

ANTONYMS

An antonym is a word that has the opposite meaning of another. It comes from the Greek words “anti” for opposite and “onym” for name. As the language is complex, people may at times, disagree on what words are truly opposite in meaning to other words.

Examples of Antonyms

- Bad is the antonym of Good.
- Coward is the antonym of hero.

However, this is not the case always that one word has just one antonym. There are many antonyms for just one word.

Here is an example of a word that has many antonyms

Good has many antonyms: bad, badness, corrupt, evil, malicious, sour, and wicked

The first point is that *good*, like many words, can be a noun or an adjective, so its antonyms will be a mix of nouns and adjectives too. The second point is that antonyms do not have to be exact opposites. There are two main types of antonyms: graded antonyms and complementary antonyms.

Graded Antonyms

Graded antonyms do not have to be opposites of equal weight. They allow for shades of oppositeness. For example, the following are all graded antonyms for good are

- unsatisfactory
- poor
- bad
- terrible

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Complementary Antonyms

Complementary antonyms offer no middle ground. With complementary antonyms, each word only has one antonym. Below are the examples listed for complementary antonyms

- 1 / 0
- before / after
- buy / sell
- dead / alive
- doctor / patient
- husband / wife
- man / woman
- off / on
- predator / prey
- yes / no

Thus, in every competitive exam, we can come across questions asked from antonyms in English section. So, it is important for candidates who appear for various competitive exams to be well versed with antonyms topic. Make sure to be well prepared with the basics and examples.