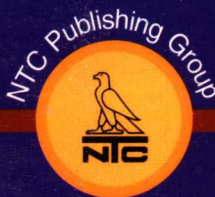


NTC 美语学习词典

NTC'S AMERICAN ENGLISH LEARNER'S DICTIONARY

[美] R. A. 斯皮尔斯



世界图书出版公司

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Richard A. Spears

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序

《NTC 美语学习词典》(下称《NTC 词典》)由美国 NTC(National Textbook Company)出版集团在 1998 年首次发行,主编为斯皮尔斯(Richard A. Spears)博士。这本词典出版后,立即受到世界图书出版公司北京公司的重视,经与 NTC 出版集团签约,共同出版面向国内读者的《NTC 词典》中国版。

应该说,近数十年来英美国国家出版的英英词典为数不少,品种多样。在群雄纷争的辞书王国中要获得一席之地,没有一定的实力和水平是难以想象的。那么,《NTC 词典》有何特色呢?

首先,《NTC 词典》的定位非常明确,即向已达到初级或中级水平的英语学习者提供“美国语言和文化的基本词汇”,使学习者在使用本词典过程中,进一步习得和提高有关美国英语的知识和实际使用能力。

在这个思想指导下,本词典共含 22,000 个主词条,35,000 个义项。对于英语学习者来说,词条和义项的数量是相当充裕的。每个义项都注明读音、词性、释义、附注,并列举至少 2 个采自实际语篇的但通俗易懂的例句(斜体,以◆引导),共 72,000 个例句。学习者即使不看用词已经大大浅化的释义,也能从例句所提供的语境抓住该词的大意和用法。除单词词条外,词典还提供“习语和短语索引”和“地名索引”两个附录。前者通过对某词条所注明的中心词在词典本文中查阅;后者附有约 450 个世界主要地名的读音和地图。

我们知道,美国的英语词典一般采用美式的注音系统,如 afraid 这个词有的标为 [əfrəd],有的标为 [ə'freɪd],而不是我们习惯的 [ə'freɪd]。考虑到海外英语学习者一般对国际音标更为熟悉,《NTC 词典》采用了国际音标,使学习者驾轻就熟,不必从头学习另一套注音系统。其次,本词典在注音时,每个音节都保留一定间隔,便于学习者分辨各个音节的界限,如 aforementioned 这个词的读音为 [ə'for mən fənd],四个音节的分辨一目了然。

英语学习者最头疼的是英语某些词类的不规则变化。在阅读过程中碰到一些不规则变化的名词或动词,要从词典找到其原形的解释和用法有时是很困难的。《NTC 词典》的优点便是将这些词语的不规则形式单列词条,便于查询,如名词 ox 的复数 oxen,动词 abide 的过去式和过去分词的不规则形式 abode,形容词 good 的比较级和最高级 better 和 best 等都可直接从词条进入。

为方便学习者,本词典力避繁琐,在简便实用上下工夫。因此,编者在本词典中对所用代码和术语严格控制,总共 48 条。除常见的词性缩略标记,如 tv. (及物动词)、iv. (不及物动词)、adj. (形容词)、n. (名词)等外,有些注解以短语缩略形式表示,如对不可数名词 information 和 advice 在附注中以“No plural form in this sense”(此词义无复数形式)示意,其它附注有“not prenominal”(不置于名词前)、“prenominal only”(仅置于名词前)和“Treated as plural”(作为多数)等。对一些短语动词以“tv. + adv.”(及物动词+副词)、“tv. + prep. phr.”(及物动词+介词短语)表示,这保证了版面的清晰和查阅的快捷。

综上所述,本词典是一部名副其实的供英语学习者使用的词典。对英语教师和英语工作者来说,案头备上这么一部工具书,定会得心应手。

胡壮麟

北京大学英语系

1998 年 6 月

How to Use This Dictionary

If you are looking for an idiom or a phrase, look first in the Idioms and Phrases Index on page 1049.

Single words should be looked up in the body of the dictionary.

Most of the entry words in the dictionary have more than one sense. Study all the relevant senses to make sure you have found the right one.

Nouns that do not follow the regular spelling rules in the formation of the plural are marked *irreg.*, and the form of the plural is given in the entry.

Verbs that do not follow the regular rules for the formation of the past tense and past participle are marked *irreg.*, and the proper forms are given in the entry.

The comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs are listed when there are special forms—as with *red*, *redder*, *reddest*—that replace, or that exist in addition to, the comparatives and superlatives formed with *more* and *most*.

When looking up an adverb, always check for a related adjective entry as well as for a main entry for the adverb itself. Adverbs, especially those created from adjectives by adding the suffix *-ly*, are sometimes listed under related senses of the adjective. Special or important senses of such adverbs sometimes have separate entries.

After many of the definitions, you will find comments—enclosed in parentheses—containing further information about the entry word.

You will often find it informative to consult the examples before reading the definitions. In many instances, the linguistic context available in the example sentences will provide valuable clues to the understanding of the word or sense that you are consulting.

Keep in mind that the goal in using a monolingual learner's dictionary is not only to find the meanings of specific words, but also to develop the skills needed to acquire new words and senses of words from their actual use in context.

Useful Spelling Rules

The following basic spelling rules equip the learner to create and identify the most important derived and inflected forms of regular English nouns and verbs. Words that have important irregular forms that do not follow these rules are identified in the dictionary.

REGULAR VERB FORMS

Note: Many verbs that have irregular past-tense forms or irregular past participles nevertheless form the present tense and the present participle regularly.

