

Latin and Greek Derivations

Many of these combining forms may be used as either prefixes or suffixes. They are listed here, in alphabetical order, first as prefixes, then as suffixes. Examples show current usage.

Prefixes	Derived From	Meaning	Example
a-, ab-	Latin	off, from, down, away	abduct, avert
a-, an-	Greek	not, without, less	abiotic, anaerobic
actin-	Greek aktis	a ray, beam, spoke	actin, actinomycete
ad-	Latin	to, attached to	adsorption
aer-	Greek	air	aerobic
amphi-	Greek	both, about, around	amphibian
ana-	Latin	away, through, again	analysis
andro-	Greek	man, male	androgens
angio-	Greek	a vessel, closed container	angiospermae
anthropo-	Greek	referring to man	anthropology
ant-, anti-	Greek	against, away, opposite	antibiosis
ante-	Latin	before	anteroom
ap-, aph-, apo-	Latin	from, off, separate	apogee
aqua-	Latin	water	aquatic
arche-, archeo-	Greek	ancient, primitive	archeology
arthri-, arthro-	Greek arthron	joint, jointed	arthritis, arthrospore
asco-	Greek askos	bag, sack, bladder	ascospore
aureo-	Latin aureus	gold coloured	aureomycin
auto-	Greek autos	self	autoimmune
bi-	Latin	two, twice, double	bipolar, binocular
bio-, bios-	Greek	related to life	biology, biocidal
blasto-	Greek blastos	an embryonic layer or cell	blastomere
brachy-	Greek	short	brachycephalic
brad-, brady-	Greek	slow, slowness	bradycardia
bry-, bryo-	Greek bryon	moss, mossy	bryophyte
calic-, calix-	Latin	cup-like	calyx
cani-, canis-	Latin	dog	canine
cardia-	Greek kardia	heart	cardiac
carn-	Latin carnis	flesh	carnivore
carp-	Latin carpalis	wrist, bones	carpel
cata-	Greek	decomposition, degradation	catabolism
cell-	Latin cella	small room	cellular
cephal-	Latin	head	cephalic
chloro-	Greek chloros	green, containing chloride	chlorophyll
chroma-, chromo-	Greek	coloured	chromosome
chron-, chrono	Greek chronos	time	chronometer
circum-	Latin	around, near, about	circumnavigate
coel-	Greek koilos	hollow cavity, belly	coelom
col-, com-, con-	Latin	with, together	combine, collide
contra-	Latin	against	contradict
crypto-	Greek kryptos	hidden	cryptogamic
cyano-	Greek kyanos	dark blue, blue-green	cyanobacteria
cyst-	Greek kystis	bladder	cystitis, cystidium
cyt-, cyte-, cyto-	Greek kytos	cell, a hollow vessel	cytology
de-	Latin	undoing, removal of, from	dehydration
den-, dent-	Latin dens	tooth	dentition
dendro-	Greek	tree	dendrochronology
derm-, derma-	Greek	skin, hide	dermatitis
deut-, deuterio-	Greek	second, secondary	deuterium
di-	Greek	double, twice, two	disaccharide

dia-	Greek	through, across	diameter
diplo-	Greek	twofold, double	diploid
dis-	Latin	apart, away	dissolve
dorm-	Latin	to sleep	dormant, dormitory
drom-, drome-	Greek	a running, racing	dromedary
e-, ec-	Latin	out, out of	efferent
eco-	Greek oikos	house, environment	ecology
ecto-	Greek ektos	outside	ectoderm
en-, endo-	Greek endon	within, internal	endoskeleton
entero-	Greek enteron	intestine	enterocolitis
entomo-	Greek entoma	insect	entomology
eo-, eos-	Greek	the dawn	Eocene, Eohippus
epi-	Greek	upon, above, top	epidermis
erythro-	Greek	red	erythrocyte
eu-	Greek	proper, true, good	Eukaryotic, eufungi
ex-	Latin	out, from	excise
exo-	Greek	outer, external	exoskeleton
extra-	Latin exter	outside of, beyond	extracellular
flagell-	Latin flagrum	whip, whip-like	flagellum
fuc-, fuco-	Greek phyktos	seaweed, algae, lichen	fucoxanthin
gamo-	Greek gamos	sexual union	gamogenesis
gastro-, gastro-	Greek gaster	stomach, belly	gastroenteritis
geno-	Latin gene	origin, development	genotype
ge-, geo-	Greek	earth	geology
glu-, glyco-	Greek	sweet, sugar	glucose, glycogen
gon-, goni-, gono-	Greek	reproductive, sexual	gonorrhoea
gymn-, gymno-	Greek gymnos	naked, bare	gymnosperm
gyn-, gyne-, gyno-	Greek	woman, female	gynecology
halo-	Greek hals	salt	halophile
haplo-	Greek haploos	single	haploid
heme-, hemo-	Greek haimo	blood	haematologist
hemi-	Greek	half	hemisphere
hepta-	Greek	seven	heptane
herb-	Latin herba	pertaining to plants	herbicide
hetero-	Greek	different, other, unlike	heterozygous
hex-, hexa-	Greek	six	hexagonal
hipp-, hippo-	Greek hippos	horse	hippodrome
histo-	Greek histos	tissue	histology
holo-	Greek holos	whole, entire	holoblastic
homeo, homo-	Greek	same, similar, like	homogeneous
hyal-, hyalo-	Greek hyalos	glassy, transparent	hyaloid
hydr-, hydro-	Greek	pertaining to water	hydrolysis
hyper-	Greek	above, more, over	hyperactive
hypo-	Greek	below, less, under	hypodermic
ichthy-, ichthyo-	Greek	referring to fish	ichthyology
inter-	Latin	between	intercellular
intra-	Latin	within, inside	intracellular
intro-	Latin	inward, within	introvert
iso-	Greek	equal, same	isotonic
kine-	Greek	movement, moving	kinetics
leuc-, leuk-	Greek	white	leucocyte
lycan-	Greek lykos	wolf	lycanthropy
macro-	Greek	large, big, long	macromolecule
man-, manu-	Latin	hand	manual
mastig-	Greek mastigos	whip	mastigophora
meg-, mega-	Greek	great, large	megabyte
melan-, melano-	Greek	black, dark	melanin
mero-	Greek merus	part, piece	meroblast
mes-, meso-	Greek mesos	middle, in between	mesoderm

