

List of Root Words in English

To understand vocabulary, we need to understand each word and history attached to it. English is considered as a global language because it is a culmination of all the popular languages like Spanish, Latin, Greek etc. Learning the root words will make it easy for the aspirants to work out the meaning of the new words as they encounter them.

What is a root word?

A root word is the word that forms the basis of new words by adding affixes (prefixes or suffixes). It is the most basic part of any word.

The basic structure of roots are either affixed or suffixed and then they become a new word. An understanding of the usual root words will help make a good guess about the meaning of newly known words and will in turn strengthen your vocabulary.

Check out [General english for competitive exams](#) for various conceptual based topics along with their explanations.

Let's check out various root words in english, their combination and different new words formed by them.

English Root Word List

1. **Root Word** - Mal - a latin word, **Meaning** - bad or evil.

English words having 'mal' root word -

- Malignment – defame something badly
- Malice – evil intention
- Maltreat. – Treat someone/something badly
- Malfunction – working badly
- Dismal – A gloomy situation
- Maleficent – Someone who deliberately try causing harm to someone

*All the words having 'mal' root word gives a negative connotation.

Candidates can check the [List of Homophones/Homonyms](#) in the given link to prepare for the English section.

2. **Root Word** - Phobia, **Meaning** - Fear or dislike

English words formed of it -

Demophobia - demo is people so one who fears public speaking have demophobia

Zoophobia - people who fear animals.

Theophobia - Thei is God/Religion, so a person who fears religion has theophobia.

Pedophobia - Pedo means child, so a person who doesn't like children has pedophobia.

Gynophobia - a person who dislikes girls/women because Gyno is a girl/woman.

You can check the [List of Phobias](#) in the given link which is important for the general awareness section as well.

3. **Root word** - Fin - a Latin word, **Meaning** - to end something, limit, or boundary.

English words containing 'Fin' in them –

- Infinity - No limit
- Infinitesimal - immeasurably small
- Confinement - concluding state of pregnancy
- Definite - Precise

We can see, the words mean to end or limit something. Examples: We take a final exam at the end of the course. The one who watches reality TV Shows, see the Finale episode or the final episode of the season. In a race, the Finish line is known as the end of it.

4. **Root word** - Phil - a Greek word, **Meaning** - to Love.

English word with root word 'Phil' -

- Bibliophile – the one who loves books
- Philologist – word lover who is a scholar of language
- Philanthropist – is a person who loves mankind.
- Philosopher - A person who will love wisdom
- Philodendron - A tree that curls up while growing and are called love trees.

So we can see all the words with root words are associated with love.. Did you know the city of Philadelphia actually means the city of brotherly love.

5. **Root word** - Logy a Greek word, **Meaning** - to study something

Words formed with the root word 'logy' are -

- Analogy - study of comparison of two or more things
- Anthropology - study of human beings as 'anthrop' means human.
- Theology - 'theo' means God/religion so theology is study of religion
- Morphology - the study of structures is morphology. Morph means structures.

The above given examples for 'logy' root words form a part of one word substitution which is again an important topic to study in the english language section. Candidates can go the category-wise [list of one word substitution](#) for assistance in preparation.

6. **Root word** - Thei, a Greek word, **Meaning** - God/Religion

English words formed using the root word 'Thei' are -

- Theist - 'ist' is follower, so theist is one who believes in God
- Atheist - A [person who do not believe in God
- Pantheist - Pan means that is all over, so the person who believes in all God across all religion is Pantheist
- Monotheist - Mono connotes one, so those who believe in one god are monotheists.

Also, check the [One Word substitution Questions & Answers](#) asked in various government exams.

7. **Root word** - Fact - coming from Latin language, **Meaning** - something that is “made” or “done”.
Let's check the different words with this root word -
- Factory: is a place where something is “made”.
 - Manufactured: A place where something is made too. Manufactured originally means something that is made in large scale.
 - Artifact – something that is made by human skills
 - Factor – is a “maker”. For example: a beautiful painting done by someone is a deciding factor who gained the rank of a master- painter.
 - Benefactor – Someone who does good for other people
 - Stupefaction – something that made you completely surprised
 - Petrification – a super power that makes people turn into stones by just gazing at them
 - Malefactor – someone that does evil to human
 - Satisfaction – done enough

All the words formed of the root word ‘fact’ connotes something done or made.

8. **Root Word** - Dict/Dic - a Latin word - **Meaning**- Say

English words containing Dict/Dic in them -

- Prediction – say something beforehand.
- Dictated – say something to someone
- Verdict – speaking or saying the truth
- Indicate – make known about something by saying
- Contradict – say something against
- Dictionary - a book that tells us how to say a certain word correctly.
- Addicted - when we want to say or declare that we are in love with certain things.

