

Chambers
Maxi
Paperback
Dictionary

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Chambers Maxi Paperback Dictionary

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Preface

Chambers Maxi Paperback Dictionary is a friendly word-companion that should have a place on every home, office and college bookshelf. It gives positive, easily-understood meanings of all the words the reader is likely to see, the speaker to use and the listener to hear within the width and variety of modern everyday life.

The *Maxi* is a streamlined edition of the latest *Chambers Concise Dictionary*, reflecting the latter's authority, broad coverage, and up-to-dateness. In the *Maxi*, the distractions of extraneous information have been avoided, giving direct, uncomplicated access to the essential requirements of dictionary users — words and their meanings.

Clear and comprehensive, *Chambers Maxi Paperback* covers today's English as it is used and understood throughout the world. New words such as **phoenixism** and **technostress** and new meanings such as 'a form of mugging' for **steaming** and 'admirable' for **wicked** rub shoulders with the longer-established vocabulary in this totally straightforward and accessible dictionary.

Using the dictionary

Order of entries

All entries are listed alphabetically, each entry having as a basic pattern the following elements:

- (1) Headword
- (2) Part of speech label
- (3) Definition(s)

Within this framework there are often

subheads – words that are derived from the headword (*derivatives*), or *compounds* or *phrases* that include the headword or one of its derivatives. This grouping of related words within an entry preserves and explains their 'family' link, while at the same time ensuring that space is used as effectively as possible.

Structure

The main elements of an entry are explained in greater detail below:

tive items, i.e. they have individual part of speech labels.

1. Headword

The word (in **bold type**) projecting at the head of an entry is referred to as the headword. Headwords are listed in alphabetical order.

Superscript numbers are added to headwords where necessary (see e.g. **cape**¹, **cape**²) to indicate homographs (words of identical spelling but of different meaning, origin, etc.).

Included in the headword list, in alphabetical order, are **cross-references**, words of which the full entry, or on which further information, is to be found elsewhere in the dictionary. Also included in the alphabetical headword sequence are **abbreviation** and **symbol** entries, which follow full-word entries of identical spelling, and which themselves are followed by **prefix**, **suffix** and **combining form** entries (see page ix).

2. Part of speech label

At the head of an entry there is a label to indicate the headword's part of speech (e.g. *adj* for adjective, *n* for noun). A further part of speech label may follow a set of definitions, to show that the preceding bold word is also used as another type of word (e.g. **gash** *v* to cut deeply into. – *n* a deep, open cut).

Part of speech labels are given after all headwords except phrasal items, and before each direct derivative word. Compound nouns are not labelled.

Entries for prefix, suffix and combining form items treat all compound subheads as deriva-

3. Definition(s)

Definitions in the dictionary entries are ordered and grouped with a view to clarity, ease of comprehension and use. Normally the most common meanings are given first, unless an earlier, perhaps more specific, sense serves to clarify or explain its subsequent use. In general, obsolete, rare, dialect and archaic senses are omitted from this dictionary, in favour of current, modern uses, although certain items in these categories, felt to be of special help or interest to the modern reader, have been included.

Definitions are separated by semicolons.

In abbreviation and symbol entries, definitions are listed alphabetically.

4. Subheads

Subheads are bold-print items not listed as separate entries, but listed and explained within an entry. Note the order in which subheads appear in an entry:

(a) Direct derivatives

These are words which are formed by adding a suffix or ending either to the headword or to the root word. They are given, alphabetically, immediately after the various meanings of the headword. Each is given a grammatical (part of speech) label. If the meaning of a regular, direct derivative is readily deducible, it may be undefined.

(b) *Compounds*

Compound words (i.e. those made up of two or more words, the first being the entry headword or one of its derivatives) follow any direct derivatives. They may be hyphenated, one-word or two-word compounds. If the compound's meaning is evident from its two parts, it may be undefined. Where no grammatical label has been given at a compound, it is to be assumed to be a noun. Those compounds which do not begin with the headword or derivative of the headword are listed under the third category, the phrases.

(c) *Phrases*

Following any direct derivatives and any compound words, all phrasal items relating to the headword are listed alphabetically. These may be phrases, phrasal verbs or idioms, or compounds which do not begin with the headword or any of its derivatives.

5. *Alternative forms*

Words spelt or formed in more than one way, but sharing the same meaning(s) and use, are shown in the dictionary linked by the word 'or'. Where a number of such alternatives are shown, strict alphabetical order may be waived in order to show the most commonly used form at the head of the list.

In hyphenated compound words, an alternative form may be shown only by the alternative element of the compound (e.g. **hunting-**box, -lodge or -seat)

6. *Inflections*

Inflected words are shown, following a colon, after the definition(s) of a word (if any). Plural forms and verb participles etc. are shown only if they are irregular in formation, or warrant special clarification. Comparative and superlative forms of adjectives are given (again only by the same criteria) in parentheses following

the adjective or its grammatical label. Current *equivalent* feminine forms appear alongside the masculine forms, whereas distinctively or less commonly used feminine forms are shown, following a colon, after the definition(s).

7. *Classification labels*

A label relating to the classification (e.g. *colloq.*, *slang.*, *chem.*, *electr.*, *psychol.*) of a word or meaning precedes the list of meanings where it applies to all of the meanings given.

Where a label applies to only one definition in a list, it immediately follows that definition.

A label which precedes the part of speech label at the head of an entry applies to all meanings of the word and to its derivatives and their meanings unless or until it is cancelled by a further classification label. This applies also where there is only one sense and one meaning of a word.

Classification labels are shown in italic print.

Foreign words A bracketed abbreviation in roman type (e.g. *Fr.*, *Ger.*) preceding the part of speech label at the head of an entry signifies that the word is still regarded as a foreign word, rather than as a naturalised English word. German nouns have been spelt with a capital letter, as they are in their country of origin.

8. *Prefix, suffix and combining forms*

These entries are treated as ordinary word entries except in the respects specified below.

Entries for prefix, suffix and combining form items (as already noted in 2.) show a separate part of speech label at each compound subhead 'nested' within the entry, treating them as derivatives of the headword.

If more than one definition is given they generally follow an initial linking word and a colon (e.g. **dia-** *pfx* denoting: through; across; during; composed of).

American English

Despite increased contact and communication between Britain and America, there is still a major difference in the forms of English used in the two countries.

Spelling

Spelling differences in a number of individual words (e.g. *manoeuvr*, *defence*, and *practice* as a verb) have been noted in the dictionary. Groups of words in which the spelling is different are as follows:

Brit. U.S.

our *or* American spellings such as *color*, *humor*, have often been noted in the text.

re *er* *center*, *meter*, *reconnoiter*, *saltpeter*, *theater*, etc.

But to show the historical sound in English, *lure*, *massacre*, *ogre*, etc.

ll *l* Americans have single *l* in all derivatives, in *ed*, *ing*, *er* (or) of words ending in *l*: *canceled*, *ing*, *caroled*, *ing*, *chiseled*, *ing*, *counseled*, *ing*, *or*, *disveiled*, *ing*, *equaled*, *ing*, *imperiled*, *ing*, *jeweled*, *ing*, *er*, *libeled*, *ing*, *er*, *reveled*, *ing*, *er*, *traveled*, *ing*, *er*.

Brit. U.S.

actualized, *ing*, *er*, etc. Also *woolen*, *marvelous*.

l *ll* *enroll*, *enthral*, *or*, *ll*, *thrall*, *dom*.

l *ll* *in full*, *skullful*, *waifful*.

In nouns in *-ment*: *enrollment*, *enthralment*, *fulfillment*, *installment*.

pp *p* *kidnaped*, *ing*, *er*, *worshiped*, *ing*, *er*.

ll *t* *carbureted*, *or*.

ae, *e* The tendency to replace *ae* and *oe* in words from Greek or Latin by *e* is more strongly developed in the United States than in Britain: e.g. *etiology*, *hemoglobin*, *esophagus*.

ise *or* *ize* Verbs and their derivatives that may be spelt *ise* or *ize*; Americans prefer *ize*.

