

NEGATIVE PREFIXES AND ACADEMIC PLURALS

NEGATIVE PREFIXES

DISCONTENT

- Discontent: unhappy
- "Uncontent" is not a word, but many Americans use this word in conversation.

DISQUALIFY AND UNQUALIFIED

- Disqualify: to prohibit or exclude; to bar or ban
- Unqualified: without qualifications; untrained or unskilled

NONDISCRIMINATORY AND INDISCRIMINATE

- Nondiscriminatory: equal; unbiased; fair
- Indiscriminate: random in selection; uncritical or unselective

NONSPECIFIC AND UNSPECIFIC

- Nonspecific: general; generic
- Unspecific: undefined; unclear

These two words can be used almost interchangeably.

VALUABLE AND INVALUABLE

These two words are often confused. "Invaluable" is not a negative term, but actually means that something is so valuable that it doesn't have a price.

- Valuable: treasured; prized; respected
- Invaluable: priceless

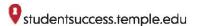
Words with double "s"

Dissatisfied: unhappy; discontent (or: unsatisfied)

Dissolution: to break something down or separate

Dissolve: to melt, soften, or fall apart

Exceptions: unsavory: disgusting



Words with double "r"

Irrevocable: synonym with "irretrievable;" cannot be undone or changed

• Irreversible: permanent

• Irretrievable: synonym with "irrevocable;" cannot be taken back

• Irrefutable: convincing; undeniable; cannot be argued

• Irrelevant: unrelated; not connected to the topic

Irreparable: cannot be fixed or repaired

• Exceptions: disreputable, unreliable, and unregulated

"Im" Impossible Impatient Impotent: not fertile; powerless; helpless Immutable: absolute; undeniable "il" Illegible Illegal Illicit Illegitimate Exceptions: unloved; unlucky; unleashed; unlocked

IRREGULAR ACADEMIC WORDS FROM LATIN AND GREEK

WORDS ARE COLOR- CODED BY THE ACADEMIC FIELD THAT USES THEM THE MOST OFTEN. WORDS IN BLACK HAVE A MORE GENERAL USE.

MATHEMATICS PSYCHOLOGY SPACE/ASTRONOMY

MEDICINE BIOLOGY GENERAL RESEARCH

EDUCATION WRITING & PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

<u>Is→ es</u> radius→ radii

Analysis→analyses rhombis → rhombis

Axis→ axes stratus→strati

basis → bases stylus → styli

bias→ biases syllabis→ syllabis

crisis → crises uterus → uteri

diagnosis → diagnoses on/um → "a"

emphasis→ emphases automaton→ automata

hypothesis→hypotheses bacterium→ bacteria

neurosis → neuroses criterion → criteria

oasis → oases curriculum → curricula

parenthesis → parentheses datum → data

psychosis → psychoses medium → media

synopsis→ synopses memorandum→

thesis → theses memoranda

us→ "l" octopus→ octopi

alumnus→ alumni millennium→ millennia

ovum → ova

cactus→cacti phenomenon→
focus→ foci phenomena

fungus→ fungi referendum→ referenda

nucleus → nuclei spectrum → spectra

<u>a→ae</u>

alumna→ alumnae

alga→algae

antenna → antennae

formula → formulae

Words that don't follow the spelling rules:

larva→ larvae

minutia → minutiae

nebula→ nebulae

vertebra→ vertebrae

Campus → campuses

Census → censuses

Corpus → corpora

Genus → genera

ix/ex→ices

appendix→ appendices

matrix > matrices

index→ indices

vertex→vertices

Forum → forums (can

also use "fora")

Species → species

Status → statuses

Virus→ viruses

Other unusual plurals: Always pluralize the primary noun in the phrase.

Example: blackbird → blackbirds (not blacksbird). The birds are plural, not their color.

Passerby → passersby

(people walking by, usually on the street)

Hyphenated words:

Mothers-in-law

Attorneys-at-law

Based on: Howard, J. (2006). Academic spelling power. Boston: Cengage Learning.

