

The  
**OXFORD**  
**THESAURUS**

An A-Z Dictionary of Synonyms

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Laurence Urdang

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**For Irena, Nicole, and Alexa**

## Foreword

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THE biggest problem with a book of this length and complexity is that one's competence and uniformity of judgement improve in the course of its preparation, gaining adequacy in the task only as the deadline for delivery of the manuscript draws nigh. Of course, given all the time in the world one would never complete any project, for each revision would yield not only greater experience but, theoretically, the temptation to achieve perfection, clearly unattainable.

The idea of publishing the *Oxford Thesaurus* was first broached to me in 1986. The book was originally to have been some 300,000 words in length; for various reasons, it was subsequently agreed to increase its size, and the book you are holding contains approximately 650,000 words (not counting the Index). Although Janet Whitcut and Sue Lloyd read the entire text and checked it for conformity to British idiom, the ultimate responsibility for the *Thesaurus* rests with me, not only for errors of omission and commission but for any benefits that I hope might be derived from its use.

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April 1991  
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

# Introduction

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In its narrowest sense, a synonym is a word or phrase that is perfectly substitutable in a context for another word or phrase. People who study language professionally agree that there is no such thing as an ideal synonym, for it is virtually impossible to find two words or phrases that are identical in denotation (meaning), connotation, frequency, familiarity, and appropriateness. Indeed, linguists have long noted the *economy of language*, which suggests that no language permits a perfect fit, in all respects, between any two words or phrases. Many examples of overlapping can be cited; the more obvious ones in English are those that reflect a duplication arising from Germanic and Romance sources, like *motherly* and *maternal*, *farming* and *agriculture*, *teach* and *instruct*. In such pairs the native English form is often the one with an earthier, warmer connotation. In some instances, where a new coinage or a loan-word has been adopted inadvertently duplicating an existing term, creating 'true' synonyms, the two will quickly diverge, not necessarily in meaning but in usage, application, connotation, level, or all of these. For example, scientists some years ago expressed dissatisfaction with the term *tidal wave*, for the phenomenon was not caused by tides but, usually, by submarine seismic activity. The word *tsunami* was borrowed from Japanese in an attempt to describe the phenomenon more accurately, but it was later pointed out that *tsunami* means 'tidal wave' in Japanese. Today, the terms exist side by side in English, the older expression still in common use, the newer more frequent in the scientific and technical literature.

Any synonym book must be seen as a compromise that relies on the sensitivity of its users to the idiomatic nuances of the language. In its best applications, it serves to remind users of words, similar in meaning, that might not spring readily to mind, and to offer lists of words and phrases that are alternatives to and compromises for those that might otherwise be overused and therefore redundant, repetitious, and boring. The *Oxford Thesaurus* goes a step further by offering example sentences to illustrate the uses of the headwords and their alternatives in natural, idiomatic contexts. In addition, by marking those synonyms that appear as main entries in the book and by providing a detailed Index of words and expressions, the *Thesaurus* offers an effective, useful networking feature that unifies the language covered into an integrated whole.

## 1. Selection of headwords

Two criteria have been employed: first, headwords have been selected because of their frequency in the language, on the assumption that synonyms are more likely to be sought for the words that are most used; second, some headwords of lower frequency have been included because it would otherwise be impossible to find a suitable place to group together what are perceived as useful sets of synonyms with their attendant illustrative sentences. Obvious listings have been omitted on the grounds that users of the *Thesaurus* can easily find synonyms for, say, *abdication* by making nouns out of the verbs listed under *abdicate*. This deliberate attempt to avoid duplication is mitigated in the case of very common words. For the convenience of the user, both *shy* and *bashful* are main entries, as are *method*, *manner*, and *mode*, which, though much the same in some respects, differ in detail and application. In this book, however, *mitigate* is a main entry but not *mitigation*, *mistake* and *mis-taken* are main entries but not *mistakenly*, etc. Where it is determined that such derivations are neither automatic nor semantically obvious, separate listings have been provided. In all instances, it is wise to consult the Index first to find a word.

## 2. Index

The Index lists, in alphabetical order, the occurrences of words and phrases that appear among the synonyms in the main text and as main entries, the latter being

## INTRODUCTION

easily identified by a degree sign. Many Index entries have several references to main entries where the sought-after word or phrase can be found; these references serve as gist-words that pinpoint the particular sense of the word being sought, enabling the user to go directly to the most appropriate main entry. For a fuller description of the principles and layout of the Index, see 'How to use the Index' on p. 559.

### 3. Illustrative sentences

On the principle that a word is known by the company it keeps, one or more sentences showing the main entry word in context are provided for each sense discrimination. These have been carefully selected to demonstrate the use of the main entry in a context likely to be encountered in familiar written or spoken ordinary English. (See also 8. Substitutability, below.)

### 4. Synonym lists

Each main entry is followed by one or more sense groupings, each illustrated by one or more sentences. An effort has been made to group the synonyms semantically as well as syntactically and idiomatically: that is, each synonym listed within a given set should prove to be more or less substitutable for the main entry in the illustrative sentence.

In some instances, idiomatic congruity may, unavoidably, become strained; where it is felt to be stretched too far—though still properly listed among its accompanying synonyms—a semicolon has been inserted to separate sub-groups of synonyms, and, in many cases, additional illustrative sentences have been provided. Such sub-groupings have been confined largely to distinctions between literal uses and figures of speech, between transitive and intransitive verbs, and between synonyms that differ in more subtle aspectual characteristics of meaning or syntax. (See also 8. Substitutability, below.)

Not all senses of all words are covered for either or both of the following reasons: the sense, though it exists, is relatively rare in ordinary discourse and writing; there are no reasonable synonyms for it. Thus, this sense of *mercy*,

an affecting or moving of the mind in any way; a  
mental state brought about by any influence; an  
emotion or feeling. *Mercy is an affection of the mind.*

is not covered for the first reason, as it is a literary and somewhat archaic usage. The same can be said for the sense,

a bodily state due to any influence

and for other senses listed in the largest dictionaries but rarely encountered except in literary contexts. Even in such contexts it would be unusual to need a synonym for this word and others like it.

### 5. Cross references

There are very few cross references between main listings in the *Thesaurus*, for the Index serves as the chief finding mechanism, and it was felt desirable to avoid unnecessary duplications of listings. Where such cross references do occur, they are simple and straightforward:

*superior adj.* . . . 3 See *supercilious*, above.  
—*n.* 4 See *supervisor*, below.

A number of cross references occur within entries, between variant forms of an expression. At the entry for *take*, for example, as one can say either *take* or *take it* in the sense of 'understand' etc., the option is shown in the following way:

*take v.* . . . 19 understand, gather, interpret, perceive,  
apprehend, deduce, conclude, infer, judge, deem,  
assume, suppose, imagine, see: *I take him to be a fool. I  
take it from your expression that you've had bad news.*

## INTRODUCTION

**33 take it:** a withstand or tolerate or survive punishment or abuse, survive: *The Marines are extremely tough and can take it.* b See 19, above.

In a few entries, the form 'See also' is used.

A unique feature of the *Thesaurus* is the cross-referencing from synonyms to entries. In this system, a degree sign (°) preceding a synonym indicates that this word also appears as a main entry at which the reader may find further useful synonyms. Thus, users seeking a different aspect or nuance of meaning of a synonym so marked are at once alerted to the fact that it has its own main entry and can look it up directly, without recourse to the Index:

**locale** *n.* 'site, 'location, 'spot, 'place, 'setting, venue, 'neighbourhood, 'situation, locality: *We moved the locale of the film to Spain.*

However, in some cases it would not be helpful to mark a synonym which appears as a main entry, as the reader would not find a useful list of synonyms there. This especially applies where a synonym is a phrase whose elements may mean something very different on their own. So, in this example,

**overshadow** *v.* . . . 2 'spoil, 'blight, 'ruin, 'mar, take (all) the pleasure from, put a damper on, take the edge off, 'impair, take the enjoyment out of: *The news from the east overshadowed everyone's spirits at the party.*

'take', 'pleasure', 'put', 'edge', and 'enjoyment' are not marked, even though each appears as a headword, because on their own they are not close in meaning to 'overshadow', and the reader would not find further synonyms of 'overshadow' in these entries.

The degree sign may also appear in front of a plural noun which occurs as a headword in its singular form:

**pretence** *n.* 1 'show, 'display, 'pretension, 'ostentation, 'airs . . .

**air** *n.* . . . 5 *airs*: 'pretension, 'pretence, 'show, affect-  
edness . . .

## 6. Labels

**A.** All words and phrases that are recognized as being typical of a particular variety of English, whether geographical or stylistic, are labelled. It might at first seem that a large number of colloquial, slang, and taboo words have been included, but that is less to provide such alternatives to the main entries than it is to ensure their presence in the Index so that users who need alternatives to them can find them readily. The labels used are those commonly encountered in ordinary dictionaries:

**Colloq** Colloquial; informal; used in everyday conversation and writing, especially in the popular press and in dramatic dialogue; sometimes avoided where more formal language is felt to be appropriate, as in business correspondence, scholarly works, technical reports, documents, etc.

