

[牛津大学出版社独家授权]

牛津法律术语小辞典

1001 LEGAL WORDS YOU NEED TO KNOW

影印注释本

1001个
你应当掌握的
法律词汇

[美]杰伊·M·费曼 (Jay M. Feinman) 著
高如华 袁方 注



法律出版社
LAW PRESS · CHINA

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《牛津法律术语小辞典》是一本美国常用法律术语指南。本书阐释了最晦涩难懂的 1001 个常用法律词汇。每个词条解释后都附上了一个例句。编者对许多易混用、错用的词汇进行了辨析，并指明了每个词条的词源。本书还在附录中添加了中文注释，以方便查阅。

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中文目录

出版说明	i
前言	v
英文目录	vi
简介	vii
条目安排	xi
发音例释	xiii
辞典正文	1—211
词条中文注释表	241—278
法律援助机构	215
推荐书目	235
如何选择律师	18
如何理解合同	58
普通法与民法	77
如何立遗嘱	87
何为授权书?	108
如何申请法学院	127
何为律师职业道德?	138
如何应诉	173
如何理解 Wills、Trusts 和 Inestate Succession	197
观看律师题材的电视节目	205

CONTENTS

<i>Chinese FOREword</i>	i
<i>Chinese Outline</i>	iii
<i>Preface</i>	v
<i>Introduction</i>	vii
<i>Using This Dictionary</i>	xi
<i>Pronunciation Key</i>	xiii
1001 LEGAL WORDS YOU NEED TO KNOW	1
Choosing a Lawyer	18
How to Understand a Contract	58
The Common Law and the Civil Law	77
Making a Living Will	87
What is a Power of Attorney?	108
Thinking About Law School	127
What is Legal Ethics?	138
What to Do if You're Being Sued	173
Understanding Wills, Trusts, and Intestate Succession	197
Watching Lawyer Shows.	205
<i>Legal Aid Organizations</i>	215
<i>Further Reading</i>	235
<i>Chinese Notes</i>	240

A

a•bate /ə'bat/ ► v. [trans.] lessen, reduce, or remove (esp. a nuisance): *this action would not have been sufficient to abate the odor nuisance.*

ORIGIN Middle English (in the legal sense 'put a stop to (a nuisance)'): from Old French *abatre* 'to fell,' from *a-* (from Latin *ad* 'to, at') + *batre* 'to beat' (from Latin *battere, battuere* 'to beat').

a•bate•ment /ə'batmənt/ ► n. the ending, reduction, or lessening of something: *noise abatement* | *an abatement in the purchase price.*

ORIGIN Middle English: from Anglo-Norman French, from Old French *abatre* 'fell, put an end to' (see **ABATE**).

ab•duc•tion /æb'dʌkʃən/ ► n. the action or an instance of forcibly taking a person or persons away against their will: *they organized the abduction of Mr. Cordes on his way to the airport* | *abductions by armed men in plain clothes.*

■ the illegal removal from parents or guardians of a child.

a•bet /ə'bet/ ► v. (**abetted, abetting**) [trans.] encourage or assist (someone) to do something wrong, in particular, to commit a crime or other offense: *he was not guilty of murder but was guilty of aiding and abetting others.*

■ encourage or assist someone to commit (a crime): *we are aiding and abetting this illegal traffic.*

DERIVATIVES **a•bet•ment** n.; **a•bet•tor** /ə'beɪtər/ (also **a•bet•ter**) n.

ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'urge to do something good or bad'): from Old French *abeter*, from *a-* (from Latin *ad* 'to, at') + *beter* 'hound, urge on.'

ab•jure /æb'jʊər/ ► v. [trans.] formal solemnly renounce (a belief, cause, or claim): *the state has abjured the authority to execute custodial arrests for such minor offenses.*

DERIVATIVES **ab•ju•ra•tion** /æbjə'ræʃən/ n.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *abjurare*, from *ab-* 'away' + *jurare* 'swear.'

a•bridge /ə'briʃ/ ► v. [trans.] (usu. **be abridged**) curtail (rights or privileges): *even the right to free speech can be abridged.*

ORIGIN Middle English (in the sense 'deprive of'): from Old French *abregier*, from late Latin *abbreviare* 'cut short'.

ab•ro•gate /'æbrə,gāt/ ► v. [trans.] formal repeal or do away with (a law,

right, or formal agreement): *a proposal to abrogate temporarily the right to strike.*

DERIVATIVES **ab•ro•ga•tion** /ˌæbrəˈgāʃən/ n.

ORIGIN early 16th cent.: from Latin *abrogat-* ‘repealed,’ from the verb *abrogare*, from *ab-* ‘away, from’ + *rogare* ‘propose a law.’

ab•scond /æbˈskænd/ ▶ v. [intrans.] leave hurriedly and secretly, typically to avoid detection of or arrest for an unlawful action such as theft: *she absconded with the remaining thousand dollars.*

■ (of someone on bail) fail to surrender oneself for custody at the appointed time. ■ (of a person kept in detention or under supervision) escape: *176 detainees absconded.*

DERIVATIVES **ab•scond•er** n.

ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (in the sense ‘hide, conceal (oneself)’): from Latin *abscondere* ‘hide,’ from *ab-* ‘away, from’ + *condere* ‘stow.’

ab•so•lute title /ˈæbsəˌlʊt ˈtɪtl/ ▶ n. guaranteed title to the ownership of a property or lease.

ab•tract of title /ˈæbstrækt əv ˈtɪtl/ ▶ n. a summary giving details of the title deeds and documents that prove an owner’s right to dispose of land, together with any encumbrances that relate to the property.

ac•ces•sion /ækˈseshən/ ▶ n. 1 the attainment or acquisition of a position of rank or power, typically that of monarch or president: *the queen’s accession to the throne* | *lost the vote on the Fortas accession to the chief justiceship.*

■ the action or process of formally joining or being accepted by an association, institution, or group: *the accession of Spain and Portugal into the European Community.*

2 a new item added to an existing collection of books, paintings, or artifacts.

■ an amount added to an existing quantity of something: *did not anticipate any further accession of wealth from the man’s estate.*

3 the formal acceptance of a treaty or agreement: *accession to the Treaty of Paris.*

▶ v. [trans.] (usu. **be accessioned**) record the addition of (a new item) to a library, museum, or other collection.

ORIGIN late 16th cent. (in the general sense ‘something added’): from Latin *accession-*, from the verb *accedere* ‘approach, come to’ (see **ACCEDE**).

ac•ces•so•ry /ækˈses(ə)rē/ (also **ac•ces•sa•ry**) ▶ n. (pl. **ac•ces•so•ries**) someone who gives assistance to the perpetrator of a crime, without directly committing it, sometimes without being present: *she was charged as an accessory to murder.* Compare with **PRINCIPAL**.

PHRASES **accessory before** (or **after**) **the fact** dated a person who incites or assists someone to commit a crime (or knowingly aids someone who has committed a crime).

ORIGIN late Middle English: from medieval Latin *accessorius* ‘additional thing,’ from Latin *access-* ‘increased,’ from the verb *accedere*.

ac•com•plice /ə'kæmplis/ ► **n.** a person who helps another commit a crime.
 ORIGIN mid 16th cent.: alteration (probably by association with *ac-company*) of Middle English *complice* 'an associate,' via Old French from late Latin *complex*, *complic-* 'allied,' from *com-* 'together' + the root of *plicare* 'to fold.'

ac•cu•sa•to•ri•al /ə,kyʊzə'tôriəl/ ► **adj.** [attrib.] (esp. of a trial or legal procedure) involving accusation by a prosecutor and a verdict reached by an impartial judge or jury. Often contrasted with **INQUISITORIAL**.

ac•quaint•ance rape /ə'kwāntəns ,rāp/ ► **n.** rape by a person who is known to the victim.

ac•quit /ə'kwɪt/ ► **v.** (**acquitted**, **acquitting**) [trans.] (usu. **be acquitted**) free (someone) from a criminal charge by a verdict of not guilty: *she was acquitted on all counts* | *the jury acquitted him of murder*.

ORIGIN Middle English (originally in the sense 'pay a debt, discharge a liability'): from Old French *acquiter*, from medieval Latin *acquitare* 'pay a debt,' from *ad-* 'to' + *quitare* 'set free.'

ac•quit•tal /ə'kwɪtəl/ ► **n.** a judgment that a person is not guilty of the crime with which the person has been charged: *the trial resulted in an acquittal* | *the women felt their chances of acquittal were poor*.

act /ækt/ ► **v.** [intrans.] (**act for/on behalf of**) represent (someone) on a contractual, legal, or paid basis: *he chose an attorney to act for him*.

► **n.** 1 (often as **criminal act**) a constituent element of a crime or tort: *they argued over whether the burning of the flag is a criminal act*.

2 a written ordinance of Congress, or another legislative body; a statute: *the act to abolish slavery*.

■ a document attesting a legal transaction. ■ (often **acts**) dated the recorded decisions or proceedings of a committee or an academic body.

PHRASES **act of God** an instance of uncontrollable natural forces in operation (often used in insurance claims). **read the Riot Act** see **RIOT ACT**.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *actus* 'event, thing done,' *act-* 'done,' from the verb *agere*, reinforced by the French noun *acte*.

ac•tion /'ækʃən/ ► **n.** a legal process; a lawsuit: *an action for damages*.

ORIGIN late Middle English: via Old French from Latin *actio(n-)*, from *agere* 'do, act.'

ac•tion•a•ble /'ækʃənəbəl/ ► **adj.** giving sufficient reason to take legal action: *slandorous remarks are actionable*.

ac•tus re•us /,æktəs 'rēəs; 'rāəs/ ► **n.** action or conduct that is a constituent element of a crime, as opposed to the mental state of the accused: [as modifier] *the statutes do not characterize hate and bias as actus reus conditions*. Compare with **MENS REA**.

ORIGIN early 20th cent.: Latin, literally 'guilty act.'

ad li•tem /æd 'lɪtəm/ ► **adj.** (esp. of a guardian) appointed to act in a lawsuit on behalf of a child or other person who is not considered capable of representing themselves: *you'll have to discuss that with the girls' guardian ad litem*.

ORIGIN mid 18th cent.: Latin, literally 'for the lawsuit.'

ad·min·is·tra·tion /ədˌmɪnəˈstræʃən/ (abbr.: **admin.**) ▶ **n.** the management and disposal of the property of an intestate, deceased person, debtor, or other individual, or of an insolvent company, by a legally appointed administrator: *the company went into administration* | [as adj.] *an administration order*.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Latin *administratio*(n-), from the verb *administrare*.

ad·min·is·tra·tor /ədˌmɪnəˈstrætər/ ▶ **n.** a person legally appointed to manage and dispose of the estate of an intestate, deceased person, debtor, or other individual, or of an insolvent company.

ad·min·is·tra·trix /ədˌmɪnəˈstrātriks/ ▶ **n.** a female administrator of an estate.

ad·mi·ral·ty /ˈædmərəltē/ ▶ **n.** (pl. **ad·mi·ral·ties**) the jurisdiction of courts of law over cases concerning ships or the sea and other navigable waters (maritime law).

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *admiralte*, from *admirail* ‘emir, leader.’

ADR ▶ **abbr.** alternative dispute resolution.

ad·ult /əˈdʌlt; ˈæd,əlt/ ▶ **n.** a person who has reached the age of majority. ORIGIN mid 16th cent.: from Latin *adultus*, past participle of *adolescere* ‘grow to maturity.’

ad·ul·ter·y /əˈdʌlt(ə)rē/ ▶ **n.** voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not his or her spouse: *she was committing adultery with a much younger man*.

ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from the obsolete noun *adulter*, from Latin *adulter* ‘adulterer,’ replacing an earlier form *avoutrie*, from Old French *avouterie*, likewise based on Latin *adulter*.

ad va·lo·rem /ˌæd vəˈlôrəm/ ▶ **adv. & adj.** (of the levying of tax or customs duties) in proportion to the estimated value of the goods or transaction concerned: [as adj.] *the property owner may be eligible for a reduction in ad valorem taxes*.

ORIGIN late 17th cent.: Latin, literally ‘according to the value.’

ad·vance di·rec·tive /ədˈvæns dəˌrektɪv/ ▶ **n.** a written statement of a person’s wishes regarding medical treatment, often including a living will, made to ensure those wishes are carried out should they be unable to communicate them to a doctor.

ad·ver·sar·i·al /ˌædvərˈserēəl/ ▶ **adj.** (of a trial or legal procedure) in which the parties in a dispute have the responsibility for finding and presenting evidence: *equality between prosecution and defense is essential in an adversarial system of justice*. Compare with **INQUISITORIAL**.

