*
  interpret ➔ ***mis****interpret*
  integrate ➔ ***dis****integrate*

dis + verb ➔ the opposite effect or reverse of the process described by the original verb

agree ➔ **dis**agree connect ➔ **dis**connect

dis + noun/adjective/adverb ➔ the opposite of the root word

agreement ➔ **dis**agreement agreeable ➔ **dis**agreeable agreeably ➔ **dis**agreeably
honesty ➔ **dis**honesty honest ➔ **dis**honest honestly ➔ **dis**honestly

mis + verb ➔ doing what the root describes wrongly or badly

judge ➔ **mis**judge judgement ➔ **mis**judgement

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