



English Suffixes: Meanings and Examples

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Root	IPA	Meaning	Examples
-able	/əbəl/	able to be	comfortable, readable, capable, reliable, suitable, portable, valuable, fashionable, manageable, reasonable
-ac	/æk/	pertaining to	maniac, cardiac, aphrodisiac, hypochondriac, elegiac, celiac, insomniac
-acity	/ˈæsəti/	quality of	tenacity, audacity, capacity, veracity, sagacity, vivacity, perspicacity, rapacity, loquacity, pugnacity
-ocity	/ˈɒsəti/	quality of	velocity, ferocity, atrocity, reciprocity, viscosity
-ade	/eɪd/	act, action or process, product	lemonade, blockade, parade, crusade, charade, stockade, escapade, ambushade, fusillade, marinade
-age	/ɪdʒ/	action or process	package, mileage, passage, marriage, voyage, storage, postage, carriage, damage, language
-aholic	/əˈhɒlɪk/	one with an obsession for	workaholic, shopaholic, foodaholic, chocoholic, golfaholic, spendaholic, newsaholic, sexaholic, rageaholic, dramaaholic
-oholic	/əˈhɒlɪk/	one with an obsession for	alcoholic, workoholic, shopoholic, chocoholic, golfoholic
-al	/əl/	relating to	cultural, natural, personal, national, musical, physical, mental, verbal, visual, social
-algia	/ˈældʒə/	pain	neuralgia, myalgia, nostalgia, arthralgia, fibromyalgia, cephalalgia, gastralgia, odontalgia
-an	/ən/	relating to, belonging to	American, human, European, Christian, Mexican, African, Italian, Canadian, Cuban, vegan
-ian	/iən/	relating to, belonging to; relating to	musician, politician, physician, electrician, magician, comedian, historian, clinician, pediatrician, beautician
-ance	/əns/	state or quality of	importance, appearance, performance, assistance, resistance, acceptance, distance, instance, balance, abundance
-ant	/ənt/	a person who; inclined to, tending to	assistant, important, significant, brilliant, pleasant, attendant, consonant, dominant, relevant, president
-ar	/ər/	of or relating to, being; a person who	linear, nuclear, scholar, solar, lunar, polar, stellar, molecular, particular, muscular
-ard	/ərd/	a person who does an action	coward, drunkard, laggard, dullard, bastard
-arian	/ɛriən/	a person who	librarian, vegetarian, humanitarian, utilitarian, totalitarian
-arium	/ɛriəm/	a place for	aquarium, planetarium, terrarium, solarium, sanitarium
-orium	/ɔriəm/	a place for	auditorium, crematorium, moratorium, sanatorium, emporium
-ary	/ɛri/	of or relating to	ordinary, necessary, primary, secondary, stationary
-ate	/eɪt/	state or quality of (adj.); makes the word a verb	create, activate, generate, operate, separate
-ation	/ˈeɪʃən/	action or process	information, education, communication, creation, organization
-ative	/ətɪv/	tending to (adj.)	creative, informative, talkative, imaginative, narrative

