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**Merriam  
Webster's  
Desk  
Dictionary**

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**韦氏  
案头词典**

世界图书出版公司

# Merriam-Webster's Desk Dictionary

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## 韦氏案头词典

[美] 梅里亚姆-韦伯斯特公司 编



梅里亚姆-韦伯斯特公司

斯普林菲尔德, 马萨诸塞



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## 内 容 简 介

本书是一部大型百科词典,它是在《韦氏大学词典》第10版的基础上精选后编纂而成的。本书共收词6万余条,均为日常英语中最常用的词汇,给出每一词条的规范发音、准确定义和词汇来源,书中有150幅插图,增强了直观性。另有25个表格,提供了科学、自然、文化、社会和一般信息等各种实用资料。书后附有常用的资料。本书以它的权威性、实用性和丰富的资料成为人们日常工作和学习所必备的案头工具书。

## MERRIAM-WEBSTER'S DESK DICTIONARY

Merriam-Webster 1995

### 韦 氏 案 头 词 典

[美] 梅里亚姆-韦伯斯特公司 编

重印本责任编辑 王志平

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# Preface

MERRIAM-WEBSTER'S DESK DICTIONARY is the most recent in a series of Merriam-Webster® concise dictionaries that extends back more than 130 years. Over the years, books in this series have carried varied titles, such as Webster's Condensed Dictionary, Webster's Practical Dictionary, and Webster's Ideal Dictionary, but all have shared in being designed to meet the day-to-day needs of dictionary users in the home or office. This new work is firmly within the tradition of those previous books in its emphasis on practicality, range of material offered, and ease of use, but it also draws much new information—including new vocabulary—from Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition, the latest in our Collegiate® line of dictionaries.

The heart of Merriam-Webster's Desk Dictionary is the A-Z vocabulary. Within this section, one finds the core of the English vocabulary; obsolete, rare, and highly technical words and obsolete meanings of common words have been omitted. The vocabulary is thus a compilation of the words most likely to be looked up by any person searching for a meaning, pronunciation, or end-of-line division point. Every definition in this section is based on examples of actual usage found among the more than 14,500,000 citations in the Merriam-Webster files.

The A-Z vocabulary is followed by several sections that dictionary users have long found helpful: Common English Given Names; Foreign Words and Phrases that often occur in English texts but that have not yet become part of the English vocabulary;

thousands of proper names brought together under the separate headings Biographical Names and Geographical Names; Nations of the World; a list of places in the United States having 19,000 or more inhabitants in the most recent census, with a list of State Facts such as states' nicknames, areas, and mottoes; a similar list of places in Canada, with a summary by provinces and territories; a section devoted to widely used Signs and Symbols; a Handbook of Style section that summarizes common conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and the use of italics; a section on the Documentation of Sources, with information on footnotes and other kinds of bibliographical references; and finally, a list of the Forms of Address for governmental, diplomatic, religious, and military officials. All are listed on the Contents page.

The A-Z vocabulary is preceded by a section of Explanatory Notes that should be read carefully by every user of the dictionary. An understanding of the information contained in these notes will add markedly to the satisfaction and pleasure that come from looking into the pages of the dictionary. Following these notes is a page that lists and explains the pronunciation symbols used in this dictionary.

Merriam-Webster's Desk Dictionary is the product of a company that has been publishing dictionaries for 150 years. It has been edited by an experienced staff of professional lexicographers, who believe that it will serve well those who want an easy-to-read record of today's English words.

# Explanatory Notes

## Entries

A boldface letter or a combination of such letters, including punctuation marks and diacritics where needed, that is set flush with the left-hand margin of each column of type is a main entry. The main entry may consist of letters set solid, of letters joined by a hyphen or a diagonal, or of letters separated by one or more spaces:

alone . . . *adj*  
avant-garde . . . *n*  
and/or . . . *conj*  
assembly language . . . *n*

The material in lightface type that follows each main entry on the same line and on succeeding indented lines presents information about the main entry.

The main entries follow one another in alphabetical order letter by letter: *bill of health* follows *billion*; *Day of Atonement* follows *daylight saving time*. Those containing an Arabic numeral are alphabetized as if the numeral were spelled out: *4-H* comes between *fourfold* and *Four Hundred*; *3-D* comes between *three* and *three-dimensional*. Those that often begin with the abbreviation *St.* in common usage have the abbreviation spelled out: *Saint Valentine's Day*.

A pair of guide words is printed at the top of each page. These indicate that the entries falling alphabetically between the words at the top of the outer column of each page are found on that page.

The guide words are usually the alphabetically first and the alphabetically last entries on the page:

**airbrush • albumin**

Occasionally the last printed entry is not the alphabetically last entry. On page 108, for example, *combings* is the last main entry, but *combining*, an inflected form of *combine*, is the alphabetically last entry and is therefore the second guide word. The alphabetically last entry is not used, however, if it follows alphabetically the first guide word on the succeeding page. Thus on page 129 *craving* is not a guide word because it follows alphabetically the entry *craven* which is the first guide word on page 130.

Any boldface word—a main entry with definition, a variant, an inflected form, a defined or undefined run-on, or a run-in entry—may be used as a guide word.

When one main entry has exactly the same written form as another, the two are distinguished by superscript numerals preceding each word:

<sup>1</sup>melt . . . *vb*      <sup>1</sup>pine . . . *n*  
<sup>2</sup>melt . . . *n*      <sup>2</sup>pine . . . *vb*

Full words come before parts of words made up of the same letters; solid compounds come before hyphenated compounds; hyphenated compounds come before open compounds; and lowercase entries come before those with an initial capital:

<sup>2</sup>super . . . *adj*  
super- . . . *prefix*  
run-down . . . *n*  
run-down . . . *adj*  
run down . . . *vb*  
dutch . . . *adv*  
Dutch . . . *n*

The centered dots within entry words indicate division points at which a hyphen may be put at the end of a line of print or writing. Thus the noun *cap-puc-ci-no* may be ended on one line and continued on the next in this manner:

|         |           |
|---------|-----------|
|         | cap-      |
| puccino |           |
|         | cappuc-   |
| cino    |           |
|         | cappucci- |
| no      |           |

Centered dots are not shown after a single initial letter or before a single terminal letter because typesetters seldom cut off a single letter:

abyss . . . *n*  
flighty . . . *adj*  
idea . . . *n*

Nor are they usually shown at the second and succeeding homographs unless they differ among themselves:

<sup>1</sup>sig-nal . . . *n*  
<sup>2</sup>signal . . . *vb*  
<sup>3</sup>signal . . . *adj*  
<sup>1</sup>min-ute . . . *n*  
<sup>2</sup>mi-nute . . . *adj*

There are acceptable alternative end-of-line divisions just as there are acceptable variant spellings and pronunciations, but no more than one division is shown for any entry in this dictionary.

A double hyphen at the end of a line in this dictionary (as in the definition at **accelerator**) stands for a hyphen that is retained when the word is written as a unit on one line. This kind of fixed hyphen is always represented in boldface words in this dictionary with an en dash.

When a main entry is followed by the word *or* and another spelling, the two spellings are equal variants. Both are standard, and either one may be used according to personal inclination:

ocher *or* ochre

If two variants joined by *or* are out of alphabetical order, they remain equal variants. The one printed first is, however, slightly more common than the second:

<sup>1</sup>plow *or* plough

When another spelling is joined to the main entry by the word *also*, the spelling after *also* is a secondary variant and occurs less frequently than the first:

**absinthe** *also* **absinth**

Secondary variants belong to standard usage and may be used according to personal inclination. Once the word *also* is used to signal a secondary variant, all following variants are joined by *or*:

**wool-ly** *also* **wool-ie** *or* **wooly**

Variants whose spelling puts them alphabetically more than a column away from the main entry are entered at their own alphabetical places and usually not at the main entry:

**li-chee** *var of* **LITCHI**

Variants having a usage label appear only at their own alphabetical places:

**me-tre** . . . *chiefly Brit var of* **METER**

To show all the stylings that are found for English compounds would require space that can be better used for other information. So this dictionary limits itself to a single styling for a compound:

**peace-mak-er**  
**pell-mell**  
**boom box**

When a compound is widely used and one styling predominates, that styling is shown. When a compound is uncommon or when the evidence indicates that two or three stylings are approximately equal in frequency, the styling shown is based on the comparison of other similar compounds.