For the third-person singular (the form used with *he, she, it*, and singular nouns) in the present tense:

- ♦ Add *-s* to the bare verb. (If the bare verb ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, change *y* to *ie* and then add *-s*. If the bare verb ends in *s, z, x, ch*, or *sh*, add *-es*.)

like	Bill likes
cry	the baby cries
walk	Anne walks
buy	the man buys
carry	a truck carries
fix	she fixes
pass	it passes
notify	he notifies
catch	she catches

For the past tense and the past participle:

- ♦ Add *-ed* to the bare verb. (If the bare verb ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, change *y* to *i* before adding *-ed*. If the bare verb ends in *e*, just add *-d*.)

walk	walked
like	liked
judge	judged
try	tried
carry	carried
measure	measured

For the present participle:

- ♦ Add *-ing* to the bare verb. (If the bare verb ends in a single *e* preceded either by a consonant or by *u*, drop the *e* before adding *-ing*. If the bare verb ends in *ie*, change *ie* to *y* before adding *-ing*.)

judge	judging
take	taking
ask	asking
carry	carrying
pay	paying
pursue	pursuing
hoe	hoeing
see	seeing
go	going
lie	lying

Doubling of consonants in participles and past-tense forms:

- ♦ When *-ed* or *-ing* is added to a word that ends in a consonant (other than *h, w, x*, or *y*) preceded by a single vowel, if the syllable containing these is stressed, then the consonant is normally doubled. Thus *commit* and *control*, which are accented on the last syllable, become *committed* and *controlling*, but *limit* and *cancel*, which are accented on the first syllable, become *limited* and *canceled*. Similarly, *stop* becomes *stopping*, but *look*, in which the consonant is preceded by two vowels, becomes *looking*.
- ♦ Within the dictionary, forms that do not follow these doubling rules are noted or illustrated in individual entries. Outside the dictionary, learners will encounter other exceptions, as well as some variation, because sometimes another option, although less familiar in American English, is also correct. The most typical exceptions to the doubling rules are words with a final *c* that becomes *ck* rather than doubling, verbs that are compounds, and verbs with closely related noun senses or more than one pronunciation.

REGULAR NOUN PLURALS

To form the plural of a regular noun:

- ♦ If the singular ends in *s*, *z*, *x*, *ch*, or *sh*, add *-es*.

kiss	kisses
box	boxes
match	matches
dish	dishes
bus	buses

- ♦ If the singular ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, change *y* to *ie* and then add *-s*.

baby	babies
library	libraries
university	universities
butterfly	butterflies

- ♦ For nouns ending in *o*, the regular plural may be formed by adding *-es* or by adding *-s*. For some words, both spellings are possible. In this dictionary, each entry for a noun ending in *o* specifies the correct plural form or forms for that word.

radio	radios
potato	potatoes
tornado	tornados <i>or</i> tornadoes

- ♦ For all other regular nouns, add *-s* to the singular to form the plural.

table	tables
boy	boys
television	televisions
valley	valleys

About This Dictionary

The dictionary is alphabetized letter by letter—ignoring spaces, hyphens, and punctuation. The format of the main entry is very simple. There are essentially six parts to an entry: entry word, pronunciation guide, part of speech, definition, comments, and examples. When a main entry has more than one sense, the pronunciation guide is not repeated for each numbered sense unless one or more of the senses is pronounced differently. In that case, every numbered sense is provided with a pronunciation guide. Where a word has one or more irregular forms, such as an irregular past tense or past participle for a verb, those forms are listed as a comment for the first or only sense of the word and are not repeated for each of the senses. Each sense with irregular forms is marked *irreg.*, however.

Main entries and words or expressions that are the equivalent of main entries are in **boldface sans-serif type**. Entry words that are cited or referred to in the text are in **lighter sans-serif type**. Putting a word in lighter sans-serif type carries with it the suggestion that the user would benefit from consulting the word that is printed in this way. Other words or phrases that are cited are placed in *italic type*. Putting a word in italic type does not carry with it the suggestion that the user consult the word. Examples are preceded by the symbol ♦ and are in *italic type*. Words, phrases, numbers, and symbols cited within the examples may appear in quotes or in roman type—not following any particular style.

The parts of speech used here are transitive verb, intransitive verb, adjectival, nominal, adverb, conjunction, preposition, article, and pronoun. Other labels are also used: idiom, phrase, interrogative, interjection, prefix, suffix, infinitive, auxiliary verb, and contraction. All grammar terms and parts of speech are defined and illustrated as regular entries in the dictionary. Phrasal verbs are labeled as transitive or intransitive verbs plus adverbs, e.g., *tv. + adv.* Verbs that take a prepositional phrase are labeled as transitive or intransitive verbs plus prepositional phrases, e.g.,

tv. + prep. phr. Patterns of this type are listed as separate senses of the verb. Phrases and idioms are placed within the main entries that offer the most semantic and formal clues to understanding them. An index at the end of the dictionary allows users to find, by looking up almost any word in a phrase or idiom, the main entry under which the phrase or idiom has been placed.

The word *something* is used in entry phrases and definitions to refer to any thing or object. The word *someone* is used to refer to any person. Sometimes *some creature* is used to emphasize that what is referred to can be a living creature other than a human. Great care has been taken to indicate which English transitive verbs take *someone* or *something* or both as an object. *One* is used in entries, definitions, and examples to refer to a hypothetical person or hypothetical persons whose sex is irrelevant. The pronouns *they*, *them*, and *their* are used only for plural antecedents.

