

The
OXFORD
Encyclopedic
English Dictionary

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Preface

THIS dictionary is an innovative all-in-one reference book, providing within a single volume a comprehensive dictionary of current English and a concise world encyclopedia prepared from the authoritative lexical database assembled for the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* and other dictionaries of current English, supplemented by the encyclopedic resources held by the Oxford English Dictionaries Department.

Lexical coverage is generous and up to date, with special attention given to scientific and technical vocabulary. Definitions are presented in a straightforward readable style with the minimum of symbols and abbreviations. There are clear explanations of grammar, usage, and word origins, and pronunciation is indicated by means of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

The encyclopedic articles are the fullest to appear in an English dictionary of this size. They include accounts of famous people, organizations, and institutions, a history of every major language, about 3,000 entries for names of countries, cities, continents, oceans, lakes, rivers, and mountains, and articles (including historical information) on a wide range of subjects. Biographical entries are given for people who are world-famous, pioneers, statesmen who were in power at a time of significant change in their country's history, and people who have become legendary on their own spheres, together with a representative selection of lesser figures. A history of every independent country is included, and the numbers given for populations are based on the most recent statistics available.

The Appendices offer useful information that is more easily presented in a tabulated form than in an encyclopedic entry or dispersed through a number of such entries. The *Chronology of World Events* enables the reader to see at a glance what was taking place in different parts of the world at any date from the palaeolithic age onwards.

Throughout the work our aim has been to present as much information as possible in a clear and concise style so as to offer the maximum help and interest to the reader.

March 1991

JMH
REA

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Guide to Use of the Dictionary

1. USE OF CONVENTIONS

1.1 In this edition, a great deal of the information given in the dictionary entries is self-explanatory, and the use of special conventions has been kept to a minimum. The following pages are meant to explain the editorial approach and to assist the user by explaining the principles involved in assembling the information.

2. HEADWORD

2.1 The headword is printed in bold roman type, or in bold italic type if the word is not naturalized in English and is usually found in italics in printed matter:

saddle /'sæd(ə)/ n. & v. —n. 1 a seat of leather etc., usu. raised at the front and rear, fastened on a horse etc. for riding. 2 a seat for the rider of a bicycle etc. 3 a joint of meat consisting

2.2.1 Variant spellings are given before the definition; in all such cases the form given as the headword is the preferred form. Variant forms are also given at their own places in the dictionary when these are three or more entries away from the main form:

saguaro /sæ'gwɑ:rəʊ/ n. (also *sahuar* /sæ'wɑ:rəʊ/) (pl. -os) a giant cactus, *Carnegiea gigantea*, of the SW United States and Mexico. [Mex. Sp.]

2.2.2 Variant spellings given at the beginning of an entry normally apply to the whole entry, including any phrases and undefined derivatives (see below, 10–12).

2.2.3 When variants apply only to certain functions or senses of a word, these are given in brackets at the relevant point in the entry.

2.2.4 Words that are normally spelt with a capital initial are given in this form as the headword; when they are in some senses spelt with a small initial and in others with a capital initial this is indicated by repetition of the full word in the appropriate form within the entry.

2.2.5 Variant American spellings are indicated by the designation *US*. These variants are often found in American use in addition to the main forms given:

sabre /'seɪbə(r)/ n. & v. (*US saber*) —n. 1 a cavalry sword with a curved blade. 2 a cavalry soldier and horse. 3 a light fencing-sword with a tapering blade. —v.tr. cut down or wound with a sabre.

2.2.6 Pronunciation of variants is given when this differs significantly from the pronunciation of the headword.

2.3 Words that are different but spelt the same way (homographs) are distinguished by superior numerals:

bat¹ /bæt/ n. & v. —n. 1 an implement with a handle, usu. of wood and with a flat or curved surface, used for hitting balls in games. 2 a turn at using this. 3 a batsman, esp. in cricket, usu. described in some way (an excellent bat). 4 (usu. in pl.) an object like a table-tennis bat used to guide aircraft when taxiing. —v. (batted, batting) 1 tr. hit with or as with a bat. 2 intr. take a turn at batting. ☐ bat around 1 st. potter aimlessly. 2 *US* discuss (an idea or proposal). off one's own bat unprompted, unaided. right off the bat *US* immediately. [ME f. OE *batt* club, perh. partly f. OF *batte* club f. *battre* strike]

bat² /bæt/ n. any mouselike nocturnal mammal of the order Chiroptera, capable of flight by means of membranous wings extending from its forelimbs. ☐ have bats in the belfry be eccentric or crazy. like a bat out of hell very fast. [16th c., alt. of ME *bakke* f. Scand.]

bat³ /bæt/ v.tr. (batted, batting) wink (one's eyelid) (now usu. in phr.). ☐ not (or never) bat an eyelid colloq. show no reaction or emotion. [var. of obs. *bate* flutter]

3. PRONUNCIATION

3.1.1 Guidance on pronunciation follows the system of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and is based on the pronunciation associated especially with southern England (sometimes called 'Received Pronunciation').

3.1.2 It is not possible in a dictionary of this size to show the many variations heard in educated speech in other parts of the English-speaking world.

3.2 The symbols used, with their values, are as follows:

3.2.1 Consonants:

b, d, f, h, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, w, and z have their usual English values. Other symbols are used as follows:

g	(get)	ŋ	(ring)	ʃ	(she)
tʃ	(chip)	θ	(thin)	ʒ	(decision)
dʒ	(jar)	ð	(this)	j	(yes)
x	(loch)				

3.2.2 Vowels:

short vowels		long vowels		diphthongs	
æ	(cat)	ɑ:	(arm)	eɪ	(day)
e	(bed)	i:	(see)	aɪ	(my)
ə	(ago)	ɔ:	(saw)	ɔɪ	(boy)
ɪ	(sit)	ɜ:	(her)	əʊ	(no)
ɒ	(hot)	u:	(too)	aʊ	(how)
ʌ	(run)			ɪə	(near)
ʊ	(put)			eə	(hair)
				ʊə	(poor)
				aɪə	(fire)
				aʊə	(sour)

3.2.3.1 (ə) signifies the indeterminate sound as in garden, carnal, and rhythm.

3.2.3.2 (r) at the end of a word indicates an r that is sounded when a word beginning with a vowel follows, as in clutter up and an acre of land.

3.2.4 The mark ~ indicates a nasalized sound, as in the following sounds that are not natural in English:

æ̃	(timbre)
ē̃	(élan)
ō̃	(garçon)

3.2.5 The main or primary stress of a word is shown by ' preceding the relevant syllable; any secondary stress in words of three or more syllables is shown by , preceding the relevant syllable.

3.3 With headwords consisting of two or more unhyphenated words, the pronunciation is given only of the words that do not appear individually elsewhere in the dictionary.

3.4 Pronunciation of derivatives listed at the end of the entries is only given when there is a change of stress (as with many words in -ation) or some other significant change.

3.5 For the pronunciation of inflected forms, see below, 5.1.3.

3.6 For the pronunciation of prefixes, suffixes, and combining forms, see below, 14.3.

4. PART OF SPEECH

4.1 The grammatical identity of words as *noun*, *verb*, *adjective*, and so on, is given for all headwords and derivatives, and for compounds and phrases when necessary to aid clarity. The same part-of-speech label is used of groups of more than one word when the group has the function of that part of speech, e.g. *ad hoc*, *Parthian shot*.

4.2 When a headword has more than one part of speech, a list is given at the beginning of the entry, and the treatment of the successive parts of speech (in the same order as the list) is introduced by a bold dash in each case:

safe /seɪf/ *adj.* & *n.* — *adj.* 1 **a** free of danger or injury. **b** (often foll. by *from*) out of or not exposed to danger (*safe from their enemies*). 2 affording security or not involving danger or risk (*put it in a safe place*). 3 reliable, certain; that can be reckoned on (*a safe catch; a safe method; is safe to win*). 4 prevented from escaping or doing harm (*have got him safe*). 5 (also *safe and sound*) uninjured; with no harm done. 6 cautious and unenterprising; consistently moderate. — *n.* 1 a strong lockable cabinet etc. for valuables. 2 = *meat safe*.

4.3 The standard part-of-speech names are used, and the following additional explanations should be noted:

4.3.1 Nouns used attributively are designated *attrib.* when their function is not fully adjectival (e.g. *model* in *a model student*; *the student is very model* is not acceptable usage).

4.3.2.1 Adjectives are labelled *attrib.* (= attributive) when they are placed before the word they modify (as in *a blue car*), and *predic.* (= predicative) when they occur (usually after a verb) in the predicate of a sentence (as in *the car is blue*).

4.3.2.2 Some adjectives are restricted in such use: for example *aware* is normally used predicatively and *undue* is normally used attributively.

4.3.3 The designation *absol.* (= absolute) refers to uses of transitive verbs with an object implied but not stated (as in *smoking kills* and *let me explain*).

4.3.4 The designation 'in *comb.*' (= in combination), or 'also in *comb.*', refers to uses of words (especially adjectives) as an element joined by a hyphen with another word, as with *crested*, which often appears in forms such as *red-crested*, *large-crested*, and so on.

5. INFLECTION

5.1.1 Inflection of words (i.e. plurals, past tenses, etc.) is given after the part of speech concerned:

safari /sə'fɑ:ri/ *n.* (*pl. safaris*) 1 a hunting or scientific expedition, esp. in E. Africa (*go on safari*). 2 a sightseeing trip to see African animals in their natural habitat.

sag /sæg/ *v.* & *n.* — *v.intr.* (*sagged, sagging*) 1 sink or subside under weight or pressure, esp. unevenly. 2 have a downward bulge or curve in the middle. 3 fall in price. 4 (of a ship) drift from its course, esp. to leeward.