A main entry may be followed by one or more derivatives or by a homograph with a different functional label. These are run-on entries. Each is introduced by a boldface dash and each has a functional label. They are not defined, however, since their meanings are readily understood from the meaning of the root word:

**fear-less** . . . *adj* . . . — **fear-less-ly** *adv*  
— **fear-less-ness** *n*  
**hic-cup** . . . *n* . . . — **hiccup** *vb*

A main entry may be followed by one or more phrases containing the entry word or an inflected form of it. These are also run-on entries. Each is introduced by a boldface dash but there is no functional label. They are, however, defined since their meanings are more than the sum of the meanings of their elements:

**set** . . . *vb* . . . — **set sail** : . . .  
**hand** . . . *n* . . . — **at hand** : . . .

Defined phrases of this sort are run on at the entry defining the first major word in the phrase. When there are variants, however, the run-on appears at the entry defining the first major word which is invariable in the phrase:

**seed** . . . *n* . . . — **go to seed** *or* **run to seed** 1 : . . .

Boldface words that appear within parentheses (as

**co-ca** at **co-caine** and **jet engine** and **jet propulsion** at **jet-propelled**) are run-in entries.

Attention is called to the definition of *vocabulary entry* on page 615. The term *dictionary entry* includes all vocabulary entries as well as all boldface entries in the section headed "Foreign Words and Phrases."

## Pronunciation

The matter between a pair of reversed virgules \ \ following the entry word indicates the pronunciation. The symbols used are explained in the chart printed inside the back cover.

A hyphen is used in the pronunciation to show syllabic division. These hyphens sometimes coincide with the centered dots in the entry word that indicate end-of-line division:

**ab-sen-tee** \ˈab-sən-ˈtē\

Sometimes they do not:

**met-ric** \ˈme-trik\

A high-set mark ˈ indicates major (primary) stress or accent; a low-set mark ˌ indicates minor (secondary) stress or accent:

**heart-beat** \ˈhärt-ˌbēt\

The stress mark stands at the beginning of the syllable that receives the stress.

A syllable with neither a high-set mark nor a low-set mark is unstressed:

**struc-ture** \ˈstrək-çər\

The presence of variant pronunciations indicates that not all educated speakers pronounce words the same way. A second-place variant is not to be regarded as less acceptable than the pronunciation that is given first. It may, in fact, be used by as many educated speakers as the first variant, but the requirements of the printed page are such that one must precede the other:

**apri-cot** \ˈa-prə-ˌkät, ˈä-\  
**pro-vost** \ˈprō-ˌvöst, ˈprä-vəst\

Symbols enclosed by parentheses represent elements that are present in the pronunciation of some speakers but are absent from the pronunciation of other speakers, or elements that are present in some but absent from other utterances of the same speaker:

**om-ni-bus** \ˈäm-ni-(ˌ)bəs\  
**ad-dition-al** \ə-ˈdi-sh(ə)-nəl\

Thus, the above parentheses indicate that some people say \ˈäm-ni-ˌbəs\ and others say \ˈäm-ni-bəs\; some \ə-ˈdi-shə-nəl\, others \ə-ˈdi-shnəl\.

When a main entry has less than a full pronunciation, the missing part is to be supplied from a pronunciation in a preceding entry or within the same pair of reversed virgules:

**cham-pi-on-ship** \-ˌrɪʃɪp\  
**pa-la-ver** \pə-ˈlɑ-vər, -ˈlā-\

The pronunciation of the first three syllables of *cham-*

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*pionship* is found at the main entry *champion*. The hyphens before and after \lā\ in the second pronunciation of *palaver* indicate that both the first and the last parts of the pronunciation are to be taken from the immediately preceding pronunciation.

In general, no pronunciation is indicated for open compounds consisting of two or more English words that have own-place entry:

witch doctor *n*

Only the first entry in a sequence of numbered homographs is given a pronunciation if their pronunciations are the same:

<sup>1</sup>re·ward \ri-ˈwɔrd\ *vb*

<sup>2</sup>reward *n*

The absent but implied pronunciation of derivatives and compounds run on after a main entry is a combination of the pronunciation at the main entry and the pronunciation of the other element as given at its alphabetical place in the vocabulary:

— quick·ness *n*

— hold forth

Thus, the pronunciation of *quickness* is the sum of the pronunciations given at *quick* and *-ness*; that of *hold forth*, the sum of the pronunciations of the two elements that make up the phrase.

## Functional Labels

An italic label indicating a part of speech or another functional classification follows the pronunciation or, if no pronunciation is given, the main entry. The eight traditional parts of speech are indicated as follows:

**bold** . . . *adj*

**forth-with** . . . *adv*

<sup>1</sup>**but** . . . *conj*

**ge·sund·heit** . . . *interj*

**bo·le·ro** . . . *n*

<sup>2</sup>**un·der** . . . *prep*

<sup>1</sup>**it** . . . *pron*

**slap** . . . *vb*

Other italicized labels used to indicate functional classifications that are not traditional parts of speech include:

**ATM** *abbr*

**self-** *comb form*

**un-** . . . *prefix*

**-al** *adj suffix*

**-ly** *adv suffix*

**-er** . . . *n suffix*

**-ize** . . . *vb suffix*

**Fe** *symbol*

**may** . . . *verbal auxiliary*

Functional labels are sometimes combined:

**a**float . . . *adj or adv*

## Inflected Forms

### Nouns

The plurals of nouns are shown in this dictionary when suffixation brings about a change of final *-y* to *-i-*, when the noun ends in a consonant plus *-o* or in *-ey*, when the noun ends in *-oo*, when the noun has an irregular plural or a zero plural or a foreign plural, when the noun is a compound that pluralizes any element but the last, when a final consonant is doubled, when the noun has variant plurals, and when it is believed that the dictionary user might have reasonable doubts about the spelling of the plural or when the plural is spelled in a way contrary to what is expected:

<sup>2</sup>spy *n, pl spies*

si·lo . . . *n, pl silos*

val·ley . . . *n, pl valleys*

<sup>2</sup>shampoo *n, pl shampoos*

<sup>1</sup>quiz . . . *n, pl quiz-zes*

<sup>1</sup>fish . . . *n, pl fish or fishes*

mouse . . . *n, pl mice*

moose . . . *n, pl moose*

cri·te·ri·on . . . *n, pl -ria*

son-in-law . . . *n, pl sons-in-law*

pi . . . *n, pl pis*

<sup>3</sup>dry *n, pl drys*

utback inflected forms are used when the noun has three or more syllables:

ame·ni·ty . . . *n, pl -ties*

The plurals of nouns are usually not shown when the base word is unchanged by suffixation, when the noun is a compound whose second element is readily recognizable as a regular free form entered at its own place, or when the noun is unlikely to occur in the plural:

night . . . *n*

fore·foot . . . *n*

mo·nog·a·my . . . *n*

Nouns that are plural in form and that regularly occur in plural construction are labeled *n pl*:

munch·ies . . . *n pl*

Nouns that are plural in form but that are not always construed as plurals are appropriately labeled:

lo·gis·tics . . . *n sing or pl*

### Verbs

The principal parts of verbs are shown in this dictionary when suffixation brings about a doubling of a final consonant or an elision of a final *-e* or a change of final *-y* to *-i-*, when final *-c* changes to *-ck* in suffixation, when the verb ends in *-ey*, when the inflection is irregular, when there are variant inflected forms, and when it is believed that the dictionary user might have reasonable doubts about the spelling of an inflected form or when the inflected form is spelled in a way contrary to what is expected:

- <sup>2</sup>snag *vb* snagged; snag-ging  
<sup>1</sup>move . . . *vb* moved; mov-ing  
<sup>1</sup>cry . . . *vb* cried; cry-ing  
<sup>1</sup>frol-ic . . . *vb* frol-icked; frol-ick-ing  
sur-vey . . . *vb* sur-veyed; sur-vey-ing  
<sup>1</sup>drive . . . *vb* drove . . . ; driv-en . . . ; driv-ing  
<sup>2</sup>bus *vb* bused or bussed; bus-ing or bus-sing  
<sup>2</sup>visa *vb* vi-saed . . . ; vi-sa-ing  
<sup>2</sup>chagrin *vb* cha-grined . . . ; cha-grin-ing

The principal parts of a regularly inflected verb are shown when it is desirable to indicate the pronunciation of one of the inflected forms:

- learn . . . *vb* learned \ˈlɔrnd, ˈlɔrnt\; learn-ing  
<sup>1</sup>al-ter \ˈɒl-tər\ *vb* al-tered; al-ter-ing \t(ə-)rɪŋ\

Cutback inflected forms are usually used when the verb has three or more syllables, when it is a two-syllable word that ends in *-l* and has variant spellings, and when it is a compound whose second element is readily recognized as an irregular verb:

- elim-i-nate . . . *vb* -nated; -nat-ing  
<sup>2</sup>quarrel *vb* -reled or -relled; -rel-ing or -rel-ling  
<sup>1</sup>re-take . . . *vb* -took . . . ; -tak-en . . . ; -tak-ing

The principal parts of verbs are usually not shown when the base word is unchanged by suffixation or when the verb is a compound whose second element is readily recognizable as a regular free form entered at its own place:

- <sup>1</sup>jump . . . *vb*  
pre-judge . . . *vb*

Another inflected form of English verbs is the third person singular of the present tense, which is regularly formed by the addition of *-s* or *-es* to the base form of the verb. This inflected form is not shown except at a handful of entries (as *have* and *do*) for which it is in some way anomalous.