The phrase “No plural form in this sense” is used to label noun senses that are not normally counted. This is an aid in helping learners avoid saying or writing such things as *informations* or *advices*. These are sometimes called noncount nouns, and they include a variety of subclasses of nouns. The actual explanations of semantic subclasses of nouns are too complicated for inclusion in a dictionary of this type. In many instances, there are senses of such nouns that can be made plural. The most commonly occurring senses are entries in this dictionary. Entries that are nouns in this dictionary may have additional senses that can be made plural or additional senses that must not be made plural. In some instances, suggestions are made as to how number is expressed.

Material enclosed in square brackets, [like this], is often included to clarify or limit a definition. This material is not part of the definition, but it is essential to understanding it. Some definitions are enclosed in angled brackets, <like this>. These brackets are used to enclose definitions that really describe the entry word instead of providing an equivalent for it.

A numeral enclosed in a circle, like ① or ②, is a sense number. When a number in a circle follows a word in lighter sans-serif type, as in **word** ③, it refers to the specific numbered sense of the word in lighter sans-serif type. That is, **word** ③ means the third sense of the entry **word**. A number in a circle with no word in lighter sans-serif type preceding it refers to a numbered sense within the same entry.

Many nouns can function as adjectives when they are placed before other nouns, as in *house dress*. This is a general feature of English nouns. Noun entries have been provided with separate adjectival senses only when it seems useful to do so.

Comments about a word or sense are con-

tained in parentheses and follow the definition of the word or sense. Parentheses are also used to enclose material that is optional. In ['kæb (ə) nət], the [ə] is optional—that is, the word can be pronounced ['kæb ə nət] or ['kæb nət]. In the entry **migraine (headache)**, the word *headache* is optional—that is, the entry stands for both **migraine headache** and **migraine**, which have the same meaning in this particular sense. The idioms **settle** and **settle something** and **settle out of court** and **settle something out of court** are reduced to one entry through the use of parentheses: **settle (something) (out of court)**. Sometimes what is optional may be a single letter in a word; for example, **toward(s)** stands for both **toward** and **towards**.

Terms and Abbreviations

① ② ③, etc., are sense numbers. When they follow a word in special type that looks like this, they refer to an entry word outside the entry in which they are used. When there is no word in special type, they refer to senses within the entry in which they are used.

adj. adjectival.

adv. adverb.

AND follows an entry word and introduces a related or variant form of the entry word.

article a small word, such as *a*, *an*, or *the*, that comes before a noun.

aux. auxiliary verb.

colloquial means that the word or phrase is primarily spoken or is used more often in a spoken style than in a written style.

comp comparative.

compare with means to consider the differences in use or meaning between the entry word and the word or numbered sense that follows **compare with**.

conj. conjunction.

cont. contraction.

derogatory refers to words that are insulting or disparaging to someone or something.

euphemism is a word or expression that seems to be more polite or less offensive than another possible word choice.

figurative on indicates which numbered sense a figurative word or expression is based on.

formal refers to vocabulary that appears most often in writing or in polite use among educated people.

idiom is a phrase or expression that must be interpreted in a special, nonliteral way.

inf. infinitive.

informal refers to vocabulary that is casual and not used in more formal writing.

interj. interjection.

interrog. interrogative.

irreg. irregular; refers to nouns that have plural forms that do not follow the regular rules of plural formation or to verbs whose past tense and/or past participle forms do not follow the regular rules.

iv. intransitive verb.

juvenile refers to the kinds of words or expressions that are typically used by children.

n. nominal or noun.

No plural form in this sense. means that the noun in this sense is not normally counted when it has this meaning. Usually when it is possible to make such a noun plural, it has a different meaning; for example, it might mean a number of *types* of things rather than a number of things.

not prenominal refers to an adjective that does not occur before a noun.

on refers to the form from which an **idiom** is derived.

phr. phrase.

pl plural.

pp past participle.

prefix is a form that has meaning and is attached to the beginnings of certain words.

prenominal only refers to an adjective that can only occur before a noun.

prep. preposition.

prep. phr. prepositional phrase.

pron. pronoun.

pt past tense.

pt/pp past tense and past participle.

see means go to the entry word or numbered sense that follows the word **see**.

see also means to consider the meaning or form of the entry word that follows **see also**.

See Gazetteer. means to look up the entry word in the Gazetteer that begins on page 1081.

slang refers to very informal vocabulary that is not normally used in writing except for special effects.

suffix is a form that has meaning and is attached to the ends of certain words.

sup superlative.

term of address refers to a word or phrase that can be used as if it were someone's name.

Treated as plural. refers to a word that is treated as if it were plural even if its form is singular.

Treated as singular. refers to a word that is treated as if it were singular even if its form is plural.

Treated as singular or plural. refers to a word that can be treated as if it were singular or as if it were plural.

tv. transitive verb.

Pronunciation

The symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet are used to show the pronunciation of the words in this dictionary. The speech represented here is that of educated people, but it is not formal or overly precise. It is more representative of the West and the middle of the country than of the East, South, or upper Midwest.

Pronunciation of American English is variable in different regions of the country, but most native speakers of American English can understand one another quite well.

The goal of the pronunciation scheme is to provide the student with one acceptable model of pronunciation for each entry. Where the numbered senses of an entry are all pronounced the same way, the phonetic representation follows the main entry word. In entries where *even one* of the

numbered senses is pronounced differently from the rest, all the senses are provided with a phonetic representation.

Sounds represented here as [or] are often pronounced as [ɔr] in some parts of the East. Similarly, the sequence [ɛr] is often pronounced [æɹ] in parts of the East. One heavy stress is marked for each word. The dictionary user should expect to hear variation in the pronunciation of most of the words listed in this or any dictionary, but should remain confident that the model provided here is understood and accepted in all parts of the country.