Candidates preparing for various government exams can check the following topics for preparation:

- [Idioms And Phrases](#)
- [List of Synonyms and Antonyms](#)
- [Letter Writing Format](#)
- [Active And Passive Voice Rules](#)

9. **Root Word** - Cide, a Latin word, **Meaning** a person or something that kills, Act of killing.

There are many word in english language formed with the root word Cide -

- Patricide - Patri means Father, so killing of one's father is Patricide
- Uxoricide - Husband who kills his wife, Uxor means Wife.
- Maritricide - Marit is husband, so Maritricide is killing of one’s husband
- Infanticide - Infant is a child, killing of a child is infanticide.

So, it can be understood that the words with root word Cide connotes killing of someone or something.

10. **Root Word** - Anti, a Greek word, **Meaning** - Opposite or against

The english words formed of the root word ‘Anti’ -

- Antiseptic - working against infection
- Antidote - working against the effect of poison
- Antisocial - opposite to social norms
- Antioxidants - compounds that work against the chemical reactions that damage the cells of an organism.

Remember, anything with the root word 'anti' is supposed to do against or opposite of something. Given below are a few links that gives questions and answers of important verbal ability topics that are asked in various government examinations, candidates can check these for practice and revision.

Tenses Questions And Answers	Direct & Indirect Speech Questions & Answers
Sentence Correction Questions	Idioms and Phrases Questions and Answers

For more such questions and answers on different topics or to get more concepts and rules based explanations of various topics covered in the [Verbal Ability](#) section, check the linked page.

Root Words That are Common English Words

There are certain root words that form a standalone word of its own or as part of other common words in the English language. Given below are some common english words that are root words as well:

- Act - meaning - to move or do, other english words- actor, acting, reenact
- Crypt - Meaning - to hide, other english word - cryptic, apocryphal, cryptography
- Ego - meaning - Self importance, Other words formed of it egotist, egocentric, egomaniac
- Legal - meaning - related to the law, other words in english - illegal, legalities, paralegal
- Form - meaning - shape, words formed from it - conform, reform, formulate
- Phobia - meaning - fear - words formed from this root word are already discussed above.
- Norm - meaning - typical, other english words - abnormal, paranormal, normality.

Given below is the Root words list that originate from either Latin or Greek words and form the basis of different english words.

Root Words from Greek Language		
Root Words	Meaning	Examples
meter/metr	measure	thermometer, perimeter
tele	far off	television, telephone
psycho	soul; spirit	psychology, psychic
therm	heat	thermal, thermometer
techno	art; science; skill	technique, technological
pseudo	not genuine, false	pseudonym, pseudoscience
morph	form; shape	morphology, morphing
photo/phos	light	photograph, phosphorous

phon	sound	phone, symphony
hydr	water	hydration, dehydrate
mono	one	monologue, monotonous
mis/miso	hate	misanthrope, misogyny
micro	small	microbe, microscope
hetero	different	heteronym, heterogeneous
scope	viewing instrument	microscope, telescope
hypo	below; beneath	hypothermia, hypothetical
homo	same	homonym, homogenous
chron	time	chronological, chronic
gram	thing written	epigram, telegram
auto	self	autobiography, automobile
dyna	power	dynamic, dynamite
bio	life	biology, biography
dys	bad; hard; unlucky	dysfunctional, dyslexic
phobia	fear	claustrophobia, phobic
logy	study of	biology, psychology
graph	writing	graphic, phonograph
nym	name	antonym, synonym
anthropo	man; human; humanity	anthropologist, philanthropy

Candidates preparing for various government exams can check the relevant links given below:

- [Free Online Mock Tests For Government exams](#)
- [Previous Year Question Papers With Solution For Government exams](#)

The table below gives the english root words taken from Latin language:

English Root Words From Latin Language		
Root Words	Meaning	Examples
aqua	water	aquarium, aquamarine
bene	good	benefactor, benevolent
circum	around	circumference, circumstance
duc/duct	to lead	conduct, induce
cent	one hundred	century, percent

mal	bad	malevolent, malefactor
mater	mother	material, maternity
form	shape	conform, reform
ambi	both	ambiguous, ambidextrous
dict	to say	dictation, dictator
mit	to send	transmit, admit
fort	strength	fortitude, fortress
fract	to break	fracture, fraction
struct	to build	destruction, restructure
scrib/scribe	to write	inscription, prescribe
ject	throw	projection, rejection
multi	many	multimedia, multiple
fac	to do; to make	factory, manufacture
aud	to hear	audience, audition
sect/sec	to cut	bisect, section
jud	judge	judicial, prejudice
mort	death	mortal, mortician
pater	father	paternal, paternity
port	to carry	portable, transportation
contra/counter	against	contradict, encounter
rupt	to break	bankrupt, disruption
voc	voice; to call	vocalize, advocate
spect	to look	inspection, spectator
vid/vis	to see	video, televise
sent	to feel; to send	consent, resent