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THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY



- BASED ON
THE RANDOM HOUSE
DICTIONARY OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
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AUTHORITATIVE
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PAPERBACK DICTIONARY

The Random House Dictionary

Ballantine Books
New York

Preface

This new dictionary is intended to meet the needs of those who want up-to-date, comprehensive, reliable information about the English language—and who, at the same time, prefer a dictionary that is compact in format and available at a price they can readily afford.

There are more than 70,000 entries in this book, many thousands more than in any comparable dictionary. This number is necessary to cover the vocabulary—general words, scientific and technical terms, foreign words and phrases, abbreviations, idiomatic expressions, etc.—of present-day users of English. In selecting the vocabulary to be included, we had the special benefit of our large citation file (based on the continuous examination of books, magazines, and newspapers, the analysis of special vocabulary lists, the noting of words used in radio and television broadcasts, etc.).

In the writing of the definitions, we have had two central aims: first, to make them fully reliable in content; second, to write them in clear, precise, modern English. Usage labels and notes have been entered, when necessary, as further guidance for the user. Similarly, when useful, example phrases and sentences have been added to individual definitions. Synonym lists have been given especially when they might help the user achieve greater variety or effectiveness in the choice of words; these lists have been carefully keyed to appropriate individual definitions.

Throughout this book we have tried to free our definitions of sexism, racism, and other prejudices. We believe that we have done so more thoroughly than ever before in lexicographic history.

For pronunciation, we have used a simple and accurate key, shown inside the front cover. The pronunciations given here are the ones usually encountered and may, therefore, be used with confidence in their acceptability.

To increase the usefulness of this book, we have included a basic manual of style, dealing with such matters as punctuation, capitalization, italics, footnotes, manuscript preparation, etc. The recommendations of this manual reflect the practices of most modern writers and conform generally to the preferences of the Modern Language Association.

This dictionary is the latest addition to the series of *Random House Dictionaries*—a widely and generously praised series prepared by our permanent lexicographic staff with the assistance of hundreds of recognized scholars and experts.

A Guide to the Dictionary

MAIN ENTRY WORD OR WORDS

TYPEFACE AND SEQUENCE

The main entry word appears in large, boldface type, flush left to the margin of the column. All main entries—words, phrases, names, abbreviations, prefixes, suffixes, etc.—appear in a single alphabetical list in strict sequence of spelling.

GUIDE WORDS

The words at the top left or top right of each page indicate, generally, the first and last entries on that page.

SYLLABIFICATION

Single-word entries of more than one syllable are shown with the syllables separated by a boldface centered dot. These syllabification dots, placed according to the usual American principles of word division, indicate the possible breaks in a word at the end of a line in printing, typing, or writing when a hyphen must be inserted to indicate carryover to the next line. In all hyphenated boldface entries, the hyphen replaces the centered dot as a syllable divider.

The syllable divisions in the boldface entry word—not those in the pronunciation—should be used for guidance in splitting a word at the end of a line.

Examples: **ap-o-plex-y**; **big-name**; **fol-low**

STRESS

Entries consisting of two or more words are not fully syllabified (this being done under the separate alphabetical entries for the individual words themselves) but are shown with a pattern of stress in the boldface that reveals the prosodic relationship of each word to the others in the entry. This pattern is not meant to show the relationship of one syllable to another within an individual word. A primary stress mark (ˈ) follows the syllable or syllables that normally have greater stress than those marked with a secondary stress (ˌ). The absence of a stress mark indicates that the syllable or word receives less stress than those marked (ˈ) or (ˌ).

Example: **caneˈ sugˌar**

HOMOGRAPHS

Separate main entries are made for all words in the general language that are spelled identically but are of different derivation. When these words are spelled with lower-case rather than capital letters and when they have no distinguishing diacritical markings, each one is followed by a small superscript number.

Example: will¹, will²

PRONUNCIATION

Pronunciations are shown in this dictionary in parentheses immediately following the entry word. The first pronunciation, if several are shown, is generally the one in most frequent use, although there may be very little difference in frequency between any two consecutive pronunciations.

Example: dec-a-dence (dek'ə dəns, di kād'əns)

Pronunciations for plural forms, run-ons, etc., often show only that part which is affected by change.

Example:

syn-the-sis (sin'thi sis). *n.*, *pl.* -ses (-sēz'), the combining of separate parts or elements to form a whole. —syn'the-size' (-siz'). *v.t.*, *v.i.* —syn'the-size's, *n.*

PRONUNCIATION KEY

The complete Pronunciation Key used in this dictionary appears on pages xv and xvi of this book. The system of pronunciation symbols represents major sound divisions in English. Just as, on a color wheel, the shadings we conventionally name *red* and *orange* have between and around them infinite gradations of color, so certain sounds in English have between and around them infinite gradations of sound coloration. We may well regard certain sounds, then, not as precise points but as general segments of a continuum. The Pronunciation Key is so constructed that the user, by pronouncing the key words given for each symbol, will automatically produce the variety or varieties of each sound appropriate to his or her own dialect.

SYLLABIFICATION

Pronunciations are divided into syllables both as a visual aid and as an aid in producing the appropriate phonetic variant of a given sound.

STRESS

Relative differences in stress between syllables in a word are indicated in the pronunciations. In words of two or more syllables a primary stress mark (ˈ) follows the syllable having greatest stress. A secondary stress mark (ˌ) follows a syllable having slightly less stress, particularly in a word of three or more syllables in which marked, stressed syllables alternate with unmarked, weaker ones. Monosyllables are unmarked and are considered to have primary stress unless otherwise indicated.