The chart on the opposite page shows the symbols used here and what they correspond to in some simple English words.

[ɑ] { stop top	[ʌ] { nut shut	[n] { new funny	[θ] { thin faith
[æ] { sat track	[ɜ̃] { bird turtle	[ŋ] { bring thing	[u] { food blue
[aʊ] { cow now	[f] { feel if	[o] { coat wrote	[ʊ] { put look
[aɪ] { bite my	[g] { get frog	[oɪ] { spoil boy	[v] { save van
[b] { beet bubble	[h] { hat who	[ɔ] { caught yawn	[w] { well wind
[d] { dead body	[i] { feet leak	[p] { tip pat	[ʌ] { wheel while
[ð] { that those	[ɪ] { bit hiss	[r] { rat berry	[z] { fuzzy zoo
[dʒ] { jail judge	[j] { yellow you	[s] { sun fast	[ʒ] { pleasure treasure
[e] { date sail	[k] { can keep	[ʃ] { fish sure	[ˈ] { 'water ho'tel
[ɛ] { get set	[l] { lawn yellow	[t] { top pot	
[ə] { above around	[m] { family slam	[tʃ] { cheese pitcher	

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A AND a 1. ['e] *n.* the first letter of the alphabet. ♦ *A comes before all other letters in the Latin alphabet.* ♦ *The word art begins with an a.* 2. **A** ['e] *n.* the first in a series; the highest grade. ♦ *John earned an A in algebra.* ♦ *I chose category A.* 3. ['e, ə] *article one; any.* (See the note at *an*.) ♦ *Please give me a dollar.* ♦ *I will talk to you in a minute.* 4. ['e, ə] *article each; every; per.* (See the note at *an*.) ♦ *This apartment costs nine hundred dollars a month.* ♦ *Bill drinks five cups of coffee a day.*

aardvark ['ɑrd vɑrk] *n.* an insect-eating animal of southern Africa, with claws and a long, sticky tongue. (From Afrikaans for 'earth pig'.) ♦ *Our zoo has a pair of aardvarks.* ♦ *Aardvarks are active only at night.*

abandon [ə 'bæn dən] *tv.* to leave someone or something and not return; to desert someone or something. ♦ *The crew abandoned the sinking ship.* ♦ *The cat abandoned its kittens.*

abandoned [ə 'bæn dænd] *adj.* left behind; deserted. ♦ *The abandoned ship drifted aimlessly through the seas.* ♦ *The abandoned kittens were hungry and frightened.*

abbreviate [ə 'briv i et] *tv.* to make something shorter, especially a word. ♦ *I asked my teacher how to abbreviate the word secretary.* ♦ *To save space, I abbreviated as many words as I could.*

abbreviation [ə briv i 'e fən] *n.* a shortened word or phrase that takes the place of the full word or phrase. ♦ *The abbreviation for North Dakota is N.D.* ♦ *What is the abbreviation for north?*

abdicate ['æb də ket] 1. *tv.* to leave a position of royal power; to give up one's authority or set aside one's duties. ♦ *The king abdicated the throne to marry a divorced commoner.* ♦ *The queen abdicated her royal responsibilities and fled the country.* 2. *iv.* to step down from a position of power, especially one of royalty. ♦ *The people were surprised to hear that the king had abdicated.* ♦ *The queen abdicated after her divorce.*

abdication [æb də 'ke fən] *n.* giving up a position of power, especially one of royalty. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *After the king's abdication, his son became the new ruler.* ♦ *Upon her abdication, the queen moved to another country.*

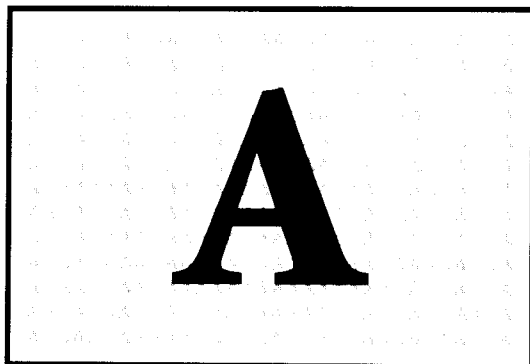
abdomen ['æb də mən] *n.* the part of the body between the chest and the legs and the internal organs within it. ♦ *The doctors cut into my abdomen to remove my appendix.* ♦ *The ball struck John in the abdomen, and he fell to the ground.*

abdominal [æb 'dɒm ə nəl] *adj.* relating to the abdomen. (Adv: *abdominally*.) ♦ *Anne had abdominal pains, so she went to the clinic.* ♦ *The doctors cleared an abdominal obstruction.*

abduct [æb 'dʌkt] *tv.* to kidnap someone or something; to illegally take someone or something away by force. ♦ *The pirates abducted the princess and hid her in a castle.* ♦ *The criminals abducted a child and demanded a large ransom.*

abduction [æb 'dʌk fən] *n.* the kidnapping of someone or something. ♦ *The abduction of the baby puzzled the police for years.* ♦ *The abductions were carried out in broad daylight.*

aberration [æb ə 're fən] *n.* a change or difference in someone or something from what is normal or expected.