**Slang** Belonging to the most informal register and characteristic of spoken English; often originating in the cult language of a particular socio-cultural group. Not sufficiently elevated to be used in most writing (aside from dialogue), although often found in the popular press and frequently heard on popular radio and television programmes.

**Taboo** Not used in polite society, usually because of the risk of offending sexual, religious, or cultural sensibilities; occasionally encountered on late-night television and radio; often occurring in graffiti and in dialogue in novels, plays, and films.

**Archaic** Describing an obsolete word or phrase (like *tickety-boo*, *lounge lizard*) that is used deliberately to invoke the feeling of a bygone time.

**Old-fashioned** Used of a synonym (like *comfit*) that is no longer current but might occasionally be encountered among older speakers and in older writing.

**Technical** Used of a somewhat specialized word that is not commonly encountered

## INTRODUCTION

in ordinary, everyday English, like *defalcator*, which appears as a synonym under *swindler*.

**Literary** Describes a word, like *euchre* 'cheat', that is not usually met with in everyday language, even of the formal genre, but may be found in poetry and other literary works.

**Brit, US, Australian, Canadian, New Zealand** Marks a word or phrase that occurs mainly in the designated variety.

The meanings of other labels are self-evident.

**B.** All labels can occur in combination. Usage labels always take precedence over regional labels. For example,

*pushover* *n.* 1 sure thing, *Colloq* piece of cake, child's play, snap, picnic, walk-over, *US* breeze, *Slang* cinch, *Brit* doddie, *US* lead-pipe cinch.

Here, 'sure thing' is standard universal English. All words and phrases following *Colloq* up to the *Slang* label are colloquial: 'piece of cake, . . . walkover' are universal colloquial English, 'breeze' is US colloquial. All synonyms following the *Slang* label are slang; 'cinch' is universal English slang, 'doddie' is confined to British slang, and 'lead-pipe cinch' is confined to American slang.

*talented* *adj.* . . . *Colloq* ace, crack, top-notch, *Brit* wizard, whizzo, *US* crackerjack.

In this entry, all synonyms shown are colloquial, 'ace, crack, topnotch' being universal English, 'wizard, whizzo' British, and 'crackerjack' US.

It must be emphasized that such labels are to some extent impressionistic and are based in the *Thesaurus* on a consensus of several sources: that is, there is no implication that 'breeze' is never used in the sense of 'pushover' except in the US, nor should such an inference be made.

**C.** Comments regarding what might be viewed as 'correct' in contrast to 'incorrect' usage are generally avoided. For example, the non-standard use of *between* in contexts referring to more than two of anything or of *among* in contexts involving fewer than three goes unmarked. However, if the usage question is confined to what can easily be represented in a 'lexical' environment, then suitable treatment is accorded it; thus 'now' and 'at present' are labelled *Non-Standard* under *presently*. To take another example, 'different to', in the typically British usage *His house is different to mine*, is rarely encountered in American English; in American English, purists condemn 'different than', as in *His house is different than mine*, which is increasingly heard in British English; purists on both sides of the Atlantic prefer 'different from'. Such matters are best left to usage books and to usage notes in dictionaries and are not treated in the *Thesaurus*.

**D.** Main entry words and sub-entries are not labelled, only the synonyms. Thus, under *beat* appears the idiomatic expression, *beat it*, which is not labelled:

*beat it*: depart, leave, abscond, run off or away,  
*Slang US* take it on the lam, lam out of here, hit the road: *You'd better beat it before the cops come.*

The idiom is not labelled because it is assumed that the user has looked it up to find a substitute for it, hence needs no information about it other than a listing of its alternatives (which are labelled, when appropriate) and an illustrative example. Should users need more detailed information about a given word or phrase, they should follow up further references to it in the Index and also resort to a dictionary, the proper repository for such information.

A rare exception to the above rule occurs where a headword has one meaning in British English and quite a different meaning in another regional variety. Thus:

*subway* *n.* 1 In *US*: underground (railway), tube: *She takes the subway to work.* 2 In *Britain*: tunnel, underpass: *Use the subway to cross the road in safety.*



## INTRODUCTION

Here, the two regional labels do not apply to the synonyms (since, for example, 'tunnel' has the same meaning in both British and US English) but to the two definitions of the headword.

E. Synonyms bearing any kind of label appear at the end of the set in which they are listed, except in the case described immediately above.

### 7. Spelling and other variants

The spellings shown throughout are those preferred by most modern British writers. British variant spellings are shown; if they are variants of the main entry word, they appear as the first word in the set(s) of synonyms following:

*mousy* *adj.* 1 *mousey*, ...  
*movable* *adj.* *moveable*, ...

Such variants are also shown when they appear within an entry:

*movable* *adj.* ... *transferable* or *transferrable*, ...

Common American spelling variants (*humor*, *traveler*, *unraveled*) are not shown, but less common ones are listed for convenience. Where both forms are variants in American spelling, they are described by 'or US also':

... *accoutrements* or US also *accouterments*, ...  
... *phoney* or US also *phony*, ...

This should be understood to mean 'the normal British spelling is *accoutrements* (or *phoney*); this form, together with *accouterments* (or *phony*), occurs in American English'.

### 8. Substitutability

A. The purpose of a synonym book is to provide the user with a collection of words that are as close as possible in meaning to a designated word. The *Oxford Thesaurus* tries to go to a step further by providing examples that not only illustrate the main entry word in a natural contextual environment but also allow the user to substitute as many of the synonyms as possible into the framework of the context. For example:

*porous* *adj.* *spongy*, *spongelike*, *permeable*, *pervious*,  
*penetrable*: *The rainwater runs through the porous*  
*rock and collects in the pools below.*

It is possible to substitute for *porous* in the sample sentence any of the words given as synonyms without any adjustment of the grammar or phrasing of the example. That is not to suggest that the synonyms are identical: 'permeable' and 'pervious' belong to a different register from that of 'spongy, spongelike', being more common in technical usage. Some might argue that 'penetrable' is not synonymous with the other listed words; but it is the function of this book to provide synonyms for the main entries, not for the other synonyms that might be listed. No claim is made—nor could it be made—that synonyms are identical, either to one another or to another word, merely that they fall well within the criteria of what, for practical purposes, is viewed as synonymy in the language.

It is certainly true that substituting for *porous* any of the five listed synonyms will yield five standard English sentences.

B. Some judgement is required of the user in determining the syntax and idiomatcity with which a given word or expression can be substituted in an illustrative context: words are rarely as readily interchangeable in a context as might be components in a chemical or mathematical formula. Moreover, while such formulae are reflective of science, language offers its users the virtually infinite variety available only in art, with each individual speaker of any language being presented with the opportunity to become an artist.

In the following example, nearly all terms can be substituted for *adjoining* in the

## INTRODUCTION

first illustrative sentence; to create idiomatic parallels to the second sentence, the parenthetical prepositions must be used:

**adjoining** *adj.* neighbouring, contiguous (to), adjacent (to), abutting, bordering, next (to): *We have bought the adjoining land and will build our new house there. The land adjoining the supermarket is for sale.*

Interpreting this, the following are all idiomatic: *adjoining land, neighbouring land, contiguous land, adjacent land, abutting land, and bordering land*. But if the context requires the adjective to come after *land* (with a following noun), then the parenthetical words must be added to yield constructions that are idiomatic, like *land adjoining the supermarket, land neighbouring the supermarket, land contiguous to the supermarket, land adjacent to the supermarket, land abutting the supermarket, land bordering the supermarket, and land next to the supermarket*.

As this is intended as a synonym book and not a work on English collocations, the treatment of idiomaticity cannot be taken further.

C. There are other reasons why direct substitutability is not always possible within a single semantic concept. The following extract demonstrates this:

**possess** *v.* . . . 3 dominate, control, govern, consume, take control of, preoccupy, obsess; charm, captivate, enchant, cast a spell on or over, bewitch, enthrall: *What possessed her to think that I could help? He behaves as if he is possessed by the devil.*

Here, two aspects of the same sense have been divided by a semicolon, with the synonyms preceding the semicolon illustrated by the first contextual example and those following it by the second. While it may be argued that in this instance the synonyms following the semicolon, with their illustrative sentence, might better have been listed in a separately numbered set, the close semantic association of the two groups would thereby have been lost.

D. Sometimes, where the sub-sense is familiar enough not to require its own example yet needs to be set off from the other synonyms because of a subtle or aspectual semantic distinction, a semicolon is inserted among the synonyms and only one example is provided:

**practice** *n.* . . . 2 exercise, discipline, drill, practising, repetition, rehearsal, training, preparation, workout, warm-up; application, study: *She needs more practice on the beginner's slope before going down the main piste.*

The idiomatic usage of this sense of 'study' and 'application' is sufficiently familiar not to require a separate example.

On the other hand, a second example is needed for the next sense of *practice*:

. . . 3 pursuit, exercise, work, profession, career, vocation, conduct; business, office: *He genuinely enjoys the practice of law. I heard of a veterinary practice for sale in Yorkshire.*

It would be difficult—perhaps impossible—to defend such fine distinctions in every instance: indeed, as a comparison of the different lengths of the entries in any dictionary will quickly reveal, language does not provide the same levels of sense discrimination for all words. The metaphorical focus and diversity of a language provide for polysemy in some semantico-cultural spheres but not in others. The classic observation often cited to demonstrate this linkage is that of the Inuit language that has a large number of distinguishing words for types of snow or of the African language that has an extensive vocabulary to describe the kinship among its speakers. On the grounds that the lexicon of a language is moulded by speakers who, quite naturally, use it to talk (and write) about things that are important to them, one might be tempted to draw conclusions about the voracity of English-speakers by reflecting that the entry for *take* has about twice as many definitions in most dictionaries as that for *give*.