PARTS OF SPEECH

A part-of-speech label for each main entry that consists of a single word is given as an italicized abbreviation preceding the definition or definitions for that part of speech.

Example: *de-gree* (di grē'), *n.*

If the entry word is used in more than one grammatical form, the appropriate italicized part-of-speech label precedes each set of definitions given for that part of speech. Part-of-speech labels subsequent to the first are preceded by a boldface dash.

Example:

e-nough (i nuf'), *adj.* 1. sufficient for the purpose or to satisfy desire. —*n.* 2. an adequate quantity or number. —*adv.* 3. sufficiently. 4. fully or quite. 5. tolerably or passably.

If the entry word shows irregularly spelled inflected forms, a summary of all the parts of speech for the entry is given with the inflected forms following the pronunciation.

Example:

feed (fēd), *v.* *fed*, *feed-ing*, *n.* —*v.t.* 1. to give food to. 2. to serve as food for. 3. to satisfy or graffy. 4. to provide with the necessary materials for development or operation. —*v.i.* 5. (esp. of animals) to eat. —*n.* 6. food, esp. for farm animals. 7. *Informal*, a meal, esp. a lavish one. 8. the act or process of supplying a furnace, machine, etc. 9. the material, or the amount of it, supplied. 10. a feeding mechanism. —*feed'a-ble*, *adj.* —*feed'er*, *n.*

If an entry word with more than one grammatical form is given a usage, subject, or other label that applies to all its parts of speech, a boldface dash precedes the first part-of-speech label as well as the others.

Example:

gyve (jiv), *n., v.* *gyved*, *gyv-ing*. *Archaic.* —*n.* 1. Usually, *gyves*, a shackle, esp. for the leg. —*v.t.* 2. to shackle.

INFLECTED FORMS

Inflected forms are plurals of nouns, past tenses and participles of verbs, and comparatives and superlatives of adjectives and adverbs. Such forms traditionally regarded as "regular" are not generally shown for:

1. nouns whose plural is formed by the addition of *-s* (as in *dog*, *dogs*) or *-es* (as in *class*, *classes*).
2. verbs whose past tense is formed by the addition of *-ed* with no alteration of the spelling, whose past participle is formed by the addition of *-ed* with no alteration of the spelling, and whose present participle is formed by the addition of *-ing* with no alteration of the spelling (as in *talk*, *talked*, *talking*).

3. comparatives and superlatives formed simply by the suffixes *-er* and *-est* (as in *small*, *smaller*, *smallest*).
4. the third-person singular, indicative, present tense of verbs, with the exception of auxiliary verbs (as in *heals*).

Inflected forms are shown for those entry words that form inflections in some way other than by the simple addition of appropriate inflectional endings, such as those for:

1. nouns, adjectives, and verbs ending in a consonant plus a *y*, where the *y* changes to an *i* before an inflectional ending is added, as in *steady*.
2. adjectives and verbs ending in *e*, where the *e* is dropped before the inflectional ending is added, as in *fine*.
3. adjectives and verbs doubling the consonant before adding inflectional endings, as in *big*, *admit*.
4. nouns and verbs changing an internal spelling to form inflections, as in *half*, *mouse*, *steal*.
5. adjectives changing their roots to form the comparative and superlative, as in *good*.
6. nouns having plurals that are not native English formations, as in *alumnus*.
7. nouns having the plural and singular spelled identically, as in *Chinese*.
8. nominative pronouns, which show their declensions, as in *I*.

To avoid possible confusion as to their spellings, certain plural forms are also shown, including those for:

1. nouns ending in *-o*, *-ful*, *-ey*, or *-us*, as in *potato*, *cupful*, *monkey*, *prospectus*.
2. nouns ending in elements resembling words that form their plurals in a different way, as in *mongoose*.
3. nouns about which there might be confusion as to the pronunciation of the plural, as in *house*, *path*.
4. entries of two or more words about which there might be confusion as to which element is pluralized, as in *attorney general*.

Where variant inflected forms occur, all forms are shown, with labels when appropriate.

Example:

be-get (bi get'), *v.t.*, be-got (-got') or (*Archaic*) be-gat (-gat'); be-got-ten (-got^{ən}) or be-got; be-get-ting. *Literary*. 1. to be the father of. 2. to cause or produce.

Where two inflected forms are given for a verb, the first is the past tense and the past participle and the second is the present participle.

Example:

flee (flē), *v.*, fled (fled), flee-ing. —*v.i.* 1. to run away, as from danger, pursuers, etc. 2. to move swiftly. —*v.t.* 3. to run away from (a place, person, etc.).

Where three inflected forms are given for a verb, the first is the past tense, the second is the past participle, and the third is the present participle.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions within an entry are individually numbered in a single sequence, regardless of the groupings according to part of speech. In general, the most common part of speech is listed first, and the most frequent meaning appears as the first definition for each part of speech.

Idioms appear in boldface type under the main entry word whose use in the idiom is least clear or denotative, unless that word is a preposition or an adverbial particle. Idioms are listed in alphabetical order after the definitions for the part of speech under which they appear.

