

**The
Merriam-Webster
Dictionary of
Synonyms
and
Antonyms**

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A Merriam-Webster®



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The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms is a concise guide to the understanding and use of synonyms. It is intended for people who wish to appreciate the shades of difference that exist among English words having the same or nearly the same meaning and who wish to be able to choose the precisely suitable word for a particular purpose.

The bulk of this book is made up of a collection of articles in which distinctions are drawn from among a group of synonyms. The distinctions usually fall into one of three peripheral areas of meaning: implication, connotation, or application. Implications are the usually minor ideas involved in the meaning of a word. Connotations are the ideas which color the meaning of a word and are the product of various factors, such as etymology and historical and literary associations. Applications are the restrictions on a word's use established by current idiom.

Each main entry begins with a list of words that are discussed in that article. Following the list is a concise statement of the element of meaning that the synonyms have in common:

abdicate, renounce, resign mean to give up formally and definitely.

After this initial sentence, there is a series of statements describing the differences that distinguish the synonyms from one another. The statements are supplemented and clarified by examples, set in angle brackets, that illustrate typical ways in which the word may be used. When the word being discriminated has an antonym, the antonym appears following the bracketed example:

Abdicate implies a giving up of sovereign power <the king was forced to *abdicate*> or sometimes an evading of responsibility <by walking out he *abdicated* his rights as a father>. **ant** assume, usurp

In addition, the book also contains thousands of cross-reference entries. By means of these entries, every word discussed in each article is entered at its own alphabetical place, followed by a cross-reference to the main entry where it is discussed:

desert see **ABANDON**.

When a word is discussed at more than one entry and is treated as the same part of speech at each entry, numbered cross-references list all of the entries at which that word is treated:

casual 1. see ACCIDENTAL. 2. see RANDOM.

abandon *vb* **Abandon, desert, forsake** mean to leave without intending to return
2. see RELINQUISH.

When a word is discussed at more than one entry and as a different part of speech, separate cross-reference entries appear:

humor *vb* see INDULGE.

humor *n* 1. see WIT. 2. see INDULGE.

need *n* **Need, necessity, exigency** mean a pressing lack of something essential

need *vb* see LACK.

In the entries listed above, the entry word is followed by an italic part-of-speech label. Such a part-of-speech label appears whenever the same entry word is listed more than once and is intended to help the reader identify the appropriate entry and reference. The meanings of the abbreviations used in part-of-speech labels in this book are as follows:

adj adjective *n* noun *adv* adverb *vb* verb

Some cross-references are followed by a number or a part-of-speech label. References like this direct the reader to the desired article when the same word serves as a main-entry word for more than one article:

adventitious see ACCIDENTAL 2.

alternative see CHOICE *n*.

correlate see PARALLEL *n* 2.

This book draws on materials that appear in various Merriam-Webster® publications, especially *Webster's Compact Dictionary of Synonyms*, and so is based on work done by the writers and editors of those books. The manuscript for this book was prepared by Dr. Mary W. Cornog, working in consultation with members of the Merriam-Webster Editorial Department. Proofreading and copyediting was done by Eileen M. Haraty. Data entry was done by Georgette B. Boucher and Marjorie C. Kochanowicz. Frederick C. Mish, Editorial Director, helped to prepare the plan for this book. Overall project coordination was provided by John M. Morse, Executive Editor.

A

abandon *vb* 1. **Abandon, desert, forsake** mean to give up completely.

Abandon can suggest complete disinterest in the future of what is given up <they *abandoned* their cat at the end of the summer>. *ant* reclaim

Desert implies a relationship (as of occupancy or guardianship); it can suggest desolation <*deserted* farms growing up to brush> or culpability <soldiers who *desert* their posts>. *ant* cleave to, stick to

Forsake implies a breaking of a close association by repudiation or renunciation <she *forsook* her husband for a career>. *ant* return to, revert to

2. see RELINQUISH.

abandon *n* see UNCONSTRAINT.

abase, demean, debase, degrade, humble, humiliate mean to lessen in dignity or status.