## INTRODUCTION

E. Often, the semicolon may be used to separate transitive uses of a verb from intransitive:

**preach** *v.* . . . 2 moralize, sermonize, advise, counsel, admonish, reprimand, lecture, harangue, pontificate; urge, inculcate, advocate: *Mother used to preach to us about being charitable. Father preached restraint in all things.*

Because of the behaviour of verbs in English, different synonyms may be required depending on what the object of the verb is and, often, whether the object is a word or phrase or a clause:

**predict** *v.* foretell, prophesy, forecast, foresee, augur, prognosticate, forewarn, presage, vaticinate; portend, foreshadow, foretoken, forebode; intimate, hint, suggest: *My mother predicted that there would be moments like this. If only I could predict the winner of the 2.30!*

F. Wherever possible, the proper prepositional or adverbial particle normally accompanying a verb in a certain sense has been supplied, though it must be emphasized that the one offered is the most frequently used and not, necessarily, the only one acceptable in standard usage. Particles used with some words may vary considerably, owing not only to dialect variation but also to whether the verb is used actively or passively as well as to which nuance of meaning, sometimes far too subtle to be dealt with adequately in a book of this kind, is to be expressed. The following entry illustrates the full treatment that can be accorded to words that occur in a wide variety of grammatical environments:

**persevere** *v.* Often, *persevere in or with or at*: persist, resolve, decide, endure, continue, carry on or through, keep at or on or up, be steadfast or staunch or constant, keep going, stand fast or firm, see through, be or remain determined or resolved or resolute or stalwart or purposeful or uncompromising, be tenacious or persistent or constant or pertinacious or assiduous or sedulous, be tireless or untiring or indefatigable, show determination or pluck or grit, be plucky, be patient or diligent or stubborn or inflexible or adamant or obstinate or obdurate, show or exhibit or demonstrate patience or diligence or stubbornness or inflexibility or obstinacy or obduracy, remain dogged, pursue doggedly, be intransigent or intractable, cling to, stick to, support, stop at nothing, sustain, *Colloq* stick with, stick (it) out: *We must persevere to win. I shall persevere in my loyalty.*

G. In some adjective senses, a split might occur between attributive and predicative uses, though in most such cases, where the syntax is open, only one, usually common, illustration is given. For example, *alone* is used only predicatively or post-positively, not attributively; that is, one cannot say \**An alone woman* . . . In this particular case, the normal attributive form would be *lone*, but *lone* is not listed as a synonym for *alone* because they are not mutually substitutable. It is acknowledged that the detailed description of the special syntactic ways in which certain words (like *alone*, *agog*, *galore*) behave lies outside the province of this book.

Although similar cautions must be observed and adjustments made throughout, it is hoped that the illustrative sentences will provide a substantial basis for the user to identify idiomatic contexts and to discriminate senses that are not always carefully distinguished in dictionaries.

# A

**abandon** *v.* 1 'give up or over, 'yield, 'surrender, 'leave, 'cede, let 'go, 'deliver (up), 'turn over, 'relinquish: *I can see no reason why we should abandon the house to thieves and vandals.* 2 'depart from, 'leave, 'desert, 'quit, 'go away from: *The order was given to abandon ship.* 3 'desert, 'forsake, 'jilt, 'walk out on: *He even abandoned his fiancée.* 4 'give up, 'renounce, 'discontinue, 'forgo, 'drop, desist, abstain from: *She abandoned cigarettes and whisky after the doctor's warning.*

— *n.* 5 recklessness, intemperance, wantonness, lack of restraint, unrestraint: *He behaved with wild abandon after he received the inheritance.*

**abandoned** *adj.* 1 'left 'alone, 'forlorn, 'forsaken, 'deserted, 'neglected; rejected, shunned, 'cast off or aside, 'jilted, 'dropped, 'outcast: *An abandoned infant was found on the church steps. Totally alone, she felt abandoned by her friends.* 2 'bad, 'immoral, 'amoral, 'wicked, 'sinful, 'evil, 'corrupt, 'unprincipled, 'unrestrained, 'uninhibited, 'reprobate; 'loose, 'wanton, 'debauched, 'wild, 'dissolute, 'dissipated, 'profligate; 'depraved, 'lewd, 'lascivious, 'flagitious: *His abandoned behaviour soon landed him in jail.*

**abbreviate** *v.* 1 'shorten, 'compress, 'contract, 'truncate, 'trim, 'reduce, 'curtail: *We abbreviated some of the longer words to save space.* 2 'shorten, 'cut, 'condense, 'abridge, 'abstract, 'digest, 'epitomize, 'summarize, *US* synopsis: *The school presented an abbreviated version of A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

**abbreviated** *adj.* skimpy, 'brief, revealing: *The dancers' abbreviated costumes shocked some members of the audience.*

**abbreviation** *n.* initialism; acronym; shortening, contraction: *UK is one kind of abbreviation, or initialism; NATO, which is pronounced as a word, is another, usually called an acronym.*

**abdicate** *v.* 'give up, 'renounce, 'disclaim, 'waive, 'disown, 'surrender, 'yield, 'relinquish, 'abandon, 'resign, 'quit: *He abdicated all responsibility for care of the children. She abdicated the throne to marry a commoner.*

**abduct** *v.* 'kidnap, 'carry off, 'make away or off with, 'seize, *Slang US* 'snatch, 'grab: *The child that was abducted is safe.*

**abet** *v.* 1 'encourage, 'urge, 'instigate, 'incite, 'provoke, egg on, 'prod, 'goad; 'aid, 'help, 'assist: *The jury found that his wife had abetted him in the murder.* 2 countenance, 'approve (of), 'support, 'endorse, 'second, 'sanction, condone; 'further, 'advance, 'promote, 'uphold: *By failing to inform on the terrorists, the neighbours abetted the bombing.*

**abeyance** *n.* *in abeyance:* 'pending, 'abeyant, 'reserved, 'in 'reserve, 'shelved, 'pushed or 'shoved or 'shunted aside, 'postponed, 'put off, 'suspended, *US* 'tabled; temporarily 'inactive, 'dormant; 'latent; *Colloq* in a holding 'pattern, on the back burner; *Slang* on 'hold, in the deep-freeze, on the shelf, on ice, hanging 'fire: *Legal proceedings were held in abeyance so that talks could take place to reach an out-of-court settlement.*

**abhor** *v.* 'hate, 'loathe, 'detest, 'abominate, 'execrate; regard or view with 'horror or 'dread or 'fright or 'repugnance or 'loathing or 'disgust, 'shudder at, 'recoil or 'shrink from; be or stand aghast at: *He said that he abhorred any violation of human rights.*

**abhorrent** *adj.* 'hateful, 'detestable, 'abhorred, 'abominable, 'contemptible, 'odious, 'loathsome, 'horrid, 'heinous, 'execrable, 'repugnant; 'repulsive, 'repellent, 'revolting, 'offensive, 'disgusting, 'horrifying, 'obnoxious: *The idea of war was totally abhorrent to her.*

**abide** *v.* 1 'stand, 'endure, 'suffer, 'submit to, 'bear, 'put up with, 'accept, 'tolerate, 'brook: *How can you abide the company of such a fool?* 2 'live, 'stay, 'reside, 'dwell, 'sojourn: *Local people believe that the rain god abides in these mountains.* 3 'remain, 'stay, 'continue, 'tarry; 'linger, 'rest: *He'll abide in my care till he can walk again.* 4 *abide by:* 'consent to, 'agree to, 'comply with, 'observe, 'acknowledge, 'obey, 'follow, 'submit to, 'conform to, 'keep to, 'remain 'true to, 'stand 'firm by, 'adhere to, 'hold to: *You must abide by the rules of the club if you become a member.*

**abiding** *adj.* 'lasting, 'permanent, 'constant, 'steadfast, 'everlasting, 'unending, 'eternal, 'enduring, 'indestructible; 'unchanging, 'fast, 'hard and fast, 'fixed, 'firm, 'immutable, 'changeless: *Her abiding love is a solace to him.*

**ability** *n.* 1 adeptness, 'aptitude, 'facility, 'faculty, 'capacity, 'power, 'knack, 'proficiency, *Colloq* know-how: *I have perceived your ability to manipulate situations to your own advantage.* 2 'talent, 'skill, cleverness, 'capacity, 'wit, 'gift, 'genius, 'capability: *He has such extraordinary ability it is difficult to see why he doesn't accomplish more.* 3 *abilities:* 'faculty, 'faculties, 'talent(s), 'gift(s), 'skill(s): *Her abilities have made her one of the finest cellists of our time.*

**ablaze** *adj.* 1 aflame, 'afire, 'burning, on 'fire, 'alight, blazing: *By the time the firemen arrived, the roof was ablaze.* 2 lit up, 'alight, 'brilliantly or 'brightly lit, 'sparkling, 'gleaming, 'aglow, 'bright, 'brilliant, 'luminous, 'illuminated, 'radiant: *The ballroom was ablaze with the light from thousands of candles.*