5.1.2 The forms given are normally those in use in British English. Variant American forms are identified by the label *US*; these variants are often found in American use in addition to the main forms given.

5.1.3 Pronunciation of inflected forms is given when this differs significantly from the pronunciation of the

headword. The designation '*pronunc. same*' denotes that the pronunciation, despite a change of form, is the same as that of the headword.

5.2 In general, the inflection of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs is given when it is irregular (as described further below) or when, though regular, it causes difficulty (as with forms such as *budgeted*, *coos*, and *taxis*).

5.3 *Plurals of nouns*: nouns that form their plural regularly by adding *-s* (or *-es* when they end in *-s*, *-x*, *-z*, *-sh*, or soft *-ch*) receive no comment. Other plural forms are given, notably:

5.3.1 nouns ending in *-i* or *-o*.

5.3.2 nouns ending in *-y*.

5.3.3 nouns ending in Latinate forms such as *-a* and *-um*.

5.3.4 nouns with more than one plural form, e.g. *fish* and *aquarium*.

5.3.5 nouns with plurals involving a change in the stem, e.g. *foot*, *feet*.

5.3.6 nouns with a plural form identical to the singular form, e.g. *sheep*.

5.3.7 nouns in *-ful*, e.g. *handful*.

5.4 *Forms of verbs*:

The following forms are regarded as regular:

5.4.1 third person singular present forms adding *-s* to the stem (or *-es* to stems ending in *-s*, *-x*, *-z*, *-sh*, or soft *-ch*).

5.4.2 past tenses and past participles adding *-ed* to the stem, dropping a final silent *e* (e.g. *changed*, *danced*).

5.4.3 present participles adding *-ing* to the stem, dropping a final silent *e* (e.g. *changing*, *dancing*).

5.4.4 Other forms are given, notably:

5.4.4.1 doubling of a final consonant, e.g. *bat*, *batted*, *batting*.

5.4.4.2 strong and irregular forms involving a change in the stem, e.g. *come*, *came*, *come*, and *go*, *went*, *gone*.

5.5 *Comparative and Superlative of Adjectives and Adverbs*:

5.5.1 Words of one syllable adding *-er* or *-est*, those ending in silent *e* dropping the *e* (e.g. *braver*, *bravest*) are regarded as regular. Most one-syllable words have these forms, but participial adjectives (e.g. *pleased*) do not.

5.5.2 Those that double a final consonant (e.g. *hot*, *hotter*, *hottest*) are given, as are two-syllable words that have comparative and superlative forms in *-er* and *-est* (of which very many are forms ending in *-y*, e.g. *happy*, *happier*, *happiest*), and their negative forms (e.g. *unhappier*, *unhappiest*).

5.5.3 It should be noted that specification of these forms indicates only that they are available; it is usually also possible to form comparatives with *more* and superlatives with *most* (as in *more happy*, *most unhappy*), which is the standard way of proceeding with adjectives and adverbs that do not admit of inflection.

5.6 *Adjectives in -able formed from Transitive Verbs*:

These are given as derivatives when there is sufficient evidence of their currency; in general they are formed as follows:

5.6.1 Verbs drop silent final *e* except after *c* and *g* (e.g. *movable* but *changeable*).

5.6.2 Verbs of more than one syllable ending in *-y* (preceded by a consonant or *qu*) change *y* to *i* (e.g. *enviable*, *undeniable*).

5.6.3 A final consonant is often doubled as in normal inflection (e.g. *conferrable*, *regrettable*).

6. DEFINITION

6.1 Definitions are listed in a numbered sequence in order of comparative familiarity and importance, with the most current and important senses first:

sail /seɪl/ n. & v. —n. 1 a piece of material (orig. canvas, now usu. nylon etc.) extended on rigging to catch the wind and propel a boat or ship. 2 a ship's sails collectively. 3 a voyage or excursion in a sailing-ship. b a voyage of specified duration. 4 a ship, esp. as discerned from its sails. 5 (collect.) ships in a squadron or company (a fleet of twenty sail). 6 (in pl.) Naut. a sl. a maker or repairer of sails. b hist. a chief petty officer in charge of rigging. 7 a wind-catching apparatus, usu. a set of boards, attached to the arm of a windmill. 8 a the dorsal fin of a sailfish. b the tentacle of a nautilus. c the float of a Portuguese man-of-war. —v. 1 intr. travel on water by the use of sails or engine-power. 2 tr. a navigate (a ship etc.). b travel on (a sea). 3 tr. set (a toy boat) afloat. 4 intr. glide or move smoothly or in a stately manner. 5 intr. (often foll. by through) colloq. succeed easily (sailed through the exams).

6.2 They are subdivided into lettered senses (a, b, etc.) when these are closely related or call for collective treatment.

7. ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Many examples of words in use are given to support, and in some cases supplement, the definitions. These appear in italics in brackets. They are meant to amplify meaning and (especially when following a grammatical point) illustrate how the word is used in context, as in the following sense of *saint*:

a very virtuous person; a person of great real or affected holiness (would try the patience of a saint).

8. GRAMMATICAL INFORMATION

8.1 Definitions are often accompanied by explanations in brackets of how the word or phrase in question is used in context. Often the comment refers to words that usually follow (foll. by) or precede (prec. by) the word being explained. For example, at *sack*¹:

sack¹ /sæk/ n. & v. —n. 1 a large strong bag, usu. made of hessian, paper, or plastic, for storing or conveying goods. b (usu. foll. by of) this with its contents (a sack of potatoes). c a quantity contained in a sack. 2 (prec. by the) colloq. dismissal from employment. 3 (prec. by the) US sl. bed. 4 a a woman's short loose dress with a sacklike appearance. b archaic or hist. a woman's loose gown, or a silk train attached to the shoulders of this. 5 a man's or woman's loose-hanging coat not shaped to the back. —v. tr. 1 put into a sack or sacks. 2 colloq. dismiss from employment. 3 sack race a race between competitors in sacks up to the waist or neck. 4 sackful n. (pl. -fuls). sacklike adj. [OE *sacc* f. L *saccus* f. Gk *sakkos*, of Semitic orig.]

sense 1b usually appears as *a sack of* (something), as the example further shows; and senses 2 and 3 always appear as *the sack*.

8.2 With verbs, the fact that a sense is transitive or intransitive can affect the construction. In the examples given below, *prevail* is intransitive (and the construction is *prevail on a person*) and *urge* is transitive (and the construction is *urge a person on*).

prevail /prɪ'veɪl/ v. intr. 1 (often foll. by against, over) be victorious or gain mastery. 2 be the more usual or predominant. 3 exist or occur in general use or experience; be current. 4 (foll. by on, upon) persuade.

urge /s:ɹdʒ/ v. & n. —v. tr. 1 (often foll. by on) drive forcibly; impel; hasten (urged them on; urged the horses forward). 2 (often foll. by to + infin. or that + clause) encourage or entreat earnestly or

persistently (urged them to go; urged them to action; urged that they should go).

8.3 The formula (foll. by *to* + infin.) means that the word is followed by a normal infinitive with *to*, as in *want to leave and eager to learn*.

8.4 The formula (foll. by *that* + clause) indicates the routine addition of a clause with *that*, as in *said that it was late*. (For the omission of *that*, as in *said it was late*, see the usage note in the entry for *that*.)

8.5 'pres. part.' and 'verbal noun' denote verbal forms in -ing that function as adjectives and nouns respectively, as in *set him laughing and tired of asking*.

9. USAGE

9.1 If the use of a word is restricted in any way, this is indicated by any of various labels printed in italics, as follows:

9.2 Geographical

9.2.1 *Brit.* indicates that the use is found chiefly in British English (and often also in Australian and New Zealand English, and in other parts of the Commonwealth) but not in American English.

9.2.2 *US* indicates that the use is found chiefly in American English (often including Canada and also in Australian and New Zealand English) but not in British English except as a conscious Americanism.

9.2.3 Other geographical designations (e.g. *Austral.*, *NZ*, *SAfr.*) restrict uses to the areas named.

9.2.4 These usage labels should be distinguished from comments of the type '(in the UK)' or '(in the US)' preceding definitions, which denote that the thing defined is associated with the country named. For example, *Pentagon* is a US institution, but the term is not restricted to American English.

9.3 Register

9.3.1 Levels of usage, or registers, are indicated as follows:

9.3.2 *formal* indicates uses that are normally restricted to formal (esp. written) English, e.g. *commence*.

9.3.3 *colloq.* (= colloquial) indicates a use that is normally restricted to informal (esp. spoken) English.

9.3.4 *sl.* (= slang) indicates a use of the most informal kind, unsuited to written English and often restricted to a particular social group.

9.3.5 *archaic* indicates a word that is restricted to special contexts such as legal or religious use, or is used for special effect.

9.3.6 *literary* indicates a word or use that is found chiefly in literature.

9.3.7 *poet.* (= poetic) indicates uses confined to poetry or other contexts with romantic connotations.

9.3.8 *joc.* (= jocular) indicates uses that are intended to be humorous or playful.

9.3.9 *derog.* (= derogatory) denotes uses that are intentionally disparaging.

9.3.10 *offens.* (= offensive) denotes uses that cause offence, whether intentionally or not.