## Adjectives & Adverbs

The comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs are shown in this dictionary when suffixation brings about a doubling of a final consonant or an elision of a final *-e* or a change of final *-y* to *-i-*, when the word ends in *-ey*, when the inflection is irregular, and when there are variant inflected forms:

- <sup>1</sup>red . . . *adj* red-der; red-dest  
<sup>1</sup>tame . . . *adj* tam-er; tam-est  
<sup>1</sup>kind-ly . . . *adj* kind-ll-er; -est  
hors-ey or horsy . . . *adj* hors-i-er; -est  
<sup>1</sup>good . . . *adj* bet-ter . . . ; best  
<sup>1</sup>far . . . *adv* far-ther . . . or fur-ther . . . ;  
far-thest or fur-thest

The superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs of two or more syllables are usually cut back:

- <sup>2</sup>fancy *adj* fan-ci-er; -est  
<sup>1</sup>ear-ly . . . *adv* ear-ll-er; -est

The comparative and superlative forms of regularly inflected adjectives and adverbs are shown when it is desirable to indicate the pronunciation of the inflected forms:

- <sup>1</sup>young \ˈyʊŋ\ *adj* youn-ger \ˈyʊŋ-gər\; youn-gest  
\ˈyʊŋ-gɛst\

The inclusion of inflected forms in *-er* and *-est* at adjective and adverb entries means nothing more about the use of *more* and *most* with these adjectives and adverbs than that their comparative and superlative degrees may be expressed in either way: *lazier* or *more lazy*; *laziest* or *most lazy*.

At a few adjective entries only the superlative form is shown:

- <sup>2</sup>mere *adj*, superlative mer-est

The absence of the comparative form indicates that there is no evidence of its use.

The comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs are usually not shown when the base word is unchanged by suffixation, when the inflected forms of the word are identical with those of a preceding homograph, or when the word is a compound whose second element is readily recognizable as a regular free form entered at its own place:

- <sup>1</sup>near *adv*  
<sup>2</sup>good *adv*  
un-wor-thy . . . *adj*

Inflected forms are not shown at undefined run-ons.

## Capitalization

Most entries in this dictionary begin with a lowercase letter. A few of these have an italicized label *often cap*, which indicates that the word is as likely to be capitalized as not and that it is as acceptable with an uppercase initial as it is with one in lowercase. Some entries begin with an uppercase letter, which indicates that the word is usually capitalized. The absence of an initial capital or of an *often cap* label indicates that the word is not ordinarily capitalized:

- salm-on . . . *n*  
gar-gan-tuan . . . *adj*, *often cap*  
Mo-hawk . . . *n*

The capitalization of entries that are open or hyphenated compounds is similarly indicated by the form of the entry or by an italicized label:

- dry goods . . . *n pl*  
french fry *vb*, *often cap 1st F*  
un-Amer-i-can . . . *adj*  
Par-kin-son's disease . . . *n*  
lazy Su-san . . . *n*  
Jack Frost *n*

A word that is capitalized in some senses and lowercase in others shows variations from the form of the main entry by the use of italicized labels at the appropriate senses:



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**Trin-i-ty** . . . *n* . . . 2 *not cap*  
**To-ry** . . . *n* . . . 3 *often not cap*  
**ti-tan** . . . *n* 1 *cap*  
**re-nais-sance** . . . *n* . . . 1 *cap* . . . 2 *often cap*

## Etymology

This dictionary gives the etymologies for a number of the vocabulary entries. These etymologies are in bold-face square brackets preceding the definition. Meanings given in roman type within these brackets are not definitions of the entry, but are meanings of the Middle English, Old English, or non-English words within the brackets.

The etymology gives the language from which words borrowed into English have come. It also gives the form of the word in that language or a representation of the word in our alphabet if the form in that language differs from that in English:

**philo-den-dron** . . . [NL, fr. Gk. neut. of *philo-dendros* loving trees . . .]

**sav-age** . . . [ME *sauvage*, fr. MF, fr. ML *salvaticus*, alter. of L *silvaticus* of the woods, wild . . .]

An etymology beginning with the name of a language (including ME or OE) and not giving the foreign (or Middle English or Old English) form indicates that this form is the same as the form of the entry word:

**le-gume** . . . [F]

**jour-ney** . . . [ME, fr. OF . . .]

An etymology beginning with the name of a language (including ME or OE) and not giving the foreign (or Middle English or Old English) meaning indicates that this meaning is the same as the meaning expressed in the first definition in the entry:

**ug-ly** . . . *adj* . . . [ME, fr. ON *uggligr* . . .] 1  
: FRIGHTFUL, DIRE

## Usage

Three types of status labels are used in this dictionary—temporal, regional, and stylistic—to signal that a word or a sense of a word is not part of the standard vocabulary of English.

The temporal label *obs* for “obsolete” means that there is no evidence of use since 1755:

**post** *n* 1 *obs*

The label *obs* is a comment on the word being defined. When a thing, as distinguished from the word used to designate it, is obsolete, appropriate orientation is usually given in the definition:

**cat-a-pult** . . . *n* 1 : an ancient military machine for hurling missiles

The temporal label *archaic* means that a word or sense once in common use is found today only sporadically or in special contexts:

**mete** . . . *vb* . . . 1 *archaic*

**thou** . . . *pron.* *archaic*

A word or sense limited in use to a specific region of the U.S. has an appropriate label. The adverb *chiefly* precedes a label when the word has some currency outside the specified region, and a double label is used to indicate considerable currency in each of two specific regions:

**wash** *n* . . . 5 *West*

**dogie** . . . *n*, *chiefly West*

**crul-ler** . . . *n* . . . 2 *Northern & Midland*

Words current in all regions of the U.S. have no label.

A word or sense limited in use to one of the other countries of the English-speaking world has an appropriate regional label:

**chem-ist** . . . *n* . . . 2 *Brit*

**loch** . . . *n*, *Scot*

**wireless** *n* . . . 2 *chiefly Brit*

The label *dial* for “dialect” indicates that the pattern of use of a word or sense is too complex for summary labeling: it usually includes several regional varieties of American English or of American and British English:

**mind** *vb* 1 *chiefly dial*

The stylistic label *slang* is used with words or senses that are especially appropriate in contexts of extreme informality:

**can** . . . *vb* . . . 2 *slang*

**grand** *n*, *slang*

There is no satisfactory objective test for *slang*, especially with reference to a word out of context. No word, in fact, is invariably *slang*, and many standard words can be given *slang* applications.