**able** *adj.* 1 'capable, 'qualified, 'competent, 'proficient: *I feel quite able to take care of myself, thank you. He is an able tennis player.* 2 'talented, 'clever, 'skilled, 'masterful, 'masterly; 'adept, 'skilful, 'gifted, 'superior, 'expert, 'accomplished: *There is no doubt that Wellington was a very able general.*

**abnormal** *adj.* 1 'deviant, 'deviating, 'irregular, 'unusual, 'unconventional, 'aberrant, *Psych* jargon 'exceptional: *The wing of a bat is an abnormal structure.* 2 'peculiar, 'unusual, 'odd, 'strange, 'queer, 'freakish, 'unnatural, 'extraordinary, 'weird, 'eccentric, 'bizarre, 'anomalous, 'aberrant, 'perverse, 'deviant, 'irregular, *Colloq* 'offbeat, *Slang* 'oddball, 'kinky, 'weirdo: *They certainly make the contestants on that TV show do some very abnormal things.*

**abnormality** *n.* 1 irregularity, 'unconformity, 'unusualness, 'singularity, 'eccentricity, 'unconventionality, 'uncommonness, 'deviation, 'aberration, 'idiosyncrasy: *The desire in a man to wear women's clothing is viewed as an abnormality.* 2 distortion, 'anomaly, 'malformation, 'deformity: *The child was born with an abnormality of the right foot.*

**abode** *n.* 'residence, 'dwelling, 'dwelling-place, 'house, 'home, 'domicile, 'habitation, 'quarters, 'lodging, 'accommodation, *Military* billet; *Colloq* *Brit* digs, 'diggings: *He was described as being of no fixed abode.*

**abolish** *v.* 'eliminate, 'end, 'put an 'end to, 'terminate, 'destroy, 'annihilate, 'annul, 'void, 'make 'void, 'demolish, 'do away with, 'nullify, 'repeal, 'cancel, 'obliterate, 'liquidate, 'stamp out, 'quash, 'extinguish, 'erase, 'delete, 'expunge; 'eradicate, 'extirpate, 'deracinate, 'uproot: *The best way to abolish folly is to spread wisdom. Prohibition in the US was abolished in 1933.*

**abolition** *n.* 'elimination, 'end, 'termination, 'annulment, 'nullification, 'repudiation, 'cancellation; 'destruction, 'annihilation: *1837 marks the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire.*

**abominable** *adj.* 1 'offensive, 'repugnant, 'repulsive, 'vile, 'monstrous, 'loathsome, odious, execrable, detestable, 'despicable, 'base, 'disgusting, 'nauseous, nauseating, 'foul, 'abhorrent, horrid, 'deplorable: *He was accused of crimes too abominable to detail in open court.* 2 'terrible, unpleasant, 'disagreeable; 'awful, 'distasteful, in 'bad taste, 'horrible, 'frightful. *Colloq Brit* 'beastly: *No one wants to go out in this abominable weather. The décor in this hotel is simply abominable.*

**aboriginal** *n.* 'native, indigene, autochthon; *Colloq Australian* Abo, *Offensive Australian* aborigine, *Slang Australian* contemptuous boong: *Many aboriginals are not assimilated to modern life.*

**abound** *v.* 1 'prevail, 'thrive, 'flourish: *Disease abounds among the undernourished peoples of Africa.*

2 **abound in:** be crowded or 'packed or jammed with, be 'abundant or 'rich in, 'proliferate (in or with): *The ship abounds in conveniences.* 3 **abound with:** 'teem or 'swarm or 'throng with, be filled or infested with, overflow with: *The ship abounds with rats.*

**about** *adv.* 1 'round, around, 'close by, 'nearby, on every side: *Gather about, for I have something to tell you.* 2 'approximately, around, 'nearly, 'roughly, more or less, 'almost, 'close to or upon; give or take: *In 1685 London had been, for about half a century, the most populous capital in Europe. Light travels at about 186,000 miles a second.* 3 to and fro, up and down, back and forth, here and there, hither and yon, 'far and wide, hither and thither: *He wandered about aimlessly for several days.* 4 here and there, 'far and wide, hither and yon, hither and thither, 'helter-skelter: *My papers were scattered about as if a tornado had struck.*

5 around, 'prevalent, in the air: *There is a lot of flu about this year.* 6 'approximately, 'nearly, 'close to, not far from, 'almost, 'just about, 'around: *It is about time you telephoned your mother.*

— *prep.* 7 'around, 'surrounding, encircling: *There is a railing about the monument.* 8 'round, around, all 'round, 'everywhere, in all directions, all over: *Please look about the room for my hat.* 9 'near, 'nearby, adjacent to, 'beside, alongside, 'close by, nigh: *There were a lot of trees about the garden.* 10 with, at hand, *Colloq on:* *I am sorry, but I haven't my cheque-book about me.* 11 'touching, 'concerning, connected with, involving, in or with 'reference to, in or with 'regard to, 'regarding, in the 'matter of, with 'respect to, respecting, 'relative to, relating to, *apropos*, *Formal* anent: *He wrote a book about the Spanish Armada.*

**about-turn** *n.* 'reversal, 'reverse, 'turn-about, turn-round, U-turn, volte-face, *US* about-face: *There has been a complete about-turn in the policy concerning immigration.*

**above** *adv.* 1 'overhead, on 'high, 'aloft, in the 'sky or heavens: *Far above, the clouds scudded swiftly by.* 2 upstairs: *They lived on the ground floor and the landlady lived above.*

— *prep.* 3 on, on (the) 'top of, upon, 'over, atop: *The plume of smoke remained fixed above the volcano. He hasn't got a roof above his head for the night.* 4 'over, more than, 'exceeding, in 'excess of, beyond, greater than, 'surpassing: *The operations are controlled by gears, of which there are above fifty in number.* 5 insusceptible to, 'unaffected by, out of reach of, not susceptible or vulnerable or exposed to, 'superior to: *The judge is above bribery or other influence.* 6 **above all:** before or beyond everything, 'first of all, 'chiefly, 'primarily, in the 'first place, 'mainly, essentially, at 'bottom: *Above all, serve God and country before you serve yourself.*

**above-board** *adv.* 1 'openly, candidly, 'freely, publicly, frankly, straightforwardly, plainly, for all to see, out in the 'open, in the 'open: *Donald has always dealt completely above-board with everyone.*

— *adj.* 2 'open, 'candid, 'frank, 'straight, 'direct, 'honourable, straightforward, 'forthright, guileless, undeceiving, 'artless, 'ingenuous, undeceptive, 'undeceitful, 'straight from the 'shoulder; 'honest, 'genuine: *The company's dealings have always been above-board.*

**abridge** *v.* 'shorten, 'reduce, condense, 'cut, 'abbreviate, 'cut back, 'trim, 'curtail, 'pare down, 'contract, compress, 'digest, summarize, epitomize, 'abstract, *US* synopsis: *We abridged the original edition of 1000 pages to 480 pages.*

**abridgement** *n.* 1 shortening, reduction, 'abbreviation, condensation, contraction, truncation, trimming: *The abridgement took ten years.* 2 curtailment: *We protested against the abridgement of our right to picket.* 3 'digest, condensation, 'epitome, compendium, 'concise edition or version, 'cut edition or version; 'synopsis, 'abstract, 'summary, ' précis, 'outline, résumé: *The one-volume abridgement of the dictionary is easier to use.*

**abroad** *adv.* 1 'overseas, in 'foreign lands or parts: *We were abroad on assignment for a few years.* 2 broadly, 'widely, at 'large, near and 'far, 'far and wide, 'everywhere, extensively, publicly: *Don't spread rumours abroad.* 3 'outside, out of doors, away, out and about: *There are few people abroad this early in the morning.*

**abrupt** *adj.* 1 'sudden, 'hasty, 'quick, 'precipitate, 'snappy; unexpected, unannounced, unplanned, 'unforeseen, unanticipated: *The general's abrupt departure has been linked with the disappearance of a great deal of money.* 2 'precipitous, 'steep, 'sheer, 'sudden: *From the ridge there is an abrupt drop of 1000 metres into the valley.* 3 'curt, 'short, 'brusque, 'blunt, 'bluff, 'gruff, uncivil, 'rude, 'discourteous, 'impolite, unceremonious, 'snappish: *My bank manager gave me an abrupt reply when I asked for an increased overdraft.*

**absence** *n.* 1 non-attendance, non-presence, non-appearance, truancy: *This is Jason's third absence from class in a week. She runs the place in my absence.* 2 'lack, 'want, deficiency, non-existence; insufficiency, scantiness, paucity, 'scarcity, 'dearth: *In the absence of new evidence, the matter must remain undecided.*

**absent** *adj.* 1 away, 'out, 'off, 'elsewhere, not 'present, missing, gone: *Twenty people attended, but Harold was conspicuously absent.* 2 missing, lacking, 'wanting, 'deficient: *All warmth is absent from her singing.*

— *v.* 3 **absent (oneself) from:** keep or stay away from; 'withdraw or 'retire from: *He absented himself from the court during his father's trial for murder. Absent thee from felicity awhile.*

