



# Rule 18: prefixes



# Parent information

- This teaching resource is organised into four sections:  
**1)** Explanation of the rule **2)** Examples of key words that fit the rule **3)** Opportunities to practise **4)** Further examples of commonly used words following the rule & some notable exceptions.
- These slides are intended as a starting point for teaching this rule. The lists of words given at the end might be used for card sorting exercises or a variety of spelling games.



# 1) Rule 18: Explanation

Prefixes are added to the start of a root word.

unplug      antisocial      submarine  
reclaim      disapprove      preview  
automatic      semicircle

How do these prefixes change the meaning?

**un:** not / reversal      **anti:** against  
**sub:** below / nearly      **re:** again  
**dis:** removal / not      **pre:** before in time  
**auto:** by itself      **semi:** half / partly

# 1) Rule 18: Explanation

'un', 'dis' and 'mis' all have negative meanings.

'in' can mean *not*. It may also be spelt 'ir', 'il' & 'im'.

incorrect      illegal      improper      irregular

il: before an 'l'

im: before an 'm' or 'p'

ir: before an 'r'

in: before anything else

'in', 'ir', 'il' or 'im'?

\_\_possible      \_\_logical

\_\_rational      \_\_active



Remember

imp!



## 2) Rule 18: Examples

How does the prefix change the meaning?

unfinished

replay

irreplaceable

discontented

autobiography

preheat

substandard

semicircle

anticlockwise

**THINK**: Which other words can you think of with these prefixes?

# 3) Rule 18: Practice

Match the root word to the correct prefix.

## Starter

mis	fold
re	like
un	match
pre	do
dis	view

## Challenge 1

sub	pilot
auto	dote
anti	natural
in	marine
un	correct

## Challenge 2

in	appear
pre	possible
im	fortune
dis	active
mis	occupy

THINK: Do any have more than one answer?

# 4) Rule 18: Further examples

## auto

autograph  
autobiography  
autopilot

## mis

misfortune  
misunderstand  
mislead  
misplace  
misconduct  
mismatch  
misread

## anti

antisocial  
anticlockwise  
antibiotic  
antidote  
antiseptic

## dis

disappear  
disable  
dislike  
disbelief  
dissatisfaction  
disadvantage

## un

undo  
unfold  
unafraid  
unnatural  
uncertain  
unbolt  
unaware  
unable  
unhelpful  
unhappy

## pre

preview  
premature  
preoccupy  
prehistoric  
preface  
prefix  
preheat  
prejudge

## re

retry  
replace  
recall  
redo  
restock  
repay  
renew  
reassure

## sub

submarine  
substandard  
suburban  
subdivision  
subcontract

## in/im/il/ir

illiterate  
incorrect  
immodest  
illegal  
immortal  
impossible  
irregular  
illogical  
inactive  
irrational  
intolerant

## Note

These letters do not always act as a prefix at the start of a word

E.g. under,  
distant

Some prefixes have more than one meaning

E.g. 'in' can mean not / without (*intolerant*) or into / towards (*incoming*).