Abase suggests losing or voluntarily yielding up dignity or prestige <a fine stage actor who *abased* himself by turning to television>. *ant* exalt, extol

Demean suggests unsuitable behavior or association as the cause of loss of status <commercial endorsements *demean* the Olympics>.

Debase emphasizes loss of worth or quality <*debase* a currency> and especially deterioration of moral standards <drunkenness has *debased* the Mardi Gras>.

Degrade suggests a downward step, sometimes in rank, more often in ethical stature, and typically implies a shameful or corrupt end <the public altercation *degraded* both candidates>. *ant* uplift

Humble frequently replaces *degrade* when the disgrace of a reduction in status is to be emphasized <they were delighted to see the bully *humbled* by a boy half his size>.

Humiliate implies the severe wounding of one's pride and the causing of deep shame <*humiliated* by his suggestive remarks>.

abash see EMBARRASS.

abate 1. see DECREASE.

2. **Abate, subside, wane, ebb** mean to die down in force or intensity.

Abate stresses a progressive diminishing <waited until the storm *abated*>. *ant* rise, revive

Subside suggests a falling to a low level and an easing of turbulence <the protests *subsided* after a few days>.

Wane adds to *abate* an implication of fading or weakening <a *waning* moon> and is often used of something impressive or intense <the public's *waning* interest in spaceflight> *ant* wax
Ebb suggests a gradual waning, especially of something that commonly comes and goes <vitality often *ebbs* with illness>
ant flow (as the tide)

abbey see CLOISTER.

abbreviate see SHORTEN.

abdicate, renounce, resign mean to give up formally or definitely.

Abdicate implies a giving up of sovereign power <the king was forced to *abdicate*> or sometimes an evading of responsibility such as that of a parent <by walking out he *abdicated* his rights as a father>. *ant* assume, usurp

Renounce may be chosen when the sacrifice, especially to some higher or moral end, is stressed <the king *renounced* his throne to obtain peace>. *ant* arrogate, covet

Resign applies especially to the giving up of an unexpired office or trust <forced to *resign* from office>.

aberrant see ABNORMAL.

abet see INCITE.

abeyant see LATENT.

abhor see HATE.

abhorrent 1. see HATEFUL. 2. see REPUGNANT.

abide 1. see BEAR. 2. see CONTINUE. 3. see STAY 1.

object see MEAN.

abjure, renounce, forswear, recant, retract mean to withdraw one's word or professed belief.

Abjure implies a firm and final rejecting or abandoning under oath <candidates for citizenship must *abjure* allegiance to any foreign power>. *ant* pledge (as *allegiance*), elect (as *a way of life*)

Renounce often equals *abjure* but may carry the meaning of *disclaim* or *disown* <willing to *renounce* his lifelong friends>.

Forswear may add to *abjure* an implication of perjury or betrayal <cannot *forswear* my principles to win votes>.

Recant stresses the withdrawing or denying of something professed or taught <the suspect *recanted* his confession and professed his innocence>.

Retract applies to the withdrawing of a promise, an offer, or an accusation <under threat of lawsuit the paper *retracted* the statement>.

able, capable, competent, qualified mean having power or fitness for work.

Able suggests ability above the average as revealed in actual performance <proved that she is an *able* Shakespearean actress>. *ant* inept, unable

Capable stresses the having of qualities fitting one for work but does not imply outstanding ability <*capable* of doing simple tasks under supervision>. **ant** incapable

Competent and **qualified** imply having the experience or training for adequate performance <a leap that any *competent* ballet dancer can execute> <seek help from a *qualified* medical professional>. **ant** incompetent, unqualified

abnegation see RENUNCIATION.

abnormal, atypical, aberrant mean deviating markedly from the rule or standard of its kind.