**absent-minded** *adj.* 'preoccupied, 'inattentive, unattentive, 'absorbed, unmindful, 'absent, 'off, 'withdrawn, unheeding, 'heedless, unheeding, 'inadvertent; distracted, abstracted, day-dreaming, in a brown study, in the clouds, 'unaware, 'oblivious, in a 'trance, drait(e), mooning, ('far) away (somewhere), stargazing, wool-gathering: *The absent-minded professor delivered his lecture to an empty lecture hall.*

**absolute** *adj.* 1 'perfect, 'complete, 'total, finished, 'thorough, through-and-through, consummate, 'flawless, 'faultless, unadulterated, 'pure, unmixed, unalloyed, 'undiluted; 'rank: *Alan behaved like an absolute gentleman.* 2 'complete, 'outright, 'downright, 'genuine, 'real, 'pure, 'out-and-out, 'transparent, 'unmitigated, 'categorical, 'unqualified, unconditional, utter, 'veritable, unconditioned: *Peace is an absolute requirement for prosperity.* 3 unrestricted, unrestrained, unconstrained, 'unlimited, 'unmitigated, 'arbitrary, 'despotic, 'dictatorial, 'totalitarian, 'supreme, almighty, autocratic, 'tyrannical: *The days of absolute monarchy are numbered.* 4 'positive, 'certain, 'sure, unambiguous, 'unquestionable, 'authoritative, verifiable, uncompromised: *Few intelligent people would claim absolute knowledge of anything.*

**absolutely** *adv.* 1 unqualifiedly, unconditionally, unreservedly, unexceptionally, unequivocally, unquestionably, 'positively, 'definitely, 'really, genuinely, decidedly, 'surely, 'truly, certainly, categorically: *She is absolutely the best dancer I have ever seen.*

*I absolutely refuse to go.* 2 'totally, 'utterly, 'completely, 'entirely, fully, 'quite, 'altogether, 'wholly: *It is absolutely necessary that you undergo surgery.* — *interj.* 3 certainly, assuredly, 'positively, 'definitely, of 'course, 'naturally, indubitably, yes, to be 'sure: *'Are you sure you want to go?' 'Absolutely!'*

**absorbed** *adj.* engrossed, 'lost, wrapped up, occupied, 'engaged, immersed, buried, 'preoccupied, concentrating, 'rapt: *He was absorbed in his reading.*

**absorbing** *adj.* engrossing, 'engaging, 'riveting, captivating, fascinating, 'spellbinding, gripping: *Maria was watching an absorbing thriller on television.*

**abstract** *adj.* 1 'theoretical, unapplied, notional, ideational, conceptual, metaphysical, unpractical, 'intellectual: *It is difficult to capture abstract ideas on paper.* 2 non-representational, 'symbolic, non-realistic: *Museums began buying abstract art in the 1930s.* — *n.* 3 'summary, 'epitome, 'synopsis, 'essence, 'digest, condensation, 'survey, conspectus, 'extract; 'outline, 'précis, résumé: *By reading the abstracts, you can determine which articles merit reading in full.* — *v.* 4 epitomize, 'abbreviate, 'digest, summarize, condense, 'shorten, 'abridge, 'cut, 'cut down, *US* synopsise: *The service abstracts articles that appear in scientific journals.*

**absurd** *adj.* 1 'ridiculous, 'silly, 'nonsensical, 'senseless, 'outlandish, 'preposterous, 'farfical, 'mad, 'stupid, 'foolish, 'idiotic, 'imbecilic or 'imbecile, 'moronic, 'childish; laughable, 'ludicrous, 'risible, 'inane, *Colloq* 'crazy, 'nutty, 'nuts, *Chiefly Brit* 'daft: *The notion that the moon is made of green cheese is absurd.* 2 asinine, 'senseless, 'illogical, 'irrational, 'unreasoned, 'unreasonable, 'incongruous, 'paradoxical, 'unsound, 'meaningless: *Today, most people view it absurd to believe that the earth is flat.*

**absurdity** *n.* 1 'folly, silliness, 'ridiculousness, 'foolishness, 'ludicrousness, 'nonsense, 'senselessness, 'meaninglessness, 'illogicality, 'irrationality, 'unreasonableness, 'incongruity, 'stupidity, *Colloq* 'craziness, 'nuttness, *Chiefly Brit* 'daftness: *Many comics rely on absurdity rather than cleverness for humour.* 2 'paradox, self-contradiction, 'error, 'fallacy: *No one can abide the man's pretentiousness and other absurdities.*

**abundance** *n.* overflow, 'superfluity, over-abundance, 'superabundance, 'excess, 'surplus, oversupply, 'glut, 'satiation, over-sufficiency; 'plenty, 'plenteousness, 'plentifulness, 'plenitude, 'copiousness, 'profusion, *Formal* 'nimety: *The days when there was an abundance of fresh drinking-water have come to an end.*

**abundant** *adj.* 1 'plentiful, overflowing, 'ample, 'copious, over-sufficient, 'superabundant, 'plenteous, 'profuse, 'inexhaustible, 'replete, 'bountiful, 'bounteous: *The abundant rainfall fills the reservoirs every day.* 2 abounding (in), 'full (of), 'rich (in), 'luxuriant, 'lavish: *We know a stream that is abundant in trout.* *The abundant vegetation of the rain forest is an ecological wonder.*

**abuse** *v.* 1 'misuse, misemploy, 'pervert, misapply, 'exploit: *The officer abused his authority in ordering the forced march at midnight.* 2 maltreat, ill-use, 'injure, 'wrong, 'hurt, 'mistreat, 'manhandle, 'ill-treat; 'damage: *I cannot stand by and watch that drunk abuse his wife and family.* 3 malign, revile, 'censure, 'upbraid, 'assail, 'objurgate, 'lambaste, 'berate, 'rebuke, 'scold, 'reproach, 'disparage, 'traduce, 'defame, 'insult, 'swear at, 'curse (at), calumniate, 'slander, 'libel, 'decry, 'deprecate, 'vilify, 'rail against: *In the report the director was abused in the most virulent terms.*

— *n.* 4 'misuse, misusage, misemployment, 'perversion, misapplication, misappropriation, *Rhetoric* 'catharsis: *Beware of imitating his abuse of the language.* 5 addiction, 'dependence: *They are being treated for drug abuse at the local clinic.* 6 maltreatment, ill-treatment, 'ill 'use, 'fault: *It seemed perfectly natural that he should defend abuses by which he profited.* 7 'self-abuse, self-pollution, 'masturbation, 'violation,

'defilement; corruption: *The schoolmasters consistently lectured the boys against any abuse of themselves.*

8 revilement, reviling, execration, vituperation, 'malediction, 'imprecation, tongue-lashing, 'calumny, 'calumniation, 'vilification, 'obloquy, 'scurrility, 'infective, 'maligning, 'upbraiding, 'berating, 'objurgation, 'scolding; 'billingsgate: *The two parties, after exchanging a good deal of abuse, came to blows.*

**abused** *adj.* 1 misused: *Permission to use the office copying machine has become an abused privilege.*

2 maltreated, ill-treated, mistreated, 'hurt: *It was explained that he had been an abused child.*

**abusive** *adj.* 1 insulting, 'scurrilous, 'vituperative, 'calumnious, 'calumnatory, 'offensive, 'slandorous, 'libellous, 'defamatory, 'censorious, 'opprobrious, 'disparaging, 'deprecatory, 'derogatory, 'derisive, 'derisive, 'reviling, 'vilifying, 'reproachful; 'profane; 'rude, 'filthy, 'dirty, 'foul, 'vulgar, 'obscene, 'smutty, 'vile, 'theristial: *The Crown refuses to tolerate abusive satire directed at the king. If I hear another word of abusive language out of you, I'll wash out your mouth with soap!* 2 'perverted, misapplied, 'improper, 'wrong, 'incorrect; 'exploitive, 'exploitative, 'exploitative; 'brutal, 'cruel, 'injurious, 'hurtful, 'harmful, 'destructive: *Despite the abusive treatment of wives, married women commanded much respect.* 3 'corrupt, 'venal, 'dishonest, 'crooked: *The politicians exercised abusive power over the townspeople.*

**abysmal** *adj.* 1 'awful, 'appalling, 'dreadful, 'terrible, 'profound: *The government of Nero presented a spectacle of abysmal degradation.* 2 abyssal, 'bottomless, 'profound, 'unfathomable, 'unfathomed: *The abysmal depths have been plumbed in the diving bell.*

**abyss** *n.* 'deep, 'abysm, 'bottomless 'gulf, yawning chasm, 'gaping 'void, 'unfathomable 'cavity, 'impenetrable 'depth(s): *The path led straight down into the abyss. In the scandal the MP was plunged into the abyss of disgrace.*

**academic** *adj.* 1 'scholastic, 'collegiate; 'scholarly, 'learned, 'lettered, 'erudite: *Green's academic background qualifies him for the professorship. The university began publishing academic journals in the 19th century.* 2 'theoretical, 'hypothetical, 'conjectural, 'speculative, 'abstract; 'ivory-tower, 'visionary, 'idealistic; 'impractical, 'unrealistic, 'unpractical: *The car doesn't run, so the question of miles per gallon is purely academic.*