Definitions are sometimes followed by verbal illustrations that show a typical use of the word in context. These illustrations are enclosed in angle brackets, and the word being illustrated is usually replaced by a lightface swung dash. The swung dash stands for the bold-face entry word, and it may be followed by an italicized suffix:

**jump** . . . *vb* . . . 5 . . . (<~ the gun)

**all-around** . . . *adj* 1 . . . (<best ~ performance)

**can-on** . . . *n* . . . 3 . . . (<the ~s of good taste)

**en-joy** . . . *vb* . . . 2 . . . (<~ed the concert)

The swung dash is not used when the form of the bold-face entry word is changed in suffixation, and it is not used for open compounds:

**deal** *vb* . . . 2 . . . (<dealt him a blow)

**drum up** *vb* 1 . . . (<drum up business)

Definitions are sometimes followed by usage notes that give supplementary information about such matters as idiom, syntax, and semantic relationship. A usage note is introduced by a lightface dash:

**cry** *n* . . . 5 . . . — usu. used in the phrase *a far cry*

**drum** *vb* . . . 4 . . . — usu. used with *out*

**jaw** . . . *n* . . . 2 . . . — usu. used in pl. . . .

**<sup>1</sup>ada-gio** . . . *adv or adj* . . . — used as a direction in music

**hajji** . . . *n* . . . — often used as a title

Sometimes a usage note is used in place of a definition. Some function words (as conjunctions and prepositions) have chiefly grammatical meaning and little or no lexical meaning; most interjections express feelings but are otherwise untranslatable into lexical meaning; and some other words (as honorific titles) are more amenable to comment than to definition:

**or** . . . *conj* — used as a function word to indicate an alternative

**<sup>1</sup>at** . . . *prep* 1 — used to indicate a point in time or space

**auf Wie-der-seh-en** . . . *interj* . . . — used to express farewell

**sir** . . . *n* . . . 2 — used as a usu. respectful form of address

## Sense Division

A boldface colon is used in this dictionary to introduce a definition:

**equine** . . . *adj* . . . : of or relating to the horse

It is also used to separate two or more definitions of a single sense:

**no-ti-fy** . . . *vb* . . . 1 : to give notice of : report the occurrence of

Boldface Arabic numerals separate the senses of a word that has more than one sense:

**add** . . . *vb* 1 : to join something else so as to increase in number or amount 2 : to say further . . . 3 : to combine (numbers) into one sum

A particular semantic relationship between senses is sometimes suggested by the use of one of the two italic sense dividers *esp* or *also*.

The sense divider *esp* (for *especially*) is used to introduce the most common meaning included in the more general preceding definition:

**crys-tal** . . . *n* . . . 2 : something resembling crystal (as in transparency); *esp* : a clear glass used for table articles

The sense divider *also* is used to introduce a meaning related to the preceding sense by an easily understood extension of that sense:

**chi-na** . . . *n* : porcelain ware; *also* : domestic pottery in general

The order of senses is historical; the sense known to have been first used in English is entered first. This is not to be taken to mean, however, that each sense of a multisense word developed from the immediately preceding sense. It is altogether possible that sense 1 of a word has given rise to sense 2 and sense 2 to sense 3, but frequently sense 2 and sense 3 may have developed independently of one another from sense 1.

When an italicized label follows a boldface numeral, the label applies only to that specific numbered sense. It

does not apply to any other boldface numbered senses:

**craft** . . . *n* . . . 3 *pl usu craft*

**<sup>1</sup>fa-ther** . . . *n* . . . 2 *cap* . . . 5 *often cap*

**dul-ci-mer** . . . *n* . . . 2 or **dul-ci-more** \-môr\

**<sup>2</sup>lift** *n* . . . 5 *chiefly Brit*

At *craft* the *pl* label applies to sense 3 but to none of the other numbered senses. At *father* the *cap* label applies only to sense 2 and the *often cap* label only to sense 5. At *dulcimer* the variant spelling and pronunciation apply only to sense 2, and the *chiefly Brit* label at *lift* applies only to sense 5.

## Cross-Reference

Four different kinds of cross-references are used in this dictionary: directional, synonymous, cognate, and inflectional. In each instance the cross-reference is readily recognized by the lightface small capitals in which it is printed.

A cross-reference following a lightface dash and beginning with *see* is a directional cross-reference. It directs the dictionary user to look elsewhere for further information:

**ri-al** . . . *n* — *see* MONEY table

A cross-reference following a boldface colon is a synonymous cross-reference. It may stand alone as the only definition for an entry or for a sense of an entry; it may follow an analytical definition; it may be one of two or more synonymous cross-references separated by commas:

**pa-pa** . . . *n* : FATHER

**<sup>1</sup>par-tic-u-lar** . . . *adj* . . . 4 : attentive to details : PRECISE

**<sup>2</sup>main** *adj* 1 : CHIEF, PRINCIPAL

**<sup>1</sup>fig-ure** . . . *n* . . . 6 : SHAPE, FORM, OUTLINE

A synonymous cross-reference indicates that an entry, a definition at the entry, or a specific sense at the entry cross-referred to can be substituted as a definition for the entry or the sense in which the cross-reference appears.

A cross-reference following an italic *var of* ("variant of") is a cognate cross-reference:

**pick-a-back** . . . *var of* PIGGYBACK

Occasionally a cognate cross-reference has a limiting label preceding *var of* as an indication that the variant is not standard English:

**aero-plane** . . . *chiefly Brit var of* AIRPLANE

A cross-reference following an italic label that identifies an entry as an inflected form (as of a noun or verb) is an inflectional cross-reference:

**calves** *pl of* CALF

**woven** *past part of* WEAVE

Inflectional cross-references appear only when the inflected form falls at least a column away from the entry cross-referred to.

## Synonyms

A boldface **syn** near the end of an entry introduces words that are synonymous with the word being defined:

**alone** . . . *adj* . . . **syn** lonely, lonesome, lone, solitary

Synonyms are not definitions although they may often be substituted for each other in context.

## Combining Forms, Prefixes, & Suffixes

An entry that begins or ends with a hyphen is a word element that forms part of an English compound:

**-wise** . . . *adv comb form* . . . (slantwise)

**ex-** . . . *prefix* . . . (ex-president)

**-let** . . . *n suffix 1* . . . (booklet)

Combining forms, prefixes, and suffixes are entered in this dictionary for two reasons: to make understandable the meaning of many undefined run-ons and to make recognizable the meaningful elements of words that are not entered in the dictionary.

## Lists of Undefined Words

Lists of undefined words occur after the entries *anti-*, *in-*, *non-*, *over-*, *re-*, *self-*, *semi-*, *sub-*, *super-*, and *un-*. These words are undefined because they are self-explanatory: their meanings are simply the sum of a meaning of the prefix or combining form and a meaning of the root word.

## Abbreviations & Symbols

Abbreviations and symbols for chemical elements are included as main entries in the vocabulary:

**RSVP** *abbr* . . . please reply

**Ca** *symbol* calcium

Abbreviations have been normalized to one form. In practice, however, there is considerable variation in the use of periods and in capitalization (as *vhf*, *v.h.f.*, *VHF*, and *V.H.F.*), and stylings other than those given in this dictionary are often acceptable.

Symbols that are not capable of being alphabetized are included in a separate section of the back matter headed "Signs and Symbols."