9.3.11 *disp.* (= disputed) indicates a use that is disputed or controversial. Often this is enough to alert the user to a danger or difficulty; when further explanation is needed a usage note (see below) is used as well or instead.

9.3.12 *hist.* (= historical) denotes a word or use that is confined to historical reference, normally because the thing referred to no longer exists.

9.3.13 *propr.* (= proprietary) denotes a term that has the status of a trade mark (see the Note on Proprietary Status, p. xvii).

9.4 Subject

The many subject labels, e.g. *Law, Math., Naut.*, show that a word or sense is current only in a particular field of activity, and is not in general use.

9.5 Usage Notes

These are added to give extra information not central to the definition, and to explain points of grammar and usage. They are introduced by the symbol ¶. The purpose of these notes is not to prescribe usage but to alert the user to a difficulty or controversy attached to particular uses.

10. PHRASES AND IDIOMS

10.1 These are listed (together with compounds) in alphabetical order after the treatment of the main senses, introduced by the symbol □. The words *a, the, one,* and *person* do not count for purposes of alphabetical order.

□ on the **safe side** with a margin of security against risks. **safe bet** a bet that is certain to succeed. **safe-breaker** (or **-blower** or **-cracker**) a person who breaks open and robs safes. **safe conduct** 1 a privilege of immunity from arrest or harm, esp. on a particular occasion. 2 a document securing this. **safe deposit** a building containing strongrooms and safes let separately. **safe house** a place of refuge or rendezvous for spies etc. **safe keeping** preservation in a safe place. **safe light** *Photog.* a filtered light for use in a darkroom. **safe period** the time during and near the menstrual period when conception is least likely. **safe seat** a seat in Parliament etc. that is usually won with a large margin by a particular party.

10.2 They are normally defined under the earliest important word in the phrase, except when a later word is more clearly the key word or is the common word in a phrase with variants (in which case a cross-reference often appears at the entry for the earliest word):

make do 1 manage with the limited or inadequate means available. 2 (foll. by *with*) manage with (something) as an inferior substitute. **make an example** of punish as a warning to others. **make a fool of** see **FOOL**¹. **make for** 1 tend to result in (happiness etc.). 2 proceed towards (a place). 3 assault; attack. 4 confirm (an opinion). **make friends** (often foll. by *with*) become friendly. **make fun of** see **FUN**. **make good** see **GOOD**. **make a habit of** see **HABIT**. **make a hash of** see **HASH**¹. **make hay** see **HAY**. **make head or tail of** see **HEAD**. **make a House** *Polit.* secure the presence of enough members for a quorum or support in the House of Commons. **make it** *colloq.* 1 succeed in reaching, esp. in time. 2 be successful. 3 (usu. foll. by *with*) *sl.* have sexual intercourse (with). **make it up** 1 be reconciled, esp. after a quarrel. 2 fill in a deficit. **make it up to** remedy negligence, an injury, etc. to (a person). **make light of** see **LIGHT**². **make love** see **LOVE**. **make a meal of** see **MEAL**¹. **make merry** see **MERRY**.

11. COMPOUNDS

11.1 Compound terms forming one word (e.g. *bathroom, newspaper*) are listed as main entries; those consisting of two or more words (e.g. *chain reaction*) or joined by a hyphen (e.g. *chain-gang*) are given under the first element or occasionally as main entries.

12. DERIVATIVES

12.1 Words formed by adding a suffix to another word are in many cases listed at the end of the entry for the main word, introduced by the symbol □□. In this position they are not defined since they can be understood from

the sense of the main word and that given at the suffix concerned:

□□ **sainthood** *n.* **sainthood** *n.* **saintlike** *adj.* **saintling** *n.* **sainthood** *n.*

When further definition is called for they are given main entries in their own right (e.g. *changeable*).

12.2 For derivative words used in combination (e.g. *-crested* in *red-crested*), see 4.3.4 above.

13. ETYMOLOGY

13.1 A brief account of the etymology, or origin, of words is given in square brackets at the end of entries. It is not given for compound words of obvious formation (such as *bathroom* and *jellyfish*), for routinely formed derivatives (such as *changeable*, *muddy*, and *seller*), or for words consisting of clearly identified elements already explained (such as *Anglo-Saxon*, *overrun*, and many words in *in-*, *re-*, *un-*, etc.). It is also not always given for every word of a set sharing the same basic origin (such as the group from *proprietary* to *propriety*). Noteworthy features, such as an origin in Old English, are however always given.

13.2 More detailed information can be found in the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (ed. C. T. Onions et al., 1966) and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (ed. T. F. Hoad, 1986).

13.3 The immediate source language is given first. Forms in other languages are not given if they are exactly or nearly the same as the English form given in the headword.

13.4 Words of Germanic origin are described as 'f. Gmc' or 'f. WG' (West Germanic) as appropriate; unrecorded or postulated forms are not normally given.

13.5 OE (Old English) is used for words that are known to have been used before AD 1150, and ME (Middle English) for words traceable to the period 1150–1500 (no distinction being made between early and late Middle English).

13.6 Words of Romance origin are referred to their immediate source, usually F (French) or OF (Old French before 1400), and then to earlier sources when known.

13.6.1 AF (Anglo-French) denotes the variety of French current in England in the Middle Ages after the Norman Conquest.

13.6.2 Rmc (Romanic) denotes the vernacular descendants of Latin that are the source of French, Spanish, Italian, etc. Romanic forms are almost always of the 'unrecorded' or 'postulated' kind, and are not specified except to clarify a significant change of form. Often the formula 'ult. f. L' etc. (ultimately from Latin, etc.) is used to indicate that the route from Latin is via Romanic forms.

13.6.3 L (Latin) denotes classical Latin up to about AD 200; OL (Old Latin) Latin before about 75 BC; LL (Late Latin) Latin of about 200–600; med.L (medieval Latin) Latin of about 600–1500; mod.L (modern Latin) Latin in use (mainly for technical purposes) since about 1500.

13.6.4 Similar divisions for 'late', 'medieval', and 'modern' are made for Greek.

13.7 Many English words have corresponding forms in both French and Latin, and it cannot always be established which was the immediate source. In such cases the formula 'F or L' is used (e.g. *section* . . . F *section* or L

sectio); in these cases the Latin form is the source of the French word and (either directly or indirectly) of the English word.

13.8 When the origin of a word cannot be reliably established, the forms 'orig. unkn.' (= origin unknown) and 'orig. uncert.' (= origin uncertain) are used, even if frequently canvassed speculative derivations exist (as with *gremlin* and *pommy*). In these cases the century of the first recorded occurrence of the word in English is given.

13.9 An equals sign (=) precedes words in other languages that are parallel formations from a common source (cognates) rather than sources of the English word.

4. PREFIXES, SUFFIXES, AND COMBINING FORMS

4.1 A large selection of these is given in the main body of the text; prefixes are given in the form *ex-*, *re-*, etc., and suffixes in the form *-ion*, *-ness*, etc. These entries should be consulted to explain the many routinely formed derivatives given at the end of entries (see above, 2).

4.2 Combining forms (e.g. *bio-*, *-graphy*) are semantically significant elements that can be attached to words or elements as explained in the usage note at the entry for *combine*.

4.3 The pronunciation given for a prefix, suffix, or combining form is an approximate one for purposes of articulating and (in some cases) identifying the headword;

pronunciation and stress may change considerably when they form part of a word.

15. CROSS-REFERENCES

15.1 These are introduced by any of a number of reference types, as follows:

15.1.1 '=' denotes that the meaning of the item at which the cross-reference occurs is the same as that of the item referred to.

15.1.2 'see' indicates that information will be found at the point referred to, and is widely used for encyclopedic matter and in the idiom sections of entries to deal with items that can be located at any of a number of words included in the idiom (see also above, 10.2).

15.1.3 'see also' indicates that further information can be found at the point referred to.

15.1.4 'cf.' denotes an item related or relevant to the one being consulted, and the reference often completes or clarifies the exact meaning of the item being treated.

15.1.5 'opp.' refers to a word or sense that is opposite to the one being treated, and again often completes or clarifies the sense.

15.1.6 References of the kind 'pl. of' (= plural of), 'past of' (= past tense of), etc., are given at entries for inflections and other related forms.

15.2 Cross-references preceded by any of these reference types appear in small capitals if the reference is to a main headword, and in italics if the reference is to a compound or idiom within an entry.

15.3 References in italics to compounds and defined phrases are to the entry for the first word unless another is specified.