met-, meta-	Greek	later, following, changed in position or form	metamorphosis
micro-	Greek mikros	small	microbiology
milli-	Latin	a thousandth part	millimetre
mio-	Greek meion	less, smaller	Miocene
mito-	Greek mitos	thread	mitosis
mon-, mono-	Greek	one, single	monocular
morph-	Greek	shape, form	morphology
mor-, mort-	Latin	die, death	mortality
muc-, muco-	Latin	consisting of many units	multicellular
mus-	Latin	mouse, as one running	muscle
myco-, mykos-	Greek	fungus, mushroom	mycology
myo-	Greek mys	muscle	myoglobin
myxo-	Greek	slime, mucus	myxomycetes
nemato-	Greek	thread, threadlike	nematode
ob-	Latin	against	obtuse
octa-	Greek	eight	octopus
olig-, oligo-	Greek	few, small, less	oligarchy
omni-	Latin	all, everywhere	omnipotent
oo-	Greek	pertaining to an egg	oocyte
ophthalmo-	Greek	referring to the eye	ophthalmologist
opisth-, opistho-	Greek	behind, backwards, back	Opisthobranchia
orni-, ornitho-	Greek	bird	ornithology
orth-, ortho-	Greek	straight	orthodontist
osteo-	Greek	bone	osteocyte
oto-	Greek	referring to the ear	otology
ova-, ovi-, ovul-	Latin	egg	ovary, oviduct
paleo-	Greek	old, ancient	paleontology
para-	Greek	beside, near, beyond	parasitism
path-, patho-	Greek	disease, suffer	pathogenic
ped-, pedi-	Latin	foot	pedicure
penna-, pinna-	Latin	feather, feathery	pinnate
pent-, penta-	Greek	five	pentagon
per-	Latin	through	pervade, peruse
peri-	Greek	around, surrounding	perimeter
pher-	Greek	bearing, carrying, support	pheromone
phil- philo-	Greek	loving, attracted to	philanthropy
phob-	Greek	fear, fearing	phobic
photo-	Greek	pertaining to light	photosynthesis
phyco-	Greek	seaweed, algae	phycology
phylo-	Greek	tribe, race, related group	phylogeny
phyto-	Greek	pertaining to plants	phytohormone
plasm-, plasma-	Greek	formative substance	plasmablasts
plati-, platy-	Greek	flat	platypus
pleio- pleo-	Greek	more, many	pleiomorphic
pod-, poda-, podi-	Greek	foot	podiatrist
poly-	Greek	many	polyhedron
post-	Latin	after	postnatal
pre-	Latin	before	prenatal
preter-	Latin	beyond	preterhuman
prim-	Latin	first	primary
pro-	Greek	before, on behalf of	proboscis
pro-	Latin	forward	progressive
proto-	Greek	first, primary	protozoa
pseudo-	Greek	false	pseudopod
psilo-	Greek	bare, mere	psilopsida
pteri-, ptero-	Greek	fern, feather	pteridophyte