Example:

heel' (hēl), *n.* 1. the back part of the foot, below and behind the ankle. 2. the part of a stocking, shoe, etc., covering this part. 3. a solid, raised base attached to the back part of the sole of a shoe. 4. something resembling a heel in position, shape, etc. 5. down at the heels, shabby or poor. 6. kick up one's heels, to frolic. 7. on or upon the heels of, closely following. —*v.t.* 8. to furnish with heels, as shoes. —*v.i.* 9. (of a dog) to follow at one's heels on command. —**heelless**, *adj.*

If two or more definitions belong to the same labeled subject field, they are marked with boldface letters under the same definition number. If an idiomatic phrase has two or more meanings, each meaning is marked with a boldface letter but the idiom itself is listed only once.

Example: See **effect** (def. 6)

For meanings using the entry word in a form slightly different from that shown at the main entry, as with a capital letter or a lower-case letter, the changed form is indicated at the beginning of the definition.

Example: See **republican** (def. 2)

USAGE AND OTHER LABELS

Entries that are limited, in whole or in part, to a particular region, time, subject, or variety of usage, are marked with appropriate labels, as *Brit.*, *Latin*; *Archaic*, *Obs.*; *Physics*, *Chem.*; *Slang*, *Informal*.

1. If the label applies to the entire entry, it appears before the first part-of-speech label if there is more than one part of speech and after it if there is only one part of speech.
2. If the label applies to a certain part of speech only, it follows the part-of-speech label and precedes the subsequent definition numbers.
3. If the label applies to a certain definition only, it follows the definition number and precedes the text of the definition.

4. If a definition has two or more lettered parts and the label applies to both, it precedes the first letter. If the label applies to only one of the lettered parts, it follows that letter.

CROSS REFERENCES

Main entries are defined under the form most commonly encountered in contemporary English. Other forms—for example, less common spellings or shortened forms—are generally listed in their own alphabetical places.

VARIANTS

1. Common variant spellings are shown in boldface type at the form of the entry that is defined, preceded by "Also." Variant names for an entry are preceded by "Also called."

Examples: See **kerosene**; **sleeping pill**

2. If a variant applies to a certain definition only, it follows the definition number and precedes the text of the definition.

Example: See **casino** (def. 2)

3. When a less common form of an entry, as a spelling or other type of variant, appears as a main entry, it is followed by a cross reference to the entry where the definition appears.

Example: See **inclose**

INFLECTED FORMS

When an inflected form is given its own main entry, it is cross-referred to the defined entry of which it is a part.

Example: See **lent**

HIDDEN ENTRIES

A hidden entry may be implicitly or explicitly defined within the text of a broader definition in the same field. It is shown in boldface, enclosed in parentheses.

Example:

a-part-ment (ə pɑrt'mənt), *n.* 1. a room or combination of rooms for use as a dwelling. 2. a building (**apart'ment house**) containing such rooms.

ETYMOLOGIES

Etymologies in this dictionary appear in square brackets after the definitions. An etymology key appears on page xiv of this book.

SYMBOLS

The following are the most important symbols in the etymologies:

- < This symbol, meaning "from," is used to show descent from one language or group of languages to another, or to show that a word is derived from another word.
- = This symbol of equivalence precedes the analysis of a word. It is used to show that a word is made up of the words or elements that follow it.
- + This symbol is used between elements, the members of a compound or a blend, etc., to indicate that these are the immediate constituents of the word being analyzed.

PARENTHESES

Parentheses are used to set off those parts of the source words that do not require analysis or that do not have any bearing on the entry word. They are also used to show various kinds of omission, as in blends and acronyms, variant spellings, etc.

LANGUAGE LABELS

A language label is shown alone, without an accompanying italicized form, when there is no significant difference in form or meaning between the word in the given language and the preceding word.

TYPEFACE

Roman type is used for translations, definitions, and other explanatory matter. Italic type is used for all words or parts of words from which the entry words are formed by derivation or composition.

RUN-ON ENTRIES

Derivatives of the main entry word are often formed by adding a suffix to the root of the main entry. When their meanings are readily understandable from the combined senses of the root word and the suffix, these derivatives are run on at the end of the entry. The run-on entry appears in boldface type at the end of the entry. It is preceded by a lightface dash and followed by an italicized, part-of-speech label.

Example: See *tart* (—*tart*'ly, *adv.* —*tart*'ness, *n.*)

If the pronunciation of a run-on entry is readily derivable from that of the main entry, a preceding variant of the main entry, or a preceding run-on entry, the run-on entry is syllabified with centered dots and stressed in the boldface spelling.

SYNONYMS

At the end of many entries synonym lists appear, preceded by --Syn. They appear in alphabetical order and are usually keyed to the specific definitions to which they relate.

USAGE NOTES

At the end of a number of entries there are usage notes, set flush left to the margin and preceded by **—Usage**. These describe many of the problems that arise in matters of grammar and usage, and they are intended to reflect the opinions of most educated users of English.

