

29 Everyday problems

Prefixes that mean "not" are called negative prefixes. Many words that have negative prefixes are useful for talking about everyday workplace and urban problems.

 **New language** Negative prefixes

Aa Vocabulary Urban problems

 **New skill** Talking about everyday problems

29.1 KEY LANGUAGE NEGATIVE PREFIXES

Negative prefixes change a word's meaning to its opposite.

Maria is very organized. Her desk is always tidy.



Kevin is very **dis**organized. His desk is always **un**tidy.



The opposite of "organized."

The opposite of "tidy."



29.2 FURTHER EXAMPLES NEGATIVE PREFIXES

The traffic is so bad it's **im**possible to get to work on time.



I think you've **mis**understood what I was trying to say.



It's **ir**responsible to drive faster than the speed limit.



It's **il**legal to park in the middle of the road.



Aa 29.3 FILL IN THE GAPS USING THE WORDS IN THE PANEL

They were so unlucky to miss the train this morning.

- 1 It's _____ to solve a problem when you don't have all the facts.
- 2 Her room is so _____ that you can't even see the floor.
- 3 He's very _____, so I always have to check to confirm our meetings.
- 4 It's _____ to download that movie without paying for it.

untidy

illegal

~~unlucky~~

impossible

disorganized



29.4 READ THE ARTICLE AND FIND 11 MORE WORDS THAT BEGIN WITH NEGATIVE PREFIXES

1 im- *immature*

2 dis-

3 un-

4 ir-

YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

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Bad Workplace Habits

Q I share my office with 20 young co-workers. Most are great, but some are really immature and it's almost impossible to work with them. They play unacceptable and irresponsible tricks on colleagues. For example, if I leave my desk tidy, I sometimes return to find it in total disorder. And they also swap computers around during lunch, leaving people unable to do their work. Actually, it's unusual to come back to the desk and find everything as we left it. These people think it's funny, but I disagree. I think it's disrespectful. I understand the irresistible if slightly irrational wish to break rules, but I'm getting very impatient with their behavior. Should I report them to our manager?
Jenny (via email)



29.5 SAY THE OPPOSITE OF THE STATEMENTS OUT LOUD, USING NEGATIVE PREFIXES

They were able to meet their deadline.

They were unable to meet their deadline.



1 You have made a very mature decision.



2 Speeding on the freeway is responsible.



3 Playing tricks on your colleagues is acceptable.



4 I completely agree with you.



5 Your remarks were very respectful.



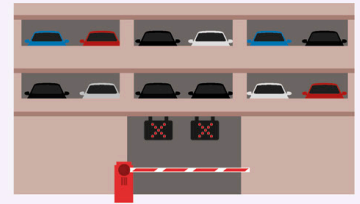
29.6 VOCABULARY URBAN PROBLEMS



road works



traffic jam



nowhere to park



accident



crime



missed bus



overcrowded train



line (US)
queue (UK)



canceled trains



29.7 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS



Julia tells her colleague Marisha about a difficult trip to work.

Julia often arrives late at work.

True ☐ False ☒ Not given ☐

1 Julia's train wasn't very crowded.

True ☐ False ☐ Not given ☐

2 Julia thought the students were childish.

True ☐ False ☐ Not given ☐

3 Julia told the guard to call the police.

True ☐ False ☐ Not given ☐

4 Julia lost patience with the guard.

True ☐ False ☐ Not given ☐

5 The next train was on time.

True ☐ False ☐ Not given ☐

I'm stuck in a traffic jam on the highway.

① _____ there's been an _____ 2 miles south of us.

② It's _____ to move, and we could be _____ for another 2 hours.

③ The highway was already jammed because of the _____.

④ The traffic is so bad that the highway is like an _____ parking lot.

⑤ People are getting very _____, which I suppose isn't _____.

accident
delayed
road works
unusual
~~traffic jam~~
impatient
impossible
Unfortunately
overcrowded



29 ✓ CHECKLIST

⚙️ Negative prefixes ☐

Aa Urban problems ☐

🧩 Talking about everyday problems ☐

🔄 REVIEW THE ENGLISH YOU HAVE LEARNED IN UNITS 26–29

NEW LANGUAGE	SAMPLE SENTENCE	☑	UNIT
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS	I have been painting the house all day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	26.1
"FOR" AND "SINCE"	I've been painting the house for three hours. I've been painting the house since three o'clock.	<input type="checkbox"/>	26.6
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS QUESTIONS	Have you been baking a cake? How long have you been playing the guitar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	27.1, 27.7
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS FOR ONGOING ACTIVITIES	I've been fixing my car. I'm covered in oil.	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.1
PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE FOR FINISHED ACTIVITIES	I've fixed my car. Now I can drive to work again.	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.1
STATE VERBS	I've always loved classical music.	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.5
NEGATIVE PREFIXES	Kevin is very disorganized . His desk is always untidy .	<input type="checkbox"/>	29.1