

Latin and Greek roots in English

*Here's a list of **Latin and Greek roots** commonly used in English, along with their meanings and example words. Being familiar with this linguistic material will help you with figuring out the meaning of unknown words at least to a degree. Not for the faint of heart, though.*

abs-, ab- (*Latin*: away from) – absent (away), abstract (drawn away from reality)

ac- (*Latin*: sharp) – acute (sharp angle), acerbic (sharp in tone)

acer-, acr- (*Latin*: sharp, bitter) – acrid (bitter taste), exacerbate (make worse)

ad-, a- (*Latin*: to, toward) – adapt (adjust toward), advocate (speak toward a cause)

aer- (*Greek*: air) – aerodynamics (study of air motion), aerobic (requiring air)

aero- (*Greek*: air) – aerodynamics (study of air motion), aeroplane (airplane)

ag-, act- (*Latin*: do, act) – agent (one who acts), action (the process of doing)

agon- (*Greek*: struggle, contest) – antagonist (opponent in a struggle), agony (intense struggle or pain)

agri- (*Latin*: field) – agriculture (farming), agrarian (related to fields)

alb- (*Latin*: white) – albino (absence of pigmentation), albumen (egg white)

alg- (*Greek*: pain) – neuralgia (nerve pain), analgesic (pain reliever)

ali-, alter- (*Latin*: other) – alien (otherworldly being), alternate (another option)

alter- (*Latin*: other) – alter (to change), alternative (other option)

alter- (*Latin*: other) – alternative (other choice), altercation (heated argument)

am-, amat- (*Latin*: love) – amiable (friendly, loving), amateur (one who loves an activity)

ambi- (*Latin*: both) – ambidextrous (skilled with both hands), ambiguous (open to both interpretations)

ambi- (*Latin*: both) – ambiguous (having two meanings), ambidextrous (able to use both hands)

ambi- (*Latin*: both) – ambiguous (having two meanings), ambivalence (conflicting feelings)

ambi-, amphi- (*Latin/Greek*: both, around) – amphibian (lives both on land and water), ambidextrous (able to use both hands)

amphi- (*Greek*: both, around) – amphibious (lives both on land and water), amphitheater (seating around a stage)

andr- (*Greek*: man, male) – androgynous (characteristics of both genders), android (human-like robot)

andro-, anthro- (*Greek*: man, human) – anthropology (study of humans), android (human-like robot)

ang- (*Latin*: bend) – angle (a bend), angular (having angles)

anim- (*Latin*: life, spirit) – animal (living creature), animate (to bring to life)

anim- (*Latin*: life, spirit) – animate (give life to), animal (living being)

anim- (*Latin*: soul, spirit) – animate (to bring to life), inanimate (without spirit or life)

aster-, astr- (*Greek*: star) – astronomy (study of stars), asteroid (star-like object)

astro- (*Greek*: star) – astronomy (study of stars), astronaut (star voyager)

aud- (*Latin*: hear) – audio (relating to sound), audience (those who hear)

aud- (*Latin*: hear) – auditorium (hearing place), audible (able to be heard)

aud-, from Latin *audire*, meaning "to hear" Examples: audio (sound), audience (group of listeners)

aur- (*Latin*: gold) – aurum (Latin for gold), auriferous (gold-bearing)

auto- (*Greek*: self) – autobiography (self-written story), autonomous (self-governing)

auto- (*Greek*: self) – automatic (self-operating), autonomy (self-governance)

auto-, from Greek *autos*, meaning "self" Examples: autobiography (self-written life story), autonomous (self-governing)

avi- (*Latin*: bird) – aviary (place for birds), aviation (air travel)

bar- (*Greek*: weight, pressure) – barometer (measures pressure), isobar (equal pressure)

bell- (*Latin*: war) – bellicose (warlike), antebellum (before the war)

bell- (*Latin*: war) – belligerent (hostile), rebellion (resistance against authority)

bell- (*Latin*: war) – rebellion (act of war), bellicose (warlike nature)