# Abbreviations Used in This Work

|                |                      |                 |                  |               |  |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|--|
| <i>ab</i>      | about                | <i>Heb</i>      | Hebrew           | <i>OPer</i>   | Old Persian                            |
| <i>abbr</i>    | abbreviation         | <i>Hung</i>     | Hungarian        | <i>OProv</i>  | Old Provençal                          |
| <i>abl</i>     | ablative             | <i>Icel</i>     | Icelandic        | <i>orig</i>   | originally                             |
| <i>acc</i>     | accusative           | <i>imit</i>     | imitative        | <i>part</i>   | participle                             |
| <i>A.D.</i>    | anno Domini          | <i>imper</i>    | imperative       | <i>Per</i>    | Persian                                |
| <i>adj</i>     | adjective            | <i>interj</i>   | interjection     | <i>perh</i>   | perhaps                                |
| <i>adv</i>     | adverb               | <i>Ir</i>       | Irish            | <i>Pg</i>     | Portuguese                             |
| <i>alter</i>   | alteration           | <i>irreg</i>    | irregular        | <i>pl</i>     | plural                                 |
| <i>Am</i>      | American             | <i>It, Ital</i> | Italian          | <i>Pol</i>    | Polish                                 |
| <i>AmerF</i>   | American French      | <i>Jp</i>       | Japanese         | <i>pp</i>     | past participle                        |
| <i>AmerInd</i> | American Indian      | <i>K</i>        | Kelvin           | <i>prep</i>   | preposition                            |
| <i>AmerSp</i>  | American Spanish     | <i>L</i>        | Latin            | <i>pres</i>   | present                                |
| <i>Ar</i>      | Arabic               | <i>LaF</i>      | Louisiana French | <i>prob</i>   | probably                               |
| <i>Aram</i>    | Aramaic              | <i>LG</i>       | Low German       | <i>pron</i>   | pronoun, pronunciation                 |
| <i>B.C.</i>    | before Christ        | <i>LGk</i>      | Late Greek       | <i>Prov</i>   | Provençal                              |
| <i>Brit</i>    | British              | <i>LHeb</i>     | Late Hebrew      | <i>prp</i>    | present participle                     |
| <i>C</i>       | Celsius              | <i>lit</i>      | literally        | <i>Russ</i>   | Russian                                |
| <i>Calif</i>   | California           | <i>LL</i>       | Late Latin       | <i>Sc</i>     | Scotch, Scots                          |
| <i>CanF</i>    | Canadian French      | <i>masc</i>     | masculine        | <i>Scand</i>  | Scandinavian                           |
| <i>cap</i>     | capital, capitalized | <i>MD</i>       | Middle Dutch     | <i>ScGael</i> | Scottish Gaelic                        |
| <i>Celt</i>    | Celtic               | <i>ME</i>       | Middle English   | <i>Scot</i>   | Scottish                               |
| <i>cent</i>    | century              | <i>MexSp</i>    | Mexican Spanish  | <i>sing</i>   | singular                               |
| <i>Chin</i>    | Chinese              | <i>MF</i>       | Middle French    | <i>Skt</i>    | Sanskrit                               |
| <i>comb</i>    | combining            | <i>MGk</i>      | Middle Greek     | <i>Slav</i>   | Slavic                                 |
| <i>compar</i>  | comparative          | <i>ML</i>       | Medieval Latin   | <i>So</i>     | South                                  |
| <i>conj</i>    | conjunction          | <i>modif</i>    | modification     | <i>Sp</i>     | Spanish                                |
| <i>D</i>       | Dutch                | <i>MS</i>       | manuscript       | <i>St</i>     | Saint                                  |
| <i>Dan</i>     | Danish               | <i>n</i>        | noun             | <i>superl</i> | superlative                            |
| <i>dat</i>     | dative               | <i>neut</i>     | neuter           | <i>Sw</i>     | Swedish                                |
| <i>deriv</i>   | derivative           | <i>NewEng</i>   | New England      | <i>syn</i>    | synonym, synonymy                      |
| <i>dial</i>    | dialect              | <i>NGk</i>      | New Greek        | <i>trans</i>  | translation                            |
| <i>dim</i>     | diminutive           | <i>NHeb</i>     | New Hebrew       | <i>Turk</i>   | Turkish                                |
| <i>E</i>       | English              | <i>NL</i>       | New Latin        | <i>US</i>     | United States                          |
| <i>Egypt</i>   | Egyptian             | <i>No</i>       | North            | <i>USSR</i>   | Union of Soviet<br>Socialist Republics |
| <i>Eng</i>     | English              | <i>Norw</i>     | Norwegian        | <i>usu</i>    | usually                                |
| <i>esp</i>     | especially           | <i>n pl</i>     | noun plural      | <i>var</i>    | variant                                |
| <i>F</i>       | Fahrenheit, French   | <i>obs</i>      | obsolete         | <i>vb</i>     | verb                                   |
| <i>fem</i>     | feminine             | <i>OE</i>       | Old English      | <i>vi</i>     | verb intransitive                      |
| <i>fr</i>      | from                 | <i>OF</i>       | Old French       | <i>VL</i>     | Vulgar Latin                           |
| <i>G</i>       | German               | <i>OldIr</i>    | Old Irish        | <i>vt</i>     | verb transitive                        |
| <i>Gk</i>      | Greek                | <i>OldIt</i>    | Old Italian      | <i>W</i>      | Welsh                                  |
| <i>Gmc</i>     | Germanic             | <i>ON</i>       | Old Norse        |               |  |

# Pronunciation Symbols

ə . . . . abut, collect, suppose

ˈə, ɪə . . . . humdrum

ə . . . . (in ɹl, ɹn) battle, cotton; (in lɹ, mɹ, rɹ)  
French table, prisme, titre

ɒr . . . . operation, further

a . . . . map, patch

ā . . . . day, fate

ä . . . . bother, cot, father

â . . . . a sound between \a\ and \ä\, as in an  
Eastern New England pronunciation of  
aunt, ask

au . . . . now, out

b . . . . baby, rib

ch . . . . chin, catch

d . . . . did, adder

e . . . . set, red

ē . . . . beat, easy

f . . . . fifty, cuff

g . . . . go, big

h . . . . hat, ahead

hw . . . . whale

ī . . . . tip, banish

ĩ . . . . site, buy

j . . . . job, edge

k . . . . kin, cook

k̥ . . . . German Bach, Scots loch

l . . . . lily, cool

m . . . . murmur, dim

n . . . . nine, own

ⁿ . . . . indicates that a preceding vowel is pro-  
nounced through both nose and mouth,  
as in French bon \bõⁿ\

ŋ . . . . sing, singer, finger, ink

ō . . . . bone, hollow

ó . . . . saw

œ . . . . French bœuf, German Hölle

œ̃ . . . . French feu, German Höhle

ôl . . . . toy

p . . . . pepper, lip

r . . . . rarity

s . . . . source, less

sh . . . . shy, mission

t . . . . tie, attack

th . . . . thin, ether

th̃ . . . . then, either

ü . . . . boot, few \ˈfyü\

û . . . . put, pure \ˈpyür\

ue . . . . German füllen

ü̃ . . . . French rue, German fühlen

v . . . . vivid, give

w . . . . we, away

y . . . . yard, cue \ˈkyü\

ʸ . . . . indicates that a preceding \l\, \n\, or \w\  
is modified by having the tongue ap-  
proximate the position for \y\, as in  
French digne \dēnʸ\

z . . . . zone, raise

zh . . . . vision, pleasure

\ . . . . slant line used in pairs to mark the be-  
ginning and end of a transcription: \ˈpen\

ˈ . . . . mark at the beginning of a syllable that  
has primary (strongest) stress: \ˈbar-ē-  
ər\

ˌ . . . . mark at the beginning of a syllable that  
has secondary (next-strongest) stress:  
\ˈshəf-əl-bōrd\

- . . . . mark of a syllable division in pronunci-  
ations (the mark of end-of-line division  
in boldface entries is a centered dot •)

( ) . . . . indicate that what is symbolized be-  
tween sometimes occurs and sometimes  
does not occur in the pronunciation of  
the word: **bakery** \ˈbā-k(ə-)rē\ = \ˈbā-  
kə-rē, ˈbā-krē\

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## A

<sup>1</sup>**a** \ə-ā\ *n*, *pl* **a's** or as \əz\ *often cap 1*: the 1st letter of the English alphabet **2**: a grade rating a student's work as superior

<sup>2</sup>**a** \ə, (ə)ā\ *indefinite article*: ONE, SOME — used to indicate an unspecified or unidentified individual (there's ~ man outside)

<sup>3</sup>**a** *abbr*, *often cap 1* **absent** **2** acre **3** alto **4** answer **5** are **6** area

**AA** *abbr* Alcoholics Anonymous **2** antiaircraft **3** associate in arts

**AAA** *abbr* American Automobile Association

**A and M** *abbr* agricultural and mechanical

**A and R** *abbr* artists and repertory

**aard-vark** \ārd-ˌvārk\ *n* [obs. Afrikaans, fr. Afrikaans *aard* earth + *vark* pig]: a large burrowing African ungulate mammal that feeds on ants and termites with its sticky tongue

**ab** *abbr* about

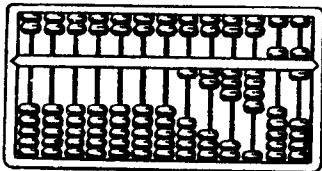
**Ab** \əb, ˈāv, ˈov\ *n* [Heb *Ābh*]: the 11th month of the civil year or the 5th month of the ecclesiastical year in the Jewish calendar

**AB** *abbr* **1** able-bodied seaman **2** airman basic **3** [NL *artium baccalaureus*] bachelor of arts

**ABA** *abbr* American Bar Association

**aback** \ə-ˈbak\ *adv*: by surprise (taken ~)

**aba-cus** \ə-bə-ˈkəs\ *n*, *pl* **aba-ci** \-ˌsi, -ˌkē\ or **aba-cuses**: an instrument for making calculations by sliding counters along rods or grooves



abacus

<sup>1</sup>**abaft** \ə-ˈbaft\ *prep*: to the rear of

<sup>2</sup>**abaft** *adv*: toward or at the stern: AFT

**ab-a-lo-ne** \ə-bə-ˈlō-nē, ˈa-bə-ˈ\ *n*: a large edible sea mollusk with a flattened slightly spiral shell with holes along the edge

<sup>1</sup>**aban-don** \ə-ˈban-dən\ *vb* [ME *abandonen*, fr. MF *abandoner*, fr. *abandon*, *n.*, surrender, fr. *a bandon* in one's power]: to give up completely: FORSAKE, DESERT — **aban-don-ment** *n*

