

# **COMPOUND NOUNS- NEGATIVE PREFIXES**

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# 1. COMPOUND NOUNS- NEGATIVE PREFIXES

## 1.1 COMPOUND NOUNS

A noun is the part of speech which names a person, an animal, place, a thing or a quality of a thing. It can be further classified into abstract noun, collective noun, common noun, compound noun, concrete noun, countable noun, uncountable noun, gerund noun and proper noun.

Common noun – girl, boy, woman, book, town, country

Abstract noun – honesty, charity, wisdom

Collective noun – crowd, fleet, team, group

Concrete noun – iron, gold, silver

Countable noun – refers to things that can be counted; pens, chairs, people, car. They can be singular or plural.

Uncountable noun - sugar

Proper nouns - names; Sita, Rama, Madras, Delhi

Gerund nouns - nouns that are formed from a verb by adding ‘**ing**’ are called gerund nouns; It can follow a verb, preposition or adjective; I love singing.

**A compound noun** is an expression which is made up of more than one word and functions as a noun.

They are formed by nouns modified by adjectives or nouns. Most frequently they are combination of two

nouns like bank-account, baby-sitter, letter-box, etc.

Black bird – adjective+noun

Under-water – preposition+noun

Hair cut – noun+verb

They can be written as one word or with hyphen in between or as two separate words.

Tin opener – just separate words

Pen-name – hyphen in between

Earring – one word

Compound nouns may be countable, uncountable or only used in singular or the plural.

**Animation**



**TECHNICAL ENGLISH**  
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**Noun Types**

The interface consists of a vertical column of eight blue, rounded rectangular buttons on the left side. To the right of these buttons is a large, bright green rectangular area with a red border. In the center of this green area, the text "Click any one button" is displayed in a black, sans-serif font.



Animation by,  
**C.Bharathy,**  
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**Note : Can Be viewed only on Acrobat 9.0 and above**

**Common Countable Compound Nouns:**

Tea-bag, contact lens, credit card, food token, hand cuffs, windscreen

**Common Uncountable Compound Nouns:**

Income-tax, data-processing, family-planning, pocket money, swine-flu, fast-food

**Compound nouns used only in Singular:**

Generation-gap, brain drain, mother-tongue, labour force, death-penalty, blood-pressure

**Compound Nouns used only in the plural:**

Roadworks, traffic-lights, dancing shoes, sun-glasses, human rights

**Assignment:**

Choose any article in a magazine or newspaper and write down all the compound words

Or

Make a list of compound nouns you are familiar with.

## **1.2 PREFIXES**

Prefixes are often used to give adjectives a negative meaning. The opposite of 'similar' is **dis**similar. The opposite of kind is **un**kind. Opposite of decent is **in**decent. Opposite of obedient is **dis**obedient. Unfortunately, there is no easy way of knowing which prefix any adjective will use to form the opposite. When you learn a new adjective note down whether it has an opposite formed with a prefix and if so what it is.

**Some rules to remember:**

- **in-** becomes **im-** before a root beginning with 'm' or 'p', e.g., **im**mature, **im**patient, **im**probable.
- Similarly **in-** becomes **ir-** before a word beginning with 'r' and **il-** before a word beginning with 'l', e.g., **ir**replaceable, **ir**reversible, **il**legal, **il**legible, **il**literate.
- The prefix **in-** does not always have a negative meaning, often it gives the idea of inside or into, e.g., **im**part, **in**ternal, **in**sert, **in**come.

Although it is mainly adjectives, that are made negative by prefixes, **in-** and **dis-** can also form the opposites of verbs too, e.g., appear – **dis**appear. The prefix is used here to reverse the action of the verb. Here are some more examples – **dis**agree, **dis**approve,

**disbelieve, disconnect, discredit, dislike, dismount, disqualify, unbend, undo, undress, unfold, unload, unlock, unveil, unwrap, unzip.**

Many other prefixes are used in English. Here is a list of prefixes which are useful in helping you to understand unfamiliar words. Some of these words are used with a hyphen.

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
anti	against	antiwar, antisocial, antibiotic
auto	of or by oneself	auto graph, auto pilot, auto biography
bi	two, twice	Bicycle, bimonthly, biannual, bilingual.
ex	former	Ex-wife, ex-student, ex-president.
ex	out of	extract, exhale, excommunicate
micro	small	microcomputer, microwave, microscopic
mis	badly/wrongly	misunderstand, mistranslate,
mono	one, single	monotonous, monologue, monogamous
multi	many	multinational, multi-purpose, multi-racial
over	too much	overdo, overtired, oversleep, overheat
post	after	post war, post graduate, post revolutionary
pro	in favour of	pro-revolutionary, pro-Indian
pseudo	false	pseudo intellectual
re	again	re-type, replace, rewind
semi	half	semi circle, semi-finals, semi-detached
sub	under	subway, sub marine, sub-diversion
under	not enough	undercooked, under worked, under used
neo	new	Neoclassism
tri	three	tri-cycle, triangle

- ‘un’- is used before adjectives or participles, **universe, unexpected, unassuming.**
- ‘non’- is used before adjectives, nouns etc., non-specific, non-entity.
- ‘a’- is used before adjectives and nouns, amoral, anarchy, amorphous.

- **Reversative Prefixes:**

These prefixes have the meaning reversal of action indicated by the base. They do not have negative implication un-, de-, dis-.

e.g., undo, untie, unpack, dehydrate, decode, defrost, decentralise, disown.

