

Negative prefixes

Negative statements are the opposite of affirmative statements. In English, one way to make negative statements is by adding negative prefixes to nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Here are some English negative prefixes: *a-*, *dis-*, *il-*, *im-*, *in-*, *ir-*, *non-*, *un-*.

Words that take *a-* as a negative prefix always begin with a [consonant](#).

affirmative	negative
political	apolitical
sexual	asexual
theist	atheist

Words that take *dis-* as a negative prefix may begin with a [vowel](#) or a consonant.

affirmative	negative
agree	disagree
comfort	discomfort
mount	dismount
orient	disorient

Words that take *il-* as a negative prefix always begin with the letter *l*.

affirmative	negative
legal	illegal
legible	illegible
literate	illiterate
logical	illogical

Words that take *im-* as a negative prefix always begin with the letter *m* or *p*.

affirmative	negative
mobile	immobile
moral	immoral
perfect	imperfect
possible	impossible

Words that take *in-* as a negative prefix can begin with a vowel (except *i* or *u*) or a consonant.

affirmative	negative
accurate	inaccurate
eligible	ineligible
organic	inorganic

decent indecent
sane insane

Note: There are many words that begin with *in-* that are not words with a negative prefix. For example:

word does not mean

incline ~~not~~cline

indulge
e ~~not~~dulge

insist ~~not~~sist

invoke ~~not~~voke

Words that take *ir-* as a negative prefix always begin with the letter *r*.

affirmative negative

rational irrational

reconcilabl
e irreconcilable

regular irregular

resistible irresistible

Words that take *non-* as a negative prefix may begin with a vowel or a consonant.

affirmative negative

conformist nonconformist

essential nonessential

fiction nonfiction

sense nonsense

Words that take *un-* as a negative prefix may begin with a vowel or consonant.

affirmative negative

able unable

interesting uninteresting

usual unusual

comfortabl
e uncomfortable

helpful unhelpful

prepared unprepared

Note: Remember, not all words that appear to have a negative prefix are negative.

word does not mean

alike ~~not~~like

discuss ~~not~~cuss

universe ~~not iverse~~

illuminat
e ~~not luminate~~

important ~~not portant~~

involve ~~not volve~~

irrigate ~~not rigate~~