

8

Suffixes

A Common noun suffixes

-er /ə/ is used for the *person* who does an activity, e.g. writer, painter, worker, shopper, teacher.

You can use **-er** with a wide range of verbs to make them into nouns.

Sometimes the **-er** suffix is written as **-or** (it is still pronounced /ə/). It is worth making a special list of these as you meet them, e.g. actor, operator, sailor, supervisor.

-er/-or are also used for *things* which do a particular job, e.g. pencil-sharpener, bottle-opener, grater, projector.

-er and **-ee** (pronounced /i:/) can contrast with each other meaning 'person who does something' (**-er**) and 'person who receives or experiences the action' (**-ee**) employer/employee /em'plɔɪj'i:/, sender/addressee, payee (e.g. of a cheque).

-(t)ion/-sion/-ion are used to form nouns from verbs, e.g.

complication pollution reduction alteration donation promotion admission

-ist [a person] and **-ism** [an activity or ideology]: used for people's politics, beliefs and ideologies, and sometimes their profession (compare with **-er/-or** professions above). e.g. Buddhism, journalism, Marxist, typist, physicist, terrorist.

-ist is also often used for people who play musical instruments, e.g. pianist, violinist, cellist

-ness is used to make nouns from adjectives: goodness, readiness, forgetfulness, happiness, sadness, weakness. Note what happens to adjectives that end in **-y**.

B Adjective suffixes

-able/-ible /əbl/ with verbs, means 'can be done':

drinkable washable readable forgivable edible [can be eaten] flexible [can be bent]

C Verbs

-ise (or **-ize**) forms verbs from adjectives, e.g. modernise [make modern], commercialise, industrialise.

D Other suffixes that can help you recognise the word-class

-ment: (nouns) excitement enjoyment replacement

-ity: (nouns) flexibility productivity scarcity

-hood: (abstract nouns especially family terms) childhood motherhood

-ship: (abstract nouns especially status) friendship partnership membership

-ive: (adjectives) passive productive active

-al: (adjectives) brutal legal (nouns) refusal arrival

-ous: (adjectives) delicious outrageous furious

-ful: (adjectives) forgetful hopeful useful

-less: (adjectives) useless harmless homeless

-ify: (verbs) beautify purify terrify

NOTE

The informal suffix **-ish** can be added to most common adjectives, ages and times to make them less precise, e.g. She's thirtyish. He has reddish hair. Come about eightish.

TIP

When you are recording a new word in your vocabulary notebook, write any suffixes that go with it (e.g. refuse – refusal).

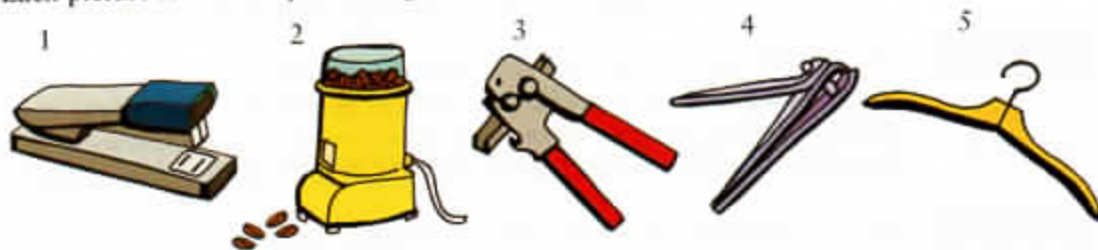
Exercises

- 8.1** Use the *-er/-or*, *-ee* and *-ist* suffixes to make the names of the following. If you need to use a dictionary, try looking up the words in bold.

Example: A person who plays jazz on the piano. a **jazz pianist**

- The thing that wipes rain off your car windscreen.
- A person who plays classical violin.
- A person who takes professional **photographs**. (N.B. pronunciation)
- A person who **acts** in amateur theatre.
- The person to whom a cheque is **paid**.
- A machine for **washing** dishes.
- A person who **donates** their organs upon their death.
- The person to whom a letter is **addressed**.

