Essential English Prefixes & Roots

Negation, reversal and opposition

un- (not; reversal in some verbs)

uncertain · unlock

in- / im- / il- / ir- (not (with assimilated variants))

inaccurate · impossible · illegal · irregular

dis- (negation, separation or reversal)

disagree · disconnect · displace

non- (absence or exclusion)

nonverbal · nonresident

anti- (against, counteracting)

antibiotic · anti-inflammatory

de- (remove, reduce or reverse)

declassify · deforestation

Time, repetition and order

re- (again; back)

reconsider · rebuild · return

pre- (before)

precondition · prehistoric

post- (after)

postwar · postgraduate

inter- (between, among)

international · interdependent

intra- (within)

intranet · intramural

retro- (backwards; looking to the past)

retrospective · retroactive

Quantity, degree and distribution

mono- (one)

monolingual · monopoly

bi- (two)

bilingual · bilateral

multi- (many)

multilingual · multidisciplinary

semi- (half; partly)

semicircle · semiautonomous

sub- (under, below; secondary)

submarine · subordinate

super- (above; beyond)

superstructure · supersede

hyper- / hypo- (above normal / below normal)

hypertension · hypothermia

Movement, relation and position

trans- (across; beyond)

transatlantic · transform

circum- (around)

circumference · circumvent

con- / com- / col- / cor- (with, together (historical Latin patterns))

connect · combine · collaborate · correspond

ex- (out of; former)

exclude · export · ex-president

ad- / ac- / af- / ag- (toward (historical Latin forms))

adhere · accept · affect · aggregate

ob- / oc- / of- (toward; against (historical patterns))

obstruct · occur · offend

Latin and Greek roots in serious prose

scrib / script (write)

describe · transcript · inscription

dict (say, speak)

dictate · verdict · contradict

vid / vis (see)

evidence · visible · revise

duc / duct (lead)

conduct · induce · aqueduct

tract (draw, pull)

attract · extract · contract

cred (believe, trust)

credible · credential · credulous

bene / mal (well / badly)

beneficial · malnutrition

bio / geo / chrono (life / earth / time)

biography · geology · chronology

log / logy (account, study, speech)

logic · geology · dialogue

morph (form)

morphology · metamorphosis