Abbreviations and Symbols

Some abbreviations (especially of language-names) occur only in etymologies. Others may appear in italics. Abbreviations in general use (such as etc., i.e., and those for books of the Bible) are explained in the dictionary itself.

abbr.	abbreviation	Cat.	Catalan	emphat.	emphatic(ally)
ablat.	ablative	Celt.	Celtic	Engin.	Engineering
absol.	absolute(ly)	Ch.	Church	Engl.	England; English
acc.	according	Chem.	Chemistry	Entomol.	Entomology
accus.	accusative	Chin.	Chinese	erron.	erroneous(ly)
adj.	adjective	Cinematog.	Cinematography	esp.	especial(ly)
adv.	adverb	class.	classical	est.	estimated
Aeron.	Aeronautics	coarse sl.	coarse slang	etym.	etymology
AF	Anglo-French	cogn.	cognate	euphem.	euphemism
Afr.	Africa, African	collect.	collective(ly)	Eur.	Europe, European
Afrik.	Afrikaans	colloq.	colloquial(ly)	ex.	example
Akkad.	Akkadian	comb.	combination; combining	exc.	except
AL	Anglo-Latin	compar.	comparative	exclam.	exclamation
alt.	alteration	compl.	complement	F	French
Amer.	America, American	Conchol.	Conchology	f.	from
Anat.	Anatomy	conj.	conjunction	fam.	familiar
anc.	ancient	conn.	connected	fem.	feminine
Anglo-Ind.	Anglo-Indian	constr.	construction	fig.	figurative(ly)
Anthropol.	Anthropology	contr.	contraction	Finn.	Finnish
Antiq.	Antiquities, Antiquity	Corn.	Cornish	fl.	floruit
app.	apparently	corresp.	corresponding	Flem.	Flemish
Arab.	Arabic	corrupt.	corruption	fol.	followed, following
Aram.	Aramaic	Criminol.	Criminology	form.	formation
arbitr.	arbitrary, arbitrarily	Crystallog.	Crystallography	Fr.	French
Archaeol.	Archaeology			Frank.	Frankish
Archit.	Architecture	Da.	Danish	frequent.	frequentative(ly)
Arith.	Arithmetic	decl.	declension	G	German
assim.	assimilated	def.	definite	Gael.	Gaelic
assoc.	associated, association	Demog.	Demography	Gallo-Rom.	Gallo-Roman
Assyr.	Assyrian	demons.	demonstrative	gen.	general
Astrol.	Astrology	demons.adj.	demonstrative adjective	genit.	genitive
Astron.	Astronomy	demons.pron.	demonstrative pronoun	Geog.	Geography
Astronaut.	Astronautics	deriv.	derivative	Geol.	Geology
attrib.	attributive(ly)	derog.	derogatory	Geom.	Geometry
attrib.adj.	attributive adjective	dial.	dialect	Ger.	German
augment.	augmentative	different.	differentiated	Gk	Greek
Austral.	Australia, Australian	dimin.	diminutive	Gk Hist.	Greek History
aux.	auxiliary	disp.	disputed (use)	Gmc	Germanic
		dissim.	dissimilated	Goth.	Gothic
back-form.	back-formation	distrib.	distributive	Gram.	Grammar
Bibl.	Biblical	Du.	Dutch	Heb.	Hebrew
Bibliog.	Bibliography	E	English	Hind.	Hindustani
Biochem.	Biochemistry	Eccl.	Ecclesiastical	Hist.	History
Biol.	Biology	Ecol.	Ecology	hist.	with historical reference
Bot.	Botany	Econ.	Economics	Horol.	Horology
Braz.	Brazil, Brazilian	EPris.	East Frisian	Hort.	Horticulture
Bret.	Breton	Egypt.	Egyptian	Hung.	Hungarian
Brit.	British, in British use	E.Ind.	East Indian, of the East Indies	Icel.	Icelandic
Bulg.	Bulgarian	Electr.	Electricity	IE	Indo-European
Burm.	Burmese	elem.	elementary	illit.	illiterate
Byz.	Byzantine	ellipt.	elliptical(ly)	imit.	imitative
c.	century				
c.	circa				
Can.	Canada, Canadian				

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

immed.	immediate(ly)	N.Amer.	North America, North American	Pharm.	Pharmacy; Pharmacology
imper.	imperative	Nat.	National	Philol.	Philology
impers.	impersonal	Naut.	Nautical	Philos.	Philosophy
incept.	inceptive	neg.	negative(ly)	Phoen.	Phoenician
incl.	including; inclusive	N.Engl.	North of England	Phonet.	Phonetics
Ind.	of the subcontinent comprising India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh	neut.	neuter	Photog.	Photography
ind.	indirect	Norm.	Norman	phr.	phrase
indecl.	indeclinable	north.	northern	Phrenol.	Phrenology
indef.	indefinite	Norw.	Norwegian	Physiol.	Physiology
infin.	infinitive	n.pl.	noun plural	pl.	plural
infl.	influence(d)	num.	numeral	poet.	poetical
instr.	instrumental (case)	NZ	New Zealand	Pol.	Polish
int.	interjection			Polit.	Politics
interrog.	interrogative(ly)	O	Old (with languages)	pop.	popular, not technical; population
interrog.adj.	interrogative adjective	obj.	object; objective	pop.l.	popular Latin, informal spoken Latin
interrog.pron.	interrogative pronoun	OBret.	Old Breton	Port.	Portuguese
intr.	intransitive	OBrit.	Old British	poss.	possessive
Ir.	Irish (language or usage)	obs.	obsolete	poss.pron.	possessive pronoun
iron.	ironical(ly)	Obstet.	Obstetrics	prec.	preceded, preceding
irreg.	irregular(ly)	OBulg.	Old Bulgarian	predic.	predicate; predicative(ly)
It.	Italian	occas.	occasional(ly)	predic.adj.	predicative adjective
Jap.	Japan, Japanese	OCcit.	Old Celtic	prep.	preposition
Jav.	Javanese	ODa.	Old Danish	pres.part.	present participle
joc.	jocular(ly)	ODu.	Old Dutch	prob.	probable, probably
L	Latin	OE	Old English	pron.	pronoun
lang.	language	OF	Old French	pronunc.	pronunciation
LG	Low German	offens.	offensive	propr.	proprietary term
LHeb.	Late Hebrew	OFrank.	Old Frankish	Prov.	Provençal
lit.	literal(ly)	OFris.	Old Frisian	Psychol.	Psychology
LL	Late Latin	OGael.	Old Gaelic	RC Ch.	Roman Catholic Church
M	Middle (with languages)	OHG	Old High German	redupl.	reduplicated
masc.	masculine	OIce.	Old Icelandic	ref.	reference
Math.	Mathematics	OIr.	Old Irish	refl.	reflexive(ly)
MDa.	Middle Danish	OIt.	Old Italian	rel.	related; relative
MDu.	Middle Dutch	OL	Old Latin	rel.adj.	relative adjective
ME	Middle English	OLG	Old Low German	Relig.	Religion
Mech.	Mechanics	ON	Old Norse	rel.pron.	relative pronoun
Med.	Medicine	ONF	Old Northern French	repr.	representing
med.	medieval	ONorw.	Old Norwegian	Rhet.	Rhetoric
med.L	medieval Latin	OPers.	Old Persian	rhet.	rhetorical(ly)
metaph.	metaphorical	OPort.	Old Portuguese	Rmc	Romanic
metath.	metathesis	opp.	(as) opposed (to); opposite (of)	Rom.	Roman
Meteorol.	Meteorology	OProv.	Old Provençal	Rom.Hist.	Roman History
Mex.	Mexican	orig.	origin; original(ly)	Russ.	Russian
MFlem.	Middle Flemish	Ornithol.	Ornithology	S.Afr.	South Africa, South African
MHG	Middle High German	OS	Old Saxon	S.Amer.	South America, South American
Mil.	Military	OScand.	Old Scandinavian	Sc.	Scottish
Mineral.	Mineralogy	OSlav.	Old Slavonic	Scand.	Scandinavia, Scandinavian
mistransl.	mistranslation	OSp.	Old Spanish	Sci.	Science
MLG	Middle Low German	OSw.	Old Swedish	Shakesp.	Shakespeare
mod.	modern	Palaeog.	Palaeography	sing.	singular
mod.L	modern Latin	Parl.	Parliament; Parliamentary	Sinh.	Sinhalese
MSw.	Middle Swedish	part.	participle	Skr.	Sanskrit
Mus.	Music	past part.	past participle	sl.	slang
Mythol.	Mythology	Pathol.	Pathology		
n.	noun	pejor.	pejorative		
		perf.	perfect (tense)		
		perh.	perhaps		
		Pers.	Persian		
		pers.	person(al)		
		Peruv.	Peruvian		

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

Slav.	Slavonic	tr.	transitive	v.aux.	auxiliary verb
Sociol.	Sociology	transf.	in transferred sense	Vet.	Veterinary
Sp.	Spanish	transl.	translation	v.intr.	intransitive verb
spec.	special(ly)	Turk.	Turkish	voc.	vocative
Stock Exch.	Stock Exchange	Typog.	Typography	v.refl.	reflexive verb
subj.	subject; subjunctive			v.tr.	transitive verb
superl.	superlative	ult.	ultimate(ly)		
Sw.	Swedish	uncert.	uncertain	WFris.	West Frisian
syll.	syllable	unexpl.	unexplained	WG	West Germanic
symb.	symbol	univ.	university	W.Ind.	West Indian, of the West Indies
syn.	synonym	unkn.	unknown	WS	West Saxon
		US	American, in American use	WSlav.	West Slavonic
techn.	technical(ly)	usu.	usual(ly)		
Telev.	Television			Zool.	Zoology
Teut.	Teutonic	v.	verb		
Theatr.	Theatre, Theatrical	var.	variant(s)		
Theol.	Theology				

Symbols used in the Dictionary

- ¶ introduces notes on usage (see *Guide to the Use of the Dictionary* 9.5).
- introduces defined compounds, phrases, and idioms.
- ◻ introduces undefined derivatives formed by adding a suffix to the main word.

Note on Proprietary Status

This dictionary includes some words which are, or are asserted to be, proprietary names or trade marks. Their inclusion does not imply that they have acquired for legal purposes a non-proprietary or general significance, nor is any other judgement implied concerning their legal status. In cases where the editor has some evidence that a word is used as a proprietary name or trade mark this is indicated by the designation *propr.*, but no judgement concerning the legal status of such words is made or implied thereby.