**accent** *n.* 1 'emphasis, 'stress, 'force, 'prominence, 'accentuation; 'intensity, 'inflection; 'cadence, 'beat: *The accent is on the second syllable in 'reward'.* 2 'diacritic, 'diacritical 'mark, 'mark, 'accent 'mark: *There is an acute accent on the 'e' in 'cliché'.* 3 'pronunciation, 'articulation, 'intonation, 'speech 'pattern, 'inflection: *Even after forty years in the country, he still speaks English with an Italian accent.*

— *v.* 4 'accentuate, 'emphasize, 'stress, 'give 'prominence to, 'mark, underline, underscore, 'distinguish, highlight, 'set off or 'apart: *In her speech, the psychologist accented the 'id' in 'Idiot'. Why must he always accent the negative aspect of everything?*

**accept** *v.* 1 'receive, 'take, 'allow, 'permit: *Sorry, but we cannot accept any more applications.* 2 accede (to), 'agree (to), assent (to), 'consent (to), 'acknowledge, 'admit, 'allow, 'recognize: *We accept your request for a hearing.* 3 'assume, 'undertake, 'take on or up, 'agree to 'bear: *I'll accept the responsibility for replying.* 4 'reconcile oneself to, 'suffer, 'undergo, 'experience, 'stand, 'withstand, 'stomach, 'endure, 'bear, 'resign oneself to, 'brook, 'allow, 'tolerate, 'take: *I think I have accepted enough criticism for one day.*

**acceptable** *adj.* 1 'satisfactory, 'adequate, 'tolerable, all 'right, 'sufficient, 'admissible, 'passable, *Colloq* 'OK, okay: *The bread and meat were acceptable, but the beer was awful.* 2 'agreeable, 'pleasing, 'welcome, 'satisfying, 'delightful, 'pleasant, 'pleasing: *Most people find her compliments quite acceptable.*

**accessible** *adj.* approachable, 'open, 'available, 'attainable, 'obtainable, 'reachable, 'ready, 'at 'hand,

*Colloq get-at-able: The president is always accessible to those seeking help. The mechanism is accessible if the cover is removed.*

**accessory** *n.* 1 'extra, 'addition, adjunct, 'attach-ment, component, 'frill, *Slang* bells and whistles, doodah, *US and Canadian* doodad: *My food processor has more accessories than I could ever need.* 2 'accessary, 'accomplice, helper, 'assistant, confederate, 'col-league, abettor, 'aide, collaborator, co-conspirator, conspirator, fellow-criminal, 'associate or 'partner in crime: *Although he did not rob the bank, he drove the getaway car, which legally makes him an accessory before the fact. A seller of stolen goods is an accessory after the fact.*

—*adj.* 3 'extra, 'subordinate, 'auxiliary, additional, ancillary, supplemental, 'supplementary, 'secondary, adventitious, *Formal* adscititious: *For no apparent reason, the salamander grew an accessory limb near its hind leg.*

**accident** *n.* 1 'mishap, 'misfortune, mischance, mis-adventure, 'blunder, 'mistake; 'casualty, 'disaster, 'catastrophe, 'calamity: *A high percentage of the road accidents were caused by drunken drivers.* 2 'chance, 'fortune, 'luck, fortuity, 'fluke; serendipity: *I came across the gold ring by accident, when cleaning out a disused cupboard.* 3 'non-essential, 'accessory or accessory, 'extra, 'addition: *Melancholy is an almost inseparable accident of old age.*

**accidental** *adj.* 'chance, fortuitous, 'lucky, unlucky, serendipitous; undesigned, 'unpremeditated, uncalculated, unintended, unintentional, unwitting, 'inadvertent; unexpected, unplanned, 'unforeseen, unanticipated, adventitious; 'casual, 'random: *Our meeting was entirely accidental.*

**accommodate** *v.* 1 'fit, 'suit, 'adapt, 'adjust, 'modify; customize: *I shall do my best to accommodate the equipment to your needs.* 2 harmonize, make consist-ent, 'reconcile, 'adapt: *It is uncertain whether his version of the incident can be accommodated to ours.* 3 'equip, 'supply, 'provide, 'furnish: *Can you accom-modate me with five pounds till tomorrow?* 4 'put up, 'house, 'lodge, 'shelter, 'quarter, *Military* billet: *The innkeeper is unable to accommodate us tonight.* 5 'suit, 'oblige, convenience, 'serve: *I was willing to accom-modate you by selling your old car.*

**accommodating** *adj.* 1 'obliging, cooperative, 'helpful, 'hospitable; 'considerate, conciliatory, 'easy to deal with, pliant, 'yielding, compliant, 'polite, 'friendly, complaisant, 'kind, 'kindly: *The lady at the complaints desk in the store was most accommodating.* 2 'pliable, 'accessible, corruptible, subornable, get-at-able; bribable: *If you want to get off scot-free, we'll have to find an accommodating judge.*

**accommodation** *n.* 1 'adaptation, 'adjustment, modification, 'change, 'alteration, conformation, con-formity: *Her skilful accommodation to her boss's demands kept the peace in the office.* 2 'settlement, 'treaty, compromise: *Negotiations were now opened for an accommodation between the belligerents.* 3 conveni-ence, 'favour: *Would you take the mail to the post office as an accommodation to me?* 4 'lodging(s), 'room(s), 'quarters, 'shelter, 'housing; 'facility, premises, *Brit* digs, *US* accommodations: *We were able to arrange for accommodation at the hotel. Have you seen our new office accommodation?* 5 'loan, (financial) 'assistance or 'aid, 'grant, grant-in-aid: *The man was able to obtain an accommodation from his brother-in-law.*

**accompany** *v.* 1 convey, 'escort, chaperon or chape-rone, 'go (along) with; 'attend; usher, 'squire: *Allow me to accompany you to your taxi.* 2 'go (along) with, 'come with, be associated with, 'belong with, 'go together with, be linked with: *The roast was accom-panied by a bottle of claret.*

**accomplice** *n.* 'accessory or accessory, 'partner in crime, confederate, 'ally, 'associate, 'colleague, 'fellow, 'henchman, collaborator, conspirator, co-conspirator, abettor, 'assistant, fellow criminal,

*Colloq US* 'cohort: *The police arrested the safe-cracker and three accomplices within hours of the robbery.*

**accomplish** *v.* 'fulfil, 'perform, 'achieve, 'carry out, 'execute, 'carry off, do, 'complete, 'carry through, 'finish, 'effect, bring to an 'end, conclude, 'wind up, 'end; attain, 'reach, 'gain; *Colloq* 'bring off, 'knock off, 'polish off, *Slang* 'pull off, *US* 'swing, 'hack, 'cut: *I don't know how she accomplished it, but she sailed around the world single-handed. Has he accomplished his goal yet?*

**accomplished** *adj.* consummate, 'perfect, 'expert, 'adept, 'skilful, 'proficient, 'practised, 'gifted, 'talen-tered, skilled, 'professional: *Did you know that she is also an accomplished flautist?*

**accomplishment** *n.* 1 'fulfilment, 'consummation, 'completion, 'realization, attainment, 'achievement, conclusion, culmination: *After the accomplishment of the task they were all taken out to celebrate.* 2 coup, 'feat, 'exploit, 'triumph, *tour de force*: *Among her many accomplishments was climbing Mount Everest.* 3 'skill, skilfulness, 'talent, 'gift, 'ability: *Playing the violin is another of his accomplishments.*

**accord** *v.* 1 'agree, harmonize, concur, be at 'one, 'correspond, be in 'harmony, be 'consistent, 'go (together), 'coincide, 'conform: *His principles and practices do not accord with one another.*

—*n.* 2 'agreement, unanimity, concord, 'reconcili-ation, 'harmony, 'mutual 'understanding, conformity, accordance, 'rapport, concert: *The countries are in accord on a beneficial trade balance.* 3 'agreement, 'treaty, 'pact, 'contract: *The accords will be signed at the summit meeting in May.* 4 'agreement, 'harmony, congruence; correspondence: *The colours of the cur-tains are in perfect accord with those of the carpet.*

**accordingly** *adv.* 1 'hence, 'therefore, 'consequently, 'thus, in consequence whereof, (and) so: *Smoking was forbidden; accordingly, we put out our cigars.* 2 suit-ably, in conformity, in compliance; conformably, 'appropriately, compliantly: *Dinner-jackets were required, and the men dressed accordingly.*

**according to** *adv.phr.* 1 on the 'authority of, 'con-sistent with, in conformity or 'agreement with, as said or believed or maintained etc. 'by: *We are going to play this game according to Hoyle. According to his lawyer, he should never have been acquitted.* 2 conformable to, 'consistent with, in conformity with, commensurate with: *The queen greeted them in order, according to rank.*

**account** *v.* 1 *account for*: 'explain, give a 'reason for, give or render a 'reckoning for, 'answer for, 'justify, 'reckon for: *The treasurer has been able to account for every penny of expense. His desire to conceal his back-ground accounts for his secrecy.*

—*n.* 2 'calculation, accounting, 'reckoning, computa-tion, ('financial) 'statement; enumeration: *The accounts show that the company has ample funds in reserve. Williams hasn't submitted his expense account for the trip.* 3 'interest, 'profit, 'advantage, 'benefit, 'favour, 'sake: *Nigel turned his convalescence to good account by writing a best seller. Don't read the book on my account.* 4 'explanation, 'statement, 'description, 'report, 'recital, 'narrative, 'history, 'chronicle: *The defendant gave a credible account of his whereabouts at the time of the crime.* 5 'consideration, 'use, 'worth, 'importance, consequence, 'note, value, 'merit, 'standing, 'significance, 'estimation, 'esteem: *The committee decided that length of service is of some account in determining retirement pensions.* 6 'story, 'narration, 'narrative, 'report, 'tale, 'relation, 'description: *Alice's account of the rabbit wearing a waistcoat is unbelievable. I take into account or take account of*: 'notice, take 'note of, 'consider, take into 'consideration, 'allow for in passing sentence, the judge took into account the child's poverty and the fact that it was Christmas time.