<sup>2</sup>**abandon** *n*: a thorough yielding to natural impulses; *esp*: EXUBERANCE

**aban-doned** \ə-ˈban-dənd\ *adj*: morally unrestrained *syn* profligate, dissolute, reprobate

**abase** \ə-ˈbās\ *vb* **abased**: **abas-ing**: HUMBLE, DEGRADE — **abase-ment** *n*

**abash** \ə-ˈbash\ *vb*: to destroy the composure of: EM-BARRASS — **abash-ment** *n*

**abate** \ə-ˈbāt\ *vb* **abat-ed**; **abat-ing** **1**: to put an end to (~ a nuisance) **2**: to decrease in amount, number, or degree

**abate-ment** \ə-ˈbāt-mənt\ *n* **1**: DECREASE **2**: an amount abated; *esp*: a deduction from a tax

**ab-at-toir** \ə-bə-ˌtwār\ *n* [F]: SLAUGHTERHOUSE

**ab-ba-cy** \ə-bə-sē\ *n*, *pl* **-cies**: the office or term of office of an abbot or abbess

**ab-bé** \ə-ˈbā, ˈa-ˌ\ *n*: a member of the French secular clergy — used as a title

**ab-bess** \ə-bəs\ *n*: the superior of a convent for nuns

**ab-bey** \ə-bē\ *n*, *pl* **abbeys** **1**: MONASTERY **2**: CONVENT **3**: an abbey church

**ab-bot** \ə-bət\ *n* [ME *abbod*, fr. OE, fr. LL *abbat*-, *ab-bas*, fr. LGk *abbas*, fr. Aramaic *abbā* father]: the superior of a monastery for men

**abbr** *abbr* abbreviation

**ab-bre-vi-ate** \ə-ˈbrē-vē-āt\ *vb* **-at-ed**; **-at-ing**: SHORT-EN, CURTAIL; *esp*: to reduce to an abbreviation

**ab-bre-vi-a-tion** \ə-ˈbrē-vē-ā-shən\ *n* **1**: the act or result of abbreviating **2**: a shortened form of a word or phrase used for brevity *esp.* in writing

<sup>1</sup>**ABC** \ā-(ə)bē-ˈsē\ *n*, *pl* **ABC's** or **ABCs** \-ˈsēz\ **1**: ALPHABET — *usu.* used in *pl.* **2**: RUDIMENTS

<sup>2</sup>**ABC** *abbr* American Broadcasting Company

**ABD** \ā-bē-ˈdē\ *n*, *pl* **ABDs** also **ABD's** [all but dissertation]: a doctoral candidate who has completed required courses and examinations but not a dissertation

**Ab-di-as** \ab-ˈdī-əs\ *n*: OBADIAH

**ab-di-cate** \ab-di-ˈkāt\ *vb* **-cat-ed**; **-cat-ing**: to give up (as a throne) formally — **ab-di-ca-tion** \ab-di-ˈkā-shən\ *n*

**ab-do-men** \ab-də-mən, ab-ˈdō-\ *n* **1**: the cavity in or area of the body between the chest and the pelvis **2**: the part of the body posterior to the thorax in an arthropod — **ab-dom-i-nal** \ab-ˈdā-mən-əl\ *adj* — **ab-dom-i-nal-ly** *adv*

**ab-duct** \ab-ˈdʌkt\ *vb*: to take away (a person) by force: KIDNAP — **ab-duc-tion** \-ˈdʌk-shən\ *n* — **ab-duc-tor** \-tər\ *n*

**ab-beam** \ə-ˈbēm\ *adv* or *adj*: on a line at right angles to a ship's keel

**abed** \ə-ˈbed\ *adv* or *adj*: in bed

**Ab-e-na-ki** \ə-bə-ˈnā-kē\ *n*, *pl* **Abenaki** or **Abenakis**: a member of a group of American Indian peoples of northern New England and southern Quebec

**ab-er-ra-tion** \ə-bə-ˈrā-shən\ *n* **1**: deviation *esp.* from a moral standard or normal state **2**: failure of a mirror or lens to produce exact point-to-point correspondence between an object and its image **3**: unsoundness of mind: DERANGEMENT — **ab-er-rant** \ə-ˈber-ənt\ *adj*

**abet** \ə-ˈbet\ *vb* **abet-ted**; **abet-ting** [ME *abetten*, fr. MF *abeter*, fr. OF *beter* to bait] **1**: INCITE, ENCOURAGE **2**: to assist or support in the achievement of a purpose — **abet-tor** or **abet-ter** \-ˈbe-tər\ *n*

**abey-ance** \ə-ˈbā-əns\ *n*: a condition of suspended activity

**ab-hor** \əb-ˈhōr, ab-ˌ\ *vb* **ab-horred**; **ab-hor-ring** [ME *abhorren*, fr. L *abhorrere*, fr. *ab-* + *horrere* to shudder] **1**: LOATHE, DETEST — **ab-hor-rence** \-əns\ *n*

**ab-hor-rent** \-ənt\ *adj*: LOATHSOME, DETESTABLE

**Abib** \ā-ˈvēv\ *n* [Heb *Ābhīb*, lit., ear of grain]: the first month of the ancient Hebrew calendar corresponding to Nisan

**abide** \ə-ˈbīd\ *vb* **abode** \-ˈbōd\ or **abid-ed**; **abid-ing** **1**: BEAR, ENDURE **2**: DWELL, REMAIN, LAST

**abil-i-ty** \ə-ˈbi-lē-tē\ *n*, *pl* **-ties**: the quality of being able: POWER, SKILL

**-ability** also **-ibility** *n* *suffix*: capacity, fitness, or ten-

\ə\abut \ə\kitten \ər\urther \ə\ash \ə\acc \ə\map, mar \ə\out \ə\chin \ə\bet \ə\easy \ə\go \ə\hit \ə\ice \ə\job \ə\sing \ə\go \ə\law \ə\boy \ə\thin \ə\the \ə\loot \ə\foot \ə\yet \ə\vision *see also* Pronunciation Symbols *page*