Meaning

Some variations in vocabulary and meaning between British English and American English are indicated in the dictionary, e.g. *bonnet/hood*; *braces/suspenders*. A few words used only in the U.S. are likewise indicated, e.g. *sidewalk*.

Some other varieties of English

British English and American English are only two of the many varieties of English which exist in the world today. Other forms of English exist elsewhere, notably in Canada, South Africa, India and Pakistan, Australia and New Zealand. These differ to a greater or lesser extent from the English of Britain and America with regard to vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and sometimes spelling. Many words or meanings of words unique to these regional forms are noted in the dictionary, e.g. *baas*, *billabong*, *coloured*, *hartial*, *joey*. Some guidance on the spelling is given in the following notes. The grammatical differences are for the most part beyond the scope of a dictionary.

Canadian English

In spelling, Canadian usage stands midway between American English and British English. The usage is however far from uniform and varies from province to province and even from person to person. Hence such spellings as *color*, *traveler* and *center*, which reflect American usage, and *colour*, *traveller* and *centre*, which reflect the British, are to be found alongside each other.

English in Australia and New Zealand

Although there are differences between the English of Australia and that of New Zealand, some of which will be commented on below, the two varieties are sufficiently similar to each other to be treated together here.

The spelling of Australian English traditionally follows that of British English but American spelling is now sometimes also found.

English in South Africa

In spelling, South Africa follows British English.

English in the Indian Subcontinent

English in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh is normally learned as a second language, and is often greatly influenced by the speaker's first language. Thus no homogeneous Indian English can be described here.

Abbreviations used in the dictionary

(Note that abbreviations shown in roman with stops may also occur *without stops* when printed in *italic*, as labels.)

abbrev.	abbreviation	compar.	comparative	Flem.	Flemish
abl.	ablative	<i>comput</i>	computers,	fol.	followed,
accus	accusative		computing		following
A.D.	<i>anno domini</i>	conj	conjunction	<i>fort</i>	fortification
adj.	adjective	conn.	connected,	Fr.	French
adv.	adverb		connection	Fris.	Frisian
Afr.	Africa(n)	contr.	contracted,	fut.	future
A.Fr.	Anglo-French		contraction	Gael.	Gaelic
Afri.	Afrikaans	Copt.	Coptic	<i>geog</i>	geography
agri	agriculture	Corn.	Cornish	<i>geol</i>	geology
alg	algebra	corres.	corresponding	<i>geom</i>	geometry
Am.	America(n)	<i>crystall</i>	crystallography	Ger.	German(y)
<i>anat</i>	anatomy	cu.	cubic	Gmc.	Germanic
<i>anthrop</i>	anthropology	Czech.	Czechoslovakian	Goth.	Gothic
<i>antiq</i>	antiques, antiquity	d.	died	Gr.	Greek
app.	apparently	Dan.	Danish	<i>gram</i>	grammar
approx.	approximately	dat.	dative	Heb.	Hebrew
Ar.	Arabic	demonstr.	demonstrative	Hind.	Hindustani
<i>archaeol</i>	archaeology	deriv.	derivative,	<i>hist</i>	historic,
<i>archit</i>	architecture		derived,		history
<i>arith</i>	arithmetic		derivation	<i>hort</i>	horticulture
As.	Asia(n)	<i>derog</i>	derogatorily	Hung.	Hungarian
Assyr.	Assyrian	Dict., dict.	Dictionary,	<i>hyperb</i>	hyperbolically
<i>astrol</i>	astrology		dictionary	Icel.	Icelandic (Modern)
<i>astron</i>	astronomy	dimin.	diminutive	i.e.	(<i>L. id est</i>) that is
attrib.	attributive(ly)	Du.	Dutch	<i>illit</i>	illiterate
augm.	augmentative	E.	East	imit.	imitative
Austr.	Australia(n)	<i>E Afr</i>	East Africa(n)	<i>immun</i>	immunology
A.V.	Authorised Version	<i>E Anglian</i>	East Anglian	imper.	imperative
b.	born	<i>eccles</i>	ecclesiastical	imperf.	imperfect
<i>bacteriol</i>	bacteriology	<i>ecol</i>	ecology	impers.	impersonal
Bav.	Bavarian	<i>econ</i>	economy	incl.	including
Beng.	Bengali	<i>educ</i>	education	Ind	India(n)
<i>biochem</i>	biochemistry	e.g.	(<i>L. exempli gratia</i>)	indei	indefinite
<i>biol</i>	biology		for example	indic.	indicative
Bohem.	Bohemian	Egyp.	Egyptian	infin.	infinitive
<i>bot</i>	botany	<i>electr</i>	electrical,	infl.	influenced
Br.	Britain, British		electricity	instrum.	instrumental (case)
Braz.	Brazilian	<i>embryol</i>	embryology	interj.	interjection
c.	(<i>L. circa</i>) about	Eng.	England,	interrog.	interrogative
Can.	Canada,		English	intrans.	intransitive
	Canadian	<i>eng</i>	engineering	Ir.	Ireland,
<i>cap</i>	capital	<i>entom</i>	entomology		Irish
<i>caps</i>	capitals	erron.	erroneous(ly)	irreg.	irregular(ly)
<i>Caribb</i>	Caribbean	esp.	especially	Is.	Island(s),
<i>cartog</i>	cartography	etc.	(<i>L. et cetera</i>) and so		Isle(s)
Celt.	Celtic		on	It.	Italian,
cent.	century	ety.	etymology		Italy
cf.	(<i>L. confer</i>) compare	euph.	euphemism,	I.V.R.	International
<i>Ch</i>	Church		euphemistic(ally)		Vehicle
<i>chem</i>	chemical,	Eur.	Europe(an)		Registration
	chemistry	exc.	except	Jap.	Japanese
<i>chem eng</i>	chemical	fem.	feminine	Jav.	Javanese
	engineering	ff.	following (pages),	kg.	kilogram(s)
Chin.	Chinese		folios	km.	kilometre(s)
<i>civ eng</i>	civil engineering	<i>fig</i>	figurative(ly)	L.	Latin
cm.	centimetre(s)	Finn.	Finnish	lb.	(<i>L. libra(e)</i>)
<i>C of E</i>	Church of England	fl.	(<i>L. floruit</i>)		pound(s)
colloq.	colloquial(ly)		flourished	L.G.	Low German