Abnormal frequently suggests strangeness and sometimes deformity or monstrosity <a classic study of *abnormal* personalities>. **ant** normal

Atypical stresses divergence upward or downward from some established norm <a markedly *atypical* reaction to a drug>.

ant typical, representative

Aberrant implies a departure from the usual or natural type <that joyriding incident must be regarded as an *aberrant* episode in his life>. **ant** true (to a type)

abolish, annihilate, extinguish mean to make nonexistent.

Abolish implies a putting to an end chiefly of things that are the outgrowth of law, customs, and conditions of existence <*abolish* a poll tax>. **ant** establish, institute

Annihilate suggests a complete wiping out of existence of something material or immaterial <homes and cities *annihilated* by enemy attack>.

Extinguish is likely to suggest a complete but gradual ending (as by stifling, choking, or smothering) <a religion that was thoroughly *extinguished* by governmental oppression>.

abominable see HATEFUL.

abominate see HATE.

abomination, anathema, bugbear, bête noire mean a person or thing that arouses intense dislike.

Abomination suggests the arousal of loathing, disgust, and extreme displeasure <in her opinion all of modern art is an *abomination*>.

Anathema suggests that something is so odious that it is dismissed or rejected out of hand <anything that was Yankee was *anathema* to my Southern aunt>.

Bugbear suggests something so dreaded that one seeks continually to avoid it <the deficit became an annual congressional *bugbear*>.

Bête noire suggests a pet aversion that one habitually or especially avoids <his mooching brother-in-law was the *bête noire* of his life>.

aboriginal see NATIVE.

abortive see FUTILE.

abound see TEEM.

aboveboard see STRAIGHTFORWARD.

abridge see SHORTEN.

abridgment, abstract, synopsis, conspectus, epitome mean a condensed treatment.

Abridgment implies reduction in compass with retention of relative completeness <an *abridgment* of a dictionary>. *ant* expansion

Abstract applies to a summary of points (as of a treatise, document, or proposed treatment) <a published *abstract* of a medical paper>. *ant* amplification

Synopsis implies a skeletal presentation of an article or narrative suitable for rapid examination <read a *synopsis* of the screenplay>.

Conspectus suggests a quick overall view of a large detailed subject <the book is a *conspectus* of modern American history>.

Epitome suggests the briefest possible presentation of a complex whole as an ideal example <"know thyself" was the *epitome* of Greek philosophy>.

abrogate see NULLIFY.

abrupt 1. see PRECIPITATE. 2. see STEEP.

absolute, autocratic, arbitrary, despotic, tyrannical mean exercising power or authority without restraint.

Absolute implies that one is not bound by legal constraints or the control of another <King Louis XIV was an *absolute* monarch>.

Autocratic suggests the egotistical, self-conscious use of power or the haughty imposition of one's own will <the flamboyant, *autocratic* director of the ballet company>.

Arbitrary implies the exercise and usually the abuse of power according to one's momentary inclination <his high-handed, *arbitrary* way of running his department>. *ant* legitimate

Despotic implies the arbitrary and imperious exercise of absolute power or control <the most decadent and *despotic* of the Roman emperors>.

Tyrannical implies the abuse of absolute power and harsh or oppressive rule <a new regime as *tyrannical* as the one it had deposed>.

absolution see PARDON.

absolve see EXCULPATE.

absorb 1. **Absorb, imbibe, assimilate** mean to take something in so as to become imbued with it.

Absorb is likely to suggest a loss of identity in what is taken in or an enrichment of what takes in <a lotion *absorbed* quickly by the skin>. *ant* dissipate (as time, energies)

Imbibe implies a drinking in and may imply an unconscious

taking in whose effect may be significant or profound <children *imbibe* the values of their parents>. *ant* ooze, exude
Assimilate stresses an incorporation into the substance of the body or mind <asked to *assimilate* a mass of material in a brief time>.