## 2 abject • absenteeism

- dency to act or be acted on in a (specified) way (flam-  
mability)
- ab-ject** \əb-'jekt, ab-'jekt\ *adj*: low in spirit or hope  
; CRINGING — **ab-jection** \əb-'jek-shən\ *n* — **ab-ject-ly** *adv* — **ab-ject-ness** *n*
- ab-jure** \əb-'jūr\ *vb* **ab-jured**; **ab-jur-ing** 1: to re-  
nounce solemnly: RECENT 2: to abstain from — **ab-ju-ration** \əb-jə-'rā-shən\ *n*
- abl** *abbr* ablative
- ab-late** \ə-'blāt\ *vb* **ab-lat-ed**; **ab-lat-ing**: to remove or  
become removed esp. by cutting, abrading, or vapor-  
izing
- ab-la-tion** \ə-'blā-shən\ *n* 1: surgical cutting and remov-  
al 2: loss of a part (as the outside of a nose cone) by  
melting or vaporization
- ab-la-tive** \əb-lə-'tīv\ *adj*: of, relating to, or constituting  
a grammatical case (as in Latin) expressing typically  
the relation of separation and source — **ablative** *n*
- ablaze** \ə-'blāz\ *adj* or *adv*: being on fire: BLAZING
- able** \ā-bəl\ *adj* **abler** \-b(ə)-lər\; **ablest** \-b(ə)-ləst\ 1:  
having sufficient power, skill, or resources to accom-  
plish an object 2: marked by skill or efficiency — **ably**  
\-blē\ *adv*
- able also -ible** *adj* *suffix* 1: capable of, fit for, or worthy  
of (being so acted upon or toward) (breakable) (collect-  
ible) 2: tending, given, or liable to (knowledgeable)  
(perishable)
- able-bodied** \ā-bəl-'bā-dəd\ *adj*: having a sound  
strong body
- abloom** \ə-'blium\ *adj*: BLOOMING
- ab-lu-tion** \ə-'blū-shən, ə-\ *n*: the washing of one's body  
or part of it
- ABM** \ā-(ə)bē-'em\ *n*, *pl* **ABM's** or **ABMs**: ANTIBAL-  
LISTIC MISSILE
- Ab-na-ki** \əb-'nā-kē\ *var* of **ABENAKI**
- ab-ne-gate** \əb-ni-'gāt\ *vb* **-gat-ing** 1: DENY,  
RENOUNCE 2: SURRENDER, RELINQUISH — **ab-ne-ga-tion** \əb-ni-'gā-shən\ *n*
- ab-nor-mal** \əb-'nōr-məl\ *adj*: deviating from the nor-  
mal or average — **ab-nor-mal-i-ty** \əb-nōr-'ma-lə-tē\ *n*  
— **ab-nor-mal-ly** *adv*
- aboard** \ə-'bōrd\ *adv* 1: ALONGSIDE 2: on, onto, or with-  
in a car, ship, or aircraft 3: in or into a group or as-  
sociation (welcome new workers ~)
- aboard** *prep*: ON, ONTO, WITHIN
- abode** \ə-'bōd\ *n* 1: STAY, SOJOURN 2: HOME, RESIDENCE
- abol-ish** \ə-'bā-lish\ *vb*: to do away with: ANNUL — **ab-ol-i-tion** \ə-bə-'li-shən\ *n*
- ab-o-li-tion-ism** \ə-bə-'li-shə-'ni-zəm\ *n*: advocacy of  
the abolition of slavery — **ab-o-li-tion-ist** \-li-sh(ə)-  
nist\ *n* or *adj*
- A-bomb** \ā-'bām\ *n*: ATOMIC BOMB — **A-bomb** *vb*
- abom-i-na-ble** \ə-'bā-mə-nə-bəl\ *adj*: ODIIOUS, LOATH-  
SOME, DETESTABLE
- abominable snow-man** \-'snō-mən, -'man\ *n*, *often cap*  
**A&S**: a mysterious creature with human or apelike  
characteristics reported to exist in the high Himalayas
- abom-i-nate** \ə-'bā-mə-'nāt\ *vb* **-nat-ed**; **-nat-ing** [L  
*abominari*, lit., to deprecate as an ill omen, fr. *ab-* away  
+ *omen* omen]: LOATHE, DETEST
- abom-i-na-tion** \ə-'bā-mə-'nā-shən\ *n* 1: something  
abominable 2: DISGUST, LOATHING
- ab-orig-i-nal** \ə-bə-'ri-jə-nəl\ *adj*: ORIGINAL, INDIGE-  
NOUS, PRIMITIVE
- ab-orig-i-ne** \ə-bə-'ri-jə-nē\ *n*: a member of the original  
race of inhabitants of a region: NATIVE
- aborn-ing** \ə-'bōr-niŋ\ *adv*: while being born or pro-  
duced
- abort** \ə-'bōrt\ *vb* 1: to cause or undergo abortion 2: to  
terminate prematurely (~ a spaceflight) — **abor-tive**  
\-hōr-tiv\ *adj*
- abort** *n*: the premature termination of a mission of or a  
procedure relating to an aircraft or spacecraft
- abor-tion** \ə-'bōr-shən\ *n*: the spontaneous or induced  
termination of a pregnancy after, accompanied by, re-  
sulting in, or closely followed by the death of the em-  
bryo or fetus
- abor-tion-ist** \-sh(ə)-nist\ *n*: one who induces abortions
- abound** \ə-'baund\ *vb* 1: to be plentiful: TEEM 2: to be  
fully supplied
- about** \ə-'baüt\ *adv* 1: reasonably close to; also: on the  
verge of (~ to join the army) 2: on all sides 3: NEARBY
- about** *prep* 1: on every side of 2: near to 3: CONCERN-  
ING
- about-face** \-'fās\ *n*: a reversal of direction or attitude  
— **about-face** *vb*
- above** \ə-'bäv\ *adv* 1: in the sky; also: in or to heaven  
2: in or to a higher place; also: higher on the same page  
or on a preceding page
- above** *prep* 1: in or to a higher place than: OVER (storm  
clouds ~ the bay) 2: superior to (he thought her far ~  
him) 3: more than: EXCEEDING 4: as distinct from (~  
the noise)
- above-board** \-'bōrd\ *adv* or *adj*: without concealment  
or deception: OPENLY
- abp** *abbr* archbishop
- abr** *abbr* abridged; abridgment
- ab-ra-ca-da-bra** \ə-brə-kə-'da-brə\ *n* 1: a magical  
charm or incantation against calamity 2: GIBBERISH
- abrade** \ə-'brād\ *vb* **abrad-ed**; **abrad-ing** 1: to wear  
away by friction 2: to wear down in spirit: IRRITATE —  
**abra-sion** \-'brā-zhən\ *n*
- abra-sive** \ə-'brā-siv\ *n*: a substance (as pumice) for  
abrading, smoothing, or polishing
- abrasive** *adj*: tending to abrade: causing irritation (~  
relationships) — **abra-sive-ly** *adv* — **abra-sive-ness** *n*
- abreast** \ə-'brest\ *adv* or *adj* 1: side by side 2: up to a  
standard or level esp. of knowledge
- abridge** \ə-'briŋ\ *vb* **abridged**; **abridg-ing** [ME *abregen*,  
fr. MF *abregier*, fr. LL *abbreviare*, fr. L *ad* to + *brevis*  
short]: to lessen in length or extent: SHORTEN —  
**abridg-ment** or **abridge-ment** *n*
- abroad** \ə-'brōd\ *adv* or *adj* 1: over a wide area 2:  
away from one's home 3: outside one's country
- ab-ro-gate** \ə-brə-'gāt\ *vb* **-gat-ed**; **-gat-ing**: ANNUL,  
REVOKE — **ab-ro-ga-tion** \ə-brə-'gā-shən\ *n*
- abrupt** \ə-'brəpt\ *adj* 1: broken or as if broken off 2:  
SUDDEN, HASTY 3: so quick as to seem rude 4: DIS-  
CONNECTED 5: STEEP — **abrupt-ly** *adv*
- abs** *abbr* absolute
- ab-scess** \əb-'ses\ *n*, *pl* **ab-scess-es** [L *abscessus*, lit.,  
act of going away, fr. *abscedere* to go away, fr. *abs-*, *ab-*  
away + *cedere* to go]: a localized collection of pus sur-  
rounded by inflamed tissue — **ab-scessed** \-'sest\ *adj*
- ab-scis-sa** \əb-'si-sə\ *n*, *pl* **abscissas** also **ab-scis-sae**  
\-'si-(ə)sē\ : the horizontal coordinate of a point in a  
plane coordinate system obtained by measuring paral-  
lel to the x-axis
- ab-scis-sion** \əb-'si-zhən\ *n* 1: the act or process of cut-  
ting off 2: the natural separation of flowers, fruits, or  
leaves from plants — **ab-scise** \əb-'sīz\ *vb*
- ab-scond** \əb-'skänd\ *vb*: to depart secretly and hide  
oneself
- ab-sence** \əb-'səns\ *n* 1: the state or time of being absent  
2: WANT, LACK 3: INATTENTION
- ab-sent** \əb-'sənt\ *adj* 1: not present 2: LACKING 3: IN-  
ATTENTIVE
- ab-sent** \əb-'sənt\ *vb*: to keep (oneself) away
- ab-sent** \əb-'sənt\ *prep*: in the absence of: WITHOUT
- ab-sen-tee** \əb-sən-'tē\ *n*: one that is absent or keeps  
away
- absentee ballot** *n*: a ballot submitted (as by mail) in ad-  
vance of an election by a voter who is unable to be pre-  
sent at the polls
- ab-sen-tee-ism** \əb-sən-'tē-i-zəm\ *n*: chronic absence  
(as from work or school)



**ab-sent-mind-ed** \ab-sənt-'mīn-dəd\ *adj* : unaware of one's surroundings or actions : **INATTENTIVE** — **ab-sent-mind-ed-ly** *adv* — **ab-sent-mind-ed-ness** *n*

**ab-sinthe** also **ab-sinth** \ab-'sīnth\ *n* [F] : a liqueur flavored esp. with wormwood and anise

**ab-so-lute** \ab-sə-'lüt, -ab-sə-'lüt\ *adj* 1 : free from imperfection or mixture 2 : free from control, restriction, or qualification 3 : lacking grammatical connection with any other word in a sentence (~ construction) 4 : **POSITIVE** (~ proof) 5 : relating to the fundamental units of length, mass, and time 6 : **FUNDAMENTAL**, **ULTIMATE** — **ab-so-lute-ly** *adv*

**absolute pitch** *n* 1 : the position of a tone in a standard scale independently determined by its rate of vibration 2 : the ability to sing a note asked for or to name a note heard