- 8.2** Each picture is of an object ending in *-er*. Can you name them?



- 8.3** List six jobs you would like to have in order of preference. How many different suffixes are there in your list? Do any of the job names not have a suffix? (e.g. pilot, film star)

- 8.4** Do these words mean a thing, a person, or both?

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 a cooker | 3 a ticket-holder | 5 a cleaner | 7 a drinker |
| 2 a typewriter | 4 a CD player | 6 a smoker | 8 a dresser |

- 8.5** Complete each of the second sentences by changing the words underlined in the first sentences. Use a suffix from the left-hand page and make any spelling changes needed.

- Most of his crimes can be forgiven. Most of his crimes are
- The Club refuses to admit anyone not wearing shoes. The Club refuses to anyone not wearing shoes.
- Her only fault is that she is lazy. Her only fault is
- This firm has produced a lot in recent years. This firm has been very in recent years.
- I found the book very easy and pleasant to read. I found the book very

- 8.6** Can you think of anything in your country which should be *nationalised* (e.g. airlines), *privatised*, *standardised*, *modernised*, *computerised* or *centralised*?

- 8.7** Which word is the odd one out in each group and why?

- brotherhood neighbourhood manhood priesthood
- tearful spiteful dreadful handful
- appointment involvement compliment arrangement
- worship kinship friendship partnership

- 7 to break the telephone connection (e.g. by unplugging it from the wall or by doing something at the telephone exchange so that calls can no longer be made, possibly because a bill has not been paid.)
 8 letters that have not been delivered to the people they were addressed to

Unit 8

- 8.1** 1 windscreen wiper(s) 5 payee
 2 classical violinist 6 dishwasher (normally written as one word)
 3 professional photographer 7 organ donor
 /fə'tɒgrəfə/ 8 addressee
 4 amateur actor

- 8.2** 1 stapler 3 can-opener (or tin-opener) 5 coat-hanger
 2 grinder 4 nail-clipper

- 8.4** 1 a cooker – a thing (the stove on which you cook); the person who cooks is a cook.
 2 a typewriter – a thing (machine for typing); the person is a typist.
 3 a ticket-holder – person or thing; a person who has a ticket, e.g. for a concert, or a kind of wallet for holding tickets, e.g. a season ticket for the train/bus.
 4 a CD player – a thing (machine for playing CDs).
 5 a cleaner – person or thing; person who cleans, e.g. in an office or other place of work; a substance or instrument for cleaning, e.g. 'this cleaner will get the grease off your oven'.
 6 a smoker – a person or thing; a person who smokes; a short name for a seat in the smoking area of a plane or a train (or the whole smoking compartment on a train).
 7 a drinker – a person (someone who drinks alcohol, usually regularly or in large quantities).
 8 a dresser – a person or thing; the person is someone who helps actors with their costumes; the thing is a piece of furniture.

- 8.5** 1 forgivable 2 admission 3 laziness 4 productive 5 readable

- 8.7** 1 neighbourhood: it is a place (an area); all the others refer to human relationships, quantities or identities.
 2 handful: it is a noun; all the others are adjectives.
 3 compliment: all the others are verb + 'ment', e.g. appoint + ment. There is no verb 'compli'.
 4 worship: all the others are kinds of human relationships; **worship** refers to paying tribute to a God, or, figuratively, as a verb, to loving someone very, very much, e.g. 'They worshipped their teacher'.

Unit 9

- 9.1** 1 indiscreet 4 irrelevant 7 irresponsible 10 intolerant
 2 insensitive 5 disobedient 8 ungrateful
 3 unconvincing 6 inefficient 9 disloyal

- 9.2** 1 Unmarried 3 Illiterate 5 Impartial
 2 Inedible 4 Unemployed 6 Irreplaceable