♦ *Everyone noticed the aberration in John's behavior.* ♦ *The aberrations in the data puzzled the scientists.*

abeyance [ə 'be əns] **in abeyance** *phr.* in reserve. ♦ *Until the judge determined that the evidence could be used in the trial, it was held in abeyance.* ♦ *I kept my opinion in abeyance.*

abhor [əb 'hɔr] *tv.* to hate someone or something very much. ♦ *Jane abhorred lima beans.* ♦ *John abhorred his neighbors, so he moved.*

abhorrence [əb 'hɔr əns] *n.* disgust; intense hatred. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Susan could not conceal her abhorrence of the movie.* ♦ *John let his abhorrence of his nephew ruin the family gathering.*

abhorrent [əb 'hɔr ənt] *adj.* hateful; repellent; repulsive. (Adv: *abhorrently*.) ♦ *Bill was ashamed of his abhorrent treatment of Tom.* ♦ *Bill's abhorrent behavior shocked the community.*

abide [ə 'baɪd] 1. *iv., irreg.* to remain at a place or with someone. (Older English. Pt/pp: *abided* or *abode*.) ♦ *The prince chose to abide in France until the war at home was over.* ♦ *Come and abide with us at our house for a while.* 2. **abide by** *iv. + prep. phr.* to obey something; to follow rules; to satisfy one's obligations. ♦ *You must abide by the rules.* ♦ *I have to abide by the contract that I signed.* 3. *tv., irreg.* to tolerate or endure someone or something. (Usually negative. Rarely in the past tenses.) ♦ *I cannot abide sweet potatoes.* ♦ *"I cannot abide your behavior," the babysitter told the twins.*

ability [ə 'bɪl ə ti] 1. *n.* capability; the skill or power to do something. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Mike has the will but lacks ability of any kind.* ♦ *Lisa is someone who has great ability.* 2. *n.* a skill or power to do something. ♦ *I have a few abilities, but cooking is not one of them.* ♦ *John's swimming ability saved the drowning child.*

able ['e bəl] 1. *adj.* skilled; well qualified. (Adv: *ably*.) ♦ *Your able assistant can complete the project while you are on vacation.* ♦ *In his younger days, Bill was an able gymnast.* 2. **able to do something** *idiom* having the power or skill to do something. ♦ *I am able to read and write Spanish.* ♦ *Are you able to carry those bags by yourself?*

abnormal [æb 'nɔr məl] *adj.* not normal or usual; odd. (Adv: *abnormally*.) ♦ *The warm December weather in northern Canada was abnormal.* ♦ *There were a few abnormal oranges in the harvest.*

abnormality [æb nɔr 'mæl ə ti] *n.* something that is unusual or irregular. (Often refers to a physical defect.)

♦ The puppy was born with an abnormality in its tail. ♦ An abnormality in the data ruined the analysis.

aboard [ə 'bɔ:d] *prep.* on a ship, train, bus, or plane. ♦ Jane made many friends aboard the ship when she traveled to Greece. ♦ Aboard the bus, I found a five-dollar bill.

abode [ə 'bɒd] *a pt/pp of abide.*

abolish [ə 'bɒl ɪʃ] *tv.* to ban something; to get rid of something completely. ♦ When I am king, I will abolish taxes. ♦ The committee abolished all entry requirements.

abolition [æ bə 'lɪ ʃən] *n.* getting rid of something; banning something; making something illegal. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ The abolition of slavery was a moral victory. ♦ The abolition of the right to bear arms was contested bitterly.

abolitionist [æ bə 'lɪ ʃə nɒst] *n.* someone who wants to ban someone or something, especially slavery. ♦ The abolitionists made their voices heard in the legislature. ♦ John's ancestors were abolitionists before the Civil War.

abominable [ə 'bʌm (ə) nə bəl] *adj.* disgusting; horrible. (Adv: abominably.) ♦ Mary nearly choked on the abominable food. ♦ The weather was just abominable last winter.

abominate [ə 'bæm ə net] *tv.* to hate someone or something very much; to detest someone or something very much. ♦ I simply abominate long lectures. ♦ Those who abominate sentimentalism will dislike this film.

abomination [ə bʌm ə 'ne ʃən] *n.* someone or something that is hated, disgusting, or horrible. ♦ The protester said that war is an abomination that cannot be justified. ♦ Where did you get that ugly dress? It's an abomination!

abort [ə 'bɔ:t] **1.** *iv.* to give birth to a fetus before it can survive outside the womb. ♦ The pregnant woman aborted in the second month. ♦ Mary was advised to rest to avoid aborting. **2.** *tv.* to deliver a fetus before it can survive outside the womb. ♦ The presence of a hereditary disease made the couple decide to abort the fetus. ♦ The fetus was aborted in a clinic. **3.** *tv.* to stop something in the middle of a process; to end something prematurely. ♦ The rocket launch was aborted at the last minute. ♦ The bank aborted its effort to foreclose on our mortgage.

abortion [ə 'bɔ:r ʃən] **1.** *n.* the removal or expulsion of a fetus from the womb before it can survive outside. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ Abortion is sometimes used to save the mother's life. ♦ Abortion is controversial in the United States. **2.** *n.* an instance of ①. ♦ The abortion was carried out in an operating room. ♦ The pregnant woman considered having an abortion.

abound [ə 'baʊnd] **1.** *iv.* to be abundant. ♦ Opportunities for employment abound in the city. ♦ Fish abound wherever the water is clear. **2.** **abound with** *iv. + prep. phr.* to have a lot of something; to be full of something. ♦ The mountain streams abound with fish. ♦ Large cities abound with opportunities for employment.

about [ə 'baʊt] **1.** *prep.* regarding someone or something; concerning someone or something. ♦ Did you hear the news about Jane? ♦ In school we learned about World War II. **2.** *prep.* back and forth and here and there in a certain place. ♦ We walked about the house all afternoon during the storm. ♦ Bill drove about town, looking for Jane's house. **3.** *adv.* approximately; nearly. ♦ We left Jane's house about three o'clock. ♦ Our dog is about 12 years old. **4.** *adv.*

almost; not quite. ♦ I was about finished with dinner when I spilled my milk. ♦ Are you about done? **5.** **about to** *adv. + inf.* almost ready to do something. ♦ Bill was about to leave when the phone rang. ♦ Just when I was about to give up, I finally succeeded.

