List of "Pre" Words

Pre is a prefix that has been around a long time, and it looks as if it will be here for good. Many people argue that *pre* is redundant, and, in many cases, I agree. But there are some legitimate uses for *pre* where it makes sense.

I recognize that language changes, and it must, but I refuse to use some of the *pre* words. Since *pre* means *before* it often doesn't make sense. Which ones don't I like?

- Preboard

All airlines use this word when they announce that it's time to get on the plane. They use "preboard" to let the people with higher frequent flyer status, or families traveling with younger children, to beat the rush. I don't have an issue with the policy. The issue I have is that to "board" the plane means to get on the plane, so how can you "pre board"? Are you getting on the plane *before* you get on?

Of course, I realize what it means but that doesn't make it right. The airlines should get some guts and announce it properly. "We're boarding our first-class passengers now, and those who have gold or silver status in our rewards program."

- Prerecord

This is another one I have issues with. How can you record something *before* it's recorded?

- Preorder

To begin with, I prefer the hyphen in this word though accepted practice is to not use it. That aside, I understand what the word conveys (to order something prior to a release) but technically you can't order something before you order it. And besides, no one said *order* meant the product was released. I just ordered a book today that won't be out for months. I placed an *order* for it. I did not *preorder* it. That means to order before you order.

There are many *pre* words like this, but there are also legitimate ones. Ones like *pre-existing*. Existing means living—to be alive. Many things are *pre-exisitng* like dinosaurs are a *pre-existing* species.

There are plenty more we could discuss, but let's just get on with the list.

The following list contains almost 300 words that begin with the "pre" prefix. The list shows them all as one word, but some dictionaries may use a hyphen for some of them. It is a debated issue, but the rule I follow is that if you have doubts, use the hyphen.

Using a hyphen will seldom muddy the waters (so to speak); however, omitting the hyphen may. A classic example is preorder. A lot of people write *pre-order*, and I have to admit, when I first see it, *pre-order* is easier to read than *preorder*. The consensus is, however, to only use a hyphen when a prefix ends with the same vowel as the word it's attaching to. A few examples follow.

- Pre-eminent (with hyphen)
- Preorder (without)
- Anti-inflammatory (with)
- Antibiotic (without)
- Re-energize (with)

Or if leaving the hyphen out would create potential confusion with another word such as:

- Re-cover (as in to cover something again)
- Recover (as in to find something that was lost)

List of *pre* Words

This list came from [Merriam-Webster's site](#), so it is how they recommend spelling each one. I disagree with a few, but not many.

- pre-admission
- pre-adult
- pre-agricultural
- pre-anesthetic
- pre-announce
- pre-approve
- pre-arrange
- pre-arrangement
- pre-assembled
- pre-assign
- pre-bake
- prebattle
- prebiblical
- prebook
- prebreakfast
- precapitalist
- prechill
- pre–Christmas
- preclearance
- precode
- precoital
- precollege
- precollegiate
- precolonial
- precombustion
- precommitment
- precompute
- precomputer
- preconcert

- preconciliar
- preconquest
- preconstructed
- preconvention
- preconviction
- precool
- precopulatory
- precrash
- precrease
- precrisis
- precut
- predawn
- predefine
- predelivery
- predeparture
- predesignate
- predevaluation
- predevelopment
- predinner
- predischarge
- prediscovery
- predive
- predraft
- predrill
- predynastic
- preelection
- preelectric
- preelectronic
- preembargo
- preemployment
- preenrollment
- preerect
- preestablish
- preethical
- preexperiment
- prefade
- prefeudal
- prefight
- prefile
- prefilled
- prefinance
- prefire
- preflame
- preformat

- pre-formulate
- pre-genital
- pre-harvest
- pre-hiring
- prholiday
- pre-inaugural
- pre-incorporation
- pre-induction
- pre-industrial
- pre-interview
- pre-invasion
- pre-kindergarten
- pre-launch
- pre-life
- pre-literary
- pre-lunch
- pre-luncheon
- pre-made
- pre-manufacture
- pre-marital
- pre-marketing
- pre-marriage
- pre-meal
- pre-measure
- pre-medieval
- pre-meet
- pre-meiotic
- pre-menopausal
- pre-merger
- pre-migration
- pre-modern
- premodification
- premodify
- premoisten
- pre-notification
- pre-notify
- pre-number
- pre-operational
- preorder
- pre-paste
- preperformance
- pre-plan
- preportion
- pre-prepared

- pre-presidential
- pre-press
- pre-price
- pre-primary
- pre-production
- pre-program
- pre-psychedelic
- pre-publication
- pre-punch
- pre-purchase
- pre-qualification
- prequalify
- pre-race
- pre-recession
- pre-recorded
- pre-rehearsal
- pre-release
- pre-require
- pre-retirement
- pre-return
- pre-review
- pre-revisionist
- pre-revolution
- pre-revolutionary
- pre-rinse
- pre-sale
- pre-schedule
- pre-screen
- pre-season
- pre-sentence
- pre-sentencing
- pre-slice
- pre-song
- prespecify
- presplit
- prestamp
- presterilize
- prestorage
- pre-strike
- prestructure
- pre-summit
- presurgery
- pre-sweeten
- pre-symptomatic

- pretape
- pretax
- pretechnological
- pretelevision
- pretermination
- pretheater
- pretournament
- pretrain
- pretravel
- pretreat
- pre-treatment
- pre-trial
- pre-trimmed
- pre-type
- pre-unification
- pre-university
- pre-viable
- prewar
- prewarn
- prewash
- pre-weaning
- pre-work
- pre-wrap

I inserted all but one of these hyphens because that's the way I like them. The dictionary only had one hyphen in this whole list—pre-Christmas. Pre-Christmas was hyphenated because the rule is that prefixes used with proper nouns are always hyphenated. Other examples would be:

- trans-Canadian (pipeline)
- mid-August (heat)
- pre-Victorian (era)

Also please note that the prefix *does not* get capitalized simply by being attached to the proper noun.

You should be able to download this by clicking the link.