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A

A¹ /eɪ/ n. (also **a**) (pl. **As** or **A's**) 1 the first letter of the alphabet. 2 *Mus.* the sixth note of the diatonic scale of C major. 3 the first hypothetical person or example. 4 the highest class or category (of roads, academic marks, etc.). 5 (usu. **a**) *Algebra* the first known quantity. 6 a human blood type of the ABO system. □ **A1** /eɪ 'wʌn/ 1 *Naut.* **a** a first-class vessel in Lloyd's Register of Shipping. **b** first-class. 2 *colloq.* excellent, first-rate. **A1, A2**, etc. the standard paper sizes, each half the previous one, e.g. **A4** = 297 × 210 mm, **A5** = 210 × 148 mm. **from A to B** from one place to another (**a** means of getting from A to B). **from A to Z** over the entire range, completely.

A² /eɪ/ *abbr.* (also **A.**) 1 *Brit.* (of films) classified as suitable for an adult audience but not necessarily for children. ¶ Now replaced by **PG**. 2 = **A LEVEL**. 3 *ampere(s)*. 4 *answer*. 5 *Associate of*. 6 *atomic (energy etc.)*.

a¹ /ə, eɪ/ *adj.* (also **an** before a vowel) (called the indefinite article) 1 (as an unemphatic substitute) one, some, any. 2 one like (a Judas). 3 one single (not a thing in sight). 4 the same (all of a size). 5 in, to, or for each (twice a year; £20 a man; seven a side). [weakening of OE *æn* one; sense 5 orig. = **A**²]

a² /ə/ *prep.* (usu. as prefix) 1 to, towards (*ashore; aside*). 2 (with verb in pres. part. or infin.) in the process of; in a specified state (*a-hunting; a-wandering; abuzz; aflutter*). 3 on (*afire; afoot*). 4 in (*nowadays*). [weakening of OE prep. *an*, *on* (see **ON**)]

a³ *abbr.* *atto-*.

Å *abbr.* *ångström(s)*.

a⁻¹ /eɪ, æ/ *prefix* not, without (*amoral; agnostic; apetalous*). [Gk *a-*, or *L f. Gk*, or *F f. L f. Gk*]

a⁻² /ə/ *prefix* implying motion onward or away, adding intensity to verbs of motion (*arise; awake*). [OE *a-*, orig. *ar-*]

a⁻³ /ə/ *prefix* to, at, or into a state (*adroit; agree; amass; avenge*). [ME *a-* (= OF prefix *a-*), (f. F) f. L *ad-*, *at*]

a⁻⁴ /ə/ *prefix* 1 from, away (*abridge*). 2 of (*akin; anew*). 3 out, utterly (*abash; affray*). 4 in, on, engaged in, etc. (see **A**²). [sense 1 f. ME *a-*, OF *a-*, f. L *ab-*; sense 2 f. ME *a-*, f. OE *of* prep.; sense 3 f. ME, AF *a-* = OF *e-*, *es-* f. L *ex*]

a⁻⁵ /ə, æ/ *prefix* *assim.* form of **AD-** before *sc*, *sp*, *st*.

-a¹ /ə/ *suffix* forming nouns from Greek, Latin, and Romanic feminine singular, esp.: 1 ancient or Latinized modern names of animals and plants (*amoeba; campanula*). 2 oxides (*alumina*). 3 geographical names (*Africa*). 4 ancient or Latinized modern feminine names (*Lydia; Hilda*).

-a² /ə/ *suffix* forming plural nouns from Greek and Latin neuter plural, esp. names (often from modern Latin) of zoological groups (*phenomena; Carnivora*).

-a³ /ə/ *suffix* *colloq.* *sl.* 1 of (*kinda; couple*). 2 have (*mighta; coulda*). 3 to (*oughta*).

AA *abbr.* 1 *Automobile Association*. 2 *Alcoholics Anonymous*. 3 *Mil. anti-aircraft*. 4 *Brit.* (of films) classified as suitable for persons of over 14 years. ¶ Now replaced by **PG**.

AAA *abbr.* 1 (in the UK) *Amateur Athletic Association*. 2 *American Automobile Association*. 3 *Australian Automobile Association*.

Aachen /'a:ʌn, 'a:kəʊn/ (French *Aix-la-Chapelle* /'eiksli:ʃæ'pel/) an industrial city and spa in North Rhine-Westphalia in the west of Germany, near the Belgian and Dutch borders; pop. (1987) 239,200. German emperors were crowned in Aachen from the time of Charlemagne (who was born and buried there) until 1531.

Aalborg /'ɔ:lbo:g/ (also *Ålborg*) an industrial city and port in north Jutland, Denmark, one of the country's oldest towns; pop. (1988) 154,700.

Aalst /'a:lst/ (French *Alost* /æ'lost/) industrial city in East Flanders, Belgium, 22 km (14 miles) north-west of Brussels; pop. (1988) 76,700.

Aalto /'ɑ:ltəʊ/, Hugo Henrik Alvar (1898–1976), Finnish architect, one of the most inventive of his generation, who worked extensively in Europe and America as well as in Finland, where he was responsible for the design of a number of public buildings. He is notable for his expressive and inventive use of timber (Finland's basic building material) for structure and decoration, and for the use of mixed materials in designs that were beautiful as a result of purely functional concerns.

A. & M. *abbr.* (Hymns) *Ancient and Modern*.

A. & R. *abbr.* 1 *artists and recording*. 2 *artists and repertoire*.

aardvark /'ɑ:dvɑ:k/ n. a nocturnal mammal of southern Africa, *Oryzomys afer*, with a tubular snout and a long extendible tongue, that feeds on termites. Also called *ant-bear*, *earth-hog*. [Afrik. f. *aarde* earth + *vark* pig]

aardwolf /'ɑ:dwɒlf/ n. (pl. *aardwolves* /-wʊlvz/) an African mammal, *Proteles cristatus*, of the hyena family, with grey fur and black stripes, that feeds on insects. [Afrik. f. *aarde* earth + *wolf* wolf]

Aarhus /'ɔ:rhu:s/ (also *Århus*) the second-largest city of Denmark, on the coast in east Jutland; pop. (1988) 258,000.

Aaron /'eə(ə)n/ brother of Moses and traditional founder of the Jewish priesthood. □ **Aaron's beard** (see Ps. 133: 2) a popular name for several plants, especially a St John's wort *Hypericum calycinum*. **Aaron's rod** a popular name for several tall plants with flowering stems, especially a mullein, *Verbascum thapsus*. (Aaron's rod sprouted and blossomed as a sign that he was designated by God as high priest of the Hebrews; see Numbers 17: 8.)

A'asia *abbr.* *Australasia*.

aasvogel /'ɑ:s,vəʊg(ə)/ n. a vulture. [Afrik. f. *aas* carrion + *voegel* bird]

AAU *abbr.* *US Amateur Athletic Union*.

AB¹ /eɪ'bi:/ n. a human blood type of the ABO system.

AB² *abbr.* 1 *able rating or seaman*. 2 *US Bachelor of Arts*. [sense 1 f. *able-bodied*; sense 2 f. L *Artium Baccalaureus*]

ab- /əb, æb/ *prefix* off, away, from (*abduct; abnormal; abuse*). [F or L]

aba /'æbə/ n. (also *abba*, *abaya* /ə'beɪjə/) a sleeveless outer garment worn by Arabs. [Arab. 'abā']

abaca /'æbəkə/ n. 1 *Manila hemp*. 2 the plant, *Musa textilis*, yielding this. [Sp. *abacá*]

aback /ə'bæk/ *adv.* 1 *archaic* backwards, behind. 2 *Naut.* (of a sail) pressed against the mast by a head wind. □ **take aback** 1 surprise, disconcert (*your request took me aback; I was greatly taken aback by the news*). 2 (as *taken aback*) (of a ship) with the sails pressed against the mast by a head wind. [OE *on bæc* (as **A**², **BACK**)]

abacus /'æbəkəs/ n. (pl. *abacuses*) 1 an oblong frame with rows of wires or grooves along which beads are slid, used for calculating. Its provenance and date of origin are uncertain. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans used a counting-board with vertical columns as an aid to reckoning; the frame may be a development of this, or may have been devised independently. It was in general use during the Middle Ages until the adoption of the nine figures and zero, and is still used in the Far East. 2 *Archit.* the flat slab on top of a capital, supporting the architrave. [f. Gk *abax* *abakos* slab, drawing-board, f. Heb. 'ābāk dust (from use of board sprinkled with sand or dust for drawing geometrical diagrams)]

Abadan /'æbə'dæn/ a city on an island of the same name on the Shatt al-Arab waterway in western Iran; pop. (1986) 294,000. It is a port and an oil-refining centre.