ln	literally)	<i>ornithol</i>	ornithology	Scand	Scandinavian
Lith.	Lithuanian	O.T.	Old Testament	Scot.	Scottish
L. L.	Low (or Late) Latin	p.	participle	sculp.	sculpture
<i>mach</i>	machinery	Pak.	Pakistan(i)	<i>SE Asia</i>	South East Asia(n)
Malay	Malaysian	<i>palaeog</i>	palaeography	sep.	separate
masc	masculine	<i>palaeontol</i>	palaeontology	Serb.	Serbian
<i>math</i>	mathematical.	<i>pa p</i>	past participle	sfx.	suffix
	mathematics	<i>pass</i>	passive	<i>Sing</i>	Singapore
M. Du	Middle Dutch	<i>pa t</i>	past tense	sing.	singular
M. E.	Middle English	<i>pathol</i>	pathology	Sinh	Sinhalese
<i>mech</i>	mechanical.	perf.	perfect	Slav	Slavonic
	mechanics	perh.	perhaps	<i>social</i>	sociology
Med.	Mediaeval	pers.	person	Sp	Spanish
<i>med</i>	medicine		personal	<i>Sp Am</i>	Spanish America(n)
<i>metall</i>	metallurgy	Pers	Persian	<i>specif</i>	specifically
<i>metaphys</i>	metaphysics	Peruv	Peruvian	sq	square
<i>meteorol</i>	meteorology	<i>n</i>	petrology	st.	stone
Mex	Mexican	<i>ix.</i>	prefix	subj.	subject.
M. Flem	Middle Flemish	<i>pharm</i>	pharmacy		subjective,
M. Fr.	Middle French	<i>pharmac</i>	pharmacology		subjunctive
M. H. G.	Middle High	<i>philat</i>	philately	superl	superlative
	German	<i>philol</i>	philology	<i>surg</i>	surgery
<i>microbiol</i>	microbiology	<i>philos</i>	philosophy	s.v.	(<i>L. sub verba</i>) under
<i>mil</i>	military	<i>phon</i>	phonetics		the word
M. L. G.	Middle Low	<i>phot</i>	photography	Sw.	Swedish
	German	<i>phys</i>	physics	<i>SW Eng</i>	South West
mm.	millimetre(s)	<i>physiol</i>	physiology		England
mod.	modern	pl.	plural	symb.	symbol
<i>mus</i>	music	Pol.	Polish	t.	tense
N.	New, North	<i>pol econ</i>	political economy	<i>tech</i>	technology
n	noun	Port.	Portuguese	<i>telecomm</i>	telecommuni-
<i>N Am</i>	North America(n)	poss.	possessive,		cations
<i>nat hist</i>	natural history		possible	<i>telegr</i>	telegraphy
<i>naut</i>	nautical		possibly	<i>theat</i>	theatre,
neg.	negative	prep.	preposition		theatrical
neut.	neuter, neutral	pres.	present	<i>theol</i>	theology
N. L.	New Latin	prev.	previous(ly)	trans.	transitive,
no	number	prob.	probably		translation
nom.	nominative	pron.	pronoun	<i>trig</i>	trigonometry
Norm.	Norman	Prov.	Provençal	Turk.	Turkish
Norw.	Norwegian	<i>pr p</i>	present participle	<i>TV</i>	television
<i>npl</i>	noun plural	<i>pr t</i>	present tense	U.K.	United Kingdom
<i>nv</i>	nouns	<i>psychol</i>	psychology	ult.	ultimately
<i>nsing</i>	noun singular	q.v., qq.v.	(<i>L. quod vide</i>) which	U.S	United States (of
N.T.	New Testament		see		America)
<i>nuc</i>	nuclear	R.C.	Roman Catholic	U.S.S.R	Union of Soviet
N.Z.	New Zealand		(Church)		Socialist
O.	Old	refl.	reflexive		Republics
obs.	obsolete	rel.	related,	usu.	usually
O.E.	Old English		relative	v	verb
O. Fr.	Old French	<i>relig</i>	religion,	<i>vet</i>	veterinary medicine
O. Fris.	Old Frisian		religious	vi	verb intransitive
O. H. G.	Old High German	<i>rhet</i>	rhetoric	Viet.	Vietnamese
O. Ir.	Old Irish	Rom.	Romanian	voc	vocative
O. N.	Old Norse	Rum.	Rumanian	<i>vt</i>	verb transitive
O. N. Fr.	Old Northern	Russ.	Russian	<i>vulg</i>	vulgar(ly)
	French	R. V.	Revised Version	'V.	West
O. Sax.	Old Saxon	S	'South'	<i>'W Afr</i>	West Africa(n)
opp.	opposed,	<i>S. Afr</i>	South Africa(n)	W. Ind.	West Indian,
	opposite	<i>S Am</i>	South America(n)		West Indies
<i>org</i>	organic	<i>S Asia</i>	South Asia(n)	<i>W Indies</i>	West Indies
orig.	original(ly)	Sax.	Saxon		

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The Dictionary

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A

A or **a** *n* the first letter in the modern English alphabet (also see **alpha**); a note, the major sixth of the scale of *C* (*mus*); something or someone of first class or order, or of a class arbitrarily designated **A**; the designation of the principal series of paper sizes, ranging from **A0** (841 × 1189 mm.) to **A10** (26 × 37 mm.); one of the four blood types in the ABO blood group system. — **A1** first-rate, excellent; (of a ship) in first-class condition — as originally designated in Lloyd's Register of Shipping; **A-road** a trunk or a principal road; **A-side** (recorded music) the side of a single which holds the principal track being marketed. — **from A to B** from one point or place to another; **from A to Z** from beginning to end.

A or **A.** *abbrev* for: Academician; Academy; ace (*cards*); acre(s); advanced; alto (*mus*); amateur; America; American; ammeter; ampere; answer; area; argon (now usu. **Ar**; *chem*); Associate (of a society, etc.); atomic; atomic weight; Australia; Australian; Austria (I.V.R.). — **A-bomb** atomic bomb; **A level** advanced level, (a pass in) an examination generally taken after seven years of secondary education, esp. in England and Wales. — Also *adj* (often with *hyphen*).

Å *symbol* for Angstrom or angstrom.

a *adj* the indefinite article, a broken down form of **an** used before a consonant sound.

a or **a.** *abbrev* for: about; absent; acceleration; accepted; acre; acreage; acting; active; adjective; advance; advanced; afternoon; *anno* (L.), in the year; *annus* (L.), year; anonymous; answer; *ante* (L.), before; anterior; are (metric measure); atto-.

a- *pf* a reduced form of the O.E. preposition *an*, on, on, in, at, as in *abroad*, *afloat*, *asleep*, *a-begging*, and occasionally used separately as a preposition, as in *once a year*.

a- or **an-** *pf* without, not, opposite to, as in *amoral*, *anaemia*, *anodyne*.

AA *abbrev* for: Alcoholics Anonymous; anti-aircraft; Architectural Association; Associate of Arts; Australian Army; Automobile Association. **ss** or **AA** *symbol* for (in prescriptions, etc.) in equal quantities, of each.

AAA *abbrev* for: Amateur Athletic Association; American Automobile Association; Australian Automobile Association.

AAC *abbrev* for: Amateur Athletic Club; *anno ante Christum* (L.), in the year before Christ; Army Air Corps (US).

AAM *abbrev* for air-to-air missile.

A & M *abbrev* for (Hymns) Ancient and Modern.

A & R *abbrev* for: artists and recording; artists and repertoire.

aa *abbrev* for: against all risks (*commerce*); average annual rainfall.

ardvark *n* the antbear, a long-nosed African edentate that feeds on termites, etc.

ardwolf *n* a hyena-like mammal of southern Africa that feeds mainly on termites and carrion.

AB *n* one of the four blood types in the ABO blood group system.

AB *abbrev* for: able-bodied (seaman); Advisory Board; Alberta (Canadian province); *Artium Baccalaureus* (L.), Bachelor of Arts (US); autobahn.

ab- *pf* opposite to, from, away from, as in *abnormal*.

ab- *pf* used to indicate a centimetre-grain-second electromagnetic unit.

a/b *abbrev* for airborne.

abaca *n* a plantain grown in the Philippine Islands; its fibre, called Manila hemp.

abaci. See **abacus**.

aback *adv* backwards; said of sails pressed backward against the mast by the wind (*naut*). — **taken aback** taken by surprise.

abacus *n* a frame used for counting, containing rods on which are moveable beads; a piece of flat stone between the capital of a column and the architrave (*archit*). — *pl* **abaci** or **abacuses**.

abaft (*naut*) *adv* and *prep* behind; towards the stern.

abalone *n* an edible mollusc, whose shell has a pearly lining.

abampere (*electr*) *n* a unit equivalent to 10 amperes.

abandon *vt* to give up; to desert; to give (oneself) over without restraint; to give up all claims to. — *n* the condition of letting oneself go; careless freedom of action. — *adj* **abandoned** completely deserted; given up, as to a vice; profligate, dissolute. — *adv* **abandonedly**. — *n* **abandonee** (*law*) an insurer to whom a wreck has been abandoned. — *n* **abandonment**.