2. see MONOPOLIZE.

abstain see REFRAIN.

abstemiousness see TEMPERANCE.

abstinence see TEMPERANCE.

abstract see ABRIDGMENT.

abundant see PLENTIFUL.

abuse, vituperation, invective, obloquy, scurrility, billingsgate mean vehemently expressed condemnation or disapproval.

Abuse implies the anger of the speaker and stresses the harshness of the language <charged her husband with verbal *abuse*>. *ant* adulation

Vituperation implies fluent and sustained abuse <subjected his aide to a torrent of *vituperation*>. *ant* acclaim, praise

Invective implies a comparable vehemence but suggests greater verbal and rhetorical skill and may apply to a public denunciation <a politician known for his blistering *invective*>.

Obloquy suggests defamation and consequent shame and disgrace <silently endured the *obloquy* of his former friend>.

Scurrility implies viciousness of attack and coarseness or foulness of language <a debate that was not an exchange of ideas but an exercise in *scurrility*>.

Billingsgate implies practiced fluency and variety of profane or obscene abuse <a *billingsgate* that would make a drunken sailor blush>.

abutting see ADJACENT.

abysmal see DEEP 2.

academic 1. see PEDANTIC. 2. see THEORETICAL.

accede see ASSENT.

accept see RECEIVE.

acceptation see MEANING.

access see FIT n.

accession see FIT n.

accident see CHANCE n.

accidental 1. **Accidental, fortuitous, casual, contingent** mean happening by chance.

Accidental stresses chance or unexpected occurrence <any resemblance to actual persons is entirely *accidental*>. *ant* planned

Fortuitous so strongly suggests chance that it often connotes entire absence of cause <believes that life is more than a series of *fortuitous* events>. *ant* deliberate

Casual stresses lack of real or apparent premeditation or intent <a *casual* encounter between two acquaintances>.

Contingent suggests possibility of happening but stresses uncertainty and dependence on other future events <the *contingent* effects of a proposed amendment to the constitution>.

2. **Accidental, incidental, adventitious** mean not being part of the real or essential nature of something.

Accidental retains its basic notion of chance occurrence but may also imply nonessential character <the essential and *accidental* values of an education>. *ant* essential

Incidental suggests a real, sometimes a designed, relationship but one which is secondary and nonessential <expenses *incidental* to the performance of her job>. *ant* essential

Adventitious implies a lack of essential relationships and may suggest casual addition or irrelevance <avoided elaborate designs with superfluous or *adventitious* elements>. *ant* inherent

accommodate 1. see ADAPT. 2. see OBLIGE. 3. see CONTAIN.

accompany, attend, escort mean to go along with.

Accompany when referring to persons, usually implies equality of status <*accompanied* his wife to the theater>.

Attend implies a waiting upon in order to serve usually as a subordinate <will *attend* the President at the summit meeting>.

Escort adds to *accompany* implications of protection, ceremony, or courtesy <a motorcade *escorted* the visiting queen>.

accomplish see PERFORM.

accomplishment see ACQUIREMENT.

accord *vb* 1. see AGREE 3. 2. see GRANT.

accord *n* see HARMONY.

accordingly see THEREFORE.

accountable see RESPONSIBLE.

accoutre see FURNISH.

accredit see APPROVE.

accumulative see CUMULATIVE.

accurate see CORRECT *adj*.

accuse, charge, indict, impeach mean to declare a person guilty of a fault or offense.

Accuse implies a direct, personal declaration <*accused* him of trying to steal his wallet>. *ant* exculpate

Charge usually implies a formal declaration of a serious offense <an athlete *charged* with taking illegal drugs before the race>. *ant* absolve

Indict is usually used in a legal context and implies a formal consideration of evidence prior to a trial <*indicted* by a grand jury for first-degree murder>.

Impeach technically refers to a formal charge of malfeasance

in office on the part of a public official <the House of Representatives *impeached* President Andrew Johnson for high crimes and misdemeanors>.

accustomed see USUAL.

acerbity see ACRIMONY.

achieve 1. see PERFORM. 2. see REACH *vb*.

achievement see FEAT.

acknowledge, admit, own, avow, confess mean to disclose against one's will or inclination.

