BBC WORLD SERVICE
LEARNING ENGLISH

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Vocab Suffix able/ible
For each of the six questions choose the one correct answer.

1. My car is very _________ it’s never broken down.
   a. edible
   b. inedible
   c. unreliable
   d. reliable

2. This steak is completely _________, it’s cold and tough.
   a. unreliable
   b. reliable
   c. edible
   d. inedible

3. Sue’s handwriting is _________, she usually has to type letters.
   a. flexible
   b. inflexible
   c. comprehensible
   d. incomprehensible

4. Is this sweater _________ or do I have to get it dry-cleaned?
   a. washable
   b. changeable
   c. washible
   d. adjustable

5. My working hours are very _________, I have to arrive exactly on time.
   a. changeable
   b. inflexible
   c. flexible
   d. inflexible

6. Water in the UK is _________, you can take it directly from the tap.
   a. drinkable
   b. undrinkable
   c. curable
   d. incurable
Vocab Suffix able/ible

Answers

1. My car is very ________ it's never broken down.
a. edible - If something is edible, you can eat it - Most insects are edible, some are delicious!
b. inedible - If something is inedible, you cannot eat it - e.g. The inedible mushroom Hydnellum Caeruleum (now you know!)
c. unreliable - If something (or someone) is unreliable, you cannot rely or depend on it, e.g. her ex-boyfriend was always late.
d. **reliable** - If something is reliable, you can depend or rely on it. Correct

2. This steak is completely ________, it's cold and tough.
a. unreliable - If something (or someone) is unreliable, you cannot rely or depend on it, e.g. her ex-boyfriend was always late.
b. reliable - If something is reliable, you can depend or rely on it.
c. edible - If something is edible, you can eat it - Most insects are edible, some are delicious!
d. **inedible** - If something is inedible, you cannot eat it - e.g. The inedible mushroom Hydnellum Caeruleum (now you know!) Correct

3. Sue's handwriting is ________, she usually has to type letters.
a. flexible - If something is flexible, you can change it easily.
b. inflexible - If something is inflexible, you cannot change it easily.
c. comprehensible - If something is comprehensible, you can understand it.
d. **incomprehensible** - If something is incomprehensible, you can't understand it. Correct

4. Is this sweater ________ or do I have to get it dry-cleaned?
a. washable - If something is washable, you can wash it. Correct
b. changeable - We often say the UK weather is changeable, sunny one moment, rainy the next!
c. **washible** - Both 'able' & 'ible' occur as suffixes - there are no rules - learn the spelling!
d. adjustable - If something is adjustable, you can change it so that it fits / suits or is comfortable e.g. an adjustable office chair.

5. My working hours are very ________, I have to arrive exactly on time.
a. changeable - We often say the UK weather is changeable, sunny one moment, rainy the next!
b. inflexible - **If something is inflexible, you cannot change it easily. Correct**
c. flexible - If something is flexible, you can change it easily.
d. inflexable - Both 'able' & 'ible' occur as suffixes - there are no rules - learn the spelling!

6. Water in the UK is ________, you can take it directly from the tap.
a. drinkable - **If something is drinkable, you can drink it - a formal word is 'potable'. Correct**
b. undrinkable - If something is undrinkable, you can’t drink it - a formal word is 'non-potable'.
c. curable - If an illness is curable, it can be cured, the person can be made well. Some illnesses are curable,
d. incurable - If an illness is incurable, it cannot be cured, the person cannot be made well. Some illnesses are incurable.