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-cide	/saɪd/	act of killing	homicide, suicide, genocide, pesticide, infanticide
-cracy	/krəsi/	rule, government, power	democracy, autocracy, aristocracy, bureaucracy, theocracy
-crat	/kræt/	someone who has power	democrat, autocrat, aristocrat, bureaucrat, theocrat
-cule	/kju:l/	diminutive (making something small)	animalcule, molecule, minuscule, granule, globule
-cy	/si/	state, condition or quality	accuracy, privacy, efficiency, agency, legacy
-cycle	/saɪkəl/	circle, wheel	bicycle, motorcycle, tricycle, recycle, unicycle
-dom	/dəm/	condition of, state, realm	freedom, kingdom, wisdom, boredom, stardom
-dox	/dɔks/	belief, praise	orthodox, paradox, heterodox, doxology, unorthodox
-ectomy	/'ektəmi/	surgical removal of	appendectomy, tonsillectomy, hysterectomy, mastectomy, vasectomy
-ed	/d/	past tense	walked, played, wanted, needed, stopped
-ee	/i:/	receiver, performer	employee, interviewee, payee, trainee, nominee
-eer	/ɪr/	associated with/engaged in	engineer, volunteer, pioneer, mountaineer, profiteer
-emia	/'imɪə/	blood condition	anemia, leukemia, hypoglycemia, hyperglycemia, septicemia
-en	/ən/	makes the word a verb	harden, soften, widen, lengthen, strengthen
-ence	/əns/	state or condition, action	difference, independence, dependence, existence, occurrence
-ency	/ənsɪ/	condition or quality	efficiency, frequency, urgency, currency, consistency
-ent	/ənt/	inclined to performing/causing, or one who performs/causes	different, present, excellent, independent, confident
-er	/ər/	more; action or process; a person who does an action	teacher, worker, player, faster, harder, bigger, taller, speaker, driver, smaller
-ern	/ərn/	state or quality of	eastern, western, northern, southern, midwestern, northeastern, northwestern
-escence	/'ɛsəns/	state or process	adolescence, obsolescence, fluorescence, effervescence, coalescence
-ese	/i:z/	relating to a place	Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Burmese
-esque	/ɛsk/	in the style of	picturesque, grotesque, statuesque, Romanesque, burlesque
-ess	/ɪs/	female	princess, actress, waitress, hostess, lioness
-est	/ɪst/	most	biggest, smallest, tallest, fastest, smartest
-etic	/ɛtɪk/	relating to (makes the word an adj.)	poetic, aesthetic, energetic, athletic, sympathetic
-ette	/ɛt/	diminutive (makes something smaller)	cigarette, kitchenette, cassette, rosette, statuette
-ful	/fəl/	full of	helpful, beautiful, wonderful, grateful, playful
-fy	/faɪ/	make, cause (makes the word a verb)	simplify, beautify, classify, justify, modify
-gam	/gæm/	marriage, union	polygam, monogam, endogam, exogam, heterogam
-gamy	/gəmi/	marriage, union	monogamy, polygamy, bigamy, exogamy, endogamy
-gon	/gən/	angle	polygon, hexagon, pentagon, octagon, decagon

Root	IPA	Meaning	Examples
-gonic	/ɡɒnɪk/	angle	polygonic, hexagonal, pentagonal, octagonal, decagonal
-hood	/hʊd/	state, condition, or quality	childhood, motherhood, fatherhood, brotherhood, neighborhood
-ial	/iəl/	relating to	industrial, commercial, financial, official, special
-iasis	/aɪəsɪs/	diseased condition	psoriasis, elephantiasis, amoebiasis, giardiasis, candidiasis
-iatric	/aɪætrɪk/	healing practice	psychiatric, pediatric, geriatric, podiatric, bariatric
-ible	/əbəl/	able to be	possible, visible, audible, flexible, edible
-ic	/ɪk/	relating to, characterized by	poetic, heroic, acidic, basic, chronic, classic, ceramic, comic, organic, dramatic
-ical	/ɪkəl/	relating to, characterized by	historical, practical, typical, economical, musical, logical, magical, surgical, electrical, philosophical
-ile	/aɪl/	relating to, capable of	fragile, mobile, fertile, sterile, tactile, tensile, volatile, versatile, ductile, juvenile
-ily	/ɪli/	in what manner	happily, merrily, easily, lazily, cheekily, clumsily, steadily, hastily, greedily, luckily
-ine	/aɪn/	relating to	canine, feline, bovine, asinine, divine, feminine, masculine, crystalline, pristine, saline
-ing	/ɪŋ/	materials; action or process	running, building, thinking, reading, writing, feeling, painting, baking, acting, living
-ion	/ən/	action or process	action, nation, fiction, station, emotion, opinion, vision, session, mission, tension
-ious	/iəs/	having the qualities of, full of	curious, serious, obvious, precious, mysterious, glorious, anxious, cautious, notorious, various
-ish	/ɪʃ/	relating to, characteristic	childish, foolish, selfish, stylish, bookish, sheepish, devilish, pinkish, grayish, tallish
-ism	/ɪzəm/	state or quality	capitalism, criticism, racism, sexism, socialism, heroism, tourism, feminism, modernism, realism
-ist	/ɪst/	a person, one who does an action	artist, scientist, pianist, dentist, journalist, linguist, pharmacist, specialist, psychologist, economist
-ite	/aɪt/	resident of, follower, product of	socialite, Israelite, Luddite, Moabite, anchorite, stalactite, stalagmite, appetite, dynamite, graphite
-itis	/aɪtɪs/	inflammation, preoccupation	tonsillitis, arthritis, appendicitis, bronchitis, hepatitis, dermatitis, meningitis, laryngitis, tendinitis, diverticulitis
-ity	/ɪti/	state, condition, or quality	ability, activity, stability, security, identity, dignity, purity, unity, diversity, equality
-ive	/ɪv/	inclined to; quality of; that which	active, creative, positive, negative, relative, effective, attractive, impressive, expensive, collective
-ization	/ɪˈzeɪʒən/	act or process of making	organization, authorization, realization, globalization, civilization, utilization, specialization, industrialization, modernization, characterization
-ize	/aɪz/	cause, treat, become	realize, recognize, organize, authorize, utilize, characterize, specialize, modernize, globalize, civilize
-less	/lɪs/	without	hopeless, useless, careless, fearless, helpless, endless, homeless, countless, powerless, tireless
-let	/lɪt/	version of	booklet, pamphlet, leaflet, ringlet, piglet, droplet, starlet, wristlet, anklet, armband