Acknowledge implies the disclosing of something that has been or might be concealed <*acknowledged* a lie>. *ant* deny

Admit stresses reluctance to disclose, grant, or concede and refers usually to facts rather than their implications <*admitted* that the project was over budget>. *ant* gainsay, disclaim.

Own implies acknowledging something in close relation to oneself <must *own* that I know little about computers>. *ant* disown, repudiate

Avow implies boldly declaring what one might be expected to be silent about <*avowed* hostility toward his parents>. *ant* disavow

Confess may apply to an admission of a weakness, failure, omission, or guilt <*confessed* that she had a weakness for sweets>. *ant* renounce (*one's beliefs, principles*)

acme see SUMMIT.

acquaint see INFORM.

acquiesce see ASSENT.

acquire see GET.

acquirement, acquisition, attainment, accomplishment mean a power or skill won through exertion or effort.

Acquirement suggests the result of continued endeavor to cultivate oneself <an appreciation of good music was not one of his *acquirements*>.

Acquisition stresses the effort involved and the inherent value of what is gained <the ability to concentrate is a valuable *acquisition*>.

Attainment implies a distinguished achievement (in the arts or sciences) and suggests fully developed talents <honored as woman of the year for her many *attainments*>.

Accomplishment implies a socially useful skill <mastership of a foreign language is an admirable *accomplishment*>.

acquisition see ACQUIREMENT.

acquisitive see COVETOUS.

acquit 1. see BEHAVE. 2. see EXCULPATE.

acrid see CAUSTIC.

acrimony, acerbity, asperity mean temper or language marked by irritation, anger, or resentment.

Acrimony implies feelings of bitterness and a stinging verbal

attack <a campaign marked by verbal exchanges of intense *acrimony*>. *ant* suavity

Acerbity suggests sourness as well as bitterness and applies especially to mood or temperament <an inbred *acerbity* that pervades even his personal letters>. *ant* mellowness

Asperity suggests quickness of temper and sharpness of resentment, usually without bitterness <told him with some *asperity* to mind his own business>. *ant* amenity

action see BATTLE.

activate see VITALIZE.

actual see REAL.

actuate see MOVE.

acumen see DISCERNMENT.

acute 1. see SHARP.

2. *Acute*, *critical*, *crucial* mean full of uncertainty as to outcome.

Acute stresses intensification of conditions leading to a culmination or breaking point <the housing shortage is becoming *acute*>.

Critical adds to *acute* implications of imminent change, of attendant suspense, and of decisiveness in the outcome <the war has entered a *critical* phase>.

Crucial suggests a dividing of the ways and often implies a test or trial involving the determination of a future course or direction <for the campaign, the coming weeks will be *crucial*>.

adamant see INFLEXIBLE.

adapt, adjust, accommodate, conform, reconcile mean to bring one thing into correspondence with another.

Adapt implies a ready modification to changing circumstances <they *adapted* themselves to the warmer climate>.

Adjust suggests bringing into a close and exact correspondence or harmony as exists between the parts of a mechanism, often by the use of tact or ingenuity <*adjusted* the budget to allow for inflation>.

Accommodate may suggest yielding or compromising in order to achieve a correspondence <*accommodated* his political beliefs to those of the majority>. *ant* constrain

Conform applies to bringing into harmony or accordance with a pattern, example, or principle <refused to *conform* to society's idea of woman's proper role>.

Reconcile implies the demonstration of the underlying consistency or congruity of things that seem to be incompatible. <tried to *reconcile* what they said with what I knew>.

adaptable see PLASTIC.

additive see CUMULATIVE.

address see TACT.

adduce see CITE.

adept see PROFICIENT.

adequate see SUFFICIENT.

adhere see STICK.

adherence, adhesion mean a sticking to or together.

