

97 Forming verbs



This is the British Library. The collection **outgrew** its old home in the British Museum and has now been **rehoused** in a modern building. The catalogue **has been computerised** and can be searched on the Internet.

1 Verbs from nouns and adjectives

We can make some nouns and adjectives into verbs by adding suffixes:

STEM NOUN/ADJECTIVE	+ SUFFIX	= VERB
commercial computer critic modern special summary	- <i>iselize</i> *	commercialise computerise criticise modernise specialise summarise
awake flat length short	-(<i>e</i>) <i>n</i>	awaken flatten lengthen shorten
active different valid	-(<i>i</i>) <i>ate</i>	activate differentiate validate
example false note sign solid	-(<i>i</i>) <i>fy</i>	exemplify falsify notify signify solidify

* The spelling -ize is more common in American English.

The meaning of the verb is related to the original adjective or noun:

*This dress is too long. Can you **shorten** it?* (= make it shorter)

*We had to **summarise** the chapter.* (= make a summary)

*The application forms **have been computerised**.* (= changed to an electronic system)

2 Changing the meaning of verbs

We can use prefixes to change the meaning of some verbs:

PREFIX	MEANING	VERB	EXAMPLES
<i>re-</i>	do again	<i>reappear rebuild rehouse reorganise repay reproduce rethink reunite</i>	<i>The painting has been rehoused in the new gallery.</i> (= put into a new home) <i>I had to reorganise the files in alphabetical order.</i> (= organise them again)
<i>dis-</i>	not/stop	<i>disagree dislike disconnect</i>	<i>I dislike pasta.</i> (= I don't like it.) <i>Our electricity has been disconnected</i> (= stopped)
<i>over-</i>	too much	<i>overeat overcharge overheat</i>	<i>They always overcharge in that shop.</i> (= charge too much money) <i>The engine overheated and blew up.</i>
<i>un-</i>	opposite or reverse action	<i>undress unfold unpack</i>	<i>I opened the envelope and unfolded the letter.</i> <i>Have you unpacked your suitcase yet?</i>
<i>mis-</i>	badly/ wrongly	<i>misbehave misinform misjudge</i>	<i>The children always misbehave when they are tired.</i> (= behave badly) <i>I'm afraid you've been misinformed.</i> (= given wrong information)
<i>out-</i>	more/ better/ further	<i>outdo outgrow outperform</i>	<i>The collection outgrew its old home.</i> (= grew bigger than the space it was in) <i>Their team easily outperformed us.</i> (= performed better than us)

The most common prefixes are shown in the chart. Other, less common prefixes include:

under- (= not enough) *The workers in that factory are underpaid.*

inter- (= between) *Members of the two tribes rarely intermarry.*