**accountability** *n.* answerability, 'responsibility, 'liability, culpability, accountableness: *In a democracy, there can be no reducing the accountability of the government to the citizens.*

**accountable** *adj.* answerable, 'responsible, 'liable, 'obliged, obligated: *I am accountable to no man, but the greatest man in England is accountable to me.*

**accumulate** *v.* 'collect, 'gather, 'amass, 'mass, 'pile or 'heap up, aggregate, cumulate; 'assemble, 'store, 'stock, 'hoard, stockpile, 'put or 'lay away: *Overnight, the snow accumulated in six-foot drifts about the house. Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey, | Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.*

**accumulation** *n.* 1 collecting, amassing, 'gathering, piling or aggregation, heaping up: *One effect of the strike was the accumulation of rubbish in the streets.* 2 'growth, 'increase, build-up: *The accumulation of wealth has never proved a valid purpose in life.* 3 'heap, 'pile, 'mass, 'collection, 'hoard, 'store, stockpile, 'stock, aggregation; assemblage: *Our gardener made sure that there was an ample accumulation of compost.*

**accuracy** *n.* exactness, correctness, loosely 'precision, preciseness: *The translation from the Greek has been accomplished with great accuracy. Rifling the inside of the barrel of a firearm increases its accuracy.*

**accurate** *adj.* 1 'exact, 'correct, error-free, 'precise: *She gave an accurate description of the events. There is a nice distinction between 'accurate' and 'precise'.* 2 'careful, 'meticulous, 'nice, with an eye to or for 'detail, 'scrupulous, 'conscientious: *Marvin is a very accurate typist.* 3 unerring, on 'target, Colloq on the 'mark, spot on ('target): *This rifle is accurate if you allow for the wind.*

**accusation** *n.* 'charge, 'allegation, indictment, 'charge, citation, arraignment, 'complaint; 'imputation, incrimination, denunciation, impeachment: *The politician denied the accusation of having accepted a bribe.*

**accuse** *v.* 1 **accuse (of or with):** 'blame, censure, 'hold responsible (for), 'charge (with), 'denounce (for), point the 'finger (at), cite, call to 'account: *She accused the Knave of Hears of lying.* 2 **accuse (of or with):** 'charge, 'indict, 'impeach, arraign, 'incriminate; 'attribute, 'impute: *The prisoner is accused of assault, criminal damage, and disorderly conduct.*

**accustom** *v.* 'familiarize, 'acquaint, habituate, 'train, 'season; acclimatize or acclimate: *Start off by wearing your contact lenses for an hour at a time in order to accustom your eyes to them. She soon accustomed herself to the new surroundings.*

**accustomed** *adj.* 1 'customary, 'habitual, 'usual, 'traditional, 'normal, 'regular, 'set, 'routine, 'ordinary, 'familiar, wonted, 'common, habituated: *The old man took his accustomed place near the fire.* 2 'used: *I've grown accustomed to her face.*

**ache** *v.* 1 'pain, 'hurt, 'smart, throb, 'pound; 'sting: *My jaw has been aching since that tooth was extracted.* 2 'yearn, 'long, 'hunger, 'hanker, pine, crave: *A hostage for a year, he was aching to see his wife and children.*

— *n.* 3 'pain, 'pang, throbbing, pounding, smarting, soreness: *I have had this ache in my back, Doctor, and I can't stand up straight.* 4 'pang, 'pain; 'distress; 'longing: *There's been an ache in my heart, my darling, ever since you went away.*

**achieve** *v.* 1 'accomplish, 'carry out, 'execute, 'succeed in, 'complete, 'fulfil, 'bring off or about; 'realize, 'effect: *When the fund reaches its goal, we shall have achieved our purpose.* 2 'accomplish, attain, 'reach, 'gain, 'get, 'acquire, 'win, 'obtain: *She achieved her ends by cheating and conniving.*

**achievement** *n.* 1 attainment, 'accomplishment, 'acquisition, acquirement: *As he was still in his thirties, the achievement of great fame still lay ahead for him.* 2 'accomplishment, attainment, 'feat, 'deed, 'exploit, 'victory: *The winning of the Nobel prize was her greatest achievement.* 3 'fulfilment, 'realization,

'accomplishment, attainment, 'completion: *What virtue lies more in achievement than in the desire for it?*

**acknowledge** *v.* 1 'admit, 'confess, 'allow, 'concede, own, 'recognize, 'accept, accede, acquiesce; own up to: *We acknowledge that we might have been mistaken. She finally acknowledged my presence by looking up.* 2 'answer, 'reply to, 'respond to, 'react to: *She couldn't possibly acknowledge personally every letter she receives.*

**acknowledgement** *n.* 1 acknowledging, confessing, admitting, owning, 'admission, confession, avowal, affirmation: *His acknowledgement of his involvement in the crime saved the police a great deal of time.*

2 'approval, acceptance, 'recognition, 'allowance: *By acknowledgement of the parliament, the king was the commander of the army and navy.* 3 'reply, 'response, 'answer, 'recognition: *Our acknowledgement will be in tomorrow's post.*

**acme** *n.* 'peak, apex, 'top, 'summit, 'pinnacle, 'zenith; 'climax, culmination: *Roger has reached the acme of perfection as a diamond-cutter.*

**acquaint** *v.* **acquaint with:** 'familiarize with, 'inform of or about, make 'aware of, apprise of, 'advise of: *The management requires employees to acquaint themselves with the safety rules.*

**acquaintance** *n.* 1 'familiarity, 'knowledge, acquaintanceship, 'understanding, awareness; 'experience: *His acquaintance with the works of Coleridge is sparse at best.* 2 'associate, 'fellow, 'colleague: *She's not a friend of mine, only an acquaintance.*

**acquainted** *adj.* 1 known to each other or one another, 'familiar with each other or one another, on speaking terms: *I have known Rory for years, but his wife and I are not acquainted.* 2 **acquainted with:** 'familiar with, known to, 'aware of, 'informed of, 'knowledgeable of, conversant with: *I have studied trigonometry, but I am not acquainted with calculus.*

**acquire** *v.* 'get, 'obtain, 'gain, 'win, 'earn, 'procure, 'secure, 'come by or into; 'receive, come into 'possession of; 'buy, 'purchase: *He acquired great wealth by marrying rich old dying widows.*

**acquisition** *n.* 1 obtaining, getting, acquiring, acquirement, 'gain, procurement: *The acquisition of property entails many obligations.* 2 'possession(s), 'property, 'purchase; 'object: *This first edition is a recent acquisition.*

**act** *n.* 1 'deed, 'action, 'undertaking, 'operation, 'step, 'move; 'feat, 'exploit; 'accomplishment, 'achievement: *The first act of the new commission was to ban smoking in public places.* 2 'performance, 'show, 'bit, skit, 'stand, 'routine, 'turn, sketch, Colloq 'thing, Slang US shtick: *Stand-up comedians do their acts in nightclubs.* 3 'performance, 'pretence, 'posture, 'stance, feigning, 'front, 'fake, 'dissimulation, 'show, 'deception, 'hoax, 'affectation: *She didn't mean what she said—it was just an act.* 4 'bill, law, 'decree, edict, statute, 'order, ordinance, 'command, mandate, 'resolution, 'measure, enactment: *Are the opening hours of public houses in England regulated by act of Parliament?* — *v.* 5 'behave (oneself), 'carry on, deport oneself, comport oneself, 'conduct oneself: *I don't know how she'll act when we're in public.* 6 'perform, 'play, do: *She is acting in the West End.* 7 'portray, 'represent, impersonate, act out, 'personify, take or 'play the 'part or 'role of, personate: *Reginald acts the fool whenever he has had too much to drink.* 8 feign, 'pretend, 'counterfeit, 'fake, dissemble, 'make believe, 'sham, simulate, 'dissimulate, 'posture: *You may think him sincere, but I know he is just acting.* 9 take 'effect, 'work, 'operate, 'function, 'perform: *This drug will act only if taken with meals.*

**action** *n.* 1 'activity, 'performance, 'movement, 'motion, 'energy, liveliness, vim, 'vigour, 'spirit, 'vitality; 'enterprise, 'initiative: *Being a man of action, he hates just sitting and reading.* 2 'influence, 'effect, 'power, 'force, 'strength: *The action of the moon's gravitational pull causes tides on earth.* 3 'deed, 'act, 'undertaking, 'exertion, 'exercise: *The very action of*