bene- (*Latin*: good) – benefit (advantage), benevolent (kind-hearted)

bene- (*Latin*: good) – benefit (good outcome), benevolent (kind, good-hearted)

em-, empt- (*Latin*: take, buy) – exempt (taken out), preemptive (done before something else is taken)

equ- (*Latin*: equal) – equality (fairness), equidistant (equally spaced)

equ- (*Latin*: equal) – equality (state of being equal), equator (dividing line of equal halves)

equ- (*Latin*: equal) – equalize (make equal), equity (fairness)

equi- (*Latin*: equal) – equitable (fair, equal), equinox (equal day and night)

err- (*Latin*: wander) – erratic (wandering, unpredictable), error (wandering from correctness)

err- (*Latin*: wander) – error (a wandering from correctness), errant (wandering)

ethno- (*Greek*: race, culture) – ethnocentric (focused on one's culture), ethnicity (cultural identity)

fab-, fess- (*Latin*: speak) – confess (speak out), fable (spoken tale)

fac-, fact- (*Latin*: make, do) – factory (place where things are made), facilitate (make easier)

fac-, fact- (*Latin*: to make, do) – factory (place where things are made), manufacture (to make by hand or machine)

fac-, fic- (*Latin*: make, do) – manufacture (make by hand), fiction (made-up story)

fall-, fals- (*Latin*: deceive) – false (not true), fallacy (mistaken belief)

fer- (*Latin*: carry) – transfer (carry across), ferry (boat that carries people)

fer- (*Latin*: carry) – transfer (carry across), fertile (able to carry life)

ferr- (*Latin*: iron) – ferrous (containing iron), ferric (relating to iron)

fract- (*Latin*: break) – fraction (part of a whole), refract (bend or break light)

fract-, frag- (*Latin*: break) – fracture (break), fragment (broken part)

fract-, frag-, from Latin *frangere*, meaning "to break" Examples: fracture (a break), fragile (easily broken)

frag-, fract- (*Latin*: break) – fragile (easily broken), fraction (part of a whole)

gen- (*Greek/Latin*: birth, kind) – generate (create), genus (biological category)

gen- (*Latin/Greek*: birth, kind) – generate (to bring into being), genetics (study of heredity)

geo- (*Greek*: earth) – geography (study of earth), geocentric (earth-centered)

geo- (*Greek*: earth) – geography (study of Earth), geology (study of rocks)

geo- (*Greek*: earth) – geology (study of earth), geometry (measurement of earth)

geo-, from Greek *gē*, meaning "earth" Examples: geography (study of the earth), geology (study of earth's structure)

gloss-, glot- (*Greek*: tongue, language) – glossary (list of words), polyglot (speaking many languages)

grad-, gress- (*Latin*: step) – gradual (step by step), progress (step forward)

grad-, gress- (*Latin*: step) – graduate (step up), progression (step forward)

grad-, gress- (*Latin*: step) – graduate (step up), regress (step back)

grad-, gress- (*Latin*: step) – graduate (to step up), progress (to step forward)

gram-, graph- (*Greek*: write) – grammar (rules of writing), graphic (written or drawn)

jug- (*Latin*: join) – conjunction (joining together), subjugate (bring under control)

jun- (*Latin*: join) – conjunction (joining words), juncture (point of joining)

jun-, jur- (*Latin*: law, join) – jury (group for legal judgment), conjunction (joining words)

jur- (*Latin*: law) – jury (group deciding law), jurisdiction (legal authority)

labor- (*Latin*: work) – laboratory (place of work), collaborate (work together)

laps- (*Latin*: slip) – lapse (slip of time), elapse (time slipping away)

lat- (*Latin*: side) – lateral (side), unilateral (one-sided)

leg- (*Latin*: law) – legal (pertaining to law), legislature (law-making body)

leg-, lect- (*Latin*: read, choose) – lecture (spoken lesson), legal (pertaining to law)

leg-, lect- (*Latin*: read, choose) – legal (pertaining to law), elect (choose)

liber- (*Latin*: free) – liberty (freedom), liberate (free from restriction)

