

### 3 Different Types of Root Words to build Constructed Words

The three types of Root Words are: **PREFIXES**, **BASE WORDS**, AND **SUFFIXES**.

1. **Prefixes attach to the beginning or “before” the base word.** A prefix can be a letter or group of letters that attach to the base but cannot stand alone.
  - a. The prefix in the word **prefixes** is **pre-**, which means “before.”
  - b. The prefix in the word **suffix** is **suf-**, which means “secondary” – tells you that it comes second or after the base word.
  - c. **There are 4 types of prefixes:**
    - 1) **Numerical or Quantitative** – tell **how many** you have of the base word. *uni-* = one
    - 2) **Directional** – tell you **where** the base word is located or going. *in-*<sup>2</sup> = in, into, upon
    - 3) **Negating** – tell you the base is **not or opposite** its original meaning. *un-* = not
    - 4) **Intensifying** – **stress or emphasizes** the meaning of the base word. *in-*<sup>2</sup> = intensely
2. **Base Words provide the main meaning of the constructed word.**
  - a. They can be anywhere within the word – beginning, middle or end.
  - b. Sometimes, they can even stand alone, as we see in the words *flora* and *grace*, which are both base words.
3. **Suffixes attach to the end or “secondary” to the base word.** A suffix can be a letter or group of letters that attach to the base word but cannot stand alone.
  - a. The suffix in the word **suffixes** is **-es**, which tells us that the word is plural (more than one).
  - b. **There are two types of suffixes:**
    1. **Inflectional suffixes** – which make the constructed word grammatically correct and **do not change** the meaning of the base word when added. Examples include:
      - the plural suffixes: *-s/-es*
      - the past tense suffix: *-ed*
      - comparative suffixes: *-er/-est*; etc.
    2. **Derivational suffixes** – which when added to a base word, **change the meaning** of the base word **and often it’s part of speech**. This is the type of suffix we study. Examples include:
      - *-or/-tor*, which mean “a person who or thing that”
      - *-ology*, which means “the study or science of”
      - *-ic*, which means “pertaining to or characterized by”