

GREEK AND LATIN ROOT WORDS

A [root](#), as its name suggests, is a word or word part from which other words grow, usually through the addition of [prefixes](#) and [suffixes](#). The root of the word *vocabulary*, for example, is *voc*, a Latin root meaning "word" or "name."

This root also appears in the words *advocacy*, *convocation*, *evocative*, *vocal*, and *vociferous*.

Understanding the meanings of the common word roots can help us deduce the meanings of new words that we encounter. But be careful: root words can have more than one meaning and various shades of meaning. In addition, words that look similar may derive from different roots. So when you meet up with a new word, be sure to rely on a dictionary to check its definition.

The table below defines and illustrates 30 of the most common Greek and Latin roots. The letter in parentheses indicates whether the root word is Greek (*G*) or Latin (*L*).

ROOT	MEANING	EXAMPLES
-ast(er)-(G)	star	asteroid, astronomy
-audi- (L)	hear	audible, audience
-auto- (G)	self	automatic, autopsy
-bene- (L)	good	benefit, benign
-bio- (G)	life	biography, biology
-chrono- (G)	time	chronic, synchronize
-dict- (L)	say	dictate, diction
-duc- (L)	lead, make	deduce, produce
-gen- (L)	give birth	gene, generate
-geo- (G)	earth	geography, geology
-graph- (G)	write	autograph, graph
-jur-, -jus- (L)	law	jury, justice
-log-, -logue- (L)	thought	logic, obloquy
-luc- (L)	light	lucid, translucent
-man(u)- (L)	hand	manual, manure
-mand-, -mend- (L)	order	demand, recommend
-mis-, -mit- (L)	send	missile, transmission
-omni- (L)	all	omnivorous
-path- (G)	feel	empathy, pathetic
-phil- (G)	love	philosophy, bibliophile
-phon- (G)	sound	phonics, telephone
-photo- (G)	light	photograph, photon
-port- (L)	carry	export, portable
-qui(t)- (L)	quiet, rest	acquit, tranquil
-scrib-, -script- (L)	write	ascribe, script
-sens-, -sent- (L)	feel	resent, sensitive
-tele- (G)	far off	telecast, telephone
-terr- (L)	earth	terrain, territory
-vac- (L)	empty	evacuate, vacate
-vid-, -vis- (L)	see	visible, video