Adherence suggests a mental or moral attachment <*adherence* to the principles of reform>. *ant* nonadherence

Adhesion implies a physical attachment <the *adhesion* of paint to a surface>.

adherent see FOLLOWER.

adhesion see ADHERENCE.

adjacent, adjoining, contiguous, abutting, tangent, contemninous, juxtaposed mean being in close proximity.

Adjacent may or may not imply contact but always implies absence of anything of the same kind in between <the price of the house and the *adjacent* garage>. *ant* nonadjacent

Adjoining definitely implies meeting and touching at some point or line <assigned *adjoining* rooms at the hotel>. *ant* detached, disjointed

Contiguous implies having contact on all or most of one side <offices in all 48 *contiguous* states>.

Abutting stresses the termination of one thing along a line of contact with another <land *abutting* on the road>.

Tangent implies contact at a single point <a line *tangent* to a curve>.

Contemninous applies to objects bordering on each other <crossing the *contemninous* border of France and Germany> or having the same bounds, limits, or ends <the several *contemninous* civil and ecclesiastical parishes of England>.

Juxtaposed means placed side by side esp. so as to permit comparison and contrast <an ultramodern office building *juxtaposed* to a Gothic church>.

adjoining see ADJACENT.

adjourn, prorogue, dissolve mean to terminate the activities of (as a legislature or meeting).

Adjourn implies suspension until an appointed time or indefinitely <*adjourn* a meeting>. *ant* convene, convoke

Prorogue applies especially to action of the British crown or its representative by which a parliament is adjourned <the king's hasty decision to *prorogue* the parliamentary session>.

Dissolve implies permanency and suggests that the body ceases to exist as presently constituted so that an election must be held in order to reconstitute it <the president's decision *dissolved* the committee>.

adore see BEG.

adjust see ADAPT.

administer see EXECUTE.

admire see REGARD.

admission see ADMITTANCE.

admit 1. see ACKNOWLEDGE. 2. see RECEIVE.

admittance, admission mean permitted entrance.

Admittance is usually applied to mere physical entrance to a locality or a building <members must show their cards upon *admittance* to the club>.

Admission applies to entrance or formal acceptance (as into a club) that carries with it rights, privileges, standing, or membership <candidates for *admission* must submit recommendations from two club members>.

admixture see MIXTURE.

admonish see REPROVE.

ado see STIR.

adopt, embrace, espouse mean to take an opinion, policy, or practice as one's own.

Adopt implies accepting something created by another or foreign to one's nature <forced to *adopt* the procedures of the new parent company>. *ant* repudiate, discard

Embrace implies a ready or happy acceptance <eagerly *embraced* the ways and customs of their new homeland>. *ant* spurn

Espouse adds an implication of close attachment to a cause and a sharing of its fortunes <spent her lifetime *espousing* equal rights for women>.

adore see REVERE.

adorn, decorate, ornament, embellish, beautify, deck, bedeck, garnish mean to enhance the appearance of something by adding something unessential.

Adorn implies an enhancing by something beautiful in itself <a diamond necklace *adorned* her neck>. *ant* disfigure

Decorate suggests the addition of color or interest to what is dull or monotonous <*decorate* a birthday cake with colored frosting>.

Ornament implies the adding of something extraneous to heighten or set off the original <a white house *ornamented* with green shutters>.

Embellish often stresses the adding of a superfluous or adventitious element <*embellish* a page with floral borders>.

Beautify suggests a counteracting of a plainness or ugliness <will *beautify* the park with flower beds>. *ant* uglify

Deck and *bedeck* imply the addition of something that contributes to gaiety, splendor, or showiness <a house all *decked* out for the holidays> <*bedecked* with garlands>.

Garnish suggests decorating with a small final touch and is used especially in referring to the serving of food <airline food invariably *garnished* with parsley>.

adroit 1. see CLEVER. 2. see DEXTEROUS.

adult see MATURE.

adultery, fornication, incest mean illicit sexual intercourse.