Abaddon /ə'bæd(ə)n/ n. 1 *hell*. 2 *the Devil* (Rev. 9:11). [Heb., - *destruction*]

abaft /ə'baft/ *adv.* & *prep.* *Naut.* —*adv.* in the stern half of a

ship. — *prep.* nearer the stern than; aft of. [A² + -baft f. OE *beafstan* f. *be* BY + *aftan* behind]

abalone /ə'bəʊni/ *n.* any mollusc of the genus *Halotis*, with a shallow ear-shaped shell having respiratory holes, and lined with mother-of-pearl, e.g. the ormer. [Amer. Sp. *abulón*]

abandon /ə'bænd(ə)n/ *v. & n.* — *v.tr.* 1 give up completely or before completion (*abandoned hope; abandoned the game*). 2 a forsake or desert (a person or a post of responsibility). b leave or desert (a motor vehicle or ship). 3 a give up to another's control or mercy. b *refl.* yield oneself completely to a passion or impulse. — *n.* lack of inhibition or restraint; reckless freedom of manner. □ **abandoner** *n.* **abandonment** *n.* [ME f. OF *abandoner* f. *à bandon* under control ult. f. LL *banus*, -um BAN]

abandoned /ə'bænd(ə)nd/ *adj.* 1 a (of a person) deserted, forsaken (*an abandoned child*). b (of a building, vehicle, etc.) left empty or unused (*an abandoned cottage; an abandoned ship*). 2 (of a person or behaviour) unrestrained, profligate.

abase /ə'beɪs/ *v.tr. & refl.* humiliate or degrade (another person or oneself). □ **abatement** *n.* [ME f. OF *abaissier* (as A-², *baissier* to lower ult. f. LL *basus* short of stature): infl. by BASE²]

abash /ə'beɪʃ/ *v.tr.* (usu. as *abashed adj.*) embarrass, disconcert. □ **abashment** *n.* [ME f. OF *esbair* (*es* = A-⁴ 3, *baïr* astound or *baer yawn*)]

abate /ə'beɪt/ *v.* 1 *tr. & intr.* make or become less strong, severe, intense, etc. 2 *tr.* Law a quash (a writ or action). b put an end to (a nuisance). □ **abatement** *n.* [ME f. OF *abatre* f. Rmc (as A-², L *batt(u)ere* beat)]

abatiss /ə'beɪtɪs/ *n.* (also *abattis* /ə'beɪtɪs/) (*pl.* same /-tɪz/; *abatisses*, *abattisses*) *hist.* a defence made of felled trees with the boughs pointing outwards. □ **abatisséd** *adj.* [F f. *abatir* fell: see ABATE]

abattoir /ə'pɔ,twa(r)/ *n.* a slaughterhouse. [F (as ABATIS, -ORY¹)]

abaxial /ə'bæksɪəl/ *adj.* *Bot.* facing away from the stem of a plant, esp. of the lower surface of a leaf (cf. ADAXIAL). [AB- + AXIAL]

abaya (also *abba*) *var.* of ABA.

abbacy /ə'beɪsi/ *n.* (*pl.* -ies) the office, jurisdiction, or period of office of an abbot or abess. [ME f. eccl.L *abbacia* f. *abbat*-ABBOT]

Abbasid /ə'bæsɪd/ *n. & adj.* — *n.* a member of a dynasty of caliphs ruling in Baghdad 750–1258, claiming descent from Abbas (566–652), uncle of Muhammad. — *adj.* of this dynasty.

abbatial /ə'beɪʃ(ə)l/ *adj.* of an abbey, abbot, or abess. [F *abbatial* or med.L *abbatialis* (as ABBOT)]

abbé /'æbeɪ/ *n.* (in France) an abbot; a male entitled to wear ecclesiastical dress. [F f. eccl.L *abbas* *abbatis* ABBOT]

abess /'æbɪs/ *n.* a woman who is the head of certain communities of nuns. [ME f. OF *abbesse* f. eccl.L *abbatissa* (as ABBOT)]

Abbevillian /ə'bɛvɪliən/ *adj. & n.* — *adj.* of the earliest lower palaeolithic hand-axe industries in Europe, named after the type-site at Abbeville on the River Somme in northern France and dated to c.500,000 BC. The hand-axes were made by hammering flakes off a flint with a hard stone, giving them a rough appearance. (See also ACHÉULIAN.) — *n.* the Abbevillian industry. [F *Abbevillien* f. *Abbeville*]

abbey /'æbi/ *n.* (*pl.* -ies) 1 the building(s) occupied by a community of monks or nuns. 2 the community itself. 3 a church or house that was once an abbey. □ the Abbey Westminster Abbey, in London. [ME f. OF *abbete* etc. f. med.L *abbatia* ABBACY]

Abbey Theatre a theatre in Abbey Street, Dublin, first opened in 1904, staging chiefly Irish plays. W. B. Yeats was associated with its foundation. In 1925 it became the first State-subsidized theatre in the English-speaking world.

abbot /'æbɒt/ *n.* a man who is the head of an abbey of monks. □ **abbotship** *n.* [OE *abbot* f. eccl.L *abbas* -atis f. Gk *abbas* father f. Aram. 'abbā]

abbreviate /ə'brɪvɪeɪt/ *v.tr.* shorten, esp. represent (a word etc.) by a part of it. [ME f. LL *abbreviare* shorten f. *brevis* short: cf. ABRIDGE]

abbreviation /ə'brɪvɪeɪʃ(ə)n/ *n.* 1 an abbreviated form, esp. a shortened form of a word or phrase. 2 the process of abbreviating.

ABC¹ /'eɪbi:'si:/ *n.* 1 the alphabet. 2 the rudiments of any subject. 3 an alphabetical guide.

ABC² *abbr.* 1 Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 2 American Broadcasting Company.

ABC Islands the Dutch islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao which lie in the Caribbean Sea near the coast of Venezuela. [acronym]

abdicate /'æbdɪ'keɪt/ *v.tr.* 1 (usu. *absol.*) give up or renounce (the throne). 2 renounce (a responsibility, duty, etc.). □ **abdication** /'æbdɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/ *n.* **abdicator** *n.* [L *abdicare* *abdicat*- (as AB-, *dicare* declare)]

abdomen /'æbdəmən/ *n.* 1 the part of the body containing the stomach, bowels, reproductive organs, etc. 2 Zool. the hinder part of an insect, crustacean, spider, etc. □ **abdominal** /'æb'dɒmɪn(ə)l/ *adj.* **abdominally** /'æb'dɒmɪnəli/ *adv.* [L]

abduct /əb'dʌkt/ *v.tr.* 1 carry off or kidnap (a person) illegally by force or deception. 2 (of a muscle etc.) draw (a limb etc.) away from the middle line of the body. □ **abduction** *n.* **abductor** *n.* [L *abducere* *abduct*- (as AB-, *ducere* draw)]

Abduh /'æbdʊ/, Muhammad (1849–1905), Egyptian Islamic scholar and jurist, leader of a movement in Egypt and other countries to modernize and revitalize Islam. As Grand Mufti of Egypt from 1899 he introduced reforms in Islamic law and education, seeking to break through the rigid acceptance of traditional doctrines and customs and presenting the faith as rational and progressive.

Abdul Hamid II /'æbdʊl'hæmɪd/ (1842–1918), the last sultan of Turkey, 1876–1909. An autocratic ruler, he suspended parliament and the constitution and was noted for ruthless suppression of his non-Muslim subjects, notably the Armenians. In 1909 he was deposed after the revolt of the Young Turks.

Abdullah¹ /'æbdʊlə/ (1882–1951), Emir of Transjordan (1921–46) and its first king when the country (later called Jordan) became independent in 1946. He was assassinated in 1951.

Abdullah² /'æbdʊlə/, Sheikh Muhammad (1905–82), Kashmiri Muslim leader, known as the Lion of Kashmir. In the 1930s he was an activist agitating against the arbitrary rule of the Hindu Maharajah of Kashmir. After accepting Indian sovereignty (1947) he eventually won for Kashmir a form of autonomy within India, although he was imprisoned for much of the time between 1953 and 1968 on suspicion of seeking its full independence.

Abdul Rahman /'æbdʊl'rɑ:mən/, Tunku (= Prince) (1903–90), Malayan statesman. He negotiated Malayan independence from Britain (1957) and the formation of the Federation of Malaysia (1963), becoming Malaya's first Prime Minister and continuing in office as the first prime minister of Malaysia (1963–70).

abeam /ə'bi:m/ *adv.* 1 on a line at right angles to a ship's or an aircraft's length. 2 (foll. by *of*) opposite the middle of (a ship etc.). [A² + BEAM]

abed /ə'bed/ *adv.* *archaic* in bed. [OE (as A², BED)]

Abel /'æbel/, Niels Henrik (1802–29), Norwegian mathematician who, in his six productive years, published the first acceptable proof that equations of the fifth degree or above cannot be solved by methods analogous to those that had been known since the 16th c. for solving equations of degree 1, 2, 3, or 4, introduced rigorous argument into the theory of power series, and discovered startling new results on elliptic functions, as a result of which the theory of these and of their generalizations became one of the liveliest areas for 19th-c. mathematical research. After two years of travel, meeting mathematicians in Germany and France, he returned to Norway where he lived in poverty and died of consumption aged 26, at the height of his powers. □ **Abelian** /ə'bi:liən/ *adj.*

Abelard /'æbi,lɑ:d/, Peter (1079–1142), French scholar, theologian, and philosopher, whose lively, restless, independent mind impressed his contemporaries but brought him into frequent conflict with his masters and led to his being twice condemned for heresy. He lectured in Paris until his academic career was cut short in 1118 by the tragic issue of his love affair with his pupil Héloïse, niece of Fulbert, a canon of Notre-Dame.

