

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.” The prefix in the word **suffix** is **suf-**, which means “secondary” – tells you that it comes second or after the base word.
 - b. **There are 4 types or functions of prefixes:**
 - 1) **Numerical or Quantitative** – tell **how many** you have of the base word.
 - An example of a numerical prefix - *uni-* = one
 - An example of a quantifying prefix - *micro-* = small
 - 2) **Directional** – tell you **where** the base word is located or going. This is the most common type of prefix.
 - *con-/com-* = together, with This prefix also has an intensifying meaning.
 - *dis- /dif- /di-* = away, apart This prefix also has a negating meaning.
 - *in-²* = in, into, upon This prefix also has an intensifying meaning.
 - *sub-* = under, below, secondary
 - *super-* = over, above, beyond, on top of
 - *tele-* = far away, distant
 - 3) **Negating** – tell you the base is **not or opposite** its original meaning.
 - *dis- /dif- /di-* = not Also, has directional meaning – see above.
 - *in-¹* = not
 - *un-* = not
 - 4) **Intensifying** – **stress or emphasizes** the meaning of the base word.
 - *con-/com-* = fully, completely Also, has directional meaning – see above
 - *in-²* = intensely Also, has directional meaning – see above.
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. The **suffix** in the word **suffixes** is **-es**, which tells us that the word is plural (more than one).

a. There are two types of suffixes:

1) **Inflectional**, which make a word grammatically correct and **do not change** the meaning of the base word when added.

2) **Derivational suffixes**, which when added to a base word, **change the meaning** of the base word **and often its part of speech**. This is the type of suffix we study.

• **Adjective suffixes** – describe a relationship. Examples include:

- -able/-ible = capable of, tending to
- -al = pertaining to, related to
- -ic = characterized by, pertaining to

• **Noun suffixes** – a person, a place, a thing, one who, or **the idea of**. Examples include:

- *-ion / -tion / -sion / -ation / -ition* = the act of, the condition of, the state of, the process of
- *-or/-tor* = a person who or a thing that
- *-ology* = **the study of, the science of**

• **Verb suffixes** – let you know an action is taking place. Examples include

- *-ate* = **to** act by
- *-fy* = **to** make
- *-ize* = **to** cause to be