abase *vt* to degrade, belittle; to humble; to lower, put down. — *adj* **abased**. — *n* **abasement**.

abash *vt* to strike with shame or embarrassment; to disconcert. — *adj* **abashed**.

abate *vt* to grow less; to subside; to be abated (*law*). — *vt* to nullify, to bring down (*law*); to lessen, reduce; to mitigate, blunt. — *adj* **abatable**. — *adj* **abated** blunted; diminished; lowered; subdued. — *n* **abatement**.

abattoir *n* a public slaughterhouse.

abaxial (*bot*) *adj* away from the axis.

abbacy *n* the office or jurisdiction of an abbot; the time during which one is abbot. — *adj* **abbatial**.

abbé *n* a courtesy title for a French priest or cleric.

abbess *n* a woman who is head of an abbey.

abbey *n* a convent under an abbot or abbess, or (*loosely*) a prior or prioress; the church now or formerly attached to such an abbey; a name often retained by an abbatial building that has become a private house. — *pl* **abbeys**.

abbot *n* a male head of an abbey (*fem* **abbess**). — *n* **abbots**.

abbr. or **abbrev.** *abbrev* for: abbreviated; abbreviation.

abbreviate *vt* to shorten; to contract; to abridge. — *n* **abbreviation** an act of shortening; a short-

ened form, esp. part of a word — *n* **abbreviator**.
adj **abbreviatory**.

ABC *n* the alphabet (so-named from its first letters), the first rudiments, the basics; anything arranged alphabetically

ABC *abbrev* for: American Broadcasting Company; Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

abd *abbrev* for: abdicated; abridged

abdabs. See **habdabs**.

abdicate *vt* and *vi* formally to renounce or give up (office or dignity) — *adj* **abdicable**. — *n* **abdication**.

abdomen *n* the belly; (in mammals) the part between diaphragm and pelvis; (in arthropods) the hind-body. — *adj* **abdominal**. — *adv* **abdominally**.

abducent (*anat*) *adj* (of a muscle) drawing back.

abduct *vt* to take away by fraud or violence; to kidnap; (of a muscle) to cause abduction in (a part of the body) — *n* **abductee** a person who is abducted. — *n* **abduction** the carrying away, esp. of a person by fraud or force; muscular action drawing one part of the body (such as an arm or finger) away from another or away from the median axis of the body. — *n* **abductor** someone who abducts; a muscle that draws away (*anat*).

abeam (*naut*) *adv* in a line at right angles to a vessel's length, on the beam

abele *n* the white poplar-tree.

abelia *n* a plant of the *Abelia* genus of shrubs of the honeysuckle family with pink or white flowers.

Aberdeen (or sometimes, *adj* of or originating in *Aberdeen* or *Aberdeenshire*. — *n* (in full *Aberdeen terrier*) a coarse-haired kind of Scottish terrier. — *adj* **Aberdonian** of Aberdeen. — Also *n*. — **Aberdeen Angus** a breed of hornless, black cattle.

aberrate *vi* to wander or deviate from the right way. — *n* **aberrance** or **aberrancy**. — *adj* **aberrant** wandering, straying; having characteristics not strictly in accordance with type (*bot* and *zool*). — *n* **aberration** a deviation from the usual, normal, or right course, direction or behaviour; a wandering of the intellect, mental lapse; a non-convergence of rays, owing to difference in refrangibility of different colours (**chromatic aberration**) or to difference of focus of the marginal and central parts of a lens or mirror (**spherical aberration**); an apparent displacement of a star (*astron*).

abet *vt* to incite by encouragement or aid (used chiefly in a bad sense; see also **aid** and **abet** under **aid**): — *prp* **abetting**; *pa p* **abetted**. — *n* **abetment**. — *n* **abetter** or (esp. *legal*) **abettor**.

abeyance *n* a state of suspension or temporary inactivity; the state of being without a claimant (as of a peerage). — *adj* **abeyant**.

abhor *vi* to shrink from with horror; to detest, loathe: — *prp* **abhorring**; *pat* and *pa p* **abhorred**. — *n* **abhorrence** extreme hatred; something that is abhorred. — *adj* **abhorrent** repugnant; strongly opposed or out of keeping; detestable; detested; detesting. — *adv* **abhorrently**. — *n* **abhorrer**.

abide *vi* to endure; to tolerate; to meet, face, sustain; to wait for, bide. — *vi* to remain; to dwell or stay; to conform to, adhere to, comply with, obey (with *by*): — *pat* and *pa p* **abode** or

abided. — *n* **abidance**. — *adj* **abiding** continual, permanent. — *adv* **abidingly**.

à bientôt (Fr.) see you again soon.

ability *n* the quality or fact of being able (to); power (physical and mental); strength; skill

ab init. *abbrev* for *ab initio* (L.), from the beginning

abiosis (*med*) *n* absence of life — *adj* **abiotic** without life; inanimate.

object *adj* mean; worthless; grovelling; base, contemptible. — *n* **objection**. — *adv* **objectly**. — *n* **objectness**.

abjure *vt* to renounce on oath or solemnly; to recant; to repudiate. — *n* **abjuration**. — *n* **abjurer**.

abl. *abbrev* for *ablative*.

ablation *n* removal, esp. surgical removal of an organ or body-tissue, etc.; decrease caused by melting, evaporation, weathering, or (in *aero-space*) by heat friction on re-entering the atmosphere. — *vt* **ablate**. — *adj* **ablative** pertaining to ablation; in or belonging to a case which in Indo-European languages originally expressed *direction from*, or *time when*, later extended to other functions (*gram*). — *n* the ablative case; a word in the ablative. — *adj* **ablational**. — *n* **ablator** the heat shield of a spacecraft. — **ablative absolute** in Latin a phrase generally comprising a noun or pronoun coupled with another noun, an adjective or a participle, both in the ablative case and usu. indicating the time or cause of an event.

ablaut (*philol*) *n* a variation in root vowel as in *sing*, *sang*, *song*, *sung*.

ablaze *adj* and *adj* in a blaze, on fire; gleaming brightly.

able *adj* (*compar* **abler**, *superl* **ablest**) having enough strength, power or means (to do a thing); skilful. — *adj* **able-bodied** free from disability, etc.; robust. — *adv* **ably**. — **able seaman** or **able-bodied seaman** (*abbrev.* **AB**) a seaman able to perform all the duties of seamanship and having a higher rating than the ordinary sailor. — **able seawoman** or **able-bodied seawoman**.

-able *adj* *sfx* capable of (being); able to (be); worthy of (being); likely to (be); that must (be); suitable for; in accordance with; causing. — *n* *sfx* **-ability**. — *adv* *sfx* **-ably**. — See also **-ible**.

ablution *n* (often in *pl*) the act of washing, esp. the body; ceremonial washing; (in *sing*) the wine and water used to rinse the chalice, drunk by the officiating priest (*RC relig*). — *adj* **ablutionary**. — *n* **ablutoman** a person obsessed with cleanliness.

ABM *abbrev* for *antiballistic missile*.

abnegate *vt* to deny; to renounce. — *n* **abnegation**. — *n* **abnegator**.

abnormal *adj* not normal. — *n* **abnormalism**. — *n* **abnormality** — *adv* **abnormally**. — *n* **abnormality**. — **abnormal load** (usu. of road transport) a larger or heavier load than is generally carried.

ABO blood group system *n* (*med*) a system by which human blood is classified into four groups (O, A, B, AB) according to the antigens carried by the red blood cells.

Abo (*Austr.* *offensive*) *n* short for *Aboriginal* or *Aborigine*: — *pl* **Aboos**.

aboard *adv* or *prep* on board; in or into a ship, railway train, etc.; alongside (*naut*).

abode *n* a dwelling-place, home. — *of no fixed*

abode (*legal*) having no regular, habitual address.

abolish *vt* to put an end to. — *adj* **abolishable**.