Etymology Key

<	from; derived or descended from	Finn	Finnish	Pers	Persian
=	equivalent to	G	German	Pg	Portuguese
+	plus; and	Gael	Gaelic	Pr	Provençal
AF	Anglo- French	Gk	Greek	Rum	Rumanian
Afr	African	Gmc	Germanic	Russ	Russian
AmerInd	American	Haw	Hawaiian	SAfrD	South African Dutch
Ar	Arabic	Heb	Hebrew	Scand	Scandi- navian
Aram	Aramaic	Hung	Hungarian	Scot	Scottish
CanF	Canadian French	Icel	Icelandic	Skt	Sanskrit
Celt	Celtic	Ir	Irish	Sp	Spanish
Chin	Chinese	It	Italian	Sw	Swedish
D	Dutch	Jap	Japanese	Turk	Turkish
Dan	Danish	L	Latin	WInd	West Indian
F	French	ME	Middle English	WAfr	West African
		MexSp	Mexican Spanish		
		Norw	Norwegian		
		OE	Old English		

Pronunciation Key: Foreign Sounds

- A** as in French *a-mi* (A mē') [a vowel intermediate in quality between the a of *cat* and the ä of *calm*, but closer to the former]
- KH** as in German *ach* (äKH) or *ich* (ikH); Scottish *loch* (lôKH) [a consonant made by bringing the tongue into the position for k as in *key*, *coo*, while pronouncing a strong, rasping h]
- N** as in French *bon* (bôn) [used to indicate that the preceding vowel is nasalized. Four such vowels are found in French: *un bon vin blanc* (œN bôn van blän)]
- OE** as in French *feu* (fœ); German *schön* (shœN) [a vowel made with the lips rounded in the position for o as in *over*, while trying to say a as in *able*]
- R** as in French *rouge* (Roozh), German *rot* (Rôt), Italian *ma-re* (mä're), Spanish *pe-ro* (pe'rô) [a symbol for any non-English r, including a trill or flap in Italian and Spanish and a sound in French and German similar to KH but pronounced with voice]
- Y** as in French *tu* (ty); German *ü-ber* (y'bär) [a vowel made with the lips rounded in position for ö as in *ooze*, while trying to say ē as in *east*]
- as in French *Bas-togne* (ba-stôn'y') [a faint prolongation of the preceding voiced consonant or glide]

Pronunciation Key

The symbol (ˈ), as in *moth-er* (mʊθˈɜː), *civil defense*ˈ, is used to mark primary stress; the syllable preceding it is pronounced with greater prominence than the other syllables in the word or phrase. The symbol (ˌ), as in *grand-moth-er* (grændˈmʊθˌɜː), *creamˌ cheese*ˌ, is used to mark secondary stress; a syllable marked for secondary stress is pronounced with less prominence than one marked (ˈ) but with more prominence than those bearing no stress mark at all.

a	act, bat, marry	l	low, mellow, all	y	yes, lawyer
ā	aid, cape, way	m	my, simmer, him	z	zeal, lazy, those
ā(r)	air, dare, Mary	n	now, sinner, on	zh	vision, mirage
ā	alms, art, calm	ŋ	sing, Washington	ə	occurs only in unaccented syllables and indicates the sound of
b	back, cabin, cab	o	ox, box, wasp	a in	alone
ch	chief, butcher, beach	ō	over, boat, no	e in	system
d	do, rudder, bed	ō	ought, ball, raw	i in	easily
e	ebb, set, merry	oi	oil, joint, joy	o in	gallop
ē	equal, seat, bee, mighty	oo	book, poor	u in	circus
ēr	ear, mere	ōō	ooze, fool, too	●	occurs in unaccented syllables before l preceded by t, d, or n, or before n preceded by t or d to show syllabic quality, as in
f	fit, differ, puff	ou	out, loud, prow		<i>cradle</i> (krādˈɹl)
g	give, trigger, beg	p	pot, supper, stop		<i>red-den</i> (redˈɹn)
h	hit, behave, hear	r	read, hurry, near		<i>met-al</i> (metˈɹl)
hw	white, nowhere	s	see, passing, miss		<i>men-tal</i> (menˈtɹl)
i	if, big, mirror, furniture	sh	shoe, fashion, push		and in accented syllables between
ī	ice, bite, pirate, deny	t	ten, butter, bit		f and r to show diphthongal quality, as in
j	just, badger, fudge	th	thin, ether, path		<i>fire</i> (fɪˈɹ)
k	kept, token, make	th	that, either, smooth		<i>hire</i> (hɪˈɹ)
		th			
		u	up, love		
		ū(r)	urge, burn, cur		
		w	voice, river, live		
		w	west, away		

A

A, **a** (**ā**), *n.*, *pl.* **A's** or **As**, **a's** or **as**. the first letter of the English alphabet, a vowel.

a' (**ə**; when stressed **ā**), *indefinite article*. 1. any one of some class or group: a woman. 2. any certain one: one thing at a time. 3. one (used before a noun expressing quantity): a score of times. 4. any single: not a one.

a² (**ə**; when stressed **ā**), *prep.* *per*: ten cents a ride.

A, 1. ampere; amperes. 2. answer. **A**, 1. the first in order or in a series. 2. a grade or mark that indicates the highest quality. 3. Music. the sixth tone in the scale of C major.

a, *Metric System*. are; ares.

a⁻¹, a prefix meaning: **a**. on: afoot. **b**. in: abed. **c**. to: ashore. **d**. at: aside.

a⁻², a prefix meaning: **a**. of: akin. **b**. from: anew.

a⁻³, a prefix meaning: **a**. not: atypical. **b**. without: amoral.

A, 1. acre; acres. 2. America. 3. American. 4. answer.

a, 1. about. 2. acre; acres. 3. adjective. 4. alto. 5. anonymous. 6. answer. 7. *Metric System*. are; ares.

AA, Alcoholics Anonymous.

A.A., 1. Alcoholics Anonymous. 2. antiaircraft. 3. Associate in Arts.

AAA, 1. American Automobile Association. 2. antiaircraft artillery.

