

SUFFIXES IN ENGLISH

A suffix is a letter or group of letters added at the end of a word which makes a new word.

WORDS	SUFFIX	NEW WORDS
forget, use	-ful	forgetful, useful
state, govern	-ment	statement, government
complicate, create	-ion	complication, creation

The new word is most often a different word class from the original word. In the table above, the suffix -ful has changed verbs to adjectives, -ment, and -ion have changed verbs to nouns. If you see a word ending in -ment, for example, it is likely to be a noun (e.g. commitment, contentment).

1. SUFFIXES: SPELLING

Often, the suffix causes a spelling change to the original word. In the table above, the -e ending of complicate and create disappears when the -ion suffix is added. Other examples of spelling changes include:

beauty, $duty + -ful \rightarrow beautiful$, dutiful (-y changes to i)

heavy, $ready + -ness \rightarrow heaviness$, readiness (-y changes to i)

able, possible + -ity \rightarrow ability, possibility (-le changes to il)

permit, $omit + -ion \rightarrow permission$, omission (-t changes to ss)



2. COMMON SUFFIXES AND EXAMPLES

2.1. Noun suffixes

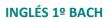
SUFFIX	EXAMPLES OF NOUNS
-age	baggage, village, postage
-al	arrival, burial, deferral
-ance/-ence	reliance, defence, insistence
-dom	boredom, freedom, kingdom
-ee	employee, payee, trainee
-er/-or	driver, writer, director
-hood	brotherhood, childhood, neighbourhood
-ism	capitalism, Marxism, socialism (philosophies)
-ist	capitalist, Marxist, socialist (followers of philosophies)
-ity/-ty	brutality, equality, cruelty
-ment	amazement, disappointment, parliament
-ness	happiness, kindness, usefulness
-ry	entry, ministry, robbery
-ship	friendship, membership, workmanship
-sion/-tion/-xion	expression, population, complexion



2.2. Adjective suffixes

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES OF ADJECTIVES
-able/-ible	drinkable, portable, flexible
-al	brutal, formal, postal
-en	broken, golden, wooden
-ese	Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese
-ful	forgetful, helpful, useful
-i	Iraqi, Pakistani, Yemeni
-ic	classic, Islamic, poetic
-ish	British, childish, Spanish
-ive	active, passive, productive
-ian	Canadian, Malaysian, Peruvian
-less	homeless, hopeless, useless
-ly	daily, monthly, yearly
-ous	cautious, famous, nervous
-у	cloudy, rainy, windy

2.3. Verb suffixes





SUFFIX	EXAMPLES OF VERBS
-ate	complicate, dominate, irritate
-en	harden, soften, shorten
-ify	beautify, clarify, identify
-ise/- ize	economise, realise, industrialize (-ise is most common in British English; - ize is most common in American English)

2.4. Adverb suffixes

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES OF ADVERBS
-ly	calmly, easily, quickly
-ward(s)	downwards, homeward(s), upwards
-wise	anti-clockwise, clockwise, edgewise

("Suffixes" from **English Grammar Today** © Cambridge University Press.)