— *n* **abolition**. — *adj* **abolitional**. — *adj* **abolitionary**.

— *n* **abolitionism**. — *n* **abolitionist** a

person who seeks to abolish anything, e.g. slavery or capital punishment.

abomasum *n* the fourth or true stomach of

ruminants: — *pl* **abomasa**. — *adj* **abomasal**.

abominate *vt* to abhor, detest. — *adj* **abominable**

hateful; detestable. — *n* **abominableness**.

adv **abominably**. — *n* **abomination** extreme

aversion; a detested object, anything abominable.

— *n* **abominator**. — **abominable snowman** a

mythical hairy man-like creature supposed to

live in the Himalayas (also called the **yell**).

ab origine (L.) from the very first, from the

source.

aborigine *n* an original or native inhabitant of a

country, esp. (now often, and in Australia always,

with *cap*) Australia. — *adj* **aboriginal** (often with

cap) earliest, primitive, indigenous. — *n* (now

often, and in Australia always, with *cap*) an

aborigine; (with *cap*) an Australian Aboriginal

language. — *n* **aboriginality**. — *adv* **aborigin-**

ally.

abort *vi* to miscarry in birth; to come to nothing;

to fail before getting fully under way or reaching

a viable stage of development. — *vt* to cause to

abort; to check or call off (an attack, mission, etc.)

at an early stage. — *n* an instance of abortion

(esp. of a rocket launch). — *n* **aborticide** the

killer of a foetus in the womb; a drug or agent

causing this (also called an **abortifacient**). — *adj*

abortifacient causing abortion. — Also *n*. — *n*

abortion the premature expulsion of an embryo

or a foetus, either occurring naturally (**spon-**

taneous abortion) or by artificial means (**induced**

abortion), esp. in the first three months of

pregnancy; the procuring of an induced abor-

tion; anything that fails in the course of coming

into being. — *n* **abortionist** a person who

procures abortion. — *adj* **abortive** unsuccessful;

brought out or produced in an imperfect con-

dition; checked in development. — *adv* **aborti-**

vely. — *n* **abortiveness**. — **abortion pill** a drug

taken orally that brings about abortion; **con-**

tagious abortion contagious bacterial infections

of cattle and of horses, causing abortion.

aboulla or **abulla** *n* loss of willpower; inability to

make decisions.

abound *vi* to exist in great plenty; to be rich (with

in); to be filled (with *with*). — *adj* **abounding**.

about *prep* round on the outside of; around; here

and there in; near in place, time, size, etc.; on the

person of; connected with; concerning; engaged

in. — *adv* around; halfway round, in the opposite

direction (e.g. *to face about*); nearly; here and

there; on the opposite tack; in motion or activity.

— **about-face** a complete change of opinion,

attitude, etc. — Also *vi*. — Also **about-turn**. —

about to on the point of (doing etc.); also just

about to; (in *neg*) not likely or keen (to do

something) (*colloq*); **bring about** to cause to take

place; **come about** to happen in the course of

time; **go about** to prepare to do; turn about

alternately; in rotation.

above *prep* over; in or to a position higher than

that of; beyond in degree, amount, etc.; too

magnanimous or proud for. — *adv* overhead; in

a higher position, order or power; in an earlier

passage (of text, etc.); in heaven. — *adj* men-

tioned in an earlier passage. — *adj* **above-board**

open, without deception. — *adj* **above-**

mentioned. — *adj* **above-named**. — *adj* **above-**

the-line of or pertaining to the Government's

expenditure and revenue allowed for in its ori-

ginal estimates and provided for by taxation; of

or pertaining to the expenditure and revenue

detailed in a company's profit and loss account.

— **above oneself** conceited

Abp *abbr* for Archbishop.

abr. *abbr* for: abridged; abridgment.

abracadabra *n* a magic word; a spell or conjuring

word; gibberish.

abrade *vt* to wear down or off. — *adj* and *n*

abradant.

abbranchiate (*zool*) *adj* without gills.

abrasion *n* a wearing away; a worn-down or

grazed place. — *adj* **abrasive** tending to abrade;

harsh; (of a person) tending to irritate or annoy.

— *n* a substance used to clean, smooth, etc. by

scratching and grinding.

abreaction (*psychol*) *n* the resolution of a neurosis

by reviving forgotten or repressed ideas of the

event first causing it. — *vi* **abreact**.

abreast *adv* with fronts in line; side by side; (with

of) keeping pace with.

abridge *vt* to shorten; to epitomise; to curtail. —

n **abridger**. — *n* **abridgment** (or sometimes

abridgement) contraction; shortening; an epit-

ome or synopsis.

abroad *adv* in or to another country; over a wide

area; at large; out of doors; current.

abrogate *vt* to annul, rescind. — *n* **abrogation**.

— *adj* **abrogative**. — *n* **abrogator**.

abrupt *adj* broken off or as if broken off; sudden,

unexpected; precipitous, steep; (of manners)

short, rude. — *adv* **abruptly**. — *n* **abruptness**.

ABS *abbr* for anti-lock braking system.

abs. *abbr* for: absence; absent; absolute; ab-

solutely; absorbent; abstract.

abscess (*med*) *n* a collection of pus in a cavity,

usu. causing an inflamed swelling.

abscind *vt* to cut off. — *n* **abscissa** (*math*) the

intercept between a fixed point and the foot of an

ordinate; the *x*-co-ordinate in analytical geom-

etry: — *pl* **abscissae**. — *n* **abscission** an act

of cutting off, or state of being cut off; organised

shedding of a part (e.g. a leaf or fruit) (*bot*).

abscise (*bot*) *vi* to fall off by abscission. — *vt* to

cause to separate by abscission. — *n* **abscisin** any

of a number of plant hormones which promote

abscission.

abscissa, **abscissae**, **abscission**. See under

abscind.

abscond *vi* to hide, or get out of the way, esp. to

escape a legal process. — *n* **abscondence**. — *n*

absconder.

absell *vi* to let oneself down a rock face using a

double rope. — *n* **abselling**.

absent *adj* not present; inattentive, dreamy. — *vt*

usu *reflexive* to keep away. — *n* **absence** the

state of being not present; want, lack; non-

existence; inattention. — *n* **absentee** a person

who is absent; a person who makes a habit of

living away from his or her estate or office. — *n*

absenteeism the practice of absenting oneself

from duty. — *adv* **absently**. — *adj* **absent-**

mind inattentive to surroundings; preoccu-

ped. *adv.* **absent-mindedly**. *n.* **absent-mindedness**.

absinth or **absinthe** *n.* a bitter, green aniseed-flavoured liqueur containing (orig. at all events) extract of wormwood, the wormwood plant.

absolute *adj.* free from limits, or conditions, certain, positive; complete; unlimited; free from mixture, pure; independent of relation to other things; peremptory, decisive; unrestricted by constitutional checks; out of ordinary syntactic relation, as the Latin *ablative absolute* (*gram*)

n. (with *the*, often with *cap*) that which is absolute, self-existent, uncaused. — *adv.* **absolutely** separately, by itself; unconditionally; positively; completely — an emphatic affirmative. — *n.* **absoluteness**. — *n.* **absolution** release from punishment or guilt; remission of sins, declared officially by a priest. — *n.* **absolutism** government by a ruler with unrestricted power; adherence to the doctrine of the Absolute. — *n.* **absolutist**. — Also *adj.* — *adj.* **absolutory**. — **absolute alcohol** water-free alcohol; **absolute magnitude** the magnitude that a star would have at a standard distance of 10 parsecs; **absolute majority** a majority, in an election, etc., which is greater than the total number of votes for all other candidates; **absolute pitch** perfect pitch; **absolute temperature** temperature measured on the Kelvin scale or Rankine scale; **absolute zero** the zero of the absolute scale of temperature (approx. - 273°C).

absolve *vt.* to loose or set free from guilt; to pardon; to give absolution to or for; to acquit without blame. — *n.* **absolver**.