AAM, air-to-air missile.

A and M, Agricultural and Mechanical.

A & R, artists and repertory (used to refer to the profession of selecting recording artists).

aard-vark (**ärd'värk'**), *n.* a large burrowing mammal of Africa, feeding on ants and termites. [*obs.* SAfrD = *aarde* earth + *vark* pig]

ab, 1. about. 2. Baseball. (times) at bat.

A.B., 1. See able seaman. 2. Bachelor of Arts. [*< L Artium Baccalaureus*]

A.B.A., American Bar Association.

a-back (**ə bak'**), *adv.* taken aback, surprised and disconcerted.

ab-a-cus (**ab'ə kəs**, **ə bak'əs**), *n.*, *pl.* **ab-a-cus-es**, **ab-a-ci** (**ab'ə sī'**). a de-

vice for making calculations, consisting of a frame set with movable beads on rods.

a-baft (**ə baft'**, **ə bäft'**), *Naut.* —*prep.* 1. to the rear of. —*adv.* 2. aft.

ab-a-lo-me (**ab'ə lö'nē**), *n.* a large mollusk with a rather flat, oval shell, whose flesh is edible.

a-ban-dom¹ (**ə ban'dən**), *v.t.* 1. to give up or discontinue (a plan or project). 2. to leave or desert. — **a-ban'don-er**, *n.* — **a-ban'don-ment**, *n.* —*Syn.* 1. relinquish, renounce. 2. forsake.

a-ban-dom² (**ə ban'dən**), *n.* freedom from constraint or conventionality. **a-ban-doned** (**ə ban'dond**), *adj.* having no shame or self-control. — **a-ban'doned-ly**, *adv.*

a-base (**ə bäs'**), *v.t.*, **a-based**, **a-basing**. to humble or degrade (used usually reflexively). — **a-base'ment**, *n.* — **a-bas'er**, *n.*

a-bash (**ə bash'**), *v.t.* to make ashamed or embarrassed. — **a-bash-ed-ly** (**ə bash'id lē**), *adv.* — **a-bash'ment**, *n.*

a-bate (**ə bät'**), *v.t.*, *v.i.*, **a-bat-ed**, **a-bat-ing**. 1. to decrease in amount, degree, worth, etc. 2. Law. to put an end (to). — **a-bat'a-ble**, *adj.* — **a-bate'ment**, *n.* — **a-bat'er**, *n.* — *Syn.* 1. ebb, subside, wane.

ab-a-tis (**ab'ə tē'**, **-tis**, **ə bat'ē**, **ə bat'is**), *n.*, *pl.* **ab-a-tis** (**ab'ə tēz'**, **ə bat'ēz**), **ab-a-tis-es** (**ab'ə tis'iz**, **ə bat'isiz**). an obstacle of felled trees with sharpened branches directed toward an enemy.

ab-at-toir (**ab'ə twär'**), *n.* a slaughterhouse.

ab-ba-cy (**ab'ə ə**), *n.*, *pl.* **-cies**. the position or term of office of an abbot.

ab-bé (**a bā'**, **ab'ā**), *n.*, *pl.* **ab-bés** (**a bāz'**, **ab'āz**). a title of respect for a French priest.

ab-bess (**ab'is**), *n.* the female superior of a convent of nuns.

ab-bey (**ab'ē**), *n.*, *pl.* **-beys**. 1. a monastery or convent. 2. the church of an abbey.

ab-bot (**ab'ət**), *n.* the head or superior of a monastery. [*< L < Gk < Aram abba* father] — **ab-bot-ship'**, *n.*

abbr., 1. abbreviated. 2. abbreviation. Also, *abbrev.*

ab-bre-vi-ate (ə brē'vē āt'), *v.t.*, -at-ed, -at-ing. 1. to shorten (a word or phrase) by omitting letters. 2. to make briefer. —ab-bre'vi-a-tor, *n.*

ab-bre-vi-a-tion (ə brē'vē ā'shən), *n.* 1. a shortened or contracted form of a word or phrase, used to represent the whole. 2. the act or result of abbreviating.

ABC (ā'bē'sē'), *n.*, *pl.* ABC's, ABCs. 1. the rudiments of a subject. 2. Usually, ABC's. the alphabet.

ab-di-cate (ab'dā kāt'), *v.t.*, *v.i.* -cat-ed, -cat-ing. to renounce or relinquish (a throne or power) formally. —ab'di-ca'tion, *n.*

ab-do-men (ab'də mən, ab dō'-), *n.* 1. the part of the body between the thorax and the pelvis. 2. the posterior section of the body of an arthropod. —ab-dom'i-nal (-dom'ə-nəl), *adj.* —ab-dom'i-nal-ly, *adv.*

ab-duct (ab dukt'), *v.t.* to carry off (a person) by force, esp. to kidnap. —ab-duc'tion, *n.* —ab-duc'tor, *n.*

a-beam (ə bēm'), *adv.*, *adj.* at right angles to a ship's keel.

a-be-ce-dar-i-an (ā'bē sē dār'ē ən), *n.* a beginner in any field of learning.

a-bed (ə bed'), *adv.*, *adj.* in bed.

ab-er-ra-tion (ab'ə rā'shən), *n.* 1. deviation from what is common, normal, or right. 2. mental disorder. 3. failure to form perfect reproduction through a lens or on a mirror. —ab'er-ra'tion-al, *adj.* —ab'er-rant, *adj.*

a-bet (ə bet'), *v.t.*, a-bet-ted, a-bet-ting. to encourage or assist, esp. in wrongdoing. —a-bet'ment, *n.* —a-bet'tor, a-bet'ter, *n.*

a-be-y-ance (ə bā'əns), *n.* temporary inactivity or cessation.

