

# 105 Forming nouns

## 1 Nouns that end in *-er, -or, -ant/-ent* and *-ist*

These nouns are often people and their jobs (e.g. *a teacher, a dentist*):

VERB OR NOUN	+	= PERSON/JOB
<i>teach drive build</i>	<i>-er</i>	<i>teacher driver builder</i>
<i>visit act</i>	<i>-or</i>	<i>visitor actor</i>
<i>assist study</i>	<i>-ant/-ent</i>	<i>assistant student</i>
<i>art journal cycle</i>	<i>-ist</i>	<i>artist journalist cyclist</i>

Some nouns that end in *-er* are things, not people:  
*cooker* = a machine that cooks things  
*photocopier* = a machine that makes copies



## 2 Nouns that end in *-ese, -(i)an* and *-ish*

These nouns are often nationalities and/or languages. They are also used as adjectives:

COUNTRY	+	= NATIONALITY / LANGUAGE / ADJECTIVE
<i>China Japan Portugal</i>	<i>-ese</i>	<i>Chinese Japanese Portuguese</i>
<i>Italy Russia Hungary</i>	<i>-(i)an</i>	<i>Italian Russian Hungarian</i>
<i>England Spain Poland Sweden</i>	<i>-ish</i>	<i>English Spanish Polish Swedish</i>

! The names of some languages and nationalities do not follow these patterns (e.g. *The Netherlands* → *Dutch*, *Greece* → *Greek*, *Thailand* → *Thai*).

## 3 Nouns that end in *-ment, -(t)ion, -ation* and *-sion*

We make these nouns from verbs:

VERB	+	= NOUN
<i>move argue govern</i>	<i>-ment</i>	<i>movement argument government</i>
<i>communicate educate</i>	<i>-ion</i>	<i>communication education</i>
<i>produce</i>	<i>-tion</i>	<i>production</i>
<i>examine invite inform</i>	<i>-ation</i>	<i>examination invitation information</i>
<i>discuss decide</i>	<i>-sion</i>	<i>discussion decision</i>

## 4 Nouns that end in *-ness, -ity* and *-ance/-ence*

We make these nouns from adjectives:

ADJECTIVE	+	= NOUN
<i>happy dark ill</i>	<i>-ness</i>	<i>happiness darkness illness</i>
<i>able active national</i>	<i>-ity</i>	<i>ability activity nationality</i>
<i>important distant</i>	<i>-ance</i>	<i>importance distance</i>
<i>independent different silent</i>	<i>-ence</i>	<i>independence difference silence</i>

The spelling often changes when we add letters to a word that ends with a vowel or *-y*:  
*cycle* → *cyclist*, *study* → *student*, *decide* → *decision*, *argue* → *argument*, *happy* → *happiness*