absorb *vt.* to suck in or swallow up; to take in, incorporate; to take up and transform (energy) instead of transmitting or reflecting (*phys*); to engage wholly, engross. — *n.* **absorbability**. — *adj.* **absorbable**. — *adj.* **absorbed** swallowed, soaked up; entirely occupied, engrossed. — *adv.* **absorbedly**. — *n.* **absorbency**. — *adj.* **absorbent** able to absorb. — *n.* something that absorbs. — *n.* **absorber**. — *adj.* **absorbing** engrossing the attention. — *adv.* **absorbingly**. — *n.* **absorption** the act of absorbing; entire occupation of mind — *adj.* **absorptive** having power to absorb. — *n.* **absorptiveness**. — *n.* **absorptivity**. — **absorption bands** or **lines** dark bands or lines interrupting a spectrum.

abstain *vi.* to hold or refrain (from; *specif* from voting or from drinking alcohol). — *n.* **abstainer**. — *n.* **abstention**.

abstemious *adj.* restrained in relation to food, drink, or other pleasures. — *adv.* **abstemiously**. — *n.* **abstemiousness**.

abstention. See **abstain**.

abstergent (*med*) *adj.* cleansing, purging. — *n.* a cleansing agent. — *n.* **absterision** a cleansing or purging process. — *adj.* **absterive** having the quality of cleansing, purgative. — Also *n.*

abstinent *adj.* abstaining; temperate, self-restrained in one's appetites. — *n.* **abstinence** an abstaining or refraining, especially from some indulgence (with *from*). — *adv.* **abstinently**.

abstract *vt.* to form a general concept from consideration of particular instances; to separate or remove; to summarise. — *n.* a summary or abridgment; that part or thing which represents the essence; an abstraction; an abstract painting or sculpture. — *adj.* **abstracted**; existing only as a

mental concept (opp. to *concrete*); theoretical; (of terms) denoting a quality of a thing apart from the thing, e.g. 'redness'; representing ideas in geometric and other designs (*visual arts*); using words primarily for their auditory and rhythmic qualities (*poetry*). — *adj.* **abstracted** drawn off (with *from*); removed; absent-minded. — *adv.* **abstractedly**. — *n.* **abstractedness**. — *n.* **abstracter** or **abstractor**. — *n.* **abstraction** the act of abstracting; the state of being abstracted; abstract quality or character, absent-mindedness, a thing existing only in idea, a theory; a term or composition that is abstract. — *adj.* **abstractional**. — *n.* **abstractianist** a person dealing in abstractions or unrealities. — *adj.* and *n.* **abstractive**. — *adv.* **abstractly**. — *n.* **abstractness**. — **abstract expressionism** a development in art that began in America in the 1940s in which the expression of the artist's feelings informs his or her abstract representations.

abstruse *adj.* difficult to understand. — *adv.* **abstrusely**. — *n.* **abstruseness**.

absurd *adj.* senseless, meaningless; ridiculous. — *n.* **absurdity** or **absurdness**. — *adv.* **absurdly**.

ABTA *abbr.* for Association of British Travel Agents

abulia. See **aboulia**.

abundance *n.* ample sufficiency; great plenty; a call of nine tricks (*solo whist*); (or **abundance ratio**) the proportion of one isotope to the total (for a specified element) (*phys*). — *n.* **abundancy**. — *adj.* **abundant**. — *adv.* **abundantly**.

abuse *vt.* to make a bad use of; to take undue advantage of; to betray (e.g. a confidence); to revile, or swear at; to maltreat; to violate. — *n.* **abusage** wrong use, esp. of words or grammar. — *n.* **abuse** wrong use, an evil or corrupt practice; hurt or maltreatment; betrayal (of confidence); bad usage. — *n.* **abuser**. — *adj.* **abusive** containing, giving, or in the nature of, abuse; (of speech) coarse, rude, insulting. — *adv.* **abusively**. — *n.* **abusiveness**.

abut *vi.* to end or lean (on, upon or against). — *vt.* to border: — *pr p* **abutting**; *pa t* and *pa p* **abutted**. — *n.* **abutment** an endwise meeting or junction; that part on which a limb of an arch ends or rests (*archit*); a place of abutting. — *n.* **abuttal** an abutment, (in *pl*) boundaries. — *n.* **abutter** (*law*) a person whose property abuts. — *adj.* **abutting**.

abuzz *adj.* and *adv.* in a state of animated excitement; in a buzz.

abvolt *n.* 10⁻⁸ volts.

abysmal *adj.* very bad (*colloq*); very deep, bottomless, unfathomable. — *adv.* **abysmally**.

abyss *n.* a bottomless gulf, hell; anything very deep, such as the depths of the sea. — *adj.* **abyssal**.

AC *abbr.* for: air-conditioned, air-conditioning; aircraft(s)man; alternating current (*electr*); ante Christum (L.), before Christ, appellation (d'origine) contrôlée; Companion of (the Order of) Australia.

Ac (*chem*) symbol for actinium

a/c *abbr.* for: account; account current.

acacia *n.* a wattle, any plant of the genus *Acacia*; the false acacia or robinia.

academe (*formal* or *literary*) *n.* the world of scholars; academic life. — *n.* **academia** academic life

academy *n* a higher or specialised school, or a university; a society for the promotion of science or art, a riding-school. — *adj* **academic** of an academy or university; scholarly; formal; theoretical only, of no practical importance or consequence. — *n* a person studying or teaching at a university, esp. one who has narrow scholarly tastes (sometimes *derog.*) — *adj* **academical**. — *n* (in *pl*) university garb. — *adv* **academically**. — *n* **academician** a member of an academy, esp. of the French Academy or the Royal Academy of Arts (London) or the Royal Scottish Academy (Edinburgh). — *n* **academism**. — *n* **academist** an academic; an academician.

Acadian *adj* and *n* Nova Scotian.

acajou *n* the cashew tree or its fruit or gum, a kind of mahogany.

acanthus *n* any plant of the prickly-leaved genus *Acanthus*; a conventionalised representation of an acanthus leaf, in classical decorative arts, esp. on Corinthian capitals. — *adj* **acanthine** of, like, or ornamented with, acanthus. — *adj* **ecanthoid** like acanthus. — *adj* **acanthous** spiny.

a cappella *adj* and *adv* (of choral music) unaccompanied.

acarus *n* a mite. — *pl* **acari**. — *adj* **acarian**. — *n* **acaridiasis** disease due to or infestation by mites. — *n* **acaricide** a mite killer. — *n* **acarid** one of the *Acarida*, the order of Arachnida to which mites and ticks belong. — *adj* and *n* **acaridan**. — *adj* **acarine**. — *adj* **acaroid** mite-like. — *n* **acarologist**. — *n* **acarology**.