quadr-, quadri-	Latin	four	quadruped
radi-	Latin	ray, spoke of wheel	radial
re-	Latin	back, again	repeat
retro-	Latin	backward	retroactive
rhiz-, rhizo-	Greek	pertaining to roots	rhizoids
rhod-, rhodo-	Greek	a rose, red	rhodopsin
rota-	Latin	wheel	rotate
sapr-, sapro-	Greek	rotten, putrid, dead	saprobe
sarc-, sarco-	Greek	flesh, fleshy	sarcoma
schiz-, schizo-	Greek	split, splitting	schizophrenia
se-	Latin	apart	secede
semi-	Latin	half	semicircle
soma-, somato-	Greek	body	somatic
sperma-, spermato-	Greek	seed	spermatozoa
sporo-	Greek	spore	sporophyte
staphylo-	Greek	bunch of grapes	staphylococcus
stoma-	Greek	mouth	stomata
strepto-	Greek	twisted, string of	streptococcus
sub-	Latin	below, under, smaller	subapical
supra-, super-	Latin	above, over	supernova
sym-, syn-	Greek	together, with	synthesis
taxi-, taxo-	Greek	to make order, arrangement	taxonomy
tel-,tele-,telo-	Greek	distant, end	telophase
terra-, terre-	Latin	land, earth	terrestrial
tetra-	Greek	four	tetrapod
therm-, thermo-	Greek	heat	thermometer
thigmo-	Greek	touch	thigmotropism
trans-	Latin	across, through, over	transfer
tri-	Latin	three	triangle
tricho-	Greek	hair	trichogyne
triplo-	Latin	triple	triploid
troche-, trocho-	Greek	wheel, hoop	trochophore
tropho-	Greek	nourishment	trophoblast
ultra-	Latin	beyond, exceedingly	ultraconservative
uni-	Latin	consisting of one	unicellular
vice-	Latin	in place of	vice-president
vid-, vis-	Latin	see	vision
xen-, xeno-	Greek	dry, desert	xerophyte
zoo-	Greek	animal, life	zoology
zyg-, zygo-	Greek	to join together	zygote

Suffixes	Derived From	Meaning	Example
-biosis	Greek	mode of living, way of life	symbiosis
-blast	Greek	formative, embryonic	mesoblast
-chaeta-, -chete	Greek	a bristle	Polychaeta
-chrome	Greek	colour	cytochrome
-cidal, -cide	Latin	killer, a killing	fungicide
-cocci, -coccus	Greek	round, seed, kernel	Streptococcus
-cyst	Greek	pouch, sac	trichocyst
-dactyl	Greek	finger	pentadactyl
-derm, -dermis	Greek	skin, layer	epidermis
-elle, -ule, -la, -le, -let, -ole	Latin	small, diminutive endings	globule, piglet
-emia	Greek	blood disease	anemia
-fer	Latin	bearer, producer, carry	conifer, transfer
-gamous, -gamy	Greek	marriage, sexual fusion	polygamy
-gen, -geny	Greek	origin, production	progeny, hydrogen

-genesis	Latin	origin, development of	embryogenesis
-gony	Latin	something produced	cosmogony
-graph	Greek	drawing, writing	chromatograph
-hedral, -hedron	Greek	side	polyhedral
-hydrate	Greek	compound of water with another substance	carbohydrate
-ism	Greek	act, practice or result of	terrorism
-ite	Latin	a division or part	somite
-itis	Greek	inflammation or infection	appendicitis
-jugal, -jugate	Latin	to yoke, join together	conjugate
-logy	Greek logos	science or study of	biology
-lysis, -lytic	Greek	loosening, separation, splitting into smaller units	photolysis
-mer, -merous	Greek meros	a part, piece	polymer
-meter	Greek metron	a measurement	diameter
-morph	Greek	form	endomorph
-mycin	Greek	derived from a fungus	aureomycin
-nomy	Greek	systematized knowledge of	astronomy
-oma	Greek	tumorous	carcinoma
-osis, -otic	Greek	abnormal condition, disease	neurosis
-phage	Greek	eater	bacteriophage
-phase	Greek	a stage or condition	metaphase
-phor, -phore	Greek	bearing, carrying, supporting	sporangiophore
-phyll	Greek	leaf	chorophyll
-phyta, -phyte	Greek	plant	epiphyte
-plasm	Greek	formative substance	cytoplasm
-plast	Greek	organized particle, granule	chloroplast
-pod, -poda	Greek	foot	arthropod
-some	Greek	body	chromosome
-stasis	Greek	a stationary position	homeostasis
-stat, -static	Greek	stationary, still	haemostat
-stomy	Greek	opening into	colostomy
-therm	Greek	heat	homoeotherm
-thes, -thesis	Greek	arrangement, in order	hypothesis
-tom, -tomy	Greek	dividing, surgery	lobotomy
-trope, -tropic	Greek	turning	phototropic
-vor, -vore	Latin vorare	feeding	carnivore
-zoa, -zoan, -zoic	Greek	animal, life	protozoa

Data taken from Dr Don Emmeluth's BioEthics webpages at Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, Georgia, USA at <http://www.angelfire.com/de/nestsite/> see also: <http://www.demmeluth.net/newindex.html>

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