above [ə 'bʌv] **1.** *prep.* over—but not touching—someone or something. ♦ Put this painting above the other picture. ♦ The jar of money was on the shelf above the refrigerator. **2.** *prep.* greater than something. ♦ Ice will not melt unless it is above 32 degrees. ♦ If the price is above \$20, I don't want to buy it. **3.** *adv.* [written about or presented] previously [in the same written work or on the same page]. ♦ As noted above in section 2, the manager will not tolerate smoking. ♦ In the chart above, you can see the annual costs. **4.** *adv.* in or at a higher place; over. ♦ The sailor looked at the sky above. ♦ Above, the sun was covered with dark clouds. **5.** *adv.* of a greater amount. ♦ Only people five feet tall and above can ride the roller coaster. ♦ Only adults 21 and above may enter the bar.

aboveboard [ə 'bʌv bɔ:d] **1.** *adj.* honest; open to scrutiny. ♦ My lawyer is aboveboard at all times. ♦ Since the arrangement appeared to be aboveboard, I signed the papers. **2.** *adv.* openly; honestly. ♦ The lawyer practices his profession aboveboard at all times. ♦ The diplomat always dealt aboveboard during the negotiations.

abrade [ə 'breɪd] *tv.* to scrape something; to wear down something by rubbing it. ♦ The top of my shoe abraded my ankle. ♦ Many feet had abraded the threads of the worn carpet.

abrasion [ə 'bre ʒən] *n.* a scrape on a surface of something, especially skin. ♦ Bill received a few abrasions when he fell off his bicycle. ♦ The cool lotion soothed the abrasion on my elbow.

abrasive [ə 'bre sɪv] **1.** *adj.* rough; coarse. (Adv: abrasively.) ♦ The abrasive powder scratched the marble when the maid cleaned it. ♦ Sand is abrasive and will scratch wood floors. **2.** *adj.* offensive; provocative. (Figurative on ①. Adv: abrasively.) ♦ John's abrasive manner annoyed everyone in the room. ♦ Mary has an abrasive style of talking, so people avoid her. **3.** *n.* a rough, gritty substance used for polishing or cleaning. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ The cook used strong abrasive to clean the stains from the sink. ♦ I need more abrasive to clean this dirty counter.

abroad [ə 'brɔ:d] *adv.* in another country; overseas. ♦ Jane studied abroad her junior year. ♦ The Browns usually travel abroad in the summer.

abrupt [ə 'brʌpt] **1.** *adj.* sudden; unexpected. (Adv: abruptly.) ♦ The passengers were jolted when the train came to an abrupt halt. ♦ The mystery novel came to an abrupt end without explaining the crime. **2.** *adj.* rude; curt. (Adv: abruptly.) ♦ Jane was offended by the clerk's abrupt manner. ♦ Because our waiter was so abrupt, we only left him a small tip.

abscess ['æb ses] **1.** *n.* a swollen infection. ♦ The doctor drained the abscess on my ankle. ♦ My tooth hurt because of an abscess. **2.** *iv.* to become infected. ♦ Jane's tooth abscessed. ♦ If you don't clean the wound, it will abscess.

abscond [æb 'skʌnd] **1.** *iv.* to run away; to flee from capture or prosecution. ♦ The robber absconded through the back door. ♦ One of the cashiers quickly absconded just as the theft was discovered. **2.** **abscond with** *iv. + prep. phr.*

to flee with something, such as stolen goods; to kidnap someone. ♦ *The thief absconded with money taken in the robbery.* ♦ *The kidnapper absconded with the weeping child.*

absence ['æb səns] **1. n.** the quality of [someone's] not being present. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Absence from the ones you love causes sadness.* ♦ *After her death, her absence was sensed even by the family dog.* **2. n.** a period of time when someone is not present. ♦ *How many absences does John have this month?* ♦ *An unexcused absence will result in punishment.* **3. n.** a lack; a deficiency. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *In the absence of evidence, the defendant will go free.* ♦ *Because of the absence of light, the plants died.*

absent ['æb sənt] **1. adj.** not present at a place; away from a place. ♦ *When Max is absent from class, the teacher calls his home.* ♦ *The president was absent, so the vice president ran the meeting.* **2. adj.** not in existence; not evident. ♦ *Signs of forced entry were absent, so the police believed the door was unlocked.* ♦ *A compelling motive for the crime was absent.* **3. adj.** [appearing] vague. (Adv: absently.) ♦ *Tom stood there with an absent expression, waiting for the door to open.* ♦ *Bob, tired from the trip, had an absent look in his eyes.*

absentee ['æb sən 'ti] **1. n.** someone who is not present at a place; someone who is away from a place. ♦ *We canceled the discussion because there were so many absentees.* ♦ *The July meeting had only one absentee.* **2. adj.** <the adj. use of ①.> ♦ *When I vacationed in Africa, I voted in the U.S. elections by absentee ballot.* ♦ *Since our apartment is owned by an absentee landlord, nothing ever gets fixed.*

absenteeism ['æb sən 'ti ɪz əm] **n.** the habit of being absent frequently. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *If your absenteeism doesn't stop, we're going to fire you.* ♦ *After the contract was approved, the rate of absenteeism at the factory dropped.*

absolute ['æb sə lut] **adj.** complete; total. (Adv: absolutely.) ♦ *When the host was insulted, an absolute silence fell across the room.* ♦ *The prime minister had absolute control of his cabinet.*