ACAS *abbr.* for Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

acatalectic (*prosody*) *adj* having the full number of syllables. — *n* an acatalectic verse or line.

acc. *abbr.* for: according; account (also **acct** or **a/c**); accusative (also **accus.**).

accede *vi* to come to office or dignity; to join up, become a party, hence agree or assent (with *to*). — *n* **accedence**. — *n* **acceder**.

accelerando (*mus*) *adj* and *adv* with increasing speed.

accelerate *vt* to increase the speed of; to hasten the progress or occurrence of. — *vi* to become faster. — *n* **acceleration** increase of speed; rate of change of velocity; a cumulative advance ahead of the normal or theoretical; the power or means of accelerating. — *adj* **accelerative** quickening. — *n* **accelerator** any person or thing that accelerates, esp. a substance that accelerates chemical action, a nerve or muscle that increases rate of action, an apparatus for changing the speed of a machine, or one for imparting high energies to atomic particles. — *adj* **acceleratory**.

accent *n* stress on a syllable, word or note; a mark used to direct this stress; a mark over a letter to indicate differences of stress, pitch, length, etc.; any way of pronouncing speech characteristic of a region, a class, or an individual; a distinguishing mark; a significant word, or words generally (*poetic*); a touch bringing out some particular effect (*painting*); (in *pl*) speech, language. — *vt* to express or mark the accent of; to utter; to accentuate. — *adj* **accentual**. — *adv* **accentually**. — *vt* **accentuate** to mark, play, or pronounce with accent; to emphasise. — *n* **accentuation**.

accept *vt* to take (something offered); to receive; to reply to in the affirmative, say yes to; to view

favourably, tolerate; to understand. — *adj* **acceptable** worth accepting, welcome, pleasing; capable of being accepted, tolerable; satisfactory, adequate. — *n* **acceptableness**. — *adv* **acceptably**. — *n* **acceptability**. — *n* **acceptance** accepting; favourable reception; acceptableness; an agreeing to terms; an accepted bill; acceptance. — *n* **acceptancy**. — *n* **acceptant** a person who accepts. — *adj* ready to receive. — *n* **acceptation** sense in which a word, etc., is understood. — *n* **accepter**. *n* **acceptor** someone who accepts something, esp. a bill of exchange; an impurity in semiconductor material which increases the conductivity of the material. — **accepting house** a financial institution, such as a merchant bank, which accepts bills of exchange.

access *n* approach; admittance; a way of opportunity, approach or entrance; addition or accession; onset or attack of illness; a fit (of illness or passion). — *vt* (*comput*) to locate or retrieve information; to retrieve information from (a computer), or from a computer in (a particular location), to gain access to, succeed in reaching. — *n* and *adj* **accessory** accessory (esp. in legal senses). — *n* **accessibility**. — *adj* **accessible** within reach; approachable; easily comprehensible. — *adv* **accessibly**. — *n* **accession** the act or event of acceding; a coming, esp. to office or dignity, or as an addition; that which is added; assent. — *vt* to enter in a book as an accession to a library. — *vt* **accessorise** or **-ize** to add accessories to. — *adj* **accessory** additional; subsidiary; aiding, or participating in, a crime (*law*) or misdeed, but not as principal. — *n* anything that is secondary, additional, or non-essential; someone who helps others commit a crime or allows them to do so. — *adj* **accessorial**. — *adv* **accessorily**. — **accessary before (or after)** the fact someone who helps a criminal before (or after) the committing of a crime; **access broadcasting** and **access television** radio and television programmes put out independently by groups of people who want to bring their points of view to public notice; **Access² card** a credit card issued by a group of banks; **access road** a minor road built to give access to a house, locality, motorway, etc.; **access television** see **access broadcasting**; **access time** the time needed for information stored in a computer to be retrieved.

acciacatura (*mus*) *n* a short appoggiatura.

accidence *n* the part of grammar that deals with inflexions of words.

accident an unforeseen or unexpected event; a chance; a mishap. — *adj* **accidental** happening by chance; not essential. — *n* a sharp, flat, or natural not in the key-signature (*mus*). — *n* **accidentalism** the state or quality of being accidental. — *n* **accidentality**. — *adv* **accidentally**. — *adj* **accident-prone** more than normally liable to have accidents. — *a chapter of accidents* a series of accidents.

acclamation *n* a shout of applause or assent; enthusiastic approval or welcome. — *vt* **acclaim** to hail or declare by acclamation; to welcome with enthusiasm. — *adj* **acclamatory**.

acclimatise or **-ize** (also in U.S. **acclimate** *vt* to accustom (a person, animal or plant etc.) to a new

climate or environment *n* **acclimatisation** or **-z-**.

acclivity *n* an upward slope. — *adj* **acclivilitous**.

accolade *n* the action used in conferring knight-hood, formerly an embrace, a kiss, now a tap on each shoulder with the flat of a sword; high award, or praise publicly given.

accommodate *vt* to adapt; to adjust; to harmonise; to provide or supply (with); to find or provide room, etc., for; to oblige. — *adj* **accommodable**. — *adj* **accommodating** ready to make adjustment; obliging. — *n* **accommodation** adaptation; adjustment, esp. of the eye to change of distance; settlement or compromise; a convenience; lodgings, living quarters; space for what is required; a loan of money. — *adj* **accommodative**. — *n* **accommodator**. — **accommodation address** an address to which mail may be sent but which is not that of the addressee's home or office; **accommodation ladder** a stairway outside of a ship allowing access to and from small boats, etc., alongside; **accommodation road** a road giving access to buildings, etc., off the public road.

accompany *vt* to go or be in company with; to attend; to go along with; to perform an accompaniment to or for (*mus*); to associate, join, or couple. — *n* **accompanier**. — *n* **accompaniment** that which accompanies; a subsidiary part or parts supporting a solo (*mus*). — *n* **accompanist** a player of accompaniments.

accomplice *n* a person who helps another or others to commit a crime.

accomplish *vt* to complete; to fulfil; to achieve. — *adj* **accomplishable**. — *adj* **accomplished** complete, finished; highly skilled, expert. — *n* **accomplisher**. — *n* **accomplishment** completion; an achievement; an acquired skill, esp. in matters of culture or social behaviour.

accord *vi* to agree; to correspond (with). — *vt* to give or grant (to a person). — *n* **agreement**; harmony. — *n* **accordance** agreement; conformity; a granting. — *adj* **accordant**. — *adv* **accordantly**. — *n* **accorder**. — *adj* **according** in accordance. — *adv* **accordingly** suitably; in agreement (with what precedes); therefore. — **according as** in proportion as; depending on whether; **according to** in accordance with, or agreeably to; as asserted by; **of one's own accord** spontaneously, voluntarily; **with one accord** with spontaneous unanimity.

accordion *n* a portable musical instrument consisting of folding bellows, keyboard, and metal reeds. — *n* **accordionist**.

accost *vt* to approach and speak (often threateningly) to; to speak first to; to solicit as a prostitute. — *adj* **accostable**.

accouchement *n* giving birth to a child.

account *vt* to reckon; to judge, value. — *vi* to reckon; to keep accounts; to give a reason or explanation; to give a statement of money dealings; to answer as one responsible. — *n* **reckoning**; a reckoning of money or other responsibilities; a statement of money owing; money deposited in a bank or building society etc.; a credit agreement between a customer and a supplier (e.g. a retail store or a financial institution) that involves the provision of goods or services in return for payment on agreed terms; the period of time (usu. a fortnight)

allowed before accounts are settled (*stock exchange*); a business relationship, or a specific part of a company assigned to handle such; value; estimation; consideration; sake; a descriptive report; a performance. — *n* **accountability**.

adj **accountable** responsible; explicable. — *n* **accountableness**. — *adv* **accountably**. — *n* **accountancy** the office, work or profession of an accountant. — *n* **accountant** a person who keeps, or is skilled in, accounts. — *n* **accountantship**.

n and *adj* **accounting**. — **account-book** a book for keeping accounts in. — **bring or call to account** to demand of someone an explanation or justification of what they have done; to reprimand; **by all accounts** according to general opinion; **give a good account of oneself** to give a good performance; to do well; **hold to account** to hold responsible; **on or to account** as an instalment or interim payment; **on account** because of; **on no account** not for any reason; **on one's own account** on one's own responsibility; **take into account** to take into consideration; **take no account of** to overlook or fail to take into consideration; **turn to good account** to turn to advantage.

accoutre *vt* to dress or equip (esp. a warrior). — *n* **accoutrement** equipping; (usu. in *pl*) dress; military equipments.

accredit *vt* to show to be true or correct; to accept as true; to provide with or send with credentials; to certify; to attribute (to); to ascribe to (*with* the thing attributed); to accept (a student) for university entrance on the basis of work done in school as opposed to an examination (*NZ*). — *n* **accreditation**. — *adj* **accredited** provided with credentials; certified officially; (of livestock) certified free from a particular disease, e.g. brucellosis.

accrete *vi* to grow together, to become attached. — *vt* to unite; to form or gather round itself.

n **accretion** continued growth; the growing together of parts that are usually separate; an extraneous addition. — *adj* **accretive**.

accrue *vi* to come as an accession, increment or product; to fall (to one) by way of advantage. — *to fall due*. — *n* **accrual**.

accl *abbrev* for account.

acculturation *n* the process or result of assimilating the features of another culture. — *adj* **accultural**. — *vi* and *vi* **acculturate**.

accumulate *vt* to heap or pile up. — *vi* to increase greatly; to go on increasing. — *adj* **heaped up**. — *n* **accumulation** heaping up; a heap or mass. — *adj* **accumulative** growing by progressive addition; cumulative. — *n* **accumulator** a thing or person that accumulates; a means of storing energy, esp. an electric battery that can be recharged; in a computer, etc., a device that performs arithmetical operations and stores the results. — **accumulator or accumulator bet** a bet on four or more races, original stake and winnings from each race being laid on the next race.

accurate *adj* exact. — *n* **accuracy** correctness; exactness. — *adv* **accurately**. — *n* **accurateness**.

accursed *adj* cursed, doomed; worthy of a curse. **accus.** *abbrev* for accusative.

accuse *vt* to bring a charge against (with *of*). — *adj* **accusable**. — *n* **accusal** accusation. — *n*

accusation the act of accusing; a charge brought.

adj accusative accusing, in or belonging to a grammatical case which expresses the direct object of transitive verbs. — *n* a word in the accusative case. *adj accusative*.

accusatorial of an accuser; (of a trial) in which the judge is not the same person as the prosecutor.

adj accusatory containing accusation. *adj*

accused. — *n* (sing or pl) the person or persons accused. — *n* **accuser.**

accustom *vt* to make familiar by custom (with to); to habituate. *adj customary.* — *adj*

accustomed usual; frequent; habituated; in the habit. — *n* **accustomedness.**

AC/DC *abbrev* for alternating current/direct current. — *adj* bisexual (*slang*).

ACE *abbrev* for: Advisory Centre for Education, Association for the Conservation of Energy.

ace *n* a unit; the one in dice, cards, dominoes, etc.; a single point; a hole in one (see under **hole**); *golf* a winning serve (*tennis*); a jot; a person of distinguished achievement, an expert (*colloq*)

adj of highest quality; outstanding. — **an ace up one's sleeve** a decisive but hidden advantage; **play one's ace** to use one's best weapon, resource, etc.; **within an ace of** within a hair's-breadth of.

acedia *n* listlessness, torpor, sloth

acephalous *adj* headless.

ACER *abbrev* for Australian Council for Educational Research.

acerbic *adj* bitter and sour. — *vt* **acerbate** to embitter, to irritate. — *n* **acerbity.**

acet- or **aceto-** combining form denoting vinegar. — *n* **acetal** a liquid formed by oxidation of alcohol, etc. — *n* **acetate** a salt of acetic acid, short for **acetate rayon**, an artificial fibre made from cellulose acetate. — *adj* **acetic** of, of the nature of or producing, vinegar (**acetic acid**), the sour principle in vinegar. — *n* **aceticification.**

vt and *vi* **aceticify** to turn into vinegar. — *n*

acetone a ketone. — *adj* **acetosous** acetous. *adj*

acetulous like, or producing, vinegar; sour. — *n*

acetyl the radical of acetic acid (**acetyl-salicylic acid** aspirin). — *n* **acetylene** a gas used in welding, synthesising acetic acid, illumination, etc.

acetabulum (*zool*) *n* the hollow that receives the head of the thigh-bone; the cavity that receives a leg in the body of insects; in various animals, a sucker. — *pl* **acetabula.** — *adj* **acetabular.**

acetate, acetic etc., acetone, acetyl, acetylene. See under **acet-**

ACGB *abbrev* for Arts Council of Great Britain.

achalina *n* a giant African snail.

ache *n* a continued pain. — *vt* to be in or be the site of continued pain; to long (for). — *n* **aching.** — *adj* **achy.**

achene (*bot*) *n* a dry, one-seeded fruit, formed of one carpel, as in the buttercup. — *adj* **achenial.**

Acheron (*Gr mythol*) *n* one of the rivers of Hades. — *adj* **Acherontic.**

achieve *vt* to perform; to accomplish; to win. *adj* **achievable.** — *n* **achievement** achieving;

something achieved; an exploit; an escutcheon or armorial shield granted in memory of some achievement (*heraldry*); escutcheon, armour, etc., hung over a tomb.

Achilleian *adj* like *Achilles*, the great Greek hero in the Trojan war, invulnerable except in the

heel, by which his mother held him when she dipped him in the Styx. — **Achilles' heel** a person's most vulnerable point; **Achilles' tendon** the attachment of the muscles of the calf of the leg to the heel-bone (*physiol*).

achondroplasia *n* dwarfism characterised by shortness of the arms and legs. — *adj* **achondroplastic.**

achromatic *adj* transmitting light without much chromatic aberration; without colour. — *n*

achromat an achromatic lens. — *adj* **achromatically.** — *vt* **achromatise** or **-ize** to render achromatic. — *n* **achromatism** the state of being achromatic. — *n* **achromatopsia** total colour blindness.

acicular *adj* needle-shaped; slender and sharp-pointed. — *adj* **aciculate** marked as if with needle-scratches.

acid *adj* sharp; sour; (of soil) having an acid reaction; biting, keen (*fig*); ill-natured, morose (*fig*); pertaining to, of the nature of or having the properties of, an acid (*chem*); relating to acid house (*q.v.*). — *n* a substance with a sour taste; any of a class of substances which turn vegetable blues (e.g. litmus) red, and combine with bases, certain metals, etc., to form salts (*chem*); any of a class of substances that dissolve in water with the formation of hydrogen ions (*chem*); any of a class of substances that can transfer a proton to another substance, etc. (*chem*); something harsh, biting or sarcastic (*fig*); L.S.D. or other hallucinogenic drug (*slang*). — *adj* **acidic.** — *adj* **acidifiable.**

n **acidification.** — *vt* **acidify** to make acid; to convert into an acid. — *vt* to become acid: — *pp* **acidifying**; *put* and *pp* **acidified.** — *n*

acidity the quality of being acid or sour. — *n*

acidosis (*med*) the presence of acids in the blood beyond normal limits. — *vt* **acidulate** to make slightly acid. — *adj* **acidulous** slightly sour; caustic, sharp (*fig*). — **acid drop** a sweet flavoured with tartaric acid; **Acid House** or **acid house** a fashionable craze first apparent in the late 1980s involving large crowds of young people meeting in otherwise empty buildings (e.g. a warehouse) to hold **Acid House parties**, gatherings held in a hypnotic atmosphere produced by bright flashing lights and **Acid House music**, extremely loud repetitive music produced originally by sampling existing songs and always featuring strong complex percussion patterns, such gatherings often associated with the activities of drug-pushers; **acid rain** rain; hail or snow etc. containing sulphur and nitrogen compounds and other pollutants; **acid test** a test for gold by acid; a searching test (*fig*). — *put* the **acid on** (*colloq*, *Austr* and *NZ*) to apply pressure (on a person)

aclerate *vt* to turn into steel. — *n* **aclerage** the covering of a metal plate with a film of iron.

acinus *n* one of the small fruits that make up an aggregate fruit like the raspberry; an aggregate fruit; a pip. — *pl* **acini.** — *adj* **acinaceous.** — *adj* **aciniform.**

ack-ack *adj* anti-aircraft.

acknowledge *vt* to admit to be or recognise as true, or genuine, or valid or one's own; to confess; to admit awareness of; to express gratitude for or thanks to; to intimate receipt of.

adj **acknowledgeable.** — *n* **acknowledgment** (sometimes **acknowledgement**) recognition; ad-