ab-hor (ab hōr'), *v.t.*, -horred, -hor-ring. to detest utterly. —ab-hor'-rence, *n.* —ab-hor'rer, *n.*

ab-hor-rent (ab hōr'ənt, -hor'-), *adj.* causing repugnance or loathing. —ab-hor'rent-ly, *adv.*

a-hide (ə hīd'), *v.* a-hode or a-bid-ed, a-bid-ing. —*v.i.* *Literary.* 1. to remain or stay. 2. to reside. —*v.t.* 3. *Literary.* to wait for. 4. to endure or tolerate. 5. abide by, a. to act in accord with. b. to submit to or agree to. —a-bid'ance, *n.*

a-bid-ing (ə bī'dīŋ), *adj.* enduring or steadfast. —a-bid'ing-ly, *adv.*

Ab-i-djan (ab'ī jän'), *n.* the capital of the Ivory Coast.

a-bil-i-ty (ə bil'i tē), *n.*, *pl.* -ties. 1. power or capacity to act. 2. talent or skill.

ab-ject (ab'jekt, ab jekt'), *adj.* 1. humiliating and wretched. 2. con-

temptible or despicable. —ab-jec'-tion, *n.* —ab-ject-ly (ab jekt'lē, ab'jekt lē), *adv.* —ab-ject'ness, *n.*

ab-jure (ab jōor'), *v.t.*, -jured, -jur-ing. 1. to retract solemnly. 2. to renounce under oath. —ab-ju-ra-tion (ab'jōo rā'shən), *n.* —ab-jur'-a-to-ry, *adj.* —ab-jur'er, *n.*

abl., ablative.

ab-late (a blāt'), *v.t.*, *v.i.*, -lat-ed, -lat-ing. to cause or undergo ablation.

ab-la-tion (ab lā'shən), *n.* 1. removal by surgery, melting, erosion, etc. 2. *Rocketry.* burning away of a nose cone by heat in reentry.

ab-la-tive (ab'lā tiv), *Gram.* —*adj.* 1. noting a case that indicates the place or manner of an action, as in Latin. —*n.* 2. the ablative case. —ab-la-ti-val (ab'lā tī'vəl), *adj.*

a-blaze (ə blāz'), *adj.* 1. on fire. 2. gleaming or brilliant.

a-ble (ā'bəl), *adj.*, a-bler, a-blest. 1. having necessary power, skill, or resources. 2. having or showing intelligence, skill, etc. 3. legally competent. —a'bly, *adv.* —*Syn.* 1. capable, competent. 2. clever, ingenious.

-able, a suffix meaning: a. able to be; readable. b. worthy of: laudable. c. tending to: changeable.

a-ble-bod-ied (ā'bəl bod'ēd), *adj.* physically fit.

a-ble sea'man, a skilled or experienced seaman. Also called a-ble-bodied sea'man.

a-bloom (ə blōom'), *adj.* in bloom. ab-lu-tion (ab lōo'shən, ə blōō'-), *n.* a cleansing of the body, esp. as a religious ritual.

ABM, See antiballistic missile.

ab-ne-gate (ab'nə gāt'), *v.t.*, -gat-ed, -gat-ing. to deny oneself (rights, comfort, etc.). —ab-ne-ga'tion, *n.*

ab-nor-mal (ab nōr'məl), *adj.* not average, typical, or normal. —ab-nor-mal-i-ty (ab'nōr mal'i tē), *n.* —ab-nor'mal-ly, *adv.*

a-board (ə bōrd', ə bōrd'), *adv.*, *prep.* 1. on, in, or into (a ship, train, etc.). 2. alongside (of a ship or shore).

a-bode¹ (ə bōd'), *n.* *Literary.* 1. a house or residence. 2. a stay.

a-bode² (ə bōd'), *v.* a pt. and pp. of abide.

a-bol-ish (ə bōl'ish), *v.t.* to put an end to. —*Syn.* abrogate, annul, nullify.

ab-o-li-tion (ab'ə lish'ən), *n.* 1. the act of abolishing or state of being abolished. 2. (often cap.) the legal termination of slavery in the U.S. —ab'o-li'tion-ar-y, *adj.*

ab-o-li-tion-ism (ab'ə lish'ə niz'əm), *n.* the policy of abolition of slavery, esp. in the U.S. —ab'o-li'tion-ist, *n.*

A-bomb (ā'bom'), *n.* See *atomic bomb*.

a-bom-i-na-ble (ə bom'ə nə bel), *adj.* 1. repugnantly hateful. 2. very bad or poor. —**a-bom'i-na-bly**, *adv.*

Abom'inable Snow'man, a large humanlike creature reported to inhabit the Himalayas.

a-bom-i-nate (ə bom'ə nāt'), *v.t.*, *-nat-ed*, *-nat-ing*. 1. to loathe intensely. 2. to dislike strongly. —**a-bom'i-na'tion**, *n.* —**a-bom'i-na'-tor**, *n.*

ab-o-rig-i-nal (ab'ə ri'jə nəl), *adj.* 1. of or pertaining to aborigines. 2. native or indigenous. —*n.* 3. an aborigine.