*breathing caused me pain.* 4 'remedy, 'proceeding, 'process: *If they don't stop beating their dog we shall take action against them.* 5 fighting, 'combat: *We saw action in the Far East.* 6 'fight, 'battle, 'engagement, 'encounter, 'clash, 'fray, 'sortie, 'skirmish, 'affray: *How many men were lost in last night's action?* 7 'effect, 'effectiveness, 'activity, 'function, 'performance, 'functioning, 'reaction: *What is the action of steroids on the lymph system?* 8 actions: 'behaviour, 'conduct, 'deportment, 'demeanour, 'ways, 'manner, 'manners: *She must be held responsible for her actions.*

**activate** *v.* 'move, 'actuate, 'set in 'motion, get started, 'energize, get or 'set 'going, 'start, 'initiate, 'switch or 'turn on, trigger; 'motivate, 'rouse, 'arouse, 'prompt, 'stimulate, 'stir, 'mobilize, 'animate, 'impel, 'galvanize, *Colloq US* light a fire under: *The sensor in the pavement activates the traffic signal. Her enthusiasm activated him to go into business for himself.*

**active** *adj.* 1 'strenuous, 'vigorous, 'full, 'dynamic, 'physical; 'energetic, 'lively, 'busy, 'brisk, 'bustling, occupied, on the 'move, *Colloq* on the 'go, 'running: *She is healthier for having led a very active life. He always seems to be active.* 2 acting, 'effective, 'efficacious, 'effectual, working, 'functioning, 'operative, 'potent, 'influential; 'powerful: *The active ingredient in her medicine is an antihistamine.* 3 'energetic, 'lively, 'hyperactive, 'animated, 'spry, 'nimble, 'quick, 'agile, 'sprightly: *There is no keeping up with an active child.*

**activity** *n.* 1 'action, 'movement, 'motion, 'vigour, 'vim, 'energy, 'liveliness, 'bustle: *Last week there wasn't much activity in the stock market.* 2 'pursuit, 'occupation, 'vocation, 'work, 'function, 'operation, 'job, 'labour, 'endeavour, 'enterprise, 'project, 'undertaking, 'venture, 'interest: *What sort of business activity are you engaged in?*

**actual** *adj.* 1 existing, existent, 'real, 'genuine, 'factual, 'true, 'authentic, 'verified, 'verifiable, 'true to 'life, 'manifest, 'realized, 'realistic, *Colloq* 'solid: *The actual cost of the project turned out to be double the estimate.* 2 'present, 'current, 'existent, 'real, 'genuine, 'physical, 'tangible: *No telescope has detected any actual volcanic eruption on the moon.*

**actually** *adv.* 'really, in 'reality, in 'fact, in 'actuality, in point of 'fact, in 'truth, 'absolutely, as a matter of 'fact, 'indeed, 'truly, 'literally: *The interest rates actually charged by banks may vary from those quoted publicly.*

**acute** *adj.* 1 'sharp, 'pointed, 'narrow: *The two roads meet at an acute angle.* 2 'severe, 'intense, 'critical, 'crucial, 'dangerous, 'grave, 'serious: *This is the ward for patients with acute illnesses.* 3 'sharp, 'cutting, 'intense, 'severe, 'violent, 'penetrating, 'exquisite, 'excruciating, 'fierce, 'shooting, 'stabbing, 'piercing, 'sudden: *The onset of the disease is marked by acute pains in the abdomen.* 4 'keen, 'sharp, 'sensitive: *The bloodhound is known for its acute sense of smell.* 5 'keen, 'sharp-witted, 'shrewd, 'clever, 'ingenious, 'astute, 'sharp, 'canny, 'incisive, 'discerning, 'perceptive, 'perspicacious, 'intelligent, 'penetrating, 'insightful, 'percipient, 'wise, 'sensitive, 'discriminating; 'alert, 'aware, on the qui vive: *Such a circumstance could not be lost upon so acute an observer.*

**adapt** *v.* 1 'suit, 'fit, 'make 'suitable, 'qualify: *The structure of the outer ear is adapted to collect and concentrate the vibrations.* 2 'alter, 'modify, 'change, 'remodel, 'tailor, 'reshape, 'shape, 'fashion; 'adjust, 'accommodate, 'accustom, 'acclimatize or 'acclimate, 'habituate: *He adapted the play from an old French comedy. The whale adapts itself to great changes in pressure when it dives thousands of feet.*

**adaptable** *adj.* 'flexible, 'pliable, 'pliant, 'compliant, 'accommodative, 'tractable, 'malleable, 'ductile, 'versatile; 'alterable, 'changeable: *Men, in general, are not as adaptable as women.*

**adaptation** *n.* 1 'fitting, 'suiting, 'modifying, 'adjusting, 'conversion: *In 1831 electricity was ripe for adaptation to practical purposes.* 2 'modification, 'change,

'adjustment, 'accommodation, 'reworking, 'customization, 'alteration: *She was responsible for the adaptation of her short story to a television play.*

**add** *v.* 1 'join, 'unite, 'combine, 'annex: *5 + 3 denotes that 3 is to be added to 5.* 2 'total, 'sum, 'sum up, 'combine, 'count up, 'reckon, *Brit* 'tot (up), *US* tote (up): *The computer can add all those figures in a few seconds.* 3 'continue, 'go on: *'And I won't take no for an answer', she added.* 4 *add to*: 'increase, 'enlarge, 'amplify, 'augment, 'supplement: *His articles have added greatly to his reputation as a financial analyst.*

**addict** *n.* 1 ('habitual) 'user, *Slang* junkie, dope-fiend, 'doper, 'head, 'pot-head, 'acid-head, 'pill popper, 'tripper, *Chiefly US* hophead: *His contributions helped set up the halfway houses for addicts.* 2 'devotee, 'aficionado, 'fan, 'admirer, 'follower, 'adherent, 'supporter, 'enthusiast, *Colloq* buff, 'hound, 'fiend, 'groupie, *Slang* 'freak, 'bug, 'nut, 'teeny-bopper: *She became a rock 'n' roll addict in the '60s.*

**addition** *n.* 1 adding, joining, putting together, uniting, combining: *The addition of this paragraph is uncalled for.* 2 totalling, adding up, summing-up, summation, counting up, 'reckoning, 'toting up: *You have made an error in addition.* 3 addendum, appendix, 'appendage, 'supplement, 'increment, 'augmentation, 'extension: *This addition contributes nothing to the manuscript.* 4 'extension, 'ell, *Brit* 'annexe, *US* annex, wing: *We used our lottery winnings to pay for an addition to the house.*

— *prep.* 5 *in addition to*: as well as, 'besides, beyond, over and above: *In addition to books, the shop sold greetings cards.*

— *adv. phr.* 6 *in addition*: 'moreover, 'furthermore, 'additionally, 'besides, 'withal, to 'boot, in or into the 'bargain, too, also, as well: *We were compelled to exercise every morning and in addition we went for a ten-mile run each Saturday.*

**address** *n.* 1 'speech, 'talk, 'discourse, 'oration, 'lecture; 'sermon: *The Prime Minister's address to the nation was broadcast last night.* 2 'location, 'whereabouts: *She couldn't write to me because she didn't have my address.*

— *v.* 3 'speak or 'talk to; 'deliver or 'give a 'speech to; 'lecture: *After the coup, the general addressed the crowd in the square.* 4 'greet, 'hail, 'accost, 'approach: *She was addressing strangers in the street to ask their views on women's rights.* 5 *address oneself to*: 'devote or 'direct or 'apply oneself to: *After the holidays, I again addressed myself to studying for examinations.*

**adept** *adj.* 1 'versed, 'proficient, 'skilled, 'well-skilled, 'expert, 'accomplished, 'skilful, 'adroit, 'dexterous or 'dextrous, 'able, 'masterful, 'masterly, 'polished: *She is an adept pianist, and her husband is adept at carpentry.*

— *n.* 2 'expert, 'master, 'specialist, 'authority, *Colloq* dab hand, old hand: *He is an adept at anything that one does with one's hands.*

**adequate** *adj.* 1 'sufficient, 'enough, 'ample; 'satisfactory, 'fitting, 'equal, 'suitable: *Is there language adequate to describe my feelings?* 2 'passable, 'fair, 'fair to middling, 'middling, 'average, 'tolerable, ('barely) 'acceptable, ('barely) 'satisfactory, all 'right, 'competent, not (at all) 'bad, so so, *Colloq* 'OK or 'okay, up to snuff, not that or too 'bad, no 'great shakes: *The music was good, the band only adequate.* 3 'equal, 'suitable, 'suited, 'fitted, up, 'proper, 'qualified, 'competent, 'good 'enough: *Johnson was unsure that he was adequate to the task at hand.*

**adjoining** *adj.* 'neighbouring, 'contiguous (to), 'adjacent (to), 'abutting, 'bordering, 'next (to): *We have bought the adjoining land and will build our new house there. The land adjoining the supermarket is for sale.*

**adjust** *v.* 1 'set 'right, 'arrange, 'settle, 'harmonize, 'reconcile, 'resolve, set or 'put to 'rights; 'arbitrate, 'mediate; 'redress, 'rectify, 'correct, 'patch up: *The labour and management teams have not been able to*