AFFIXATION or DERIVATION

Definition
Derivation is a process of word formation, in which one or more affixes is attached to a root to produce a new word known as derived word. This process of word-formation is also termed affixation for, whenever we produce a new word this way, we need to use an affix: a prefix or a suffix. Usually derivation will change the part of speech of the root to which a suffix is added. This process of word-formation is very productive, too.

Classification of derivation
There are two kinds of derivation: prefixation and suffixation. In former, a prefix is used while in latter a suffix is used. Generally speaking, prefixation will lead to a meaning alteration while suffixation will lead to word-class change.

Classification of affixes

1. in terms of productivity
Some affixes are more productive such as "un-", "dis-", "-able" while some other ones are less productive, for example, "mal-" and even the dead ones such as "for-" in the word *forgive*.

2. in terms of position
The affixes which are added to the front part of a base are termed prefixes while those which are added to the back part of a base are termed suffixes. For example:
- ✓ Prefixes: un-, dis-, mis-, pre-, etc.
- ✓ Suffixes: -ance, -ment, -tion, -y, etc.

3. in terms of origin
Some affixes are borrowed from other languages while some others are native ones.

- ✓ Native affixes: un-, mis-, be-, out-, over-,-less, -ness, -dom, etc.
- ✓ Foreign affixes:
    a. Latin ones: in-/im-/ir-/il, sub-, inter-, counter-, mini-, ex-, re-, post-, etc.
    b. Greek ones: anti-, neo-, proto-, pseudo-, hyper-, etc.
    c. Germanic ones: un-, mis-, out-, over-, under-, etc.
    d. Romanic ones: dis-, etc.
    e. German ones: fore- etc.

Generally speaking, a native affix will be added to a native base. But we do have some exceptions, that is to say, the affixes and bases of different origins can be combined to form new words and these words will be called hybrid. For example:
Rewrite (Latin prefix "re-" plus a native base "write")
Unjust (native prefix "un-" plus an Old French base "just")
Maltreat (French prefix "mal-" plus a Latin base "treat")

4. in terms of meaning
Negative affixes: un-, non-, in-, dis-, a- etc.
Since most of the prefixes will alter the meaning of the base to which it is attached, they are usually classified into different groups in terms of their meaning alteration.

   a) reversative affixes: un-, de-, dis-, etc.
   b) pejorative affixes: mis-, mal-, pseudo-, etc.
   c) degree or size affixes: super-, out-, sub-, over-, under-, hyper-, ultra-, mini-, etc.
   d) attitude affixes: co-, counter-, anti-, pro-, etc.
   e) time or order affixes: fore-, pre-, post-, ex-, re-, etc.
   f) locative affixes: super-, sub-, inter-, trans-, etc.
   g) number affixes: mono-, bi-, di-, tri-, multi-, poly-, etc.
   h) miscellaneous categories: auto-, neo-, pan-, proto-, semi-, vice-, etc.

5. in terms of the shift of word class origin
Since most of suffixes will change the word class of a base to which it is attached, they are often classified into different groups in terms of the shift of word class. But do remember we have some prefix that can behave like suffix such as "en-" :
   e.g. (to) enlarge, (to) enhance, (to) endanger, (to) endorse, (to) endow

Denominal noun suffixes (it means that a word of noun is derived from another noun by adding a suffix): -hood, -ship, -let, -dom, -ee, -er, -ty, -ist, -tion, etc
   e.g. childhood, friendship*, booklet, stardom

> * the suffixes "-hood" and "-ship" should be distinguished from the free morphemes "hood" "ship". Compare, for instance, the following words: *spaceship* is a compound since the "ship" in the word is a free morpheme, while *friendship* is a derived word, since the "ship" in the word is not a free morpheme but a suffix.

Deadjective noun suffixes (it means that a noun is derived from an adjective by adding a suffix): -ness, -ity
   e.g. kindness, rapidity, etc.

Deverbal noun suffixes (it means that a noun is derived from a verb by adding a suffix): -er, -ee, -ment
   e.g. writer, payee, development

Deadjective verb suffixes (it means that a verb is derived from an adjective by adding a suffix): -ify, -en
   e.g. beautify, widen

Deadjective verb prefix (it means that an adjective will be changed into a verb by adding a prefix): en-, be-, a-, etc.
   e.g. enlarge, asleep, becalm, etc.

Denominal adjective suffixes (it means that an adjective is derived from a noun by adding a suffix): -ful, -ish, -al, -less, -ic
   e.g. beautiful, boyish, national, careless, atomic, etc.

Deverbal adjective suffixes (it means that an adjective is derived from a verb by adding a suffix): -able

e.g. washable, readable, changeable, comparable, measurable, tolerable, etc.

Deadjective adverb suffixes (it means that an adverb is derived from an adjective by adding a suffix): -ly, -ward

e.g. happily, backward, etc.

Denominal adverb suffixes (it means that an adverb is derived from a noun by adding a suffix): -wise

e.g. clockwise, etc.

Summary
The knowledge of the origin, productivity, meaning, word class and position about morphemes is the basis on which the structure and classification and even the meaning of derived words can be understood better.

The rule to coin derived words is sometimes quite free. For example, the suffix -ly can be added to almost all the adjectives such as *clearly*, *beautifully*, *ideally*, etc. But sometimes the application of such a rule is very arbitrary or conventional. For example, the suffix -able can be added to the bases *wash, read*, but not to *open, write*. When we say the rule is arbitrary or conventional, we mean that there is no explanation why sometimes they can be used and why sometimes they cannot. Or say, it is a sort of linguistic knowledge shared by all the members of a speech community in using that language.