ab-o-rig-i-ne (ab'ə ri'jə nə), *n.* one of the original inhabitants of a region. [*< L ab origine* from the very first]

a-born-ing (ə bōr'nīng), *adv.* in birth or while coming into being.

abort (ə bōrt'), *v.i.*, *v.t.* 1. to undergo or cause abortion. 2. to terminate (a scheduled spaceflight) prematurely. —**a-bor'tive**, *adj.* —**a-bor'tive-ly**, *adv.*

ab-or-tion (ə bōr'shən), *n.* 1. the expulsion of a human fetus before it is viable. 2. an idea or project that has failed to develop fully. —**a-bor'tion-al**, *adj.*

a-bor-tion-ist (ə bōr'shə nist), *n.* a person who induces abortions.

a-bound (ə bound'), *v.i.* 1. to exist in great quantities or numbers. 2. to be well supplied.

a-bout (ə bout'), *prep.* 1. in regard to. 2. connected with. 3. near or close to. 4. on every side of. 5. on the verge of. —*adv.* 6. nearly or approximately. 7. nearby. 8. on every side. 9. in the opposite direction. —*adj.* 10. moving around.

a-bout-face (*n.* ə bout'fās'; *v.* ə bout'fās'), *n.*, *v.*, *-faced*, *-fac-ing*. —*n.* 1. a complete reversal in position, attitude, etc. —*v.i.* 2. to switch to an opposite direction or opinion.

a-bove (ə buv'), *adv.* 1. in or to a higher place. 2. overhead, upstairs, or in the sky. 3. higher in rank or power. 4. before or earlier, esp. in a book, etc. —*prep.* 5. over. 6. more in quantity or number than. 7. superior in rank or standing to. 8. of too fine a character for. 9. above all, principally. —*adj.* 10. mentioned above. —*n.* 11. that which is above.

a-bove-board (ə buv'bōrd', -bōrd'), *adv.*, *adj.* without tricks or disguise.

abp., archbishop.

abr., 1. abridged. 2. abridgment.

ab-ra-ca-dab-ra (ab'rə kə dab'rə), *n.* 1. a mystical word used as a magi-

cal means of warding off misfortune. 2. gibberish or nonsense.

a-brade (ə brād'), *v.t.*, *v.i.*, *a-brad-ed*, *a-brad-ing*. 1. to wear or scrape off. 2. to irritate. —**a-brad'er**, *n.* —**a-bra-sion** (ə brā'zhən), *n.* **A-bra-ham** (ā'brə ham', -hem), *n.* the first patriarch of the Hebrew nation.

a-bra-sive (ə brā'siv, -ziv), *n.* 1. any material used for grinding, polishing, etc., as sandpaper. —*adj.* 2. causing abrasion. 3. irritating in manner, tone, etc. —**a-bra-sive-ly**, *adv.* —**a-bra'sive-ness**, *n.*

a-breast (ə brest'), *adv.*, *adj.* 1. side by side. 2. equal to in progress or awareness.

a-bridge (ə brij'), *v.t.*, *a-bridged*, *a-bridg-ing*. 1. to shorten by omission while retaining the substance. 2. to diminish or curtail. [*< MF abreg(i)er < LL abbreviāre* to shorten] —**a-bridg'er**, *n.* —**a-bridg'ment**, *a-bridge'ment*, *n.*

a-broad (ə brōd'), *adv.* 1. in or to foreign countries. 2. in general circulation. 3. far and wide. 4. *Obs.* out of doors.

ab-ro-gate (ab'rə gāt'), *v.t.*, *-gat-ed*, *-gat-ing*. to abolish by formal means. —**ab-ro-ga'tion**, *n.* —**ab-ro-ga'tor**, *n.* —*Syn.* annul, repeal.

ab-rupt (ə brupt'), *adj.* 1. sudden and unexpected. 2. curt or brusque. 3. terminating suddenly. 4. lacking in continuity. 5. steep or precipitous. —**ab-rupt-ly**, *adv.* —**ab-rupt-ness**, *n.*

abs., 1. absolute. 2. absolutely.

ab-scess (ab'ses), *n.* a localized collection of pus in the tissues of the body. —**ab'scessed**, *adj.*

ab-scise (ab siz'), *v.i.*, *-scised*, *-scis-ing*. to separate by abscission.

ab-scis-sa (ab sis'ə), *n.*, *pl.* *-scis-sas*, *-scis-sae* (-sis'ē). (in plane Cartesian coordinates) the horizontal or x-coordinate of a point: its distance from the y-axis measured parallel to the x-axis.

ab-scis-sion (ab sizh'ən, -sish'-), *n.* 1. removal, as by surgery. 2. the normal separation of flowers, fruit, and leaves from plants.

ab-second (ab skond'), *v.i.* to depart suddenly, esp. to avoid detection. —**ab-second'er**, *n.*

ab-sence (ab'səns), *n.* 1. state of not being present. 2. a period of being away. 3. lack or want.

ab-sent (*adj.* ab'sənt; *v.* ab sent'), *adj.* 1. not present at a given time. 2. lacking or nonexistent. 3. not attentive. —*v.i.* 4. to take or keep (oneself) away. —**ab'sent-ly**, *adv.*

ab-sen-tee (ab'sən tē'), *n.* a person who is absent. —**ab'sen-tee'ism**, *n.*

ab'sentee bal'lot, the ballot for an absentee vote.

ab'sentee vote', a vote by a person who, because of illness or the like, has been permitted to vote by mail. —**ab'sentee vot'er**.

ab-sent-mind-ed (ab'sent min'did), *adj.* preoccupied so as to be unaware or forgetful of other matters.

