

SPELLING: WORD FAMILIES

A *prefix* comes before a word root and changes the meaning of the root. Here is a list of common prefixes:

a-, an-	auto-	intra-	mal-
un-	bi-	inter-	multi-
in-	de-	inner-	post-
im-	dis-	mono-	semi-
il-	eu-	poly-	syn-, sym-
ir-	ex-	sub-	super-
pre-	hetero-	trans-	
re-	homo-	ante-	
anti-	hypo-	bene-	

A *root* carries the basic meaning of a word. Here is a list of common root words.

act	dic, dict	graph	port
biblio	duc, duct	meter	vert
cap	gam	miss, mit	
derm	gen	press	

A *suffix* comes after a word root. It adapts the word to its meaning in the sentence. A suffix may change a word root to another part of speech, such as a noun, adjective, or adverb. For example, the suffix *-ion* can change the verb *impress* to a noun *impression*. Here is a list of common suffixes:

-able, -ible	-dom	-ist	-ship
-age	-en	-ive	-some
-al	-er, -or	-ize	-ity
-an, -ian	-ful	-less	-wise
-ance	-hood	-like	-y
-ant	-ic	-ly	
-ate	-ify	-ment	
-ation, -ion,	-ish	-ness	
-tion	-ism	-ous	

Generally speaking, prefixes do not usually change the spelling of the root word; however, the spelling of a root word can change when a *suffix* is added. *A final vowel letter may be dropped when a suffix beginning with a vowel is added.*

inspire + -ation = inspiration

charity + -able = charitable

America + -an = Americanan

A final consonant may be doubled.

mud + -y = muddy

spin + -er = spinner

rot + -en = rottenn

A final y may change to i.

beauty + -ful = beautiful

friendly + -ness = friendliness

pity + -less = pitiless