Adultery implies unfaithfulness to one's spouse and therefore can be applied only to sexual intercourse between a married person and a partner other than his or her wife or husband <listed *adultery* as grounds for divorce>.

Fornication designates sexual intercourse on the part of an unmarried person <religious laws strictly forbidding *fornication*>.

Incest refers to sexual intercourse between persons proscribed from marrying on the basis of kinship ties <*incest* involving father and daughter is the most common>.

advance 1. **Advance, promote, forward, further** mean to help (someone or something) to move ahead.

Advance stresses effective assistance in hastening a process or bringing about a desired end <a gesture intended to *advance* the cause of peace>. *ant* retard, check

Promote suggests an open encouraging or fostering <a company trying to *promote* better health among employees> and may denote an increase in status or rank <a student *promoted* to third grade>. *ant* demote

Forward implies an impetus or moral force moving something ahead <a wage increase would *forward* productivity>. *ant* hinder, balk

Further suggests a removing of obstacles in the way of a desired advance <used the marriage to *further* his career>. *ant* hinder, retard

2. see CITE.

advanced see LIBERAL 2.

advantageous see BENEFICIAL.

advent see ARRIVAL.

adventitious see ACCIDENTAL 2.

adventurous, venturesome, daring, daredevil, rash, reckless, foolhardy mean exposing oneself to danger more than dictated by good sense.

Adventurous implies a willingness to accept risks but not necessarily imprudence <*adventurous* pioneers opened the West>. *ant* unadventurous, cautious

Venturesome implies a jaunty eagerness for perilous undertakings <*venturesome* pilots became popular heroes>.

Daring heightens the implication of fearlessness or boldness in courting danger <mountain climbing attracts the *daring* types>.

Daredevil stresses ostentation in daring <*daredevil* motorcyclists performing stunts>.

Rash suggests imprudence, haste, and lack of forethought <a *rash* decision that you will regret later>. *ant* calculating

Reckless implies heedlessness of probable consequences <a *reckless* driver who endangers others>. *ant* calculating

Foolhardy suggests a recklessness that is inconsistent with good sense <only a *foolhardy* sailor would venture into this storm>. *ant* wary

adversary see OPPONENT.

adverse, antagonistic, counter, counteractive mean so opposed as to cause often harmful interference.

Adverse applies to what is unfavorable, harmful, or detrimental <very sensitive to *adverse* criticism>. *ant* propitious

Antagonistic usually implies mutual opposition and either hostility or incompatibility <neighboring countries were *antagonistic* to the new nation>. *ant* favoring, favorable

Counter applies to forces coming from opposite directions with resulting conflict or tension <the *counter* demands of family and career>.

Counteractive implies an opposition between two things that nullifies the effect of one or both <poor eating habits will have a *counteractive* effect on any gains from exercise>.

adversity see MISFORTUNE.

advert see REFER 3.

advertise see DECLARE.

advice, counsel mean a recommendation as to a decision or a course of conduct.

Advice implies real or pretended knowledge or experience, often professional or technical, on the part of the one who advises <a book of *advice* for would-be entrepreneurs>.

Counsel often stresses the fruit of wisdom or deliberation and may presuppose a weightier occasion, or more authority, or more personal concern on the part of the one giving counsel <the benefit of a father's *counsel*>.

advisable see EXPEDIENT.

advise see CONFER.

advocate *vb* see SUPPORT.

advocate *n* see LAWYER.

affable see GRACIOUS.

affair 1. *Affair, business, concern, matter, thing* mean in general terms something done or dealt with.

Affair suggests action or performance and may imply a process, an operation, a proceeding, an undertaking, or a transaction <the resounding success of the whole *affair*>.

Business stresses duty or office and implies an imposed task <concern for quality is everybody's *business*>.

Concern suggests personal or direct relationship to something that has bearing on one's welfare, success, or interests <viewed the issue as of no *concern* to them>.