—**ab'sent-mind'ed-ly**, *adv.* —**ab'sent-mind'ed-ness**, *n.*

ab-sinthe (ab'sinth), *n.* a green, bitter, licorice-flavored liqueur. Also, **ab'sinth**.

ab-so-lute (ab'sə lōōt'), *adj.* 1. being fully as indicated. 2. free from any restriction, limitation, or exception. 3. not comparative or relative. 4. utter or outright. 5. without constitutional restraint. 6. certain. 7. pure. 8. relatively independent in its syntactic relation to other elements. 9. pertaining to a system of units based on some primary units of length, mass, and time. —**ab-so-lute'ly**, *adv.* —**ab'so-lute'-ness**, *n.* —**Syn.** 2. total, unconditional, unqualified. 5. arbitrary, dictatorial, totalitarian.

ab'solute pitch', 1. the exact pitch of a tone in terms of vibrations per second. 2. the ability to sing or recognize the pitch of a tone by ear.

ab'solute val'ne, *Math.* the magnitude of a quantity, irrespective of sign.

ab'solute ze'ro, the lowest possible temperature that the nature of matter admits, being a hypothetical point 273° below the zero of the Celsius scale.

ab-so-lu-tion (ab'sə lōō'shən), *n.* 1. act of absolving. 2. a remission of sin made by a priest in the sacrament of penance.

ab-so-lut-ism (ab'sə lōō tiz'm), *n.* the principle or the exercise of complete and unrestricted power in government. —**ab'so-lut'ist**, *n.*, *adj.* —**ab'so-lu-tis'tic**, *adj.*

ab-solve (ab zolv', -solv'), *v.t.*, -solved, -solv-ing. 1. to free from the consequences or penalties resulting from actions. 2. a. to grant remission of sins to. b. to remit (a sin) by absolution. —**ab-solv'a-ble**, *adj.*

ab-sorb (ab sɔrb', -zɔrb'), *v.t.* 1. to suck in (a liquid). 2. to incorporate or assimilate. 3. to engross wholly. 4. to occupy (time). 5. to take in without echo, recoil, or reflection. 6. to assume (an expense). —**ab-sorb'a-ble**, *adj.* —**ab-sorb'er**, *n.* —**ab-sorb'ing**, *adj.* —**ab-sorb'ing-ly**, *adv.* —**ab-sorb-ent** (ab sɔr'bent, -zɔr'-), *adj.*

1. capable of or tending to absorb.

—*n.* 2. a thing or material that absorbs. —**ab-sorb'en-cy**, *n.*

ab-sorp-tion (ab sɔrp'shən, -zɔrp'-), *n.* 1. the process of absorbing or being absorbed. 2. deep engrossment. —**ab-sorp'tive**, *adj.*

ab-stain (ab stān'), *v.i.* to refrain voluntarily. —**ab-stain'er**, *n.* —**ab-sten-tion** (ab sten'shən), *n.*

ab-ste-mi-ous (ab stēm'ē əs), *adj.* sparing or moderate, esp. in eating and drinking.

ab-sti-nence (ab'stə nens), *n.* forbearance from any indulgence of appetite, esp. from alcoholic liquors or from certain kinds of food. —**ab'sti-nent**, *adj.*

abstr., **abstract**.

ab-tract (*adj.* ab'strakt, ab'strakt'; *n.* ab'strakt; *v.* ab'strakt'), *adj.*

1. conceived apart from any concrete realities or specific object. 2. expressing a quality or characteristic apart from any specific object or instance. 3. theoretical: *abstract science*. 4. pertaining to the nonrepresentational art styles of the 20th century. —*n.* 5. a summary of a statement, etc. 6. an abstract idea or term. —*v.t.* 7. to take away or remove. 8. to divert the attention of. 9. to summarize. 10. *Informal.* to steal. —**ab-tract'er**, *n.* —**ab'stract-ly**, *adv.* —**ab'stract-ness**, *n.*

ab-tract-ed (ab'strak'tid), *adj.* deeply engrossed. —**ab-tract'ed-ly**, *adv.*

ab'stract expres'sionism, art that produces images in or through abstract forms. —**ab'stract expres'sionist**.

ab-strac-tion (ab'strak'shən), *n.* 1. the process of abstracting or being abstracted. 2. an abstract idea or thing. 3. engrossment. 4. an abstract work of art.

ab-struse (ab'strūs'), *adj.* hard to understand or grasp. —**ab'struse-ly**, *adv.* —**ab'struse-ness**, *n.*

ab-surd (ab'sɜrd', -zɜrd'), *adj.* contrary to all reason or common sense. —**ab-surd'ly**, *adv.* —**Syn.** illogical, preposterous, ridiculous.

abt., **about**.

a-bun-dant (ə bun'dant), *adj.* 1. present in great quantity. 2. richly supplied. —**a-bun'dance**, *n.* —**a-bun'dant-ly**, *adv.*

a-buse (v. ə byōōz'; *n.* ə byōōs'), *v.*, **a-bused**, **a-bus-ing**, *n.* —*v.t.* 1. to use wrongly or improperly. 2. to mistreat or maltreat. 3. to insult. —*n.* 4. wrong or improper use. 5. coarsely insulting language. 6. maltreatment. