

*Funk & Wagnalls*  
*Standard Handbook of*  
**SYNONYMS,**  
**Antonyms, and Prepositions**

**By JAMES C. FERNALD, L.H.D.**

**Completely Revised Edition**  
**By Funk & Wagnalls Editorial Staff**



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## PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

In 1896 Dr. James Champlain Fernald brought out his first edition of this work. It was notably successful and so well received by careful writers and speakers that, in 1914, he produced a second edition with an augmented number of dissertations, many new synonyms, and a careful revision of the previous text. Dr. Fernald died four years after completing that revision. The passage of the years since has convinced the publishers that the style of treatment used by him in showing the divergence in meanings among words which are closely synonymous in one or another respect meets the practical needs of those who wish to be discriminatory in their use of words. Times and usages have changed to some extent within the past half century, however, and the present editors have recognized such changes. Some words are no longer as restrictive as they were; others have taken on new decisiveness. Many have acquired new synonyms.

Aside from a revision of the former text to bring it into keeping with present-day usage, this edition will be found to be richer in quantity and in treatment. A considerable number of new discussions on the discrimination among words has been added. But perhaps of greater interest and value to the reader is the more extensive treatment that has been given to discussion; many words formerly listed under the main heading, but not treated in the accompanying discussion, have been critically examined and, if their differences were not clearly evident, have been compared along with the others. Much of the material has also been rearranged, so that the word under which its synonyms are grouped is the keystone to which others are compared. Dr. Fernald's fine sense of the discrimination between words of closely parallel meanings has been carefully preserved.

## SPECIAL NOTE

### USE THE INDEX

Many persons fail to find the words they are seeking in this book, because they look only at the *key-word* at the head of each article. These *key-words* are given in alphabetical order, so that if one wishes to find the word "beautiful," for instance, that will be found in the regular alphabetical order on page 87.

But under the word "beautiful" there are 17 synonyms. It is obvious that not every one of these can be made the head of a group in alphabetical order.

How can any word within the group be found? By turning to the *Index* at the back of the volume. Suppose you wish synonyms for the word "pretty." You will not find that under *P*, but by turning to the *Index* you will find:

"pretty, Beautiful ..... 87"

That is, "pretty" is to be found under the key-word, "Beautiful," on page 87. Often one word is referred to several groups, thus:

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some different aspect or meaning of the word being treated under each of the different groups.

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# A

## ABANDON

abdicate	desert	leave	resign
abjure	discontinue	quit	retire from
cast off	forgo	recant	retract
cease	forsake	relinquish	surrender
cede	forswear	renounce	vacate
depart from	give up	repudiate	withdraw from

*Abandon* is a word of wide signification, denoting the complete giving up or withdrawal from persons or things of any kind. *Abandon* implies previous association with responsibility for or control of; *forsake* implies previous association with inclination or attachment, real or assumed; a man may *abandon* or *forsake* house or friends; he *abandons* an enterprise; *forsakes* God. *Abandon* is applied to both good and evil action; a thief *abandons* his designs; a man, his principles. *Forsake*, like *abandon*, may be used either in the favorable, or unfavorable sense; *desert* is always unfavorable, involving a breach of duty, except when used of mere localities; as, "The Deserted Village."

*Abdicate* and *resign* apply to office, authority, or power; a monarch *abdicates*, a president or other elected or appointed officer *resigns*. It was held that Edward VIII *abdicated* his throne; that James II *deserted* it. *Cede* applies to territorial possessions; *surrender* especially to military force, and more generally to any demand, claim, passion, etc. *Quit* carries an idea of suddenness or abruptness not necessarily implied in *abandon*, and may not have the same suggestion of finality. A ruler might *cede* his territory, *desert* his followers, *abjure* or *renounce* his religion, *relinquish* his titles, *abandon* his designs, *recant* his confession. A cowardly officer *deserts* his ship; the helpless passengers *abandon* it. We *quit* business, *give up* property, *resign* office, *abandon* a habit or a trust, *cease* listening.

*Relinquish* commonly implies reluctance; the weary hand *relinquishes* its grasp; the creditor *relinquishes* his claim. We *discontinue* subscriptions when we *cease* to pay for them; we *give up* habits or doing something; *forgo* what we refrain from doing or *give up*, and *forswear* what we *renounce* on oath. *Repudiate*, originally to *cast off*, in this connection means to *renounce*; *retract* is to withdraw a promise or order. See *renounce*; *stop*; *surrender*.

**ANTONYMS:** *adopt, advocate, assert, cherish, claim, court, defend, favor, haunt, hold, keep, maintain, occupy, prosecute, protect, pursue, retain, seek, support, undertake, uphold, vindicate.*

## ABATE

alleviate	diminish	lower	stop
curtail	dwindle	mitigate	subside
decline	ebb	moderate	suppress
decrease	lessen	reduce	terminate

*Abate* generally implies to *lessen* in some way, but may mean to *stop* or *suppress*. The storm, the fever, and the pain *abate*. Interest *declines*. Misfortunes may be *mitigated*, desires *moderated*, intense anger *abated*, population *decreased*, taxes *reduced*, pain *alleviated*. An ill-managed fortune *dwindles*; a flood *subsides*; the tide *ebbs*. We *abate* a nuisance, *terminate* a controversy, *suppress* a rebellion, *curtail* or *reduce* production when there is a surplus. See *alleviate*.

**ANTONYMS:** *aggravate, amplify, continue, develop, enhance, enlarge, extend, foment, increase, magnify, raise, revive.*

**PREPOSITIONS:** *Abate in* fury; *abated by* law.

## ABBREVIATION

**abridgment      contraction**

An *abbreviation* is a shortening by any method; a *contraction* is a reduction of size by the drawing together of the parts. A *contraction* of a word is made by omitting certain letters or syllables and bringing together the first and last letters or elements; an *abbreviation* may be made either by omitting certain portions from the interior or by cutting off a part; a *contraction* is an *abbreviation*, but an *abbreviation* is not necessarily a *contraction*; *rec't* for receipt, *mdse.* for merchandise, and *Dr.* for debtor are *contractions*; they are also *abbreviations*; *Am.* for American is an *abbreviation*, but not a *contraction*.

*Abbreviation* and *contraction* are used of words and phrases; *abridgment* is used of books, paragraphs, sentences, etc., or it may denote a curtailment, as of rights or privileges. See **abridgment**.

## ABET

advocate	embolden	incite	sanction
aid	encourage	instigate	support
assist	help	promote	uphold
countenance			

*Abet* and *instigate* are now used almost without exception in a bad sense; one may *incite* either to good or evil. One *incites* or *instigates* to action, or to increased activity or advancement of activity; one *abets* by giving sympathy, countenance, or substantial aid to the doing of that which is already projected or in process of commission. *Abet* and *instigate* apply either to persons or actions, *incite* to persons only; one *incites* a person to an action. The originator of a crime often *instigates* or *incites* others to *abet* him in it, or one may

*instigate* or *incite* others to a crime in the commission of which he himself takes no active part.

A clergyman will *advocate* the claims of justice, *aid* the poor, *encourage* the despondent, *help* the needy, *support* the weak, *uphold* the constituted authorities; but he will not *incite* to a quarrel, *instigate* a riot, *abet* a crime, or *countenance* wrong-doing. To *promote* is to advance someone or something, or to *encourage*; to *embolden* is to make bold or brave by *encouraging*. See **help**; **support**.

**ANTONYMS:** *baffle, confound, counteract, denounce, deter, disapprove, disconcert, discourage, dissuade, expose, frustrate, hinder, impede, obstruct.*

## ABEYANCE

adjournment	expectancy	intermission	reservation
discontinuance	expectation	interruption	suspense
dormancy	inaction	quiescence	suspension

The words in this list, except *discontinuance* which may be final or temporary, denote cessation of activity with expectation or possibility of resumption. A title to property, when in *abeyance*, is likely to be revived if a lawful owner appears; a claim or a measure is held in *abeyance* with distinct purpose of pressing it should occasion arise. *Expectancy* or *expectation*, in this connection, is *abeyance* viewed from the standpoint of one who expects to attain possession; as, an estate in *expectancy*.

*Dormancy* denotes a state of suspended animation like that of a hibernating animal; a law which is in *dormancy* may be again enforced, but always with a prejudice against it, because custom has held its non-enforcement to be tantamount to an unwritten repeal. *Inaction* may be habitual; as, the slothful man wastes his life in *inaction*; or it may be temporary; as, the *inaction* of an army while awaiting the moment to strike, or the *inaction* of a volcano which is not extinct. *Intermission* points to expected, or perhaps calculated, resumption, and may be frequently or regularly repeated; as, the *intermissions* of remittent fever, the *intermission* of artillery fire, or the *intermission* between sessions of a school or of a deliberative assembly.

*Intermission* is from within; *interruption* from without; *intermission* may be natural or voluntary; *interruption* is enforced by some disturbing cause; as, the *interruption* of a religious service by rioters. *Quiescence* is closely allied to *inaction*; but while *inaction* denotes lack of activity, *quiescence* denotes lack of disturbing symptoms of activity, as agitation, excitement, or commotion. The *reservation* of a right or claim maintains it in full force, entitling the party so reserving to press it at any time; mental *reservation* consists in hold-



ing unspoken some condition or qualification which, if uttered, would seem to change the whole character of some statement or promise.

*Suspension* is temporary, usually for a stated period, and is ordinarily by authority, as the *suspension* of an officer from command, under charges, or the *suspension* of a student from college; *suspension* of payment is in theory temporary, but is in fact so often final as to be closely allied to bankruptcy; *suspension* of sentence, pending good behavior, is now frequently allowed on conviction of minor offenses. *Suspense*, as compared here, is temporary cessation.

**ANTONYMS:** *action, enforcement, enjoyment, exercise, force, operation, possession, renewal, resuscitation, revival.*

## ABHOR

abominate	detest	displease	loathe	scorn
despise	dislike	hate	nauseate	shun

*Abhor* is stronger than *despise*, implying a shuddering recoil, especially a moral recoil. *Detest* expresses indignation, with something of contempt. *Loathe* implies disgust, physical or moral. We *abhor* a traitor, *despise* a coward, *detest* a liar. We *dislike*, or are *displeased* by, an uncivil person. We *abhor* cruelty, *hate* tyranny. We *loathe* a reptile or a flatterer. We *abhor* Milton's heroic Satan, but we cannot *despise* him. We *scorn* what we hold in contempt; we *shun* what we *dislike* and do not want to meet; we *abominate* what we intensely *loathe*. If something disgusts us, makes us feel sick, it *nauseates* us.

To *hate*, in its strict sense, is to regard with such extreme aversion as to feel a desire to destroy or injure the object of hatred; properly employed it should be the strongest word for the expression of aversion, but it is often loosely used with no stronger meaning than to *dislike*, as well as for any other of the above words.

**ANTONYMS:** *admire, approve, covet, crave, desire, enjoy, esteem, like, love, relish.*

## ABIDE

await	endure	remain	stop
bear	expect	reside	tarry
bide	inhabit	rest	tolerate
confront	live	sojourn	wait (for)
continue	lodge	stay	watch
dwell			

To *abide* is to *remain* continuously without limit of time unless expressed by the context: "today I must *abide* at thy house," *Luke* xix, 5. *Abide* often

includes endurance; as, I can't *abide* a liar. *Lodge*, *sojourn*, *stay*, *tarry*, and *wait* always imply a limited time; *lodge*, to pass the night; *sojourn*, to remain temporarily; *live*, *dwell*, *reside*, to have a permanent home. *Stop*, in the sense of *stay* or *sojourn*, is colloquial. *Await* is to wait for someone or something; *bide* is to await expectantly, or, colloquially, to tarry. *Bear*, *tolerate*, and *endure* refer to long continued suffering, annoyance, etc. We *confront* people or problems when we meet them face to face. See *endure*.

**ANTONYMS:** *abandon*, *avoid*, *depart*, *forfeit*, *forfend*, *journey*, *migrate*, *move*, *proceed*, *reject*, *resist*, *shun*.

**PREPOSITIONS:** Abide *in* a place, *for* a time, *with* a person, *by* a statement.

## ABOLISH

abate	eradicate	prohibit	stamp out
abrogate	exterminate	remove	subvert
annihilate	extirpate	repeal	supplant
annul	nullify	reverse	suppress
cancel	obliterate	revoke	terminate
destroy	overthrow	set aside	void
end			

*Abolish*, to do away with, bring absolutely to an end, especially as something hostile, hindering, or harmful, was formerly used of persons and material objects, a usage now obsolete except in poetry or highly figurative speech. *Abolish* is now used of institutions, customs, and conditions, especially those widespread and long existing; as, to *abolish* slavery, ignorance, intemperance, poverty. A building that is burned to the ground is said to be *destroyed* by fire. *Annihilate* signifies to put absolutely out of existence, with no possibility of being revived or restored. An army is *annihilated*. Some believe that the wicked will be *annihilated*. *Annul* is used generally of actions or agreements; a contract may be *annulled* by an action that *voids* it.

*Abolish* is not said of laws. There we use *repeal*, *abrogate*, *nullify*, etc.; *repeal* by the enacting body, *nullify* by revolutionary proceedings; a later statute *abrogates*, without formally *repealing*, any earlier law with which it conflicts. An appellate court may *reverse* or *set aside* the decision of an inferior court.

*Cancel*, as commonly used, refers to an action that invalidates or *nullifies* something; as, to *cancel* an order.

*Overthrow* may be used in either a good or a bad sense; *suppress* is commonly in a good, *subvert* always in a bad, sense; as, to *subvert* our liberties; to *suppress* a rebellion. The law *prohibits* what may never have existed; it

*abolishes* an existing evil. We *abate* a nuisance, *terminate* a controversy. See *cancel*; *demolish*; *end verb*; *exterminate*; *overthrow*; *prohibit*.

**ANTONYMS:** *authorize, cherish, confirm, continue, enact, establish, institute, introduce, legalize, promote, reinstate, renew, repair, restore, revive, set up, support, sustain.*

## ABOMINATION

abhorrence	detestation	horror	pest
abuse	disgust	iniquity	plague
annoyance	evil	loathing	shame
aversion	execration	nuisance	villainy
crime	hatred	offense	wickedness
curse			

*Abomination* was originally applied to anything held in religious or ceremonial *aversion* or *abhorrence*; now it is applied to any person or thing which provokes *loathing* or *disgust*. The word is oftener applied to the object of such *aversion* or *abhorrence* than to the state of mind that so regards it. Choice food may be an object of *aversion* and *disgust* to a sick person; vile food would be an *abomination*. A toad is to many an object of *disgust*; a foul sewer is an *abomination*. As applied to crimes, *abomination* is used of such as are especially brutal, shameful, or revolting; theft is an *offense*; infanticide is an *abomination*.

A *nuisance* may be simply a source of *annoyance*, or it may cause actual damage or harm. *Pest* and *plague* designate epidemic disease; *plague* also is used to denote any generally blighting occurrence, while *pest* often is used, in a milder sense, to apply to someone or something which is a great *nuisance*. See *antipathy*; *chagrin*; *fear*; *hatred*; *injury*; *injustice*; *oath*; *sin*.

**ANTONYMS:** *affection, appreciation, approval, benefit, blessing, delight, desire, enjoyment, esteem, gratification, joy, satisfaction, treat.*

## ABOUND

flourish	luxuriate	prevail	stream	swell
flow	overflow	revel	swarm	teem

To *abound* signifies to *overflow*, to exist, possess, or produce in generous surplus beyond demand or need; to be abundant; luxuriant, numerous, plentiful, or plentiful, or to possess, produce, or furnish in profusion. To *teem* means to be plentifully supplied with; as, the city *teems* with people. *Luxuriate* applies to profusion in growth, as of plants; *flourish* is a general term and

applies to people, conditions, vegetation, etc. To *swarm* is to congregate in large numbers crowded together: said of insects, persons, animals, and things. To *stream* is to issue forth in continuous succession, as a crowd. In this connection, to *prevail* is to extend widely; to *revel* is to indulge freely in, as in freedom. Compare *plentiful*.

**ANTONYMS:** *be deficient, be destitute, be lacking, be wanting, fail, lack, need, want.*

## ABOVE

**on**

**over**

**upon**

*Above* is the most inclusive of these prepositions. It can ordinarily be substituted for *on*, *upon*, or *over*; as, the boards were piled one *on* or *upon* another (one *above* another); the hawk flies *over* the wood (*above* the wood). But it will be seen that while *above* is more inclusive, it is less definite; the boards laid one *on* another are in contact, but when laid one *above* another, they may not touch. *Over* often contains an intimation, while it may be slight, of extension or motion across, while *above* may simply imply greater elevation. If we say, the mountain towers *above* the plain, we think only of its height; but if we say, the mountain towers *over* the plain, we think of the plain as in the shadow of the mountain and dominated by it. So we say the mountain is 7,000 feet *above* the sea, where it would be impossible to say 7,000 feet *over* the sea. *Upon* is practically identical with *on*, both in meaning and use, preference for the former being sometimes based on euphony. *Upon* in many connections is somewhat more formal or dignified than *on*, and is also common when motion into position is involved, *on* being then used when merely rest or support is indicated; as, he got *upon* the roof and sat *on* the ridge.

**ANTONYMS:** See synonyms for *beneath*.

## ABRIDGMENT

**abbreviation**

**abstract**

**analysis**

**compend**

**compendium**

**digest**

**epitome**

**outline**

**précis**

**summary**

**synopsis**

An *abridgment* gives the most important portions of a work, usually a book, substantially as they stand. An *outline* or *synopsis* is a kind of sketch closely following the plan. An *abstract* or *digest* is an independent statement of what the book contains. An *analysis* draws out the chief thoughts or arguments, whether expressed or implied. A *summary* is the most condensed statement of results or conclusions. A *précis* is a concise, brief *summary* of the ideas and points of view of a book or an article. An *abbreviation* is a shortening, usually of a single word. An *epitome*, *compend*, or *compendium* is a condensed view

of a subject, whether derived from a previous publication or not. We may have an *abridgment* of a dictionary, but not an *analysis*, *abstract*, *digest*, or *summary*. We may have an *epitome* of religion, a *compendium* of English literature, but not an *abridgment*. An *abridgment* may also mean a curtailment, as of rights or privileges. See *abbreviation*.

## ABSCOND

<b>bolt</b>	<b>fly</b>	<b>run off</b>
<b>conceal oneself</b>	<b>hide</b>	<b>slip away</b>
<b>decamp</b>	<b>leave</b>	<b>steal away</b>
<b>depart</b>	<b>retire</b>	<b>steal off</b>
<b>disappear</b>	<b>retreat</b>	<b>take oneself off</b>
<b>flee</b>	<b>run away</b>	<b>withdraw</b>

To *abscond* is to *flee* and *hide* oneself for some discreditable reason, often for the illegal taking of money. To *decamp*, literally to "break camp," march off, usually signifies to *depart* suddenly, secretly, or unceremoniously, implying danger of attack, discovery, restraint, or pursuit; a traveler might *decamp* in fear of lurking robbers or enemies, or soldiers on the discovery of a superior force; but, as good reasons for such withdrawal seldom arise, *decamp* has, on the whole, an unfavorable implication.

To *flee* implies an abrupt departure, often with the additional connotation of complete disappearance, especially when used of things. The use of *fly* as a synonym of *flee* is restricted to the present tense; as, those who *fly* may fight again; he *fled* to the hills.

All the other words of the list may have favorable meaning, the context alone determining whether the act is worthy or unworthy. To *bolt* is to start off suddenly at full sped in defiance of restraint, like a frightened or vicious horse, as a "bolt" is shot from a bow or a gun. A student *leaves* home for college; a traveler *departs* on his journey; a passer-by *disappears* in the crowd (as a hunted thief may also do); a prisoner of war may *bolt* from his guards; one may *flee* for good or bad reason.

A slave may *run away* from his master, *run off* from a plantation; a public man may *hide* from reporters, or a criminal from the police; one may *retire* or *withdraw* from observation for good reasons or bad; an army *retires* or *retreats* from an untenable position or before a superior force; one may *slip away* from a company he does not wish to break up, *slip away* or *steal away* from a sleeping invalid, whom he would not disturb, *slip away* denoting merely quietness, *steal away* adding the idea of something furtive. See *hide*.

**ANTONYMS:** *appear, arrive, be present, come into view, emerge, hold one's ground, hold one's place, present oneself, put in an appearance, reappear, remain, stand one's ground, stay.*

## ABSOLUTE

arbitrary	controlling	imperative	supreme
arrogant	despotic	imperious	tyrannical
authoritative	dictatorial	irresponsible	tyrannous
autocratic	dogmatic	lordly	unconditional
coercive	domineering	overbearing	unconditioned
compulsive	exacting	peremptory	unequivocal
compulsory	haughty	positive	unlimited

*Absolute* primarily signifies free from limitation by other authority; as, an *absolute* monarch. In this use, it does not necessarily carry any unfavorable sense, but as *absolute* power in human hands is generally abused, the unfavorable meaning predominates. *Arbitrary*, carrying an unfavorable connotation, means made or done at the whim or caprice of the agent. An *arbitrary* decision is one made without the guidance of those precedents and thoughtful consideration which accompany reasonable and consistent action. *Autocratic* usually refers to the assertion of the right to hold *absolute* power, as in speech or action. *Despotic*, *dictatorial*, and *tyrannical* refer to the actual exercise of that right. *Despotic* is commonly applied to a masterful or severe use of power, which is expressed more decidedly by *tyrannical*. *Irresponsible* power is not necessarily bad, but eminently dangerous; an executor or trustee should not be *irresponsible*; an *irresponsible* ruler is likely to be *tyrannical*. *Tyrannous* is more often used of things or qualities than of persons; as, *tyrannous* power.

*Authoritative* implies the right to claim authority; *imperative*, *peremptory*, and *positive* are used ordinarily in a good sense; as, an *authoritative* definition, an *imperative* demand, a *peremptory* command, *positive* instructions. *Imperious* signifies not only assuming a command, but determined to command and require implicit obedience. An *arrogant* demand is offensive by its tone of superiority; an *arbitrary* demand offends by its unreasonableness; an *imperious* disposition is liable to become *arbitrary* and *arrogant*. That which is *supreme* is exalted above others; as, the *supreme* court. See *authentic*; *dogmatic*; *infinite*; *perfect*.

**ANTONYMS:** *accountable, complaisant, compliant, conditional, constitutional, contingent, docile, ductile, gentle, humble, lenient, limited, lowly, meek, mild, responsible, submissive, yielding.*

## ABSOLVE

acquit	exculpate	forgive	pardon
clear	exempt	free	release
discharge	exonerate	liberate	set free

To *absolve*, in the strict sense, is to *set free* from any bond. One may be *absolved* from a promise by a breach of faith on the part of one to whom the

promise was made. To *absolve* from sins is formally to remit their condemnation and penalty, regarded as a bond upon the soul. To *exonerate* is to relieve of something regarded as a load or burden. To *exempt* is more restricted in meaning; to *exempt* a person is to *free* him from some legal or other burden to which everyone else in similar circumstances is subject. To *exculpate* is to *free* from blame in some trifling matter. To *acquit* of sin or crime is to *free* from the accusation of it, pronouncing one *guiltless*; the innocent are *rightfully acquitted*; the guilty may be mercifully *absolved*. See *pardon verb*.

**ANTONYMS:** *accuse, bind, charge, compel, condemn, convict, impeach, inculcate, obligate, oblige.*

**PREPOSITIONS:** One is *absolved from* (rarely *of*) a promise, a sin, etc.

## ABSORB

**assimilate**  
**consume**  
**drink in**

**drink up**  
**engross**  
**exhaust**

**imbibe**  
**suck up**  
**swallow**

**swallow up**  
**take in**  
**take up**

A fluid that is *absorbed* is taken up into the mass of the absorbing body, with which it may or may not permanently combine. Wood expands when it *absorbs* moisture, iron when it *absorbs* heat, the substance remaining perhaps otherwise substantially unchanged; quicklime, when it *absorbs* water, becomes a new substance with different qualities, hydrated or slaked lime. A substance is *consumed* which is destructively appropriated by some other substance, being, or agency, so that it ceases to exist or to be recognized as existing in its original condition; fuel is *consumed* in the fire, food in the body; *consume* is also applied to whatever is removed from the market for individual use; as, silk and woolen goods are *consumed*.

A great talker *engrosses* the conversation. A credulous person *swallows* the most preposterous statement. A busy student *imbibes* or *drinks in* knowledge; he is *absorbed* in a subject that takes his whole attention. *Imbibe* connotes drinking or breathing. A person can *imbibe* refreshing liquids or exhilarating air. *Assimilate* carries the idea of absorption, with the additional implication that the absorbed material is converted into the substance of the assimilating body. Food is *assimilated* by a living organism; a student *assimilates* knowledge.

**ANTONYMS:** *cast out, disgorge, disperse, dissipate, distract, eject, emit, exude, give up, put forth, radiate, send out, shoot forth, throw off, vomit.*

**PREPOSITIONS:** Plants absorb moisture *from* the air; the student is absorbed *in* thought; nutriment may be absorbed *into* the system *through* the skin.