Root	IPA	Meaning	Examples
-like	/laɪk/	resembling, characteristic	childlike, lifelike, warlike, birdlike, godlike, homelike, catlike, doglike, businesslike, ladylike
-ling	/lɪŋ/	younger or inferior	duckling, fledgling, hatchling, yearling, weakling, underling, foundingling, princeling, wolfling, changeling
-loger	/lədʒər/	one who does	astrologer, geologer, mineralogers, chronologer, cosmologer
-logist	/lədʒɪst/	one who does	biologist, geologist, psychologist, sociologist, archaeologist, anthropologist, ecologist, meteorologist, dermatologist, cardiologist
-log	/lɔːg/	speech	dialogue, monologue, travelogue, prologue, epilogue, analogue, catalogue, decalogue
-ly	/li/	in what manner	quickly, slowly, happily, sadly, quietly, simply, carefully, beautifully, easily, finally
-ment	/mənt/	action, result	agreement, movement, development, achievement, environment, government, establishment, announcement, improvement, management
-ness	/nɪs/	state or quality (makes a noun)	happiness, sadness, kindness, darkness, goodness, greatness, loneliness, weakness, brightness, fairness
-oid	/ɔɪd/	resembling	humanoid, android, asteroid, spheroid, cuboid, ellipsoid, planetoid, celluloid, factoid, steroid
-ology	/ˈɑːlədʒi/	study of, science of	biology, geology, psychology, sociology, archaeology, anthropology, ecology, meteorology, dermatology, cardiology
-oma	/oumə/	tumor, swelling	carcinoma, melanoma, sarcoma, lymphoma, glioma, blastoma, adenoma, fibroma, hepatoma, chondroma
-onym	/ənɪm/	name, word	acronym, antonym, synonym, homonym, pseudonym, metonym, toponym, eponym, cryptonym
-opia	/oupiə/	eye defect	myopia, hyperopia, presbyopia, amblyopia, diplopia
-opsy	/apsi/	examination	biopsy, autopsy, necropsy, colposcopy, endoscopy
-or	/ər/	a person who	actor, doctor, director, professor, editor, inventor, translator, governor, sailor, vendor
-ory	/ɔri/	relating to	advisory, compulsory, explanatory, mandatory, sensory, circulatory, introductory, preparatory, narrative, directory
-osis	/ouʒɪs/	process, diseased condition	halitosis, tuberculosis, osteoporosis, thrombosis, neurosis, psychosis, sclerosis, metamorphosis, cyanosis, leukocytosis
-ostomy	/ɑstəmi/	surgical	colostomy, ileostomy, tracheostomy, gastrostomy, jejunostomy, nephrostomy, urostomy, cecostomy, sigmoidostomy
-otomy	/ɑtəmi/	surgical	tracheotomy, lobotomy, episiotomy, craniotomy, laparotomy, thoracotomy, osteotomy, myringotomy, tenotomy
-ous	/əs/	full of	dangerous, famous, nervous, serious, curious, glorious, jealous, tremendous, cautious, various
-path	/pæθ/	one who engages in	psychopath, sociopath, empath, telepath, osteopath, homeopath, naturopath, allopath, neuropath
-pathy	/pæθi/	feeling, diseased	sympathy, empathy, antipathy, apathy, telepathy, homeopathy, osteopathy, neuropathy, psychopathy, sociopathy