lingu- (*Latin*: tongue) – linguist (language specialist), bilingual (speaking two languages)

lingu- (*Latin*: tongue, language) – linguistics (study of language), bilingual (speaking two languages)

lith- (*Greek*: stone) – monolith (large stone), lithography (stone printing)

loc- (*Latin*: place) – local (nearby place), locate (find the place)

loc- (*Latin*: place) – locale (place), relocate (move to another place)

mis-, mit- (*Latin*: send) – transmit (send across), dismiss (send away)

mit-, miss-, from Latin *mittere*, meaning "to send" Examples: transmit (to send across), mission (task sent to accomplish)

mob-, mot- (*Latin*: move) – mobile (able to move), motion (movement)

mob-, mot- (*Latin*: move) – mobility (ability to move), motion (movement)

mono- (*Greek*: one) – monologue (speech by one), monopoly (control by one)

morph- (*Greek*: form) – morphology (study of forms), amorphous (without form)

mort- (*Latin*: death) – mortal (subject to death), mortician (one who prepares the dead)

mort- (*Latin*: death) – mortal (subject to death), mortuary (place for the dead)

multi- (*Latin*: many) – multiply (increase by many), multimedia (using many media)

multi- (*Latin*: many) – multiply (increase), multitude (large number)

multi- (*Latin*: many) – multiply (to increase), multicolored (many colors)

mut- (*Latin*: change) – mutate (change form), immutable (unchanging)

narr- (*Latin*: tell) – narrate (tell a story), narrative (story)

nat- (*Latin*: born) – native (born in a place), innate (inborn)

nat- (*Latin*: born) – native (born in a place), natal (related to birth)

nav- (*Latin*: ship) – navigate (steer a ship), naval (related to ships)

reg-, rect- (*Latin*: rule, straight) – regal (royal rule), rectify (make straight)

rupt- (*Latin*: break) – disrupt (break apart), eruption (breaking out)

rupt- (*Latin*: break) – erupt (burst out), rupture (break apart)

sci- (*Latin*: know) – science (study of knowledge), conscious (aware, knowing)

scope- (*Greek*: see) – microscope (to see small), telescope (to see far)

scrib-, script- (*Latin*: write) – inscription (written carving), subscribe (sign up in writing)

scrib-, script- (*Latin*: write) – manuscript (handwritten), description (written account)

scrib-, script-, from Latin *scribere*, meaning "to write" Examples: manuscript (written document), describe (to write about)

script-, scrib- (*Latin*: write) – describe (write down), scripture (sacred writings)

sect- (*Latin*: cut) – section (cut part), dissect (cut into parts)

sens-, sent- (*Latin*: feel) – sensation (feeling), consent (feel agreement)

sol- (*Latin*: sun) – solar (related to the sun), solstice (sun's position shift)

solv-, solut- (*Latin*: loosen) – dissolve (loosen into parts), solution (something loosened)

spect- (*Latin*: look) – inspect (look closely), spectator (viewer)

spect-, from Latin *specere*, meaning "to look" Examples: inspect (to look closely at), spectacle (something to look at)

spir- (*Latin*: breathe) – inspire (breathe into), respiration (breathing)

vac- (*Latin*: empty) – vacuum (empty space), vacate (leave empty)

ven-, vent- (*Latin*: come) – intervene (come between), advent (arrival)

vert-, vers- (*Latin*: turn) – convert (turn around), reverse (turn backward)

vid-, vis- (*Latin*: see) – vision (sight), video (recorded visual content)

viv-, vit- (*Latin*: life) – vital (essential to life), vivacious (full of life)

voc-, voke-, from Latin *vocare*, meaning "to call" Examples: vocal (related to voice), evoke (to call forth)

volv- (*Latin*: roll) – revolve (roll around), evolution (rolling development)

xeno- (*Greek*: foreign) – xenophobia (fear of foreigners), xenophile (love of foreign things)

zo- (*Greek*: animal) – zoology (study of animals), zoo (animal enclosure)

Source: **Chatty Gepetto**