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Opposite meanings

An **antonym** is a word with the opposite meaning to another word.

1 Learn



Big and little, hot and cold, arrive and leave: antonyms are opposites. Some are separate words, and some are made by adding a **prefix** to the front.

Separate words

big ⟷ little

ancient ⟷ modern

arrive ⟷ depart

Made with a prefix

un-	kind → **unkind**
dis-	agree → **disagree**
in-	correct → **incorrect**
im-	possible → **impossible**

Let's do one: find an antonym for visible (able to be seen).

1. The opposite meaning is "not able to be seen". Can we add a prefix?

2. Try each one aloud: unvisible? disvisible? **invisible**? imvisible? Only **invisible** is a real word.

3. Check it in a sentence: "The ink was **invisible** until Leo shone a torch on it."

Flip's tip: im- usually goes before words starting with **m** or **p** (immature, impatient). **un-** is the most common. If you're not sure, say each one aloud or check a dictionary.

Warm up: write an antonym for each word.

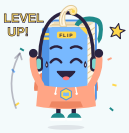
hot _____ **early** _____ **full** _____ **fair** _____

Grown-ups: some words have more than one antonym (hot: cold, cool, freezing). Accept any that really mean the opposite.

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2 Try it together

a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



Prefix cards

You need: 14 scraps of paper, a pencil and a cup or bowl.

1. Write the prefixes **un-**, **dis-**, **in-** and **im-** on four scraps. Lay them out in a row.
2. Write these words on the other scraps and put them in the cup: **kind, appear, polite, honest, visible, patient, lock, obey, complete, fair**.
3. Take turns to pull out a word. Try it with each prefix aloud. Which makes a real antonym?
4. Write it in the table. Then play **opposites ping-pong** out loud.

Word	Prefix	Antonym	Word	Prefix	Antonym

Grown-ups: made-up words like "unpossible" are a great talking point: say them aloud and laugh, then find the real one.

3 Practise

A. Write an antonym for each word. (No prefixes this time!)

generous _____ **victory** _____ **shallow** _____

accept _____ **expand** _____ **rough** _____

B. Add **un-**, **dis-**, **in-** or **im-** to make an antonym.

tidy _____	**obey** _____	**complete** _____	**perfect** _____
mature _____	**like** _____	**active** _____	**aware** _____

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C. Draw a ring round the **antonym** of the word in bold.

1. **brave**: courageous cowardly bold
2. **scarce**: rare plentiful few
3. **temporary**: short brief permanent
4. **praise**: criticise admire cheer

D. Change the meaning! Rewrite the sentence using an antonym for each underlined word.

The **tidy** classroom was **quiet** when the children **arrived**.

Challenge

Sam wrote: "It's **unpossible** to lick your own elbow!" What's wrong? Write the correct word and explain how you chose the prefix.

I can...

Tick when you can.

- [ ] explain that an antonym has the opposite meaning
- [ ] find antonyms, like big and little
- [ ] make antonyms with un-, dis-, in- and im-