- **Perforative Prefixes:**

These prefixes give the sense ill, bad, wrong, wrongly, not in the right way mis-, mal-, pseudo.

e.g., *misuse, misunderstanding, malfunction, malnutrition, pseudo intellectual.*

- **Prefixes of Degree or Size**

- *arch-, super-, out-, sur-, sub-, over-, under-, hyper-, ultra-mini-.*

e.g., archbishop, supernatural, superfluous, superman, out grow, surcharge, sub standard, sub normal, over eat, underfed, hyper activity, ultra-modern, mini-skirt.

Please note:

*'arch'-, 'over'-, 'under'- and 'hyper'- may have perforative implications.*

e.g., arch-enemy, over dressed, underworked, hyperactive.

- **Prefixes of Time and Order:**

*fore-, pre-, post-, ex-, re-.*

Examples: fore warn, pre-war, post-war, ex-president, reappear.

- **Prefixes that change word-class:**

*Be-, en-, a-*

These three convert the base into different word class.

e.g., bewitch, empower, astray

The old witch **bewitched** the dogs (verb from noun).

She gave them a **bewitching** smile (adjective).

They **empowered** him to do that (verb from noun).

He was led **astray** by bad companions (adverb from verb).

- **Hyphenation of Prefixes:**

Ordinarily prefixes are not separated by hyphens. These are a few exceptions:

- a. When last letter of the prefix is the same as the first letter of the base: co-operate, pre-election, re-enter.
- b. When the prefix 'self' - is used: self-control, self-educated.
- c. When the prefix 'pan' - is used: Pan-American, Pan-Indian.
- d. When the prefix 'ex' - is used: ex-president, ex-chairman.
- e. When confusion would otherwise result between similar words:  
Re-act (to perform again)  
React (to respond to a stimulus)  
Re-form (to form again)- Reform (to change something for the better)

### 1.2.1 Negative Prefixes:

A prefix is a syllable which is put at the beginning of a word to get another word. The prefix need not have only meaning in isolation. Yet they can change the meaning of the word. For example, by putting the prefix '**im**' before the word '**polite**', we get the word '**impolite**' which is the opposite.

The following prefixes reverse or negate the meaning of the word: a, de, il-, im-, in-, ir-, **dis-**, **mis-**, **non-**, **un-**.

a – (moral – **amoral**)

de – (centralize – **decentralize**)

dis – (respect – **disrespect**)

il – (logical – **illogical**), ( legal – **illegal**)

im – (balance – **imbalance**), (mature – **immature**)

in – (animate – **inanimate**)

ir – (rational – **irrational**), (responsible – **irresponsible**)

non – (cooperation – **non** cooperation)

un – (tidy – **untidy**), (even – **uneven**)

### **1.3 Assignment:**

Write at least 5 examples from the above given negative prefixes.

### **1.4 Antonym:**

An antonym is the word opposite in meaning to another. The antonym of any word must be the same part of the speech as that word.

Verb – Antonym – (to hate-to love)

Adjective – Antonym – (good-bad)

Noun – Antonym – (strength-weakness)

The antonym of a word can be formed in three ways:

- 1) By adding a prefix before a word.  
Responsible – irresponsible
- 2) By altering a suffix at the end of the word.  
Thought**ful** – thought**less**,  
cheer**ful** – cheer**less**
- 3) By giving a completely new word.  
Proud – humble  
Beautiful - ugly

### **1.5 List of Antonyms:**

Acquit – convict      Amateur- profession  
Acme – nadir      Abstain – indulge  
Angry – calm  
Bombastic – simple      Chaste – promiscuous  
Barren – fertile      create – destroy  
Bold – timid      childish – adult like  
Bland – spicy      diligent – lazy  
Decrease – increase      extrovert – introvert  
Emerge – disappear      fatal – harmless

Elastic – rigid                      feeble – strong  
Early – late                            fantastic – ordinary  
Genuine – fake                        imitation – real  
Hostile – friendly                    lasting – ephemeral  
Meek – assertive                    lazy – active  
Mysterious – obvious                oppressive – lenient  
Reserved – gregarious               prior – later  
Sensible – foolish                    stupendous – ordinary  
Youth – oldage

## **1.6 Assignment**

Write two examples of each type of compounds you have learnt.

### **Examples**

#### **1.6.1 Noun and verb compounds**

Sun	+	set	-	Sunset
Rain	+	fall	-	Rainfall
Wood	+	work	-	Woodwork
Way	+	Lay	-	Waylay
Treasure	+	Hunt	-	Treasure hunt
Hood	+	Wink	-	Hoodwink

#### **1.6.2 Noun and Gerunds**

Cock	+	Fighting	-	Cockfighting
Match	+	Fixing	-	Match fixing
Thanks	+	Giving	-	Thanks giving
Site	+	Seeing	-	Site seeing
Sooth	+	Saying`	-	Soothsaying

**1.6.3 Gerund and Noun**

Working	+	Day	-	Working day
Cleaning	+	Powder	-	Cleaning powder
Swimming	+	Suit	-	Swimming suit
Washing	+	Machine	-	Washing machine
Turning	+	Point	-	Turning point
Walking	+	Stick	-	Walking stick

**1.6.4 Noun to noun**

Class	+	Teacher	-	Class teacher
Tea	+	Cup	-	Tea cup
Wind	+	Mill	-	Wind mill
Bread	+	Winner	-	Bread winner
Letter	+	Box	-	Letter box
Voltage	+	Stabilizer	-	Voltage stabilizer

**1.6.5 Noun and adjective**

Jerm	+	Free	-	germ free
Home	+	Sick	-	Home sick
Blood	+	Red	-	Blood red
Sea	+	Blue	-	Sea blue
Litter	+	Free	-	Litter free

### 1.6.6 Prepositions and Noun

Out	+	Patient	-	Out patient
In	+	Door	-	In door
Out	+	Door	-	Out door
Over	+	Load	-	Over load
Up	+	Hill	-	Up hill