Abelard was castrated at Fulbert's instigation; he entered a monastery, and made Héloïse become a nun. Abelard continued his highly controversial teaching, applying reason to the deepest mysteries of the faith, notably the doctrine of the Trinity. His doctrine of the Atonement, emphasizing the love of Christ, manifest in his life and passion, which calls forth a human response of love, has had a continuing influence. The lovers are now buried in one grave in Paris.

abele /ə'bi:l, 'eɪb(ə)l/ n. the white poplar, *Populus alba*. [Du. *abeel* f. OF *abel*, *cubel* ult. f. L *albus* white]

Aberdeen¹ /ˌæbə'di:ɪn/ a city and former county in Scotland, humorously credited with an extremely parsimonious population. □ **Aberdeen Angus** 1 an animal of a Scottish breed of hornless black beef cattle. 2 this breed. [Angus former Scottish county]

Aberdeen² /ˌæbə'di:ɪn/, George Hamilton Gordon, 4th Earl of (1784-1860), British Conservative statesman, Prime Minister of a coalition government 1852-5. He reluctantly involved his country in the Crimean War and was subsequently blamed for its mismanagement and obliged to resign.

Aberdonian /ˌæbə'doʊniən/ adj. & n. —adj. of Aberdeen. —n. a native or citizen of Aberdeen. [med.L *Aberdonia*]

Aberfan /ˌæbə'væn/ a village in South Wales where, in 1966, a slag-heap collapsed and mining waste overwhelmed nearby houses and a school, killing 28 adults and 116 children.

aberrant /ə'berənt/ adj. 1 esp. Biol. diverging from the normal type. 2 departing from an accepted standard. □ **aberrance** n. **aberrancy** n. [L *aberrare* aberrant- (as *ab-*, *errare* stray)]

aberration /ˌæbə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ n. 1 a departure from what is normal or accepted or regarded as right. 2 a moral or mental lapse. 3 Biol. deviation from a normal type. 4 Optics the failure of rays to converge at one focus because of a defect in a lens or mirror. 5 Astron. the apparent displacement of a celestial body, meteor, etc., caused by the observer's velocity and the finite speed of light. As the earth has two motions, there is a diurnal as well as an annual aberration; planetary aberration is effected by the additional element of the motion of the planet itself, during the time occupied by the passage of its light to the earth. □ **chromatic aberration** see CHROMATIC. [L *aberratio* (as *ABERRANT*)]

abet /ə'bet/ v.tr. (abettor, abetting) (usu. in aid and abet) encourage or assist (an offender or offence). □ **abetment** n. [ME f. OF *abeter* f. *ā* to + *beter* BART¹]

abettor /ə'beta(r)/ n. (also *abettor*) one who abets.

abeyance /ə'beɪəns/ n. (usu. prec. by *in*, *into*) a state of temporary disuse or suspension. □ **abeyant** adj. [AF *abeyance* f. OF *abeer* f. *ā* to + *heer* f. med.L *patere* gape]

abhor /əb'hɔ:(r)/ v.tr. (abhorred, abhorring) detest; regard with disgust and hatred. [ME f. F *abhorrer* or f. L *abhorrere* (as *ab-*, *horre* shudder)]

abhorrence /əb'hɔ:rəns/ n. 1 disgust; detestation. 2 a detested thing.

abhorrent /əb'hɔ:rənt/ adj. 1 (often foll. by *to*) (of conduct etc.) inspiring disgust, repugnant; hateful, detestable. 2 (foll. by *to*) not in accordance with; strongly conflicting with (*abhorrent to the spirit of the law*). 3 (foll. by *from*) inconsistent with. □ **abhorrer** n.

abide /ə'baɪd/ v. (past *abided* or rarely *abode* /ə'boʊd/) 1 tr. (usu. in *neg.* or *interrog.*) tolerate, endure (*can't abide him*). 2 intr. (foll. by *a*) act in accordance with (*abide by the rules*). 3 remain faithful to (a promise). 3 intr. *archaic* remain, continue. 4 dwell. 4 tr. *archaic* sustain, endure. □ **abidance** n. [OE *abidan* (as *A-*, *bidan* *SIDE*)]

abiding /ə'baɪdɪŋ/ adj. enduring, permanent (an *abiding* sense of loss). □ **abidingly** adv.

Abidjan /ˌæbɪ'dʒɑ:n/ the capital and chief port of the Ivory Coast; pop. (est. 1982) 1,850,000.

abigail /ˌæbɪ'geɪl/ n. a lady's maid. [character in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*; cf. 1 Sam. 25]

ability /ə'bɪlɪti/ n. (pl. -ies) 1 (often foll. by *to* + *inf.*) capacity or power (*has the ability to write songs*). 2 cleverness, talent; mental

power (a person of great ability; has many abilities). [ME f. OF *abilete* f. L *habilitas* -*antis* f. *habilis* able]

-ability /ə'bɪlɪti/ suffix forming nouns of quality from, or corresponding to, adjectives in *able* (cf. *ability*; *vulnerability*). [F *-abilité* or L *-abilitas*; cf. -*ITY*]

ab initio /ˌæb 'ɪnɪʃɪo/ adv. from the beginning. [L]

abiogenesis /ˌeɪbɪə'ɔ:dʒenɪsɪs/ n. 1 the formation of living organisms from non-living substances. 2 the supposed spontaneous generation of living organisms. □ **abiogenic** adj. [*A-* + Gk *bios* life + *GENESIS*]

abject /ˈæbdʒekt/ adj. 1 miserable, wretched. 2 degraded, self-abasing, humble. 3 despicable. □ **abjectly** adv. **abjectness** n. [ME f. L *abjectus* past part. of *abjicere* (as *ab-*, *jacere* throw)]

abjection /əb'dʒekʃ(ə)n/ n. a state of misery or degradation. [ME f. OF *abjection* or L *abjectio* (as *ABJECT*)]

abjure /əb'dʒʊə(r)/ v.tr. 1 renounce on oath (an opinion, cause, claim, etc.). 2 swear perpetual absence from (one's country etc.). □ **abjuration** /ˌæbdʒʊ'reɪʃ(ə)n/ n. [L *abjurare* (as *ab-*, *jurare* swear)]

ablation /æb'leɪʃ(ə)n/ n. 1 the surgical removal of body tissue. 2 Geol. the wasting or erosion of a glacier, iceberg, or rock by melting or the action of water. 3 Astronaut. the evaporation or melting of part of the outer surface of a spacecraft through heating by friction with the atmosphere. □ **ablate** v.tr. [F *ablation* or LL *ablatio* f. L *ablat-* (as *ab-*, *lat-* past part. stem of *ferre* carry)]

ablative /ˈæblətɪv/ n. & adj. *Gram.* —n. the case (esp. in Latin) of nouns and pronouns (and words in grammatical agreement with them) indicating an agent, instrument, or location. —adj. of or in the ablative. □ **ablative absolute** an absolute construction in Latin with a noun and participle or adjective in the ablative case (see *ABSOLUTE*). [ME f. OF *ablatif* -*iv* or L *ablativus* (as *ABLATION*)]

ablaut /ˈæblaʊt/ n. a change of vowel in related words or forms, esp. in Indo-European languages, arising from differences of accent and stress in the parent language, e.g. in *sing. sang. sur.* [G]

ablaze /ə'bleɪz/ predic.adj. & adv. 1 on fire (set & ablaze; the house was ablaze). 2 (often foll. by *with*) glittering, glowing. 3 (often foll. by *with*) greatly excited.

able /eɪb(ə)l/ adj. (abler, ablest) 1 (often foll. by *n* + *inf.*; used esp. in *is* *able*, *will be able*, *was able*, etc., replacing tenses of *can*) having the capacity or power (*was not able to come*). 2 having great ability; clever, skilful. □ **able-bodied** fit, healthy. **able-bodied rating** (or *seaman*) Naut. one able to perform all duties. [ME f. OF *habile*, *able* f. L *habilis* handy f. *habere* to hold]

-able /ə'b(ə)l/ suffix forming adjectives meaning: 1 that may or must be (*actable*, *forgivable*, *payable*). 2 that can be made the subject of (*dutiable*, *objectionable*). 3 that is relevant to or in accordance with (*fashionable*, *seasonable*). 4 (with active sense, in earlier word-formations) that may (*comfortable*, *suitable*). [F *-able* or L *-abilis* forming verbal adjectives f. verbs of first conjugation]

abloom /ə'blu:m/ predic.adj. blooming; in flower.

ablush /ə'blʌʃ/ predic.adj. blushing.

ablution /ə'blu:ʃ(ə)n/ n. (usu. in *pl.*) 1 the ceremonial washing of parts of the body or sacred vessels etc. 2 colloq. the ordinary washing of the body. 3 a building containing washing-places etc. in a camp, ship, etc. □ **ablutionary** adj. [ME f. OF *ablution* or L *ablutio* (as *ab-*, *lutio* f. *luere* lat- wash)]

ably /eɪb(ə)lɪ/ adv. capably, cleverly, competently.

-ably /eɪb(ə)lɪ/ suffix forming adverbs corresponding to adjectives in *-able*.