**absolute value** *n* : the numerical value of a real number that for a positive number or zero is equal to the number itself and for a negative number is equal to the positive number which when added to it is equal to zero

**absolute zero** *n* : a theoretical temperature marked by a complete absence of heat and equivalent to exactly -273.15°C or -459.67°F

**ab-so-lu-tion** \ab-sə-'lüt-shən\ *n* : the act of absolving; *esp* : a remission of sins pronounced by a priest in the sacrament of reconciliation

**ab-so-lut-ism** \ab-sə-'lüt-'tī-zəm\ *n* 1 : the theory that a ruler or government should have unlimited power 2 : government by an absolute ruler or authority

**ab-solve** \ab-'zäl-, -'sälv\ *vb* **ab-solved**; **ab-solv-ing** : to set free from an obligation or the consequences of guilt

**ab-sorb** \ab-'sərb-, -'zərb\ *vb* 1 : to take in and make part of an existent whole 2 : to suck up or take in in the manner of a sponge 3 : to engage (one's attention) : **ENGROSS** 4 : to receive without recoil or echo (a ceiling that ~s sound) 5 : **ASSUME**, **BEAR** (~ all costs) 6 : to transform (radiant energy) into a different form *usu.* with a resulting rise in temperature — **ab-sorb-ing** *adj* — **ab-sorb-ing-ly** *adv*

**ab-sor-bent** also **ab-sor-bant** \ab-'sör-bənt-, -'zör-\ *adj* : able to absorb (~ cotton) — **ab-sor-ben-cy** \bən-sē\ *n* — **absorbent** also **absorbant** *n*

**ab-sorp-tion** \ab-'sörp-shən-, -'zörp-\ *n* 1 : a process of absorbing or being absorbed 2 : concentration of attention — **ab-sorp-tive** \-tīv\ *adj*

**ab-stain** \ab-'stān\ *vb* : to refrain from an action or practice — **ab-stain-er** *n* — **ab-sten-tion** \-'sten-chən\ *n*

**ab-ste-mi-ous** \ab-'stē-mē-əs\ *adj* : sparing in use of food or drink : **TEMPERATE** — **ab-ste-mi-ous-ly** *adv* — **ab-ste-mi-ous-ness** *n*

**ab-sti-nence** \ab-stē-nəns\ *n* : voluntary refraining *esp.* from eating certain foods or drinking liquor — **ab-sti-nent** \-nənt\ *adj*

**abstr** *abbr* abstract

**ab-stract** \ab-'strakt, 'ab-'strakt\ *adj* 1 : considered apart from a particular instance 2 : expressing a quality apart from an object (*whiteness* is an ~ word) 3 : having only intrinsic form ~ with little or no pictorial representation (~ painting) — **ab-tract-ly** *adv* — **ab-stract-ness** *n*

**ab-tract** \ab-'strakt; 2 also ab-'strakt\ *n* 1 : **SUMMARY**, **EPTOME** 2 : an abstract thing or state

**ab-tract** \ab-'strakt, 'ab-'strakt; 2 *usu* 'ab-'strakt\ *vb* 1 : **REMOVE**, **SEPARATE** 2 : to make an abstract of : **SUMMARIZE** 3 : to draw away the attention of 4 : **STEAL** — **ab-tract-ed-ly** \ab-'strak-təd-lē-, 'ab-'strak-\ *adv*

**abstract expressionism** *n* : art that expresses the artist's attitudes and emotions through abstract forms — **ab-stract expressionist** *n*

**ab-strac-tion** \ab-'strak-shən\ *n* 1 : the act of abstracting : the state of being abstracted 2 : an abstract idea 3 : an abstract work of art

**ab-struse** \ab-'strūs\ *adj* : hard to understand : **RECONDITE** — **ab-struse-ly** *adv* — **ab-struse-ness** *n*

**ab-surd** \ab-'sərd-, -'zərd\ *adj* [MF *absurdē*, fr. L *absurdus*, fr. *ab-* from + *surdus* deaf, stupid] : **RIDICULOUS**, **UNREASONABLE** — **ab-sur-di-ty** \-'sər-də-tē-, -'zər-\ *n* — **ab-surd-ly** *adv*

**abun-dant** \ə-'bən-dənt\ *adj*. [ME, fr. MF, fr. L *abundant-*, *abundans*, *prp.* of *abundare* to abound, fr. *ab-* from + *unda* wave] : more than enough : amply sufficient *syn* copious, plentiful, ample, bountiful — **abun-dance** \-dəns\ *n* — **abun-dant-ly** *adv*

**abuse** \ə-'byūs\ *n* 1 : a corrupt practice 2 : **MISUSE** (drug ~) 3 : coarse and insulting speech 4 : **MISTREATMENT** (child ~)

**abuse** \ə-'byüz\ *vb* **abused**; **abus-ing** 1 : to put to a wrong use : **MISUSE** 2 : **MISTREAT** 3 : to attack in words : **REVILLE** — **abus-er** *n* — **abu-sive** \-'byü-siv\ *adj* — **abu-sive-ly** *adv* — **abu-sive-ness** *n*

**abut** \ə-'bət\ *vb* **abutted**; **abut-ting** : to touch along a border : border on

**abut-ment** \ə-'bət-mənt\ *n* : the part of a structure (as a bridge) that supports weight or withstands lateral pressure

**abut-ter** \ə-'bə-tər\ *n* : one that abuts; *esp* : the owner of a contiguous property

**abys-mal** \ə-'biz-məl\ *adj* 1 : immeasurably deep : **BOTTOMLESS** 2 : absolutely wretched (~ living conditions of the poor) — **abys-mal-ly** *adv*

**abyss** \ə-'bis\ *n* 1 : the bottomless pit in old accounts of the universe 2 : an immeasurable depth

**abys-sal** \ə-'bi-səl\ *adj* : of or relating to the bottom waters of the ocean depths

**ac** *abbr* account

**-ac** *n* *suffix* : one affected with (hypochondriac)

**Ac** *symbol* actinium

**AC** *abbr* 1 air-conditioning 2 alternating current 3 [L *ante Christum*] before Christ 4 [L *ante cibum*] before meals 5 area code

**aca-cia** \ə-'kā-shə\ *n* : any of numerous leguminous trees or shrubs with round white or yellow flower clusters and often fernlike leaves

**acad** *abbr* academic; academy

**ac-a-deme** \ə-'kə-'dēm-, -ə-'kə-\ *n* : **SCHOOL**; also : **academic environment**

**ac-a-dem-ic** \ə-'kə-'de-mik\ *n* : a person who is academic in background, outlook, or methods

**academic** *adj* 1 : of, relating to, or associated with schools or colleges 2 : literary or general rather than technical 3 : theoretical rather than practical — **ac-a-dem-i-cal-ly** \-mi-k(ə-)lē\ *adv*

**ac-a-de-mi-cian** \ə-'kə-'dē-'mī-shən-, -ə-'kə-'dē-\ *n* 1 : a member of a society of scholars or artists 2 : **ACADEMIC**

**ac-a-dem-i-cism** \ə-'kə-'de-mē-'sī-zəm\ also **acad-emism** \ə-'kə-'dē-'mī-zəm\ *n* 1 : a formal academic quality 2 : purely speculative thinking

**acad-e-my** \ə-'kə-'dē-mē\ *n*, *pl* **-mies** [Gk *Akadēmeia*, school of philosophy founded by Plato, fr. *Akadēmeia*, gymnasium where Plato taught, fr. *Akadēmos* Greek mythological hero] 1 : a school above the elementary level; *esp* : a private high school 2 : a society of scholars or artists

**acan-thus** \ə-'kan-thəs\ *n*, *pl* **acanthus** 1 : any of a genus of prickly herbs of the Mediterranean region 2 : an ornamentation (as on a column) representing the leaves of the acanthus

**a cap-pel-la** also **a ca-pel-la** \ə-'kə-'pe-lə\ *adv* or *adj* [It *a cappella* in chapel style] : without instrumental accompaniment

\ə-'bət\ \-'kitten\ \ər-'further\ \ə-'ash\ \ə-'ace\ \ə-'mop, mar\ \ə-'out\ \ch-'chīn\ \ə-'bet\ \ə-'easy\ \ə-'go\ \ə-'hit\ \ə-'ice\ \ə-'job\ \ə-'sing\ \ə-'go\ \ə-'law\ \ə-'boy\ \ə-'thin\ \ə-'the\ \ə-'loot\ \ə-'foot\ \ə-'yet\ \ə-'vision see also Pronunciation Symbols page