

# Synonyms and antonyms

**Synonyms** are words that have the same meaning. For example, **large, huge, enormous, gigantic, gargantuan, massive** and **immense** all mean 'of sizable proportion'.

**Antonyms** are words which mean the opposite of one another. For example, **sad, sorrowful, downcast, miserable, mournful, joyless** and **gloomy** are all antonyms of **happy**.

Some antonyms can be made by adding a prefix to a word or by changing a suffix.

tidy → **untidy**  
agree → **disagree**

fire → **misfire**  
hopeful → **hopeless**

Some questions ask you to identify the synonym or antonym of a given word.

TIP

Using synonyms in your writing will help to make your writing more interesting and make sure you don't repeat the same word.



Always check carefully whether you are being asked to find a synonym or an antonym. Do not get them mixed up.

Underline the word on the right that means the same as the word in bold on the left.

**rubbish**    decline    refuse    wasteful

This question is asking you to find a synonym of the word 'rubbish'. First, see if there are any words that you know are not the right word. The word 'decline' means 'decrease' or 'say no', so it cannot mean 'rubbish'.

Then look to see if any words are similar, but not the same part of speech. The word 'wasteful' is related to 'rubbish'. However, 'wasteful' is an adjective whereas 'rubbish' is a noun.

The verb 'refuse' (pronounced with a stress on the second syllable) means 'decline' or 'say no' to something, but the noun 'refuse' (pronounced with a stress on the first syllable) has the same meaning as 'rubbish' (meaning waste material). Therefore, 'refuse' is the correct answer.

**Answer: rubbish**    decline    refuse    wasteful



Underline the word on the right that means the same as the word in bold on the left.

- abandon**    ceasefire    leave    advance
- clash**    conflict    agree    hit
- accomplish**    fail    accept    achieve
- diminish**    decrease    enlarge    detailed
- skilful**    novice    competent    complicated
- diligent**    slow    care    hard-working
- perplex**    bewilder    confusing    unintelligent
- convey**    letter    retain    carry