ABM abbr. anti-ballistic missile.

abnegate /ˌæbneɪ'geɪt/ v.tr. 1 give up or deny oneself (a pleasure etc.). 2 renounce or reject (a right or belief). □ **abnegator** n. [L *abnegare* *abnegat-* (as *ab-*, *negare* deny)]

abnegation /ˌæbneɪ'geɪʃ(ə)n/ n. 1 denial; the rejection or renunciation of a doctrine. 2 = *SELF-ABNEGATION*. [OF *abnegation* or LL *abnegatio* (as *ABNEGATE*)]

abnormal /əb'nɔ:m(ə)l/ adj. 1 deviating from what is normal or usual; exceptional. 2 relating to or dealing with what is

abnormal /'abnɔːrml/ (psychology). **ab** abnormally adv (earlier and F *anormal, anomal* f. Gk *anōmalos* ANOMALOUS, assoc. with L *abnormis*: see ABNORMITY)

abnormality /æb'nɔːrmlɪti/ n. (pl. -ies) 1 a an abnormal quality, occurrence, etc. **b** the state of being abnormal. 2 a physical irregularity.

abnormity /æb'nɔːrmlɪti/ n. (pl. -ies) 1 an abnormality or irregularity. 2 a monstrosity [L *abnormis* (as AB-, *normis* f. *norma* rule)]

abo /'æboʊ/ n. & adj. (also **abo**) Austral. sl. usu. *offers*. — n. (pl. *Abos*) an Aboriginal. — adj. Aboriginal. [abbr.]

aboard /ə'boːd/ adv. & prep. 1 on or into (a ship, aircraft, train, etc.). 2 alongside. **all aboard!** a call that warns of the imminent departure of a ship, train, etc. [ME f. A² + BOARD & F d *board*]

abode /ə'boʊd/ n. 1 a dwelling-place; one's home. 2 archaic a stay or sojourn. [verbal noun of ABIDE: cf. *ride, rode, road*]

abode:² past of ABIDE.

abolish /ə'boʊlɪʃ/ v.tr. put an end to the existence or practice of (esp. a custom or institution). **abolishable** adj. **abolisher** n. **abolishment** n. [ME f. F *abolir* f. L *abolere* destroy]

abolition /,æb'ɒlɪʃ(ə)n/ n. 1 the act or process of abolishing or being abolished. 2 an instance of this. [F *abolition* or L *abolitio* (as ABOLISH)]

abolitionist /,æb'ɒlɪʃ(ə)nɪst/ n. one who favours the abolition of a practice or institution, esp. of capital punishment or (formerly) of Negro slavery. **abolitionism** n.

abomasum /,æb'ɒməs(ə)m/ n. (pl. *abomasa* /sə/) the fourth stomach of a ruminant. [mod.L f. AB- + *omasum*]

A-bomb /'eɪbɒm/ n. = *atomic bomb*. [A (for ATOMIC) + BOMB]

Abomey /ə'boʊmeɪ, ,æb'əmeɪ/ a town in southern Benin, formerly capital of the kingdom of Dahomey, pop. (1982) 54,400.

abominable /ə'bɒmɪnəb(ə)l/ adj. 1 detestable; loathsome; morally reprehensible. 2 colloq. very bad or unpleasant (*abominable weather*). **Abominable Snowman** an unidentified manlike or bearlike animal said to exist in the Himalayas, a yeti. **abominably** adv. [ME f. OF f. L *abominabilis* f. *abominari* depreciate (as AB-, *ominari* f. OMEN)]

abominate /ə'bɒmɪneɪt/ v.tr. detest, loathe. **abominator** n. [L *abominari* (as ABOMINABLE)]

abomination /ə'bɒmɪneɪʃ(ə)n/ n. 1 loathing. 2 an odious or degrading habit or act. 3 (often foll. by to) an object of disgust. [ME f. OF (as ABOMINATE)]

aboral /æ'bɔːrəl/ adj. away from or opposite the mouth. [AB- + ORAL]

aboriginal /,æb'ɔːrɪdʒɪn(ə)l/ adj. & n. —adj. 1 (of races and natural phenomena) inhabiting or existing in a land from the earliest times or from before the arrival of colonists. 2 (usu. *Aborigines*) of the Australian Aborigines. — n. 1 an aboriginal inhabitant. 2 (usu. *Aboriginal*) an aboriginal inhabitant of Australia. **aboriginally** adv. [as ABORIGINE + -AL]

aborigine /,æb'ɔːrɪdʒɪn/ n. (usu. in pl.) 1 an aboriginal inhabitant. 2 (usu. *Aborigine*) an aboriginal inhabitant of Australia. **Aborigine** is the preferred singular form. *Aborigines* now the preferred plural, although *Aboriginals* is also acceptable. 3 an aboriginal plant or animal. [back-form. f. pl. *aborigines* f. L, prob. f. phr. *ab origine* from the beginning]

The Australian Aborigines, dark-skinned hunter-gatherers comprising several physically distinct groups, arrived in Australia in prehistoric times and brought with them the dingo. Before the arrival of Europeans they were scattered through the whole continent, including Tasmania. Their languages (except of Tasmania) are related to each other but not, apparently, to any other language family and have no literature of their own; estimated at several hundred in number they are almost or completely extinct, and of those that survive some have only a few hundred speakers in Australia. There are now roughly 160,000 Aborigines in Australia. Having become mostly urbanized many have recently moved to their traditional homeland areas in an attempt to preserve their culture.

abort /ə'boːt/ v. & n. — v. 1 intr. a (of a woman) undergo abortion; miscarry. b (of a foetus) suffer abortion. 2 tr. a effect the abortion of (a foetus). b effect abortion in (a mother). 3 a tr. cause to end

fruitlessly or prematurely, stop in the early stages. **b** intr. end unsuccessfully or prematurely. 4 a tr. abandon or terminate (a space flight or other technical project) before its completion, usu. because of a fault. **b** intr. terminate or fail to complete such an undertaking. 5 *Biol.* a intr. (of an organism) remain undeveloped; shrink away. **b** tr. cause to do this. — n. 1 a prematurely terminated space flight or other undertaking. 2 the termination of such an undertaking. [L *abortiri* miscarry (as AB-, *ortiri* ort- be born)]

abortifacient /,ə'boːtɪ'feɪʃ(ə)n(ə)l/ adj. & n. —adj. effecting abortion. — n. a drug or other agent that effects abortion.

abortion /ə'boːtʃ(ə)n/ n. 1 the expulsion of a foetus (naturally or esp. by medical induction) from the womb before it is able to survive independently, esp. in the first 28 weeks of a human pregnancy. 2 a stunted or deformed creature or thing. 3 the failure of a project or an action. 4 *Biol.* the arrest of the development of an organ. [L *abortio* (as ABORT)]

abortionist /ə'boːtʃ(ə)nɪst/ n. 1 a person who carries out abortions, esp. illegally. 2 a person who favours the legalization of abortion.

abortive /ə'boːtɪv/ adj. 1 fruitless, unsuccessful, unfinished. 2 resulting in abortion. 3 *Biol.* (of an organ etc.) rudimentary; arrested in development. **abortively** adv. [ME f. OF *abortif* -ive f. L *abortivus* (as ABORT)]

ABO system /,eɪ'biː'əʊ/ n. a system of four types (A, AB, B, and O) by which human blood may be classified, based on the presence or absence of certain inherited antigens.

aboulia /ə'boʊliə/ n. (also *abulia*) the loss of will-power as a mental disorder. **aboulia** adj. [Gk a- not + *boulē* will]

abound /ə'baʊnd/ v.intr. 1 be plentiful. 2 (foll. by in, with) be rich; **teem** or be infested. [ME f. OF *abunder* etc. f. L *abundare* overflow (as AB-, *undare* f. *unda* wave)]

about /ə'baʊt/ prep. & adv. —prep. 1 a on the subject of; in connection with (*a book about birds; what are you talking about?; argued about money*). **b** relating to (*something funny about this*). **c** in relation to (*symmetry about a plane*). **d** so as to affect (*can do nothing about it; what are you going to do about it?*). 2 at a time near to (*come about four*). 3 a in, round, surrounding (*wandered about the town; a scarf about her neck*). **b** all round from a centre (*look about you*).

4 here and there in; at points throughout (*toys lying about the house*). 5 at a point or points near to (*fighting going on about us*). 6 carried with (*have no money about me*). 7 occupied with (*what are you about?*). —adv. 1 a approximately (*costs about a pound; is about right*). **b** colloq. used to indicate understatement (*just about had enough; it's about time they came*). 2 here and there; at points nearby (*a lot of flu about; I've seen him about recently*). 3 all round; in every direction (*look about*). 4 on the move; in action (*out and about*). 5 in partial rotation or alteration from a given position (*the wrong way about*). 6 in rotation or succession (*turn and turn about*). 7 *Naut.* on or to the opposite tack (*go about; put about*). **be about** to be on the point of (doing something) (*was about to laugh*). [OE *abūtan* (on = A², *būtan* BUT¹)]

about-face /ə'baʊt'feɪs/ n., v., & int. — n. & v.intr. = ABOUT-TURN n. & v. — int. = ABOUT TURN int.

about-turn /ə'baʊt'tɜːn/ n., v., & int. — n. 1 a turn made so as to face the opposite direction. 2 a change of opinion or policy etc. — v.intr. make an about-turn. — int. (about turn) Mil. a command to make an about-turn. [orig. as int.]

above /ə'baʊ/ prep., adv., adj., & n. —prep. 1 over, on the top of; higher (vertically, up a slope or stream etc.) than; over the surface of (*head above water; above the din*). 2 more than (*above twenty people; above average*). 3 higher in rank, position, importance, etc., than (*above all*). 4 a too great or good for (*above one's station; is not above cheating at cards*). **b** beyond the reach of; not affected by (*above my understanding; above suspicion*). 5 archaic to an earlier time than (*not traced above the third century*). —adv. 1 at or to a higher point; overhead (*the floor above; the clouds above*). 2 a upstairs (*live above*). **b** upstream. 3 (of a text reference) further back on a page or in a book (*as noted above*). 4 on the upper side (*looks similar above and below*). 5 in addition (*over and above*). 6 rhet. in heaven (*Lord above!*). —adj. mentioned earlier; preceding (*the above argument*). — n. (prec. by *the*) what is mentioned above (*the above shows*). **above-board** adj. & adv. without concealment; fair or fairly;