## ABSTINENCE

abstemiousness	continence	moderation	self-restraint
abstaining	fasting	self-control	sobriety
abstention	frugality	self-denial	temperance

*Abstinence* from food commonly signifies going without; *abstemiousness*, partaking moderately; *abstinence* may be for a single occasion, *abstemiousness* is habitual *moderation*. *Self-denial* is giving up what one wishes; *abstinence* may be refraining from what one does not desire. *Fasting* is *abstinence* from food for a limited time, and generally for religious reasons. *Sobriety* and *temperance* signify maintaining a quiet, even temper by moderate indulgence in some things, complete *abstinence* from others. We speak of *temperance* in eating, but of *abstinence* from vice. Total *abstinence* has come to signify the entire *abstaining* from intoxicating liquors. *Continence* denotes *self-restraint* with regard to one's desires or appetites. *Frugality* is a careful *moderation* in expenditure. See *frugality*.

**ANTONYMS:** *drunkenness, excess, gluttony, greed, intemperance, intoxication, reveling, revelry, self-indulgence, sensuality, wantonness.*

**PREPOSITIONS:** The negative side of virtue is *abstinence from* vice.

## ABSTRACT

appropriate	distract	purloin	steal
detach	divert	remove	take away
discriminate	eliminate	separate	withdraw
distinguish			

The central idea of withdrawing makes *abstract* in common speech a euphemism for *appropriate* (unlawfully), *purloin*, *steal*. In mental processes we *discriminate* between objects by *distinguishing* their differences; we *separate* some one element from all that does not necessarily belong to it, *abstract* it, and view it alone. We may *separate* two ideas, and hold both in mind in comparison or contrast; but when we *abstract* one of them, we drop the other out of thought. The mind is *abstracted* when it is *withdrawn* from all other subjects and concentrated upon one, *diverted* when it is drawn away from what it would or should attend to by some other interest, *distracted* when the attention is divided among different subjects, so that it cannot be given properly to any. To *detach* something is to isolate it by breaking or removing all connections or bonds; one may *detach* a flower from its stem; a detached platoon is one *separated* from its company or troop.



**ANTONYMS:** *add, combine, complete, conjoin, fill up, increase, restore, strengthen, unite.*

**PREPOSITIONS:** The purse may be abstracted *from* the pocket; the substance *from* the accidents; a book *into* a compend.

## ABSTRACTED

absent	distraught	indifferent	oblivious
absent-minded	heedless	listless	preoccupied
absorbed	inattentive	negligent	thoughtless
distract			

As regards mental action, *abstracted*, *absorbed*, and *preoccupied* refer to the cause, *absent* or *absent-minded* to the effect. The man *absorbed* in one thing will appear *absent* in others, because his thoughts are elsewhere. The *heedless* worker may become *negligent* if he is *inattentive* to details. A *pre-occupied* person may seem *listless* and *thoughtless*, but the really *listless* and *thoughtless* have not mental energy to be *preoccupied*. The *absent-minded* man is *oblivious* of ordinary matters, because his thoughts are elsewhere. One who is *preoccupied* is intensely busy in thought; one may be *absent-minded* either through intense concentration or simply through inattention, with fitful and aimless wandering of thought. *Distraught* and its French equivalent, *distract*, carry the same meaning as *abstracted*. *Distract* is often used to describe a mood or disposition; as, her *distract* manner betrayed her preoccupation with these affairs. Compare *abstract*.

**ANTONYMS:** *alert, attentive, on hand, prompt, ready, thoughtful, wide-awake.*

## ABSURD

anomalous	ill-considered	ludicrous	ridiculous
chimerical	ill-judged	mistaken	senseless
erroneous	inconclusive	monstrous	silly
false	incorrect	nonsensical	stupid
foolish	infatuated	paradoxical	unreasonable
ill-advised	irrational	preposterous	wild

That is *absurd* which is contrary to the first principles of reasoning; as, that a part should be greater than the whole is *absurd*. A *paradoxical* statement appears at first thought contradictory or *absurd*, while it may be really true. Anything is *irrational* when clearly contrary to sound reason, *foolish* when contrary to practical good sense, *silly* when petty and contemptible in its folly, *erroneous* when containing error that vitiates the result, *unreasonable* when there seems a perverse bias or an intent to go wrong.

*Monstrous* and *preposterous* refer to what is overwhelmingly *absurd*. *Pre-*