absolutely ['æb sə 'lut li] **1. adv.** completely; without question. ♦ *Tom is absolutely broke and needs to borrow some money.* ♦ *You absolutely must clean your room today.* **2. Absolutely!** **interj.** "Certainly!"; "Of course!" ♦ *"Would you like to go to the party?" "Absolutely!"* ♦ *"Are you happy?" "Absolutely!"*

absolute zero ['æb sə lut 'zi ro] **n.** [the scientific term for] the coldest temperature possible. ♦ *At absolute zero, there is no measurable heat.* ♦ *Absolute zero is -459.7 degrees Fahrenheit.*

absolution ['æb sə 'lu fən] **n.** the official forgiveness of sins. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Mary sought absolution from her sins.* ♦ *The dying man received a final absolution from the priest.*

absolve ['æb 'zɒlv] **1. absolve of** **tv. + prep. phr.** to forgive someone of sin. ♦ *Priests can absolve penitent sinners of their sins.* ♦ *The dying man asked the priest to absolve him of his sins.* **2. absolve from** **tv. + prep. phr.** to free someone from guilt or blame. ♦ *The police absolved Jane from any blame in the matter.* ♦ *The teacher absolved John from guilt in the theft.* **3. absolve from** **tv. + prep. phr.** to release someone from duty or obligation. ♦ *Mary was*

absolved from further responsibility on the project. ♦ *You are absolved from any more responsibility in this matter.*

absorb [əb 'zɔrb] **1. tv.** to soak up a liquid. ♦ *My napkin absorbed the coffee I spilled in my lap.* ♦ *I used a sponge to absorb the spilled milk.* **2. tv.** to learn something; to learn something easily. (Figurative on ①.) ♦ *Mary is so smart she just absorbs any book she reads.* ♦ *I had trouble absorbing algebra.*

absorbent [əb 'zɔr bənt] **adj.** able to soak up liquids. (Adv: absorbently.) ♦ *Susie's absorbent diapers kept the moisture away from her skin.* ♦ *The paper towel was so absorbent that it cleaned up all the moisture.*

absorption [əb 'zɔrp fən] **n.** the ability to soak up liquid; the capacity for soaking up a liquid. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *The rate of absorption for this brand of paper towel is twice that of the other brand.* ♦ *Absorption is an important quality for diapers.*

abstain [əb 'sten] **1. abstain from** **iv. + prep. phr.** to choose not to do something; to give up something. ♦ *Because my cholesterol is high, my doctor told me to abstain from eating fat.* ♦ *While Jane was pregnant, she abstained from smoking.* **2. iv.** to choose not to cast a vote; to declare that one is neither voting for nor voting against an issue. ♦ *When the issue came to a vote, four council members abstained.* ♦ *Because Jane abstained, the vote was tied 2-2.*

abstainer [əb 'sten ə] **n.** a person who has given up something, especially alcohol. ♦ *The abstainer politely refused the glass of wine.* ♦ *Bill would be better off as an abstainer. He always drinks too much.*

abstention [əb 'sten fən] **1. n.** choosing not to do something; voluntarily giving something up. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Abstention from foods containing cholesterol improved Bill's health.* ♦ *Doctors recommend abstention from smoking during pregnancy.* **2. n.** a choice to neither vote for an issue nor vote against it; a declaration that one does not vote for an issue and does not vote against it. ♦ *Commissioner Brown's abstentions were held against him in the election.* ♦ *The final vote was five to three, with two abstentions.*

abstinence ['æb stə nəns] **n.** voluntarily avoiding or not partaking in something such as food, drink, or sex. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Abstinence from fatty foods and smoking can probably lengthen your life.* ♦ *After his fifth drunken binge, Bill vowed total abstinence.*

abstinent ['æb stə nənt] **adj.** voluntarily avoiding or not partaking in something, such as food, drink, or sex. (Adv: abstinely.) ♦ *John remained abstinent throughout Lent.* ♦ *If teenagers would stay abstinent, there would be fewer teen pregnancies.*

abstract **1.** ['æb strækt] **n.** a summary of a research paper; a summary of a document. ♦ *You can tell if a paper is worthwhile by reading its abstract.* ♦ *Anne presented the most important data in her abstract.* **2.** [əb 'strækt] **adj.** theoretical; not specific. (Adv: abstractly.) ♦ *I never understand Bill's abstract ideas.* ♦ *Professor Brown's books are very abstract and are hard to read.* **3.** [əb 'strækt] **tv.** to take or draw something, usually a thought, from a written document or speech. ♦ *I was only able to abstract one good quote that made sense out of context.* ♦ *Your problem in school is that you can't abstract the important points from the lectures.*

abstraction [æb 'stræk fən] *n.* an idea or theory drawn from actual examples. ♦ *By looking at what happened in many similar cases, we were able to create an abstraction that also covered other instances.* ♦ *After considerable thought, Mary was able to make an abstraction from the data that allowed her to predict the outcome of the experiment.*

absurd [æb 'sɜːd] *adj.* foolish; ridiculous. (Adv: absurdly.) ♦ *Wearing a swimming suit during a snowstorm is absurd.* ♦ *John's absurd hair style made everyone laugh.*

abundance [ə 'bʌn dəns] *n.* a full supply or amount of something; more than enough of something. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *The abundance of wealth in the Persian Gulf is due to the oil fields.* ♦ *I am always bothered by the abundance of mosquitoes in summer.*