Root	IPA	Meaning	Examples
-phile	/faɪl/	one who loves	audiophile, bibliophile, cinephile, francophile, Anglophile, technophile, zoophile, pedophile, logophile
-phobia	/fəʊbiə/	abnormal fear of	claustrophobia, agoraphobia, arachnophobia, acrophobia, hydrophobia, nyctophobia, xenophobia, homophobia, technophobia, coulrophobia
-phone	/fəʊn/	sound	telephone, microphone, headphone, earphone, cellphone, smartphone, megaphone, homophone, xylophone, francophone
-phyte	/faɪt/	plant, to grow	epiphyte, hydrophyte, xerophyte, mesophyte, halophyte, saprophyte, neophyte, lithophyte, heliophyte
-plegia	pli:dʒə	paralysis	paraplegia, quadriplegia, hemiplegia, monoplegia, diplegia
-plegic	pli:dʒɪk	one who is paralyzed	paraplegic, quadriplegic, hemiplegic, monoplegic, diplegic
-pnea	ni:ə	air, spirit	apnea, dyspnea, hyperpnea, hypopnea, orthopnea
-scopy	skəpi	visual exam	endoscopy, colonoscopy, bronchoscopy, laparoscopy, microscopy
-scope	skəʊp	visual exam	microscope, telescope, endoscope, stethoscope, bronchoscope
-scribe	skraɪb	to write	describe, prescribe, subscribe, transcribe, proscribe
-script	skɪpt	to write	manuscript, transcript, postscript, conscript, description
-sect	sɛkt	to cut	dissect, intersect, bisect, trisect, vivisect
-ship	ʃɪp	state or condition of, skill of	friendship, leadership, citizenship, ownership, relationship
-sion	ʒən	state or quality	vision, revision, division, decision, collision
-some	səm	characterized by, group of	handsome, troublesome, lonesome, wholesome, fearsome
-sophy	sə:fi	wisdom, knowledge	philosophy, theosophy, anthroposophy, misosophy, pansophy
-sophic	sə:ɪk	wisdom, knowledge	philosophic, theosophic, anthroposophic, misosophic, pansophic
-th	θ	state or quality	growth, strength, depth, width, length
-tion	ʃən	state or quality	action, nation, station, education, information
-tome	/təʊm/	to cut	microtome, dermatome, osteotome, lobotome, craniotome
-tomy	/təmi/	to cut	lobotomy, tracheotomy, gastrotomy, craniotomy, hysterotomy
-trophy	/trəfi/	nourishment, growth	atrophy, hypertrophy, dystrophy, eutrophy, oligotrophy
-tude	/tʊd/	state, condition or quality	attitude, gratitude, solitude, altitude, magnitude, multitude, fortitude
-ty	/ti/	state, condition or quality	safety, beauty, honesty, liberty, equality, unity, clarity, severity
-ular	/jələɪ/	relating to or resembling	particular, circular, granular, cellular, tubular, vascular, muscular
-uous	/juəs/	state or quality of	continuous, sinuous, arduous, strenuous, ambiguous, conspicuous

Root	IPA	Meaning	Examples
-ure	/ər/	action, condition	pressure, pleasure, treasure, measure, closure, seizure, leisure, mixture
-ward	/wərd/	specifies direction	forward, backward, upward, downward, inward, outward, toward, northward
-ware	/wɛr/	things of the same type or material	software, hardware, kitchenware, glassware, silverware, tableware, earthenware
-wise	/waɪz/	in what manner or direction	clockwise, counterclockwise, likewise, otherwise, edgewise, lengthwise, stepwise
-y	/i/	made up of, characterized	happy, funny, sunny, rainy, snowy, grassy, messy, dirty, sticky, tasty