ad·verse pos·ses·sion /ˈædvərs pəˈzeshən/ ▶ **n.** the acquisition of property by a trespasser whose occupation of the property is exclusive, open, and continuous for a statutory period.

ad·vo·ca·cy /ˈædvəkəsi/ ▶ **n.** the profession or work of a legal advocate. ORIGIN late Middle English: via Old French from medieval Latin *advocatia*, from *advocare* ‘summon, call to one’s aid’ (see **ADVOCATE**).

ad•vo•cate ► n. /'ædvəki/ a pleader in a court of law; a lawyer: *Marshall was a skilled advocate but a mediocre judge.*

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *avocat*, from Latin *advocatus*, past participle (used as a noun) of *advocare* 'call (to one's aid),' from *ad-* 'to' + *vocare* 'to call.'

af•fi•ant /ə'fiənt/ ► n. a person who swears to an affidavit: *your affiant, Special Agent Perez, has been a sworn police officer for 22 years.*

ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from French, present participle of *after*, from medieval Latin *affidare* 'declare on oath.'

af•fi•da•vit /,æfi'dəvit/ ► n. a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation, for use as evidence in court.

ORIGIN mid 16th cent.: from medieval Latin, literally 'he has stated on oath,' from *affidare*.

af•firm /ə'fərm/ ► v. [trans.] declare, support, or defend as fact, specifically:

■ accept or confirm the validity of (a judgment or agreement); ratify: *we affirm the judgment of the trial court.* ■ (of a court) uphold (a decision) on appeal: *the committee shall have the power to affirm, modify, or reject the decision.* ■ [intrans.] make a formal declaration rather than taking an oath (e.g., to testify truthfully): *I solemnly affirm.*

ORIGIN Middle English (in the sense 'make firm'): via Old French from Latin *affirmare*, from *ad-* 'to' + *firmus* 'strong.'

af•firm•a•tion /,æfər'mæʃən/ ► n. a formal declaration by a person who declines to take an oath for reasons of conscience.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *affirmation-*, from the verb *affirmare* (see **AFFIRM**).

af•fray /ə'fraɪ/ ► n. dated an instance of group fighting in a public place that disturbs the peace: *Lowe was charged with causing an affray | a person guilty of affray.*

ORIGIN Middle English (in the general sense 'disturbance, fray'): from Anglo-Norman French *afreyer* 'disturb, startle,' based on an element of Germanic origin related to Old English *frithu* 'peace, safety' (compare with German *Friede* 'peace').

a•fore•thought /ə'fôr, THÔ/ ► adj. see **MALICE AFORETHOUGHT**.

AG ► abbr. attorney general.

age of con•sent /'æj əv kən'sent/ ► n. the age at which a person's, typically a girl's, consent to sexual intercourse is valid in law.

ag•gra•vat•ed /'ægrə,vətid/ ► adj. [attrib.] (of an offense) made more serious by attendant circumstances (such as frame of mind): *aggravated burglary.*

■ (of a penalty) made more severe in recognition of the seriousness of an offense: *aggravated damages.*

DERIVATIVES **ag•gra•vat•ing** adj.: *aggravating factors in a death penalty case.*

a•gree•ment /ə'grēmənt/ ► n. a typically legally binding arrangement between parties as to a course of action: *a trade agreement | a verbal agreement to sell.*

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French, from *agreer* 'make agreeable to.'

al·ien·a·ble /'ælɛənəbəl; 'alyən-/ ► **adj.** able to be transferred to new ownership: *alienable common stock*.

DERIVATIVES **al·ien·a·bil·ity** /,ælɛənə'biliti; 'alyən-/ **n.**

al·ien·ate /'ælɛənət; 'alyə-/ ► **v.** [trans.] transfer ownership of (property rights) to another person or group: *he had the right to alienate the property*.

PHRASES **alienate someone's affections** induce someone to transfer their affection from a person (such as a spouse) with legal rights or claims on them: *the plaintiff sued a colleague for alienating the affections of plaintiff's wife*.

ORIGIN early 16th cent.: from Latin *alienat-* 'estranged,' from the verb *alienare*, from *alienus* 'of another.'

al·ien·a·tion /,ælɛə'næʃən; 'alyə-/ ► **n.** the transfer of the ownership of property rights.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *alienatio(n-)*, from the verb *alienare* 'estrangle,' from *alienus*.

al·i·mo·ny /'ælɔ,mōnē/ ► **n.** a husband's or wife's court-ordered provision for a spouse after separation or divorce.

ORIGIN early 17th cent. (in the sense 'nourishment, means of subsistence'): from Latin *alimonia* 'nutriment,' from *alere* 'nourish.'

al·lo·cu·tion /,ælə'kyʊʃən/ ► **n.** the right of a convicted defendant to speak on their own behalf before sentencing is pronounced: *the trial court determined Goodwin was not granted allocution at his original sentencing*.

■ an unsworn statement delivered (to the sentencing court) by a convicted defendant in which the defendant attempts to win a lesser sentence by such persuasion as requesting mercy, expressing regret, or giving a reasonable explanation for the criminal conduct: *the sentencing court indicated on the record that the defendant's allocution did not affect its sentencing decision*.

DERIVATIVES **al·lo·cute** /,ælə'kyʊt/ **v.**; **al·loc·u·tor·y** /,ælə'kyʊtərē/ **adj.**

ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *allocutio(n-)*, from *alloqui* 'speak to,' from *ad-* 'to' + *loqui* 'speak.'

al·ter·na·tive dis·pute res·o·lu·tion /ɔl'tərnətiv dis'pyʊt rezə'luʃən/ (abbr.: **ADR**) ► **n.** the use of methods such as mediation or arbitration to resolve a dispute instead of litigation.

am·e·na·ble /ə'mənəbəl; ə'men-/ ► **adj.** (**amenable to**) (of a thing) capable of being acted upon in a particular way; susceptible: *the defendant was amenable to suit in the jurisdiction*.

DERIVATIVES **am·e·na·bil·ity** /ə,mənə'biliti; ə'men-/ **n.**; **am·e·na·bly** /ə'mənəblē; ə'men-/ **adv.**

ORIGIN late 16th cent. (in the sense 'liable to answer (to a law or tribunal)'): an Anglo-Norman French legal term, from Old French

amener 'bring to,' from *a-* (from Latin *ad* 'to' + *mener* 'bring' (from late Latin *minare* 'drive (animals),' from Latin *minari* 'threaten')).

amercement /ə'mərsmənt/ ► n. historical a fine.

DERIVATIVES **amercement** v.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Anglo-Norman French *amercement*, based on *estre amercie* 'be at the mercy of another' (with respect to the amount of a fine), from *a merci* 'at (the) mercy.'

amicus /ə'mēkəs; ə'mī-/ (in full **amicus curiae** /'kyōrē,i; 'kyō-rē,ē/) ► n. (pl. **amici** /ə'mēkē; ə'mikī/, **amici curiae**) an adviser, often voluntary, to a court of law in a particular case, who is a party to the case: [as adj.] *he was planning to advance this position in an amicus brief.*

ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from modern Latin *amicus curiae*, literally 'friend of the court.'

answer /'ænsər/ ► n. the defendant's reply to the plaintiff's charges: *jury demand is made in defendant's answer.*

► v. [trans.] defend oneself against (a charge, accusation, or criticism): *he said he would return to Spain to answer all charges.*

■ [intrans.] (**answer to**) be required to explain or justify oneself to (someone): *you will have the police to answer to.*

PHRASES **answer the description of** correspond to a description, esp. one of a suspect issued by the police: *he answers the description of being slightly taller than his two supposed companions.*

ORIGIN Old English *andswaru* (noun), *andswarian* (verb), of Germanic origin; from a base shared by **SWEAR**.

anticipatory /æn'tisəpə,tōrē/ ► adj. (of a breach of contract) taking the form of an announcement or indication that a contract will not be honored: *the appellants' commencement of the lawsuit constituted anticipatory breach of the contract.*

antitrust /,æntē'trəst; ,æntī-/ ► adj. of or relating to legislation preventing or controlling trusts or other monopolies, with the intention of promoting competition in business: *West Virginia joins Massachusetts in its ongoing antitrust battle against Microsoft.*

appeal /ə'pēl/ ► v. [intrans.] apply to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court: *he said he would appeal against the conviction* | [trans.] *they have 48 hours to appeal the decision.*

► n. an application to a higher court for a decision to be reversed: *he has 28 days in which to lodge an appeal* | *the right of appeal.*

DERIVATIVES **appealable** /ə'pēləbəl/ adj.

ORIGIN Middle English (in legal contexts): from Old French *apel* (noun), *apeler* (verb), from Latin *appellare* 'to address,' based on *ad-* 'to' + *pellere* 'to drive.'

appeals court /ə'pēlz ,kôrt/ ► n. a court that hears appeals from a lower court.

appear /ə'pīr/ ► v. [intrans.] (of an accused person, witness, or lawyer) make an official appearance in a court of law: *he appeared on six charges of theft.*

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *apareir*, from Latin *apparere*, from *ad-* 'toward' + *parere* 'come into view.'

ap•pel•lant /ə'pelənt/ ► **n.** a person who applies to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from French *apelant*, literally 'appealing,' from the verb *apeler* (see **APPEAL**).

ap•pel•late /ə'pelit/ ► **adj.** (typically of a court) concerned with or dealing with applications for decisions to be reversed: *there are two appellate courts in Iowa* | *rules of appellate procedure*.

ORIGIN late Middle English (originally in the sense 'appealed against, accused'): from Latin *appellatus* 'appealed against,' from the verb *appellare* (see **APPEAL**). The current sense dates from the mid 18th cent.

ap•pel•lee /,æpe'li:/ ► **n.** the respondent in a case appealed to a higher court.

ORIGIN mid 16th cent.: from French *appelé*, past participle of *appeler* 'call,' from Latin *appellare* 'to address' (see **APPEAL**).

ap•point /ə'point/ ► **v.** [trans.] decide the disposal of (property of which one is not the owner) under powers granted by the owner: *trustees appoint the capital to the beneficiaries*.

DERIVATIVES **ap•point•ee** /ə,poin'ti:/ **n.**; **ap•point•er** **n.**

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *apointer*, from a *point* 'to a point.'

ar•bi•tral /'arbitrəl/ ► **adj.** relating to or resulting from the use of an arbitrator to settle a dispute: *the tribunal respects the enforcement of international arbitral awards*.

ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from late Latin *arbitralis*, from *arbiter* 'judge, supreme ruler.'

ar•bi•trary /'arbi,trerē/ ► **adj.** based on unreasonable or capricious exercise of discretion: *Amnesty International condemns the nationwide arbitrary arrests of forty-two journalists* | *the applicant has failed to demonstrate the judge's decision is arbitrary*.

DERIVATIVES **ar•bi•trar•i•ly** /,ärbə'trerälē/ **adv.**; **ar•bi•trar•i•ness** **n.**

ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'dependent on one's will or pleasure, discretionary'): from Latin *arbitrarius*, from *arbiter* 'judge, supreme ruler,' perhaps influenced by French *arbitraire*.

ar•bi•trate /'arbi,trat/ ► **v.** [intrans.] (of an independent person or body) reach an authoritative judgment or settlement: *by agreeing to arbitrate this dispute, parties give up their legal right to bring a court action and to have a jury trial*.

ORIGIN mid 16th cent.: from Latin *arbitrat-* 'judged,' from *arbitrari*, from *arbiter* 'judge, supreme ruler.'

ar•bi•tra•tion /,ärbī'trāshən/ ► **n.** the use of an arbitrator to settle a dispute: *arbitration is generally faster, less expensive, and more informal than going to court*.

PHRASES **go to arbitration** submit a dispute to an arbitrator: *the fifty-seven school districts went to arbitration in sixty-eight separate cases*.

ar·bi·tra·tor /'ärbɪ, trætər/ ► n. an independent person or body officially appointed to settle a dispute: *the decision of the arbitrator can be enforced by the courts, if necessary.*

ar·raign /ə'ræn/ ► v. [trans.] (often **be arraigned**) call or bring (someone) before a court to answer a criminal charge: *her sister was arraigned on attempted murder charges.*

DERIVATIVES **ar·raign·ment** n.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *araisnier*, based on Latin *ad-* 'to' + *ration-* 'reason, account.'

ar·ray /ə'rā/ ► n. a list of jurors empaneled.

► v. [trans.] empanel (a jury).

ORIGIN Middle English (in the senses 'preparedness' and 'place in readiness'): from Old French *arei* (noun), *areer* (verb), based on Latin *ad-* 'toward' + a Germanic base meaning 'prepare.'

ar·rears /ə'rɪr/ ► plural n. money that is owed and should have been paid earlier: *he was suing the lessee for the arrears of rent.*

PHRASES **in arrears** (also **in arrear**) behind in paying money that is owed: *two out of three tenants are in arrears.*

DERIVATIVES **ar·rear·age** /ə'rɪrɪj/ n.

ORIGIN Middle English (first used in the phrase *in arrear*): from *arrear* (adverb) 'behind, overdue,' from Old French *arere*, from medieval Latin *adretro*, from *ad-* 'toward' + *retro* 'backward.'

ar·rest /ə'rest/ ► v. [trans.] seize (someone) by legal authority and take into custody: *the police arrested him for possession of marijuana | two youths aged 16 were arrested.*

► n. the action of seizing someone to take into custody: *I have a warrant for your arrest | they placed her under arrest | at least 69 arrests were made.*

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *arrest*, based on Latin *ad-* 'at, to' + *restare* 'remain, stop.'

ar·rest·ee /ə, res'tē/ ► n. a person who has been arrested.

ar·son /'ärsən/ ► n. the criminal act of deliberately setting fire to property: *police are treating the fire as arson | [as adj.] an arson attack.*

DERIVATIVES **ar·son·ist** /'ärsənɪst/ n.

ORIGIN late 17th cent.: an Anglo-Norman French legal term, from medieval Latin *arsio(n-)*, from Latin *ardere* 'to burn.'

ar·ti·cle /'ärtɪkəl/ ► n. a separate clause or paragraph of a legal document or agreement, typically one outlining a single rule or regulation: [as adj.] *it is an offense under Article 7 of the treaty.*

ORIGIN Middle English (denoting a separate clause of the Apostles' Creed): from Old French, from Latin *articulus* 'small connecting part,' diminutive of *artus* 'joint.'

as·por·ta·tion /,æspər'taʃən/ ► n. rare the detachment, movement, or carrying away of property, considered an essential component of the crime of larceny.

ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from Latin *asportation-*, from *asportare* 'carry away.'

as•sault /ə'sôlt/ ▶ v. [trans.] make a physical attack on: *he pleaded guilty to assaulting a police officer* | *she was sexually assaulted as a child.*

▶ n. a physical attack: *his imprisonment for an assault on the film director* | *sexual assaults.*

■ an act, criminal or tortious, that threatens physical harm to a person, whether or not actual harm is done: *he appeared in court charged with assault.*

DERIVATIVES **as•sault•er** n.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *asaut* (noun), *assauter* (verb), based on Latin *ad-* 'to' + *saltare*, frequentative of *salire* 'to leap.'

as•sault and bat•tery /ə'sôlt ən(d) 'bæt(ə)rē/ ▶ n. the crime of threatening a person together with the act of making physical contact with them.

as•sign /ə'sīn/ ▶ v. [trans.] transfer (legal rights or liabilities): *they will ask you to assign your rights against the airline.*

▶ n. another term for **ASSIGNEE**.

DERIVATIVES **as•sign•a•ble** adj.; **as•sign•or** /ə'sīnôr/ n.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *assigner*, *assiner*, from Latin *assignare*, from *ad-* 'to' + *signare* 'to sign.'

as•sign•ee /ə,sī'nē/ ▶ n. a person to whom a right or liability is legally transferred.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *assigne*, past participle of *assigner* 'allot' (see **ASSIGN**).

as•sign•ment /ə'sīnmənt/ ▶ n. an act of making a legal transfer of a right, property, or liability: *an assignment of leasehold property.*

■ a document effecting such a transfer.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *assignement*, from medieval Latin *assignamentum*, from Latin *assignare* 'allot' (see **ASSIGN**).

as•size /ə'sīz/ ▶ n. (usu. **assizes**) historical a court that formerly sat at intervals in each county of England and Wales to administer the civil and criminal law. In 1972 the civil jurisdiction of assizes was transferred to the High Court, and the criminal jurisdiction to the Crown Court.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *assise*, feminine past participle of *asseoir* 'sit, settle, assess,' from Latin *assidere* (see **ASSESS**).

at•tach /ə'tæch/ ▶ v. [trans.] 1 include (a condition) as part of an agreement: *the Commission can attach appropriate conditions to the operation of the agreement.*

2 seize (a person's property) by legal authority: *the court attached his wages for child support.*

DERIVATIVES **at•tach•a•ble** adj.

ORIGIN Middle English (in the sense 'seize by legal authority'): from Old French *atachier* or *estachier* 'fasten, fix.'