abundant [ə 'bʌn dənt] *adj.* full; brimming; in large amounts. (Adv: abundantly.) ♦ *The abundant crops would feed the village through the winter.* ♦ *Abundant rainfall made the land fertile.*

abuse 1. [ə 'bjuz] *tv.* to harm someone in some way, such as physically or emotionally; to use something in a way that damages it. ♦ *If you continue to abuse your body by smoking, you'll suffer the consequences.* ♦ *Please stop abusing your bicycle! It's all banged up!* 2. [ə 'bjuz] *tv.* to use something badly or improperly. ♦ *If you abuse your privileges, we will take them away from you.* ♦ *Rulers who abuse their power should be removed from office.* 3. [ə 'bjus] *n.* unfair or cruel treatment of someone; action that damages something. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *I could take the abuse no longer, so I ran away.* ♦ *The walls of this house show signs of abuse.* 4. [ə 'bjus] *n.* improper use. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *Tom couldn't control his drug abuse, so he went for treatment.* ♦ *Alcohol abuse is a serious problem among teenagers.*

abused [ə 'bjuzd] *adj.* mistreated physically or mentally; used badly or wrongly. ♦ *The abused wife decided to leave her husband.* ♦ *The abused child was placed in a foster home.*

abusive [ə 'bju sɪv] *adj.* insulting; cruel. (Adv: abusively.) ♦ *The abusive teacher was fired.* ♦ *The principal punished the abusive children who made fun of Bill.*

abut [ə 'bʌt] 1. *iv.* to touch; to share a common border. ♦ *My garage abuts with my neighbor's garage.* ♦ *Because the two buildings abutted, both were destroyed in the fire.* 2. *tv.* to touch something; to share a common border with something. ♦ *Their garage abuts our vegetable garden.* ♦ *My office building abuts city hall.*

abysmal [ə 'bɪz məl] *adj.* very bad; as extreme as the depth of the deepest abyss is deep. (Adv: abysmally.) ♦ *The overcooked dinner was abysmal.* ♦ *My grades were abysmal, so I hired a tutor.*

abyss [ə 'bɪs] 1. *n.* something—such as a hole—with a great depth. ♦ *The probe descended into the abyss of the trench.* ♦ *One step further and I would have plunged into the abyss.* 2. *n.* something too deep to comprehend. (Figurative on ①.) ♦ *After his dad died, Bill was in an abyss of depression.* ♦ *The autistic child seemed to be lost in the abyss of her own mind.*

academic [æk ə 'dem ɪk] 1. *adj.* relating to colleges and universities; scholarly. (Adv: academically [...ɪk li].) ♦ *Each student wore an academic gown during the graduation ceremony.* ♦ *John was invited to give an academic address at a conference.* 2. *adj.* of abstract or theoretical interest only; moot. ♦ *Whether the event should take place was merely an academic question.* ♦ *It's too late to do anything about it now. It's all academic.* 3. *n.* someone who is part of an academic institution; a student or professor in a college or university. ♦ *My uncle, who has been an academic all his life, teaches at a university.* ♦ *Academics are usually found in the field of education and not in business.*

academy [ə 'kæd ə mi] *n.* a school for special training in a specific area of study. ♦ *The soldier had attended a military academy.* ♦ *The singer had trained in an academy for the arts.*

accede [æk 'sɪd] *iv.* to go along with something; to agree to something. ♦ *Jane was unable to accede to her employer's demands.* ♦ *I was uncertain about it, but in the end, I acceded.*

accelerate [æk 'sel ə ret] 1. *iv.* to go faster; to change or happen at a faster rate. ♦ *The car accelerated as it went downhill.* ♦ *Economic growth accelerated during the summer.* 2. *tv.* to cause something to go, happen, or change faster. ♦ *Government spending accelerates the pace of inflation.* ♦ *Too much sunshine accelerates the aging process of your skin.*

acceleration [æk sel ə 're fən] *n.* going, happening, or changing faster; causing something to go, happen, or change faster; increasing something's rate of speed, growth, change, etc. (No plural form in this sense.) ♦ *The car had no brakes, so we couldn't stop its acceleration as it rolled downhill.* ♦ *The government's policies resulted in the acceleration of inflation.*

accelerator [æk 'sel ə ret ə] *n.* the part of a motor vehicle that is pressed with the foot to feed fuel to the engine. ♦ *Jane stepped on the accelerator, and the car sped off.* ♦ *When Bill pushed the accelerator to the floor, the engine roared.*

accent ['æk sent] 1. *n.* the force or stress put on a word or a part of a word during speech. ♦ *The accent in the word hotel is on the second syllable.* ♦ *People often put the strongest accent on a word they are contrasting with something else.* 2. *n.* a mark written over a letter of the alphabet that gives the letter a special pronunciation or stress. ♦ *French, Italian, and Spanish use accents.* ♦ *In English, there is an accent on the word cliché.* 3. *n.* a way of speaking a language, and especially of pronouncing a language, that is characteristic of a particular country or region where that language is spoken. ♦ *Mary used to speak with a Southern accent.* ♦ *Bill tried to speak with a British accent, but he still sounded American.* 4. *n.* an audible indication that one is speaking something other than one's native language. ♦ *The tourist from Hungary spoke English with an accent.* ♦ *We guessed that Anne was born in Germany because she still has a slight German accent.* 5. *tv.* to emphasize something, especially to put ① on a word or a part of a word during speech. ♦ *Not HOtel! You have accented the wrong syllable.* ♦ *The teacher accented the last word in each line of the poem.* 6. *tv.* to embellish something; to make something have more visual interest. ♦ *The yellow curtains accented an otherwise dull room.* ♦ *A bit of red pepper accents the stew.*