

In linguistics, suffixes (sometimes called endings) are bound morphemes that occur after the stem (base). Suffixation is one of the four main types of word-formation, which are also prefixation, conversion and compounding. Prefixation and suffixation together are referred as affixation. Suffixes may pile up to the number of three or four. Example for four consecutive suffixes in single word is word "normalizers", where on the base norm are added -al, -ize, -er, -s. When suffixes multiply like this, the order is fixed; there is one and only one order in which they can occur. Suffixes used in English frequently have Greek, French or Latin origins.

#### TYPES OF SUFFIXES

Suffixes can be inflectional or derivational.

##### Inflectional suffixes

Inflection changes grammatical properties of a word within its syntactic category. Often used inflectional suffixes in English language nowadays are:

- s (third person singular present) – play/(he) plays
- ed (past tense) – work/worked
- ing (progressive/continuous) – talk/talking
- en (past participle) – stole/stolen
- s (plural) – horse/horses
- en (plural, irregular) – ox/oxen
- er (comparative) – big/bigger
- est (superlative) – small/smallest
- n't (negative) – can/can't

Main characteristics of inflectional suffixes are:

They do not change the part of the speech (sled/sleds, both are nouns);

They come last in a word (shortened);

They go with all stems (He eats, drinks motivates...);

They do not pile up (written, flakes, higher...).

Note that the suffix -er can convert almost any verb into the person or thing performing the action of the verb. For example: a teacher is a person who teaches, a lover loves, a killer kills, an observer observes, a walker walks, a runner runs; a sprinkler is a thing that sprinkles, a copier copies, a shredder shreds, etc.

##### Derivational suffixes

With derivational suffixes, the new word has a new meaning, and is usually a different part of speech. But the new meaning is related to the old meaning - it is "derived" from the old meaning. Often used derivational suffixes in English language nowadays are:

- ian – guard/guardian
- ize/-ise – polar/polarize
- fy – justice/justify
- ly – calm/calmly
- ful – faith/faithful
- able/-ible – eat/eatable/edible
- hood – brother/brotherhood
- ness – kind/kindness
- less – help/helpless
- ism – patriot/patriotism
- ment – move/movement
- ist – psychiatry/psychiatrist
- al – promotion/promotional

-ish – abolition/abolish

Derivational suffixes usually do not close off a word. After derivational suffix we can sometimes add inflectional suffix. For example, on word “fertilize” which ends in a derivational suffix, we can add another one like –er, and on “fertilizer” we can add inflectional suffix –s, so the result is “fertilizers”, and with that, we can close the word.

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