

Oxford Student's Dictionary of Current English

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with the assistance of
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Contents

	<i>Inside covers:</i>	Phonetic Symbols
i	Sample entries	
ii	The arrangement of the entries	
v	Symbols and Abbreviations used	
1-762	The Dictionary	
	<i>Appendices</i>	
763	1	Irregular verbs
767	2	Abbreviations
770	3	Numbers, weights and measures
773	4	Punctuation

Preface

This dictionary is a new adaptation of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. It has been specially prepared for those learning English up to the Intermediate level.

Learning a language has to be distinguished from studying a language. We become able to understand and use the mother tongue without using books. If we ever study the mother tongue, it is likely to be at a time when we have fully learnt to use it.

Language is made up of words (the vocabulary) and of the accepted ways of putting these words together (the syntax). We learn words and expressions in the mother tongue by hearing them used, again and again, in infancy, and always in particular situations. We are strongly motivated because we have to communicate. Words may have numerous meanings for many different situations. It is only when we have heard or seen a word repeatedly that we begin to know it. The first step is the identification of the word. The second and more important step is the close association of the word (the symbol) with what it stands for (the object, concept, etc). When this second stage has been achieved we have learnt the word. We know it. This process of coming to know words is universal for the mother tongue. For a foreign language (eg English for a German child) or for a second language (eg English for a Nigerian child in a home where English is spoken by the family), there are other ways of identifying words. The equivalent in the mother tongue may be given by the teacher, or found by the learner in a bilingual dictionary. By this means identification is immediate and can be (but is not always) accurate. This is a first step only, however. The reaching of complete association between symbol and what is symbolized remains the final aim. Until the learner can use the words confidently and accurately, until he has instant recognition and recall of the word, he does not know it.

A good teacher will use well-tryed methods to give the meaning of new words without the use of the mother tongue. He may use drawings and diagrams. A very competent teacher may explain a new word by using other words already known. This is what a monolingual dictionary (such as this one) attempts to do. This is not an easy task and cannot be effective until the learner is past the beginning stage.

What, then, are the advantages of a monolingual dictionary such as this, in which English words are dealt with in English? Modern textbooks encourage learners to think, write and

speaking in English only. This may be difficult at first but the rewards are well worth it. It is the more natural way of acquiring competence in a language. As soon as a learner has the confidence to read simple English sentences, he can use a monolingual dictionary if it provides simple definitions and notes to help him to use the vocabulary in context.

A bilingual dictionary has some claims to usefulness. There are some words for which there is usually a clear and unambiguous equivalent (*tulip, panther, chisel, valve*). But there are thousands of words with no exact equivalent, which, even when defined clearly, need examples before they are fully known. A word in isolation is a dead word. It comes to life when it occurs in a sentence. There are hundreds of verbs for which patterns must be learnt.

Set is a short and easy-looking verb but if you look up *set* in this dictionary you will find that it has several meanings, that it is used in several sentence patterns, that it combines with adverbs and prepositions in meanings far removed from the simple usage of 'The sun sets in the west'. These phrasal verbs, *set about/back/down/out*, etc all need illustrative phrases or sentences to show the meaning. In this dictionary the illustrative phrases and sentences help the learner to become familiar with words in their normal contexts. He may know that the verb *sever* means 'cut'. He must learn, from seeing examples the contexts in which *sever* is correct. We do not 'sever meat at meals' but our government may 'sever diplomatic relations with a neighbouring country'.

Remember, there are very few real synonyms in English. Small bilingual dictionaries which give equivalents can encourage errors. A good monolingual dictionary such as this one will not.

English nouns, if they stand for objects that can be counted, have plural forms (*one box, many boxes*). There are some nouns which are not used in the plural. We distinguish between *machine* and *machinery*, *poem* and *poetry*, (simple enough), but nouns such as *hair, furniture* and *news* are not so simple. *Hair* is not usually used as a plural so we say 'She has beautiful hair'. But an elderly person may have 'a few white hairs'. In some languages the equivalents of these words may have plural forms when they do not in English. *News* appears to be plural, but is singular - 'Is there any news of him?'. This dictionary provides detailed guidance.

The learner may think that because a bilingual dictionary provides a quick and apparently complete answer to problems of word meanings he need not use a good monolingual dictionary. If he can be encouraged to use this dictionary systematically, he will soon see its advantages.

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A S Hornby

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A S Hornby
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Sample entries

word-division | **ac-cu-racy** /ækjʊərəsi/ [m] [U] exactness, correctness. | phonetic transcription for each headword
part of speech

style marker | **baby** /ˈbeɪbi/ n (C) (pl -ies) 1 very young child [She has a ~-boy/girl] Which of you is the ~ (= the youngest member) of the family? 2 (sl) girl, sweetheart. 'baby-face(d), (of an adult) (having a) youthful face

simple definitions | 'baby grand, small grand piano
'baby hood, state, period, of being a baby.
'baby ish, of, like a baby: ~ish behaviour
'baby minder, woman paid to look after a baby for long periods, (e.g. while the mother is out working)
baby sitter, person paid to look after a baby for a short time, (e.g. while the parents are at the cinema) Hence, **baby-sit** v [-tt-] | doubled consonants

special arrangement of phrasal verbs
Parentheses () show where words may be omitted.
Obliques/show where alternative words may be used.

burst² /bɜ:st/ vi, vt (pt, pp ~) (For uses with adverbial particles and prepositions. ⇨ 5 below)

5 (uses with adverbial particles and prepositions).
burst in (on/upon), (a) interrupt: He ~ in on our conversation. (b) appear or arrive suddenly.

burst into, (a) send out suddenly; break out into The coat fell in the fire and ~ into flames (b) ~ into tears/laughter/song, etc, suddenly begin to cry/laugh, etc. ~ into blossom, begin to bloom.

burst out laughing/crying, suddenly begin to laugh/cry.

comment /ˈkɒment/ n [C, U] opinion given briefly in speech or writing about an event, or in explanation or criticism [Have you any ~s to make on my story?] ⇨ vi give opinions

countable/uncountable uses of nouns
example sentences showing current usage

irregular tenses with phonetic transcription | **know**¹ /nəʊ/ vt vi (pt know /nju/ US nɒ/, pp ~n /nəʊn/) 1 have in the mind as the result of experience ..

American English pronunciations

pretty /ˈprɪtɪ/ adj [-ier, -iest] 1 pleasing and attractive without being beautiful or magnificent; a ~ girl, garden, picture, piece of music 2 fine, good: A ~ mess you've made of it! 3 (informal) large in amount or extent: a ~ big fine for such a minor offence [A ~ pretty kettle of fish.] ⇨ fish¹ (1). a pretty penny. ⇨ penny(1) ⇨ adv., ..

comparative and superlative forms of adjectives

cross reference to other words

idiomatic expressions in bold type

The arrangement of the entries

Headwords

Headwords are printed in **bold type**:

fact **faction** **factor**

The bold dot (·) in the headword shows where the word may be divided in written English. It is usual to divide a word when it needs more space than is left at the end of a line.

fac-sim-ile **false-hood**

Where two headwords have the same spelling they are numbered:

fan¹ /fæn/ *n*

fan² /fæn/ *vt,vi*

Compounds

Compounds (whether written as one word, with a hyphen or as two separate words) are printed in **bold type** after the entry for the first word of the compound as a sub-group:

fam-ily /fæmli/ *n*

family name = surname

family planning, (use of birth control, contraceptives, for) planning the number of children, intervals between births, etc in a family.

family tree, genealogical chart.

Derivatives

Derivatives follow the headword entry in the same way:

fa-nat-ic /fə'nætɪk/ *n*

fa-nat-ic-ally /fə'nætɪkəli/ *adv*

fa-nat-ic-ism /fə'nætɪsɪzəm/ *n* [U] excessive enthusiasm; [C] instance of this.

Idiomatic expressions

Idiomatic expressions are included at the end of the appropriate definition and are printed in **bold italic type**:

gain² /gem/ *vt,vi* **gain time**, improve one's chances by delaying something, making excuses, etc. **gain the upper hand**, be victorious.

Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs are printed in **bold italic type** before the appropriate definition:

gain² /gem/ *vt,vi* ... 4 **gain on/upon**, (a) get closer to (a person or thing pursued): ~ on the other runners in a race. (b) go faster than, get further in advance of: ~ on one's pursuers.

Some verbs, such as *be*, *bring*, *come*, *get*, *go*, *make*, *take*, are used with a variety of prepositions and adverbial particles to form special expressions. These combinations are given as a separate section at the end of the entry for the verb and are listed in alphabetical order:

close³ /kloʊz/ *vt,vi* ...

5 (uses with **adverbial particles** and **prepositions**):

close down, (a) (of a factory, business, etc) stop production, shut completely. (b) (of a broadcasting station) stop transmitting: *The*

time is just after midnight and we are now closing down. Hence, close-down n.
close in, the days are closing in, getting shorter.
close in on/upon, (a) envelop: Darkness ~d in on us (b) come near(er) and attack: The enemy ~d in on us.

Note the use of parentheses () and obliques / in idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs.

The parentheses surround words which can be omitted when using the expression in a sentence

fall² /fɔl/ vi, vt *fall flat (on one's face), ...*

look² /lʊk/ vi
*look away (from sth),
look back (on sth).*

The oblique is used to give optional words in an expression:

fate /feɪt/ vt *be fated to/that.*

fashion /fæʃən/ n *come into/go out of fashion.*

Nouns

Noun entries are marked [C], [U], or [C,U]

[C] means that the noun has a singular and a plural form It can be used with *a, an, another* and with numbers Nouns used in these ways are *countable*.

[U] means that the noun does not have a plural form It is used with *some, a lot of, enough*, etc. Nouns used in these ways are *uncountable*

[C,U] means that the noun can be used as either *countable* or *uncountable*

Adjectives

Adjectives sometimes have *comparative* or *superlative* forms by the addition of *-r, -st; -er, -est*, or *-ier, -iest* The dictionary will tell you when this is possible by printing these endings in parentheses at the beginning of the entry

blue¹ /blu/ adj (-r, -st)

deep¹ /di:p/ adj (-er, -est)

funny /fʌni/ adj (-ier, -iest)

A few adjectives have special comparative and superlative forms

good² /gʊd/ adj (better, best)

bad /bæd/ adj (worse, worst)

Irregular forms

Whenever the forms of a *verb* (past participle, present participle, past tense) are *irregular*, these forms are given at the beginning of an entry in parentheses:

fall² /fɔl/ vi, vt (pt fell /fel/, pp ~ən /fɔlən/)

lose /luz/ vt, vi (pt, pp lost /lost/ US lɒst/)

fry /fraɪ/ vt, vi (3rd person sing pres tense fries, pt, pp fried)

Doubled consonants

Many *verbs* that end in a single consonant have this letter repeated to make the past participle or the present participle. Some *adjectives* repeat the last consonant in the same way. The Dictionary shows this by printing the ending in parentheses:

flap² /flæp/ vt, vi (-pp-)

sad /sæd/ adj (-der, -dest)

Style

Speaking and writing good English is not only a problem of grammatical correctness. The word or expression must be right for the particular context. Entries are marked *formal*, *informal*, *slang*, *dated*, etc to help you.

Often, the Dictionary will tell you which word is more usual:

gal /gæl/ *n* (*dated informal*) = girl

va-liant /'væliənt/ *adj* brave (the usual word).

American variants for spelling, pronunciation and meaning are shown by *US* before the information

Pronunciation

Each headword and derivative has a phonetic spelling of the word immediately after the ordinary spelling. Phonetic spelling is a way of writing so that one symbol always represents only one sound. By learning the symbols you will be able to pronounce the words in the Dictionary. A list of the phonetic symbols used in this Dictionary is printed on the inside cover for easy reference.

When a word has more than one syllable, one of them is pronounced with more force than the rest. This is called *stress* and the syllable which is stressed is shown with a stress-mark /ˈ/ before it in the Dictionary. In longer words, other syllables may also be pronounced with more force than the rest but this stress is not as strong as those marked /ˈ/. The stress-mark /ˈ/ is used to show this. So, /ˈ/ is used to mark the *primary stress* and /ˈ/ is used to mark the *secondary stress*:

fa-mi-li-er-ty /'fəmlɪ'æri:ti/

fa-mi-li-er-ty /fə'mɪli'ærəti/

Stress-marks are also given for compounds and expressions whenever this information is useful:

'fancy 'free

'gad ə'bout

in 'any case

'take əb 'down a peg or two

The pronunciations recommended are those which research has shown are the most common and the most useful for those learning English. If English people around you repeatedly use a pronunciation not given here, either discuss the choice with them or join them in their usage. A particular difference is the omission of /ə/ sounds in words, particularly from the endings. Spoken English has speeded up during the last thirty years with the effect of reducing such endings as /-bəl/, /-əl/, /-fənl/, /-ənz/ (as in *able*, *coastal*, *musical*, *civil*, *station*, *appearance*).

You should aim to use these shorter pronunciations as your familiarity and confidence with spoken English increases. The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* gives these shorter forms.

Symbols and abbreviations used

<i>abbr</i>	abbreviation	<i>n</i>	noun
<i>adj</i>	adjective	<i>(naut)</i>	nautical
<i>adv</i>	adverb	<i>(P)</i>	Proprietary name
<i>(anat)</i>	anatomy	<i>pl</i>	plural
<i>(astron)</i>	astronomy	<i>pp</i>	past participle
<i>[C]</i>	countable noun	<i>prep</i>	preposition
<i>(chem)</i>	chemistry	<i>pron</i>	pronoun
<i>(C of E)</i>	Church of England	<i>pt</i>	past tense
<i>(comm)</i>	commerce	<i>(RC)</i>	Roman Catholicism
<i>conj</i>	conjunction	<i>sb</i>	somebody
<i>e g</i>	For example	<i>sing</i>	singular
<i>esp</i>	especially	<i>sth</i>	something
<i>(fig)</i>	figurative	<i>[U]</i>	uncountable noun
<i>(Fr)</i>	French	<i>(US)</i>	American
<i>(GB)</i>	British	<i>vi</i>	verb intransitive
<i>(geom)</i>	geometry	<i>vt</i>	verb transitive
<i>i e</i>	in other words	\Rightarrow	look at (cross-reference)
<i>(It)</i>	Italian	Δ	taboo
<i>(maths)</i>	mathematics	\square	shows a change in the part of speech in an entry
<i>(med)</i>	medicine		
<i>(mil)</i>	military		
<i>(myth)</i>	mythology		

Aa

A¹, **a** /eɪ/ (pl **A**'s, **a**'s /eɪz/) the first letter of the English alphabet.

A1 /'eɪ 'wan/ (**a**) (of ships) first class. (**b**) (informal) excellent: *feeling A1, in excellent health.*

a² /ə strong form: eɪ/, **an** /ən strong form: æn/ indefinite article (*an* is used before a vowel) **1** one (but no particular one): *I have a pen (pl = some pens). Have you a pen (pl = any pens)? I said 'a train was coming, not 'the train.* **2** (used when speaking or writing about number, quantity, groups, etc): *a lot of money; a little more; a few books; half a dozen; half an hour; a friend of mine, one of my friends.* (Note: When several objects, etc are parts of a known group, the indefinite article is not repeated: *a knife and fork.*) **3** each: *60 miles an hour; twice a week; 20p a metre.* **4** that which is called; every: *A horse is an animal (pl = Horses are animals).* **5** another; one like: *He thinks he is a Napoleon.*

aback /ə'bæk/ *adv* **be** taken **a**back, **be** suddenly surprised or upset.

abacus /'æbəkəs/ *n* [C] (pl ~es or -ci /'æbəkəsi/) frame with beads or balls sliding on rods, for teaching numbers to children, or (still in East Asia) for calculating.

abaft /ə'bɑft/ *US: ə'bæft/ adv, prep* (*naut*) at, in, toward, behind, the stern half of a ship.

abandon¹ /ə'bændən/ *n* [U] careless freedom without thinking of the consequences or of convention.

abandon² /ə'bændən/ *vi* **1** go away from, not intending to return to: *The order was given to ~ ship, for all on board to leave the (sinking) ship. He ~ed his wife and child.* **2** give up; stop: *They ~ed the game because of rain.* **3** **abandon oneself to**, allow oneself to feel, act, etc because of necessity, extreme emotion, etc: *He ~ed himself to despair.*

abandoned *adj* (**a**) immoral; having no shame: *an ~ed girl.* (**b**) left or deserted (with no intention to return or reclaim): *an ~ed car/wife.*

abandonment *n* [U]

abase /ə'beɪs/ *vi* **abase oneself**, (formal) lower oneself in dignity or respect.

abasement *n* [U]

abashed /ə'bæʃt/ *adj* (formal) very embarrassed or ashamed.

abate /ə'beɪt/ *vi, vi* **1** (of winds, storms, floods, pain, etc) make or become less: *The ship sailed when the storm ~d.* **2** (legal) bring to an end: *We must ~ the smoke nu-*

sance in our big cities

abatement *n* [U] abating; decrease.

ab-at-toir /æbətwa(r)/ *US: 'æbət'waɪr/ n* [C] slaughter-house (for cattle, sheep, etc).

ab-bess /'æbes/ *US: 'æbɪs/ n* [C] woman (Mother Superior) at the head of a convent or nunnery.

ab-bey /'æbi/ *n* [C] (pl ~s) **1** building(s) in which monks or nuns live as a community in the service of God. **2** the community.

ab-bot /'æbət/ *n* [C] man (Father Superior) at the head of an abbey or monastery.

ab-breviate /ə'brɪviət/ *vi* shorten (a word, title, etc): *~ January to Jan.*

ab-breviation /ə'brɪvi'eɪʃən/ *n* **1** [U] abbreviating or being abbreviated. **2** [C] shortened form (esp of a word).

ABC /'eɪ bi 'si/ *n* the alphabet. **as easy as ABC**, very easy.

ab-di-cate /'æbdɪkət/ *vi, vi* **1** surrender or renounce a high office, control or responsibility. **2** give up the throne: *King Edward VIII ~d in 1936.*

ab-di-ca-tion /'æbdɪ'keɪʃən/ *n* **1** [U] abdicating. **2** [C] instance of this.

ab-do-men /'æbdəmən/ *n* [C] **1** part of the body that includes the stomach and bowels. **2** last of the three divisions of an insect, spider, etc.

ab-domi-nal /æb'dɒmɪnəl/ *adj* in, of, for, the abdomen: *~ pains.*

ab-duct /æb'dʌkt/ *vi* take or lead (esp a woman or child) away unlawfully, by force or fraud. ⇨ kidnap.

ab-duction /æb'dʌkʃən/ *n* [C,U]

abeam /ə'bi:m/ *adv* (*naut*) on a line at a right angle to the length of a ship or aircraft.

ab-er-ra-tion /'æbə'reɪʃən/ *n* **1** [U] (usually fig) turning away from what is expected, normal or right: *stealing something in a moment of ~.* **2** [C] instance of this; defect: *an ~ in the computer.*

abet /ə'bet/ *vi* (-tt-) **abet** (tn), (legal) help or encourage (in vice, crime). **aid and abet sb**, (legal) help him to do wrong.

abey-ance /ə'beɪəns/ *n* [U] condition of not being in force or in use for a time. **be in abeyance**, suspended, e.g. until more information is obtained. **fall/go into abeyance**, (legal) (of a law, rule, custom, etc) be suspended; be no longer observed.

ab-hor /əb'hɔ:(r)/ *vi* (-rr-) (formal) think of with hatred and disgust: *~ cruelty to both children and animals.*

ab-hor-rence /əb'hɔ:rəns/ *US: -'hɔ:-/ n* [U] (formal) hatred and disgust: *hold something in ~rence.*

ab-hor-rent /əb'hɔ:rənt/ *US: -'hɔ:-/ adj* (formal) hateful; causing horror.

abide /ə'baɪd/ *vi, vi* **1** **abide by**, (formal) be faithful to; keep: *~ by a promise/decision.* **2** *cannot/can't/couldn't abide*, cannot/could not tolerate; hate(d): *She can't ~ that man.*

abid-ing /ə'baɪdn/ *adj* (liter) lasting.

ability/about

abil-ity /ə'biləti/ *n* (pl -ies) 1 [U] (possible) capacity or power (to do something physical or mental). **to the best of my ability**, as well as I can. 2 [U] cleverness; intelligence: *a man of great ~*. 3 [C] mental power; talent: *a man of many abilities*.

ab-ject /æbdʒəkt/ *adj* (formal) 1 (of conditions) poor; miserable: *living in ~ poverty*. 2 (of a person, his behaviour) disliked or thought to be worthless because cowardly or undignified: *an ~ apology*.

ab-ject-ly *adv*

ablaze /ə'bleiz/ *adj, adv* (formal) 1 on fire: *The whole building was soon ~*. 2 (fig) shining; bright; excited: *The streets were ~ with lights*.

able /eɪbəl/ *adj* 1 **be able to do sth**, have the power, means or opportunity: *Will you be ~ to come?* ⇨ can², could. 2 (-r, -st) clever; capable; having or showing knowledge or skill: *an ~ lawyer/speech; the ~st/most ~ man I know*.

'able-bodied *adj* physically strong.

-able (also -ible) /-əbəl/ *suffix* 1 (noun + ~ = *adj*) showing qualities of: *fashionable; responsible*. 2 (verb + ~ = *adj*) that can be, fit to be: *eatable; reducible*.

-ably, -ibly *adv*

ab-lu-tions /ə'blu:ʒnz/ *n* pl ceremonial washing of the hands or the body, esp as an act of religion.

ably /eɪbli/ *adv* in an able manner.

ab-nor-mal /'æbnɔ:məl/ *adj* different from what is normal, ordinary or expected.

ab-nor-mally /-məli/ *adv*

ab-nor-mality /'æbnɔ:mæləti/ *n* [U] quality of being abnormal; [C] (pl -ies) thing that is abnormal.

aboard /ə'bɔ:d/ *adv, prep* on, in, onto or into a ship, aircraft, or (US) a train or motor-coach: *It's time to go ~*. *All ~! Welcome ~!*

abode /ə'bəʊd/ *n* *of/with no fixed ~*, (legal) having no permanent home.

abol-ish /ə'bolɪʃ/ *vi* put an end to, do away with, e.g. war, slavery, an old custom.

abol-ition /'æbə'liʃən/ *n* [U] abolishing or being abolished (esp used, in the 18th and 19th centuries, of Negro slavery).

abol-ition-ist /-ɪst/ *n* [C] (esp) person who wished to abolish Negro slavery.

A-bomb /eɪ bɒm/ *n* ⇨ atomic.

abom-in-able /ə'bɒmɪnəbəl/ *adj* 1 causing hatred and disgust. 2 (informal) unpleasant; bad: *~ weather/food*.

abom-in-ably /-əbli/ *adv*

abom-in-ate /ə'bɒmɪneɪt/ *vi* 1 (formal) feel hatred or disgust for. 2 (informal) dislike.

abom-in-ation /ə'bɒmɪneɪʃən/ *n* (formal) 1 [U] horror and disgust: *hold something in abomination*. 2 [C] something that arouses horror and disgust.

abo-rig-in-al /'æbɔ:'rɪdʒənəl/ *adj* (of people, living creatures, etc) belonging to, existing in, a region from earliest times, or from the

time when the region was first known. □ ⇨ [C] earliest inhabitant, plant, etc of a region.

Ab-o-rig-i-ne /'æbɔ:'rɪdʒəni/ *n* [C] Australian aboriginal person.

the ab-o-rig-i-nes /'æbɔ:'rɪdʒənz/ the aboriginal inhabitants.

ab-ort /ə'bɔ:t/ *vi, vi* 1 come to nothing; cancel: *~ a space mission*, e.g. because of mechanical trouble. 2 give birth to an undeveloped foetus.

ab-or-tion /ə'bɔ:ʃən/ *n* 1 [U] (legal) expulsion of the foetus from the womb during the first 28 weeks of pregnancy; helping or causing this. 2 [C] instance of this: *have an illegal ~*.

ab-or-tion-ist /-ɪst/, *person* 'who brings about an abortion; person who favours and supports legal abortion.

ab-ort-ive /ə'bɔ:tɪv/ *adj* unsuccessful: *an ~ rebellion*.

ab-ort-ively *adv*

ab-ound /ə'baʊnd/ *vi* have, exist, in great numbers or quantities: *The river ~s with fish*. *Fish ~ in the river*.

about¹ /ə'baʊt/ *adv* of degree a little more or less than; a little before or after: *~ as high as that tree; for ~ three miles; ~ six o'clock; on or ~ the fifth of May*. ⇨ exactly, just²(5). **be about time...**, (informal) time to do something immediately: *It's ~ time you stopped being so rude*. **be about it/the size of it**, (informal) be how I assess it, how I see it.

about² /ə'baʊt/ *adverbial particle* 1 (used with verbs of movement) here and there, in no particular direction: *The children were rushing ~*. *The boys were climbing ~ on the rocks*. 2 (used with other verbs, showing position, etc): *There were books lying ~ on the floor*. 3 (used with be): *There was no one ~*, no one to be seen. **be (out and) about again**, able to get out, work, etc after an illness. **be up and about**, out of bed and active. 4 **bring sth about**, ⇨ bring(5). **come about**, ⇨ come(13). 5 facing round; in the opposite direction: *It's the wrong way ~*. **A ~ turn!** (GB), **A ~ face!** (US), (mil commands) turn round to face the other way. **(do sth) turn and turn about**, ⇨ turn¹(4). **'a-bout-face** *vi* turn and face the other way. □ *n* [C] complete reversal of opinions, etc: *He did a complete ~-face!*

about³ /ə'baʊt/ *prep* 1 (used with verbs of movement) here and there, in no particular direction: *walking ~ the town; travelling ~ the world*. 2 (used with other verbs showing position, state, etc): *idle men standing ~ street corners; books and papers lying ~ the room*. 3 near to: *I dropped the key somewhere ~ here*. 4 concerning; regarding; in connection with: *He is careless ~ his personal appearance*. *What do you know ~ him?* *Tell me all ~ it*. **How/What about...**, (used to ask for information, to make a suggestion or to get a person's opinion): *How ~ going*

to France for our holidays? 5 concerned or occupied with: *And while you're ~ it...*, while you're doing that... *go/set about sth*, deal with it: *Do you know how to go ~ it?* 6 round (the usual word): *the fields ~ Oxford. She hung ~ his shoulders. 7 be about to + Inf*, be just going to (do something): *As I was (just) ~ to say, when you interrupted me...* *He was ~ to start.*

above /ə'baʊ/ *adv* 1 at a higher point; overhead; on high: *My bedroom is just ~.* A voice from ~ *shouted a welcome.* 2 earlier (in a book, article, etc): *As I mentioned/stated ~...*

above-board *adv* without deceiving; honourably. □ *adj* frank; open(8). ⇨ underhand.

above-mentioned/-named *adj* mentioned/named earlier in this book, article, list, etc.

above /ə'baʊ/ *prep* 1 higher than: *The sun rose ~ the horizon. The water came ~ our knees. We were flying ~ the clouds.* (Note: Compare: *We flew over/across the Sahara.*) 2 greater in number, price, weight, etc: *The temperature has been ~ the average recently. It weighs ~ ten tons. Applicants must be ~ the age of 21.* 3 more than. *above all*, more than anything else. *over and above*, in addition to. 4 too great, good, difficult, etc for: *If you want to learn, you must not be ~ asking* (= not be too proud to ask) *questions. He is ~ deceit*, does not practise deceit. 5 out of reach of (because too great, good, etc): *His conduct has always been ~ reproach/suspicion.* 6 (various uses): *the waterfall ~ (= up stream from) the bridge.*

ab-ra-ca-dabra /'æbrəkə'dæbrə/ *n* [U] word used to encourage magic.

ab-ra-sion /ə'breɪʃən/ *n* 1 [U] rubbing, scraping, or wearing off. 2 [C] area where something has been worn or scraped away: *an ~ of the skin.*

ab-ras-ive /ə'breɪsɪv/ *n* [C,U] substance (e.g. emery) used for rubbing or grinding down surfaces. □ *adj* 1 causing abrasion. 2 (fig) harsh, rough: *an ~ voice/character.*

ab-reast /ə'breɪst/ *adv* (of persons, ships, etc) on a level, side by side, and facing the same way: *walking three ~; warships in line ~. be/keep abreast (of/with)*, up to date: *keep ~ of the news.*

ab-ridge /ə'brɪdʒ/ *vt* make shorter, esp by using fewer words: *an ~d edition of 'David Copperfield'.*

ab-ridge-ment, ab-ridg-ment *n* [U] abridging; [C] thing, e.g. a book, that is abridged.

ab-road /ə'brɒd/ *adv* 1 in or to a foreign country or countries; away from one's own country: *be/go/live/travel ~; visitors who have come from ~.* 2 (dated) far and wide; everywhere: *There's a rumour ~ that...* People are saying that...

ab-rupt /ə'brʌpt/ *adj* 1 unexpectedly sud-

den: *The road is full of ~ turns.* 2 (of speech, writing, behaviour) rough; bad-tempered; unfriendly: *sound ~ on the telephone.* 3 (of a slope) steep.

ab-rupt-ly *adv*

ab-rupt-ness *n* [U]

ab-scess /'æbses/ *n* [C] collection of thick yellowish-white liquid (called pus) formed in a cavity in the body: *~es on the gums.*

ab-second /əb'skɒnd/ *vi* go away, suddenly, secretly, and aware of having done wrong, esp to avoid arrest.

ab-sence /'æbsəns/ *n* 1 [U] being away: *He met her during his ~ in America*, while he was there. *In the ~ of the Manager* (= While he is away) *Mr X is in charge of the business. leave of absence*, ⇨ leave²(1). 2 [C] occasion or period of being away: *after an ~ of three months.* 3 [U] non-existence: *in the ~ of definite information.*

ab-sent /'æbsənt/ *adj* 1 **absent** from, not present at: *~ from school/work.* 2 lost in thought; having one's attention elsewhere: *When I spoke to him he looked at me in an ~ way but did not answer.*

'absent-minded /'mɔɪndɪd/ *adj* so deep or far away in thought that one is unaware of what one is doing, what is happening, etc.

absent-minded-ly *adv*

absent-minded-ness *n* [U]

ab-sent /'æbsənt/ *vi* (formal) stay away (from): *Why did you ~ yourself from school yesterday?*

ab-sen-tee /'æbsən'ti/ *n* [C] person who is absent, e.g. a landlord who lives away from his property: (attrib) *~ landladies.*

ab-sen-tee-ism /-ɪzəm/ *n* [U] frequent failure to be present, e.g. the practice of often being away from work without a satisfactory reason.

ab-so-lute /'æbsəlʊt/ *adj* 1 complete; perfect: *When giving evidence in a law court, we must tell the ~ truth.* 2 unlimited; having complete power: *An ~ ruler need not ask anyone for permission to do anything.* 3 real; undoubted: *It is an ~ fact. Do you have ~ proof of his guilt?*

'absolute zero, lowest temperature theoretically possible, = -273.15°C.

ab-sol-ute-ly /'æbsəlʊtli/ *adv* 1 completely: *~ impossible; ~ right.* 2 unconditionally: *He refused ~.* 3 /'æbsəlʊtli/ (informal) (in answer to a question, or as a comment) I agree; certainly.

ab-so-lut-ism /'æbsəlʊtɪzəm/ *n* [U] (politics) despotism.

ab-sol-ution /'æbsəlʊʃən/ *n* [U] (RC Church) freeing from consequences of sin: *grant ~ from sin.*

ab-solve /əb'zɒlv/ *vt* **absolve** (from), declare free (from sin, guilt, a promise, duty, etc): *I ~ you from all blame/from your vows.*

ab-sorb /əb'sɒb/ *vt* 1 take or suck in, e.g. a liquid, heat, light. 2 (fig) gain knowledge.

absorbent / accent

etc: *The clever boy ~ed all the knowledge his teachers could give him.* 3 use up a great deal of the attention, interest or time of: *He is completely ~ed in his work.*

ab-sorb-ent /əb'zɔbənt/ *adj* able to absorb: ~ cotton-wool. □ *n* [C] absorbent material.

ab-sorp-tion /əb'sɔpjən/ *n* [U] absorbing or being absorbed: *Complete ~ in sport interfered with his studies.*

ab-stain /əb'steɪn/ *vi* hold oneself back: *His doctor told him to ~ from beer and wine. At the last election he ~ed (from voting).*

ab-stainer, person who abstains.

'total 'abstainer, person who never takes alcoholic drinks.

ab-stemi-ous /əb'stɪmiəs/ *adj* sparing or moderate, esp in taking food and drink.

ab-stemi-ously *adv*

ab-stemi-ous-ness *n* [U]

ab-sten-tion /əb'stenʃən/ *n* [U] abstaining, esp not using one's vote at an election, etc;

[C] instance of this: *six votes for, three against and two ~s.*

ab-sti-nence /əb'stɪməns/ *n* [U] abstaining, e.g. from food, enjoyment and esp alcoholic drink.

'total 'abstinence, not taking any alcoholic drink.

ab-tract¹ /əb'strækt/ *adj* thought of separately from facts, objects or particular examples: *A flower is beautiful, but beauty itself is ~. In the abstract*, regarded in an ideal or theoretical way.

'abstract 'art, art which does not represent objects, scenes, etc in an obvious way.

'abstract 'noun, (*gram*) one that is the name of a quality or state, e.g. *length, goodness, virtue.*

ab-tract² /əb'strækt/ *vi* take out; separate: ~ metal from ore.

ab-tract³ /əb'strækt/ *n* [C] short account, e.g. of the chief points of a piece of writing, a book, speech, etc.

ab-stracted /əb'stræktəd/ *adj* not paying attention.

ab-tract-ed-ly *adv*

ab-stra-ction /əb'strækʃən/ *n* 1 [U] abstracting or being abstracted. 2 [U] absent-mindedness: *in a moment of ~.* 3 [C] idea of a quality apart from its material accompaniments: *Don't lose yourself in ~s.*

Keep a firm hold on reality. 4 [U] formation of such an idea or ideas.

ab-struse /əb'stru:s/ *adj* (*formal*) whose meaning or answer is hidden or difficult to understand.

ab-struse-ly *adv*

ab-struse-ness *n* [U]

ab-surd /əb'sɜ:d ~'zɜ:d/ *adj* unreasonable; foolish; ridiculous: *What an ~ suggestion!*

ab-surd-ty *n* [C] (*pl* -tɪəs) 1 [U] state of being absurd. 2 [C] absurd act or statement.

ab-surd-ly *adv*

ab-un-dance /ə'bʌndəns/ *n* [U] 1 great amount: *food and drink in ~.* 2 *an abun-*

dance of, more than enough: *an ~ of good things.*

ab-un-dant /ə'bʌndənt/ *adj* more than enough; plentiful: *We have ~ proof of his guilt.*

ab-use¹ /ə'bju:s/ *n* 1 [U] wrong use; [C] instance of this: *an ~ of trust.* 2 [C] unjust custom or practice that has become established. 3 [U] angry or violent attack in words; bad language; cursing: *shower ~ on somebody.*

ab-use² /ə'bju:z/ *vi* 1 make a bad or wrong use of: *Don't ~ the confidence they have placed in you.* 2 say severe, cruel or unjust things to or about a person.

ab-us-ive /ə'bju:stv/ *adj* using, containing, curses: ~ language.

ab-us-ive-ly *adv*

ab-ys-mal /ə'bɪzməl/ *adj* (*esp fig and informal*) extreme: ~ ignorance.

ab-ys-mally *adv*

ab-ys-s /ə'bɪs/ *n* [C] (*pl* -es) 1 hole so deep as to appear bottomless; hell. 2 deepest degree: (*fig*) *the ~ of despair.*

aca-demic /'ækə'demɪk/ *adj* 1 of teaching, studying; of schools, colleges, etc; scholarly, literary or classical (contrasted with technical or scientific): ~ subjects; *the ~ year.* 2 too concerned with theory and not sufficiently practical: *The question is ~, is of no practical importance.* □ *n* [C] professional scholar.

academic freedom, liberty to teach and to discuss problems without outside e.g. Government, interference.

aca-demi-cally /-kli/ *adv*

aca-demi-cian /ə'kædə'miʃən/ *n* [C] member of an academy, e.g. of the Royal Academy of Arts.

acad-emy /ə'kædəmi/ *n* [C] (*pl* -ies) 1 school for higher learning, usually for a special purpose: *a 'naval/military ~; an ~ of music.*

ac-cede /ə'kɛd/ *vi* (*formal*) 1 agree, e.g. to a request. 2 take or succeed to (a position of authority).

ac-cel-er-ate /ə'kɛləreɪt/ *vi, vi* 1 increase the speed of; cause to move faster or happen earlier. 2 (of a motion or process) become faster.

ac-cel-er-ator /ə'kɛləreɪtə(r)/ *n* [C] 1 device, e.g. the pedal in a car, for controlling speed. 2 (*physics*) device for accelerating particles or nuclei.

ac-cent¹ /'æksənt/ *n* [C] 1 force when speaking (by means of stress or intonation) given to a syllable: *In the word 'today' the ~ is on the second syllable.*

2 mark or symbol used in writing and printing to show a vowel sound or syllabic stress. ⇨

acute, circumflex and grave³. 3 [C, sometimes U] individual, local or national way of pronouncing: *speaking English with a foreign ~.* 4 (*informal*) emphasis given to one aspect of a display, performance, etc: *At*

this year's Motor Show the ~ is on sports cars.

ac-cent² /æk'sent/ vt 1 pronounce with an accent(3). 2 put emphasis on (a syllable or word).

ac-centu-ate /æk'sentʃueɪt/ vt give more force or importance to.

ac-cept /ək'sept/ vi, vi 1 (agree to) receive (something offered): ~ a gift/an invitation. 2 agree; recognize; approve: I ~ that the change may take some time. It is an ~ed truth/fact. It is something that everyone believes. 3 take responsibility for: ~ delivery of goods.

ac-cept-able /-əbəl/ adj worth accepting; welcome: if this proposal is ~able to you.

ac-cept-ance /ək'septəns/ n [U] 1 accepting or being accepted. 2 approval (the usual word).

ac-cess /ækses/ n [U] 1 way (in) to a place: The only ~ to the farmhouse is across the fields. 2 access to, right, opportunity or means of reaching, using or approaching: Students must have ~ to good books.

ac-cess-ible /ək'sesəbəl/ adj able to be reached, used, visited, influenced, etc: a collection of paintings not ~ible to the general public.

ac-cess-ibility /ək'sesə'bɪləti/ n [U]

ac-cess-ary /ək'sesəri/ n [C] (pl -ies), adj (US = accessory(1)) (legal) person who helps in any act, esp a crime. **accessary before/after the fact**, ⇨ fact(1).

ac-ces-sion /æk'seʃən/ n 1 [U] reaching a rank, position or state: the Queen's ~ to the throne. 2 [C, U] (formal) (an) addition; (an) increase: recent ~s to the school library.

ac-cess-ory /ək'sesəri/ n [C] (pl -ies) 1 = accessory. 2 thing that is extra, helpful, useful, but not an essential part of: the accessories of a bicycle, eg the lamp, a pump.

ac-ci-dent /æksɪdənt/ n 1 [C] something that happens without a cause that can be seen at once, usually something unfortunate and undesirable: He was killed in a 'car ~. **Accidents will happen**, (proverb) Some unfortunate events must be accepted as inevitable. ⇨ prone. 2 [U] chance; fate. **by accident**, by chance: We met by ~. 'accident prone, frequently involved in accidents.

ac-ci-den-tal /æksɪ'dentəl/ adj happening unexpectedly and by chance: an ~ meeting with a friend.

ac-ci-den-tally /-təli/ adv

ac-claim /ə'kleɪm/ vt 1 welcome with shouts of approval; applaud loudly: ~ the winner of a race; ~ him as a great actor. 2 make a person a ruler: They ~ed him King. □ n [U] applause; approval: The film received great critical ~.

ac-cla-ma-tion /æklə'meɪʃən/ n [U] (formal) loud and enthusiastic approval of a proposal, etc: elected/carried by ~

ac-claim-ize /ə'klaɪməɪz/ vt, vi 1 get (oneself, animals, plants, etc) used to a new climate. 2 (fig) get used to a new environment, new conditions, etc: You will soon become ~d.

ac-claim-ization /ə'klaɪməɪzəʃən/ n US: -tɪz-/ n [U]

ac-col-ade /ækəleɪd/ n [C] 1 granting of a knighthood by a tap on the shoulder with the flat of a sword. 2 (fig) praise; approval.

ac-com-mo-date /ə'kɒmədeɪt/ vt 1 have, provide, lodging for: This hotel can ~ 600 guests. 2 (formal) change a plan so that it fits with something else: I will ~ my plans to yours.

ac-com-mo-dat-ing /ə'kɒmədeɪtɪŋ/ adj willing to do things to please others; easy to deal with.

ac-com-mo-da-tion /ə'kɒmədeɪʃən/ n [U] (GB) furnished or unfurnished room(s), eg in a flat, hotel, etc: Hotel ~ was scarce during the Olympic Games.

ac-com-pa-ni-ment /ə'kɑmpnɪmənt/ n [C] 1 thing that naturally or often goes with another thing: Disease is often an ~ of famine. 2 (music) (usually) instrumental part to go with a voice, choir or solo instrument: a song with a piano ~.

ac-com-pa-nist /ə'kɑmpnɪst/ n [C] person who accompanies a musician.

ac-com-pa-ny /ə'kɑmpni/ vt (pt, pp -ied) 1 go with: He was accompanied by his secretary. 2 occur or do at the same time as: fever accompanying a headache. 3 (music) play an accompaniment(2) to.

ac-com-plice /ə'kɑmplɪs/ n [C] helper or companion (in doing something illegal).

ac-com-plish /ə'kɑmplɪʃ/ vt succeed in doing; finish successfully: ~ a task.

ac-com-plished adj well trained; skilled: an ~ed dancer.

ac-com-plish-ment /ə'kɑmplɪʃmənt/ n [C] 1 (formal) completion; finishing: the ~ment of their aims. 2 [C] thing well done or successfully completed; skill.

ac-cord¹ /ə'kɒd/ n [U] of one's own accord, without being asked or forced; willingly. In/out of accord (with), agreeing/not agreeing with. with one accord, everybody agreeing.

ac-cord² /ə'kɒd/ vi, vt 1 be in agreement or harmony: His behaviour does not ~ with his principles. 2 (formal) give; grant: He was ~ed a warm welcome.

ac-cord-ance /ə'kɒdəns/ n in accordance with, in agreement with; as is expected of: in ~ with your wishes/the regulations.

ac-cord-ing /ə'kɒdɪŋ/ according to, prep 1 on the authority of: A ~ to the Bible, God created the world in six days. 2 in proportion to: He will be punished ~ to the seriousness of his crime. 3 in a manner

accordion / acid

consistent with: *The books are arranged on the shelves ~ to subjects.*

ac-cord-ing-ly *adv* for that reason.

ac-cord-ion /ə'kɔ:diən/ *n* [C] portable musical instrument with a box of air, metal reeds and a keyboard.

ac-cost /ə'kɔst/ *US*; ə'kɔst/ *vi* go up to and speak to first, esp a stranger in a public place: *I was ~ed by a beggar.*

ac-count¹ /ə'kaunt/ *n* 1 [C] (commerce) statement of money (to be) paid or received (for goods, services, etc): *I have an ~ with the Midland Bank, keep my money with this Bank. open an account; open a bank/post office, etc account, start to keep one's money at a bank, etc. settle one's account (with), (a) pay what one owes. (b) (fig) do something to get revenge for an injury, etc. square/balance accounts (with sb), (a) receive or pay the difference between debit and credit. (b) (fig) end a quarrel, etc. by giving or taking punishment. ⇨ current(3), deposit¹(1), joint², private(1) and save¹(2). 2 [C] counting; calculation: *He is quick at ~s, can do arithmetic quickly.* 3 [U] benefit; profit. *turn/put sth to (good) account, use money, abilities, talent, etc profitably.* 4 *give a good account of oneself, do well; act in a way that brings credit.* 5 [C] report; description: *Don't always believe newspaper ~s of events. by one's own account, according to what one says oneself. by/from all accounts, according to what everybody, all the papers, etc. say.* 6 [U] *take sth into account; take account of sth, note or consider it; pay attention to it. take no account of sth, pay no attention to it.* 7 [U] *on account of, because of. on this/that account, for this/that reason: Don't stay away on ~ of John/on John's ~. on no account, not for any reason: Don't on any ~ leave the baby alone in the house.**

ac-count² /ə'kaunt/ *vi, vi* 1 *account for, (a) be an explanation of: His illness ~s for his absence. Ah, that ~s for it! (b) give an explanation of money spent.* 2 *consider to be: In English law a man is ~ed innocent until he is proved guilty.*

ac-count-able /-əbəl/ *adj* responsible; expected to give an explanation: *A mental patient is not ~able for his actions.*

ac-count-ancy /ə'kauntənsi/ *n* [U] profession of an accountant.

ac-count-ant /ə'kauntənt/ *n* [C] (GB) person whose profession is to keep and examine business accounts.

ac-credit /ə'kredit/ *vt* appoint or send a person as an ambassador.

ac-crue /ə'kru:/ *vi* come as a natural growth or development: *If you keep your money in the Savings Bank, interest ~s.*

ac-cu-mu-late /ə'kjumjuleit/ *vi, vi* make or become greater in number or quantity: *Dust soon ~s if the rooms are not swept.*

ac-cu-mu-la-tion /ə'kjumju'teɪʃən/ *n* [C,U] collection: *an ~ of books/rubbish.*

ac-cu-mu-lat-ive /ə'kjumjulatrv *US*: -lətv/ *adj* growing by being added to.

ac-cu-racy /ə'kjərəsi/ *n* [U] exactness; correctness.

ac-cu-rate-ly *adv*

ac-cu-rate /'ækjərət/ *adj* 1 careful and exact: *be ~ in one's work/in what one says.*

2 free from error: *Clocks in railway stations should be ~.*

ac-cursed, ac-curst /ə'kɜ:st/ *adj* under a curse; hateful.

ac-cu-sa-tion /'ækju:'zeɪʃən/ *n* 1 [U] accusing or being accused. 2 [C] charge of doing wrong, of having broken the law: *bring an ~ (of theft) against a person.*

ac-cuse /ə'kjuz/ *vt* say that he has done wrong, broken the law, is to be blamed: *~ him of theft/ be ~d of stealing.*

the accused, the person(s) charged in a criminal case.

ac-cuser, person who accuses.

ac-cus-ing-ly /ə'kjuzɪŋli/ *adv* in an accusing manner: *He pointed ~ at me.*

ac-cus-tom /ə'kɜ:stəm/ *vi* make oneself used to: *This is not the kind of treatment I'm ~ed to, not the kind I usually receive.*

ac-cus-tomed *adjuval*: *in his ~ed seat.*

ace /eis/ *n* [C] 1 the one on dice, playing-cards, etc; card so marked: *the ~ of spades.* 2 (informal) person who is first rate or an expert. 3 *within an ace of, (of bad or unlucky incidents) only just escaping: within an ace of death/of being killed.*

acetic /ə'si:tk/ *adj* of vinegar.

acety-lene /ə'setəlin/ *n* [U] (chem) colourless gas (C₂H₂) which burns with a bright light, used for welding and cutting metal: *an ~ torch.*

ache /eɪk/ *n* [C] dull continuous pain: *have ~s and pains all over; have a ~head~; suffer from head~s. (Ache is only combined with back, ear, face, head, heart, stomach, tummy and tooth.)* □ *vi* 1 have a steady or continuous dull pain: *My head ~s/is aching.* 2 want very much: *He was aching for freedom.*

achieve /ə'tʃi:v/ *vt* 1 complete; get (something) done: *He will never ~ anything, will not do anything successfully.* 2 gain or reach by effort: *~ success/distinction in public life.*

achiev-able /-əbəl/ *adj* that can be achieved.

achieve-ment /ə'tʃi:vmənt/ *n* 1 [U] achieving: *the ~ of one's aims.* 2 [C] thing done successfully, with effort and skill: *The inventor was rewarded by the Government for his scientific ~.*

acid /'æsɪd/ *adj* 1 sour; sharp to the taste: *A lemon is an ~ fruit. Vinegar has an ~ taste.* 2 (fig) sarcastic: *an ~ wit; ~ remarks.* □ *n* [C,U] (chem) substance that contains hydrogen, which can react with metals to form a

salt: *Some ~s burn holes in wood and cloth.*

acid test, (fig) *test that proves of the value of something.*

acid-ify /ə'sɪdaɪ/ vt, vi (pt, pp -ied) *make or become acid.*

acid-ity /ə'sɪdətɪ/ n [U] *state or quality of being acid.*

ac-knowl-edge /ə'knɒlɪdʒ/ vt 1 *admit the truth, existence or reality of: He refused to ~ defeat/that he was defeated.* 2 *report that one has received (something): ~ (receipt of) a letter.* 3 *express thanks for: We must ~ his services to his country.* 4 *show that one recognizes (somebody) by giving a greeting, a smile, a nod of the head, etc: I met her in town but she didn't even ~ my wave.*

ac-knowl-edge-ment, **ac-knowl-edg-ment** /ə'knɒlɪdʒmənt/ n 1 [U] *act of acknowledging: We are sending you a gift in ~ of your kindness.* 2 [C] *something given or done to acknowledge: We have had no ~ of our letter, no reply.*

ac-ne /'æknɪ/ n [U] *disease (common among adolescents) in which there are pimples and blackheads on the face and neck.*

ac-orn /'eɪkɔn/ n [C] *seed or fruit of the oak tree.*

acous-tic /ə'kʊstɪk/ adj *of sound, the science of sound and the sense of hearing.* □ [C] *studio, hall, etc from the consideration of how well music, speech, etc can be heard.*
acous-tics n 1 (used with a *sing verb*) *the scientific study of sound.* 2 (used with a *pl verb*) *the physical qualities of sound; the design of a hall etc, that makes it good, poor, etc for hearing music or speeches: The ~s of the new concert hall are excellent.*

ac-quaint /ə'kwɛɪnt/ vt 1 *ac-quit sb/oneself with, make known: ~ oneself/become ~ed/make oneself ~ed with one's new duties.* 2 *be acquainted (with sb), have met (him) personally: We are not ~ed.*

ac-quaint-ance /ə'kwɛɪntəns/ n 1 [U] *knowledge or information gained through experience. make sb's acquaintance, get to know him, e.g by being introduced.* 2 [C] *person whom one knows (less intimate than a friend): He has a wide circle of ~s.*

ac-qui-escce /'ækwɪ'es/ vi *accept silently or without protest.*

ac-qui-escence /-'esəns/ n [C] (act of) *acquiescing.*

ac-quire /ə'kwɪə(r)/ vt *gain by skill or ability, by one's own efforts or behaviour: ~ a good knowledge of English/a reputation for dishonesty. an acquired taste, one that comes when one has experimented with food or drink and, in the end, likes it.*

ac-qui-si-tion /'ækwɪ'zɪʃən/ n 1 [U] (*formal*) *gaining; collecting: He devotes his time to the ~ of knowledge.* 2 [C] *person or thing acquired: Mr Brown will be a valuable ~ to (= a valuable new member of) the teaching staff of our school.*

ac-quis-itive /ə'kwɪzɪtv/ adj *fond of, in the habit of, collecting, buying, more and more things.*

ac-quit /ə'kwɪt/ vt (-tt-) 1 *acquit sb (of/on sth), give a legal decision that (he) is not guilty, e.g of an offence.* 2 (*formal*) *conduct (oneself): He ~ted himself well/like a hero.*

ac-quit-tal /ə'kwɪtəl/ n [C,U] *judgement that a person is not guilty: three convictions and two ~s.*

acre /'eɪkə(r)/ n [C] *measure of land, about 4 000 sq metres.*

acre-age /'eɪkərɪdʒ/ n [U] *area of land measured in acres.*

ac-rid /'ækrɪd/ adj (of smell or taste) *sharp; bitter.*

ac-ri-moni-ous /'ækrɪ'məʊniəs/ adj (*formal*) (of arguments, etc) *showing hate, disappointment.*

ac-ri-mony /'ækrɪməni/ n [U] (*formal*) *temper, manner, language, showing hate, disappointment.*

ac-ro-bat /'ækrəbæt/ n [C] *person who can do clever or unusual physical acts, e.g on a tightrope or trapeze.*

ac-ro-batic /'ækrə'bætɪk/ adj *of or like an acrobat.*

ac-ro-bat-ics n pl (used with a *sing verb*) *acrobatic tricks or feats.*

ac-ro-ny-m /'ækrənɪm/ n [C] *word formed from the initial letters of a name, e.g NASA /'næsə/, National Aeronautics and Space Administration.*

across¹ /ə'krɔs/ US: ə'krɔs/ adv *from one side to the other: Can you swim ~? The river is a mile ~, wide.*

across² /ə'krɔs/ US: ə'krɔs/ prep (for combinations with verbs, ⇨ the verb entries, e.g *come, get, put, run.*) 1 *from side to side of: walk ~ the street; draw a line ~ a sheet of paper.* 2 *on the other side of: My house is just ~ the street.* 3 *so as to form a cross; so as to cross or intersect: He sat with his arms ~ his chest.*

ac-cross-the-board, including all groups, members, etc. in a business or industry: *an ~-the-board wage increase.*

act¹ /ækt/ n [C] 1 *thing done: To kick a dog is a cruel ~.* 2 *process of, instant of, doing; action. (catch sb) in the (very) ~ (of doing sth), while doing it: The thief was caught in the act of breaking into the house.* 3 *law made by a government: an ~ of Parliament.* 4 *main division of a play: a play in five ~.* 5 *one of a series of short performances in a programme: a circus/varieté ~.* **put on an act**, pretend (in order to get one's own way, etc).

Act of God, something which is the result of uncontrollable natural forces, e.g storms, floods, earthquakes.

act² /ækt/ vi, vt 1 *do something: The time for talking is past; we must ~ at once.* **act on** (a suggestion/sb's advice/an order), do what is suggested, advised, etc. 2 *do what is*

acting / add

required or normal: *The brakes wouldn't ~ properly.* 3 do one's professional or official duty: *The police refused to ~, would not interfere.* **act for/on behalf of**, represent (a person) as a solicitor, barrister in a legal case: *A solicitor ~s for his clients.* 4 take the part of, eg a character in a play or cinema film, or in real life: *Who is ~ing (the part of) Hamlet? She's not really crying; she's only ~ing (= pretending) in order to gain your sympathy.* **act up**, (informal) behave badly so as to attract attention.

act-ing /'æktɪŋ/ *adj* doing the duties of another person for a time: *The ~ Manager/Headmaster.* □ *n* [U] (art of) performing in a play for the theatre, cinema, TV, etc: *She did a lot of ~ while she was at college.*

action /'æksən/ *n* 1 [U] process of doing things; (way of) using energy, influence, etc: *The time has come for ~.* We must act now. **bring/call (sth) into action**, cause (it) to act. **put (sth) out of action**, stop (it) working; make (it) unfit for use. **take action**, begin to act. 2 [C] thing done; act: *We shall judge you by your ~s, not by your promises.* 3 [C] **bring an action against sb**, (legal) seek judgement against him in a law court. 4 [C,U] fight(ing) between bodies of troops, between warships, etc: *go into ~, start fighting.*

'action painting, form of abstract painting in which paint is splashed, dribbled, etc on to the canvas.

'action stations, (mil) positions to which soldiers, etc go when fighting is expected to begin.

ac-ti-vate /'æktɪveɪt/ *vt* make active.

ac-tive /'æktɪv/ *adj* doing things; able to do things; in the habit of doing things: *He's over 90 and not very ~.* *Mount Vesuvius is an ~ volcano*, is one that erupts. **under active consideration**, being considered.

active voice, (gram) (a) form of a verbal phrase not containing be + a past participle, as in: *He was driving.* Compare: *He was being driven.* (b) sentence containing a transitive verb in which the noun or pronoun in front of the verb refers to the doer of the action: *The children finished off the cake.* Compare: *The cake was finished off by the children.*

ac-tive-ly *adv*

ac-tiv-ist /'æktɪvɪst/ *n* [C] person taking an active part, eg in a political movement.

ac-tiv-ity /'æktɪvətɪ/ *n* (pl -ies) 1 [U] being active or lively: *When a man is over 70, his time of full ~ is usually past.* 2 [C] thing (to be) done; occupation: *My numerous activities leave me little leisure.*

ac-tor /'æktə(r)/ *n* [C] man who acts on the stage, TV or in films.

ac-tress /'æktres/ *n* [C] woman who acts on the stage, TV or in films.

ac-tual /'æktʃuəl/ *adj* existing in fact; real: *Can you give me the ~ figures*, not an esti-

mate or a guess?

ac-tu-al-ly /'æktʃəli/ *adv* 1 really: *the political party ~ly in power.* He looks honest, but ~ly he's a thief. 2 strange or surprising as it may seem: *He not only ran in the race; he ~ly won it!*

ac-tu-al-ity /'æktʃə'ælətɪ/ *n* (pl -ies) 1 [U] actual existence; reality. 2 (usually pl) actual conditions or facts.

acu-men /'ækjuman/ *n* [U] ability to understand quickly and clearly: *business ~.*

acu-punc-ture /'ækjupʌŋktʃə(r)/ *n* [U] (med) pricking of the flesh of the human body with fine needles to relieve pain and as a local anaesthetic.

acute /ə'kjut/ *adj* 1 (of the senses, sensations, intellect) keen, quick to react: *A bad tooth can cause ~ pain.* 2 (of diseases) coming quickly to a crisis: *the ~ stage of the disease*, the brief period during which the disease is severe and at a turning point. ⇨ chronic. 3 (of sounds) high; shrill.

acute angle, angle of less than 90°.

acute accent, mark over a vowel (´), as over *e* in *café*.

acute-ly *adv*

acute-ness *n* [U]

ad /æd/ *n* [C] (informal) (abbr for) advertisement.

ad-age /'ædɪdʒ/ *n* [C] old and wise saying.

Adam /'ædəm/ *n* not know sb from Adam, have no knowledge of what he looks like.

'Adam's apple, part that projects in the front of the throat, esp in men, and moves up and down when one speaks.

ada-mant /'ædəmənt/ *adj* refusing to give in: *On this point I am ~.* Nothing can change my decision.

adapt /ə'dæpt/ *vt* make suitable for a new use, need, situation, etc: *When you go to a new country, you must ~ (yourself) to new manners and customs.* *Novels are often ~ed for the stage, television and radio.*

adap-ter, adap-tor /-tə(r)/, (a) person who adapts. (b) thing that makes it possible for something to be used in a different way from that for which it was designed, eg a fitting for an electric socket so that more than one plug(3) may be used.

adapt-able /ə'dæptəbəl/ *adj* able to adapt or be adapted: *an ~ man can change according to circumstances, etc.*

ad-ap-tation /'ædæp'teɪʃən/ *n* 1 [U] state of being adapted; adapting. 2 [C] thing made by adapting: *An ~ (of a novel) for the stage/for television.*

add /æd/ *vt, vi* 1 join, unite, put (one thing to another): *If you ~ 5 and/to 5 you get 10.*

add to, increase: *This ~s to our difficulties.*

add together, combine two or more things.

add sth up, find the sum of: *~ up a column of figures; ~ them up.* **add up (to)**, (a) give as a result, when joined: *The figures add up to 365.* (b) (informal) indicate; amount to: