

Number Prefixes used for Molecular Compounds

Molecular (covalent) compounds are named using Greek number prefixes. Prefixes are always combined from smallest to largest (left-to-right in the table below). For example, the prefix for the number 417 would be “heptadecatetracta” (7 + 10 + 400).

Chemical Number Prefixes							
No.	Prefix	No.	Prefix	No.	Prefix	No.	Prefix
1	mono- or hen- ¹	10	deca-	100	hecta-	1000	kilia-
2	di- or do- ¹	20	icosa- ²	200	dicta-	2000	dilia-
3	tri-	30	triaconta-	300	tricta-	3000	trilia-
4	tetra-	40	tetraconta-	400	tetracta-	4000	tetralia-
5	penta-	50	pentaconta-	500	pentacta-	5000	pentalia-
6	hexa-	60	hexaconta-	600	hexacta-	6000	hexalia-
7	hepta-	70	heptaconta-	700	heptacta-	7000	heptalia-
8	octa-	80	octaconta-	800	octacta-	8000	octalia-
9	nona-	90	nonaconta-	900	nonacta-	9000	nonalia-

¹When alone, the number 1 is represented by “mono-” and 2 by “di-”. In association with other numerical terms, the number 1 is represented by “hen-” (except for “undeca” for 11) and 2 by “do-”.

²The initial “i” is elided after a numerical prefix ending with a vowel, e.g., docosa-, tricosa-.