

Prefixes and Suffixes

This list will give you an overview of prefixes and suffixes which may be tested in the Cambridge English First exam.

Prefixes

Prefixes with a negative meaning		
dis-	advantage belief appear	dis advantage dis belief dis appear
il-	legal logical legible	il legal il logical il legible
im-	possible patient polite	im possible im patient im polite
in-	sufficient credible ability	in sufficient in credible in ability
ir-	regular responsible relevant	ir regular ir responsible ir relevant
un-	employment able fortunately	un employment un able un fortunately

Prefixes with other meanings		
extra- (outside / beyond)	ordinary terrestrial	extraordinary extraterrestrial
mis- (wrong / bad)	understand fortune	misunderstand misfortune
over- (too much)	crowded worked	overcrowded overworked
re- (again)	write build	rewrite rebuild
under- (too little / not enough)	paid estimate	underpaid underestimate

Verb prefix		
en-	sure able courage	ensure enable encourage

Suffixes

Noun suffixes		
-al	arrive propose approve	arrival proposal approval
-ance	appear assist perform	appearance assistance performance
-ence	exist differ depend	existence difference dependence
-ion	possess select attract	possession selection attraction
-tion	destroy intend solve	destruction intention solution
-sion	expand decide conclude	expansion decision conclusion
-ation	recommend occupy combine	recommendation occupation combination
-ition	add compete recognise	addition competition recognition
-dom	free bore wise	freedom boredom wisdom
-er	remind freeze contain	reminder freezer container
-or	calculate project generate	calculator projector generator

-hood	child adult neighbour	child hood adult hood neighbour hood
-ing	suffer meet begin	suffer ing meeting begin ing
-ism	tour criticize / criticise journal	tour ism critic ism journal ism
-ity	able original probable	ability original ity probab ility
-iety	vary anxious social	vari ety anxi ety soci ety
-ty	safe certain cruel	saf ety certai nty cruel ty
-ment	agree employ improve	agree ment employ ment impro vement
-ness	lonely fit aware	loneli ness fit ness aware ness
-ry	jewel scene rival	jewell ery / jewel ry scen ery rival ry
-ship	friend member relation	friend ship memb ership relati onship
-ure	press please architect	press ure pleas ure archite cture
-y	difficult injure discover	diffic ulty injur y discov ery

Noun suffixes for people		
-ant	inhabit apply participate	inhabitant applicant participant
-er	photograph drive perform	photographer driver performer
-or	direct instruct visit	director instructor visitor
-ee	employ interview train	employee interviewee trainee
-eer	mountain engine voluntary	mountaineer engineer volunteer
-ian	library music politics	librarian musician politician
-ist	science tour art	scientist tourist artist

Adjective suffixes		
-able	suit rely remark	suitable reliable remarkable
-ible	access sense comprehend	accessible sensible comprehensible
-al	addition coast centre	additional coastal central
-ial	commerce finance industry	commercial financial industrial
-an	Africa Europe America	African European American
-ant	please signify tolerate	pleasant significant tolerant
-ent	depend differ appear	dependent different apparent
-ary	imagine literature revolution	imaginary literary revolutionary
-ate	fortune consider despair	fortunate considerate desperate
-ed	crowd limit detail	crowded limited detailed
-ing	fascinate freeze lead	fascinating freezing leading

-en	gold wool wood	golden woollen wooden
-ful	hope doubt harm	hopeful doubtful harmful
-less	regard care motion	regardless careless motionless
-ic	history economy science	*historic *economic scientific
-ical	history economy practice	*historical *economical practical
-ive	attract impress decide	attractive impressive decisive
-ous	adventure anxiety mystery	adventurous anxious mysterious
-y	storm anger noise	stormy angry noisy

(*) Note:

The adjective 'historic' means 'important in history', for example *a historic event, a historic monument / city*.

The adjective 'historical' means 'relating to the study of history', for example *a place of historical interest, a historical novel*.

The adjective 'economic' means 'relating to industry, finance, trade etc.', for example *economic growth, economic policies*.

The adjective 'economical' means 'not wasting money, time, goods etc.', for example *an economical car, an economical process*.

Adverb suffix		
-ly	full comfortable easy	fully comfortably easily

Verb suffixes		
-en	threat strong wide	threaten strengthen widen
-ize / -ise	special social emphasis	specialize / specialise socialize / socialise emphasize / emphasise

Irregular noun forms

behave	behaviour / behavior (US)
believe	belief
broad	breadth
choose	choice
compare	comparison
deep	depth
die	death
fly	flight
grow	growth
high	height
hot	heat
know	knowledge
long	length
lose	loss
marry	marriage
prove	proof
relieve	relief
respond	response
see	sight
sell	sale
strong	strength
succeed	success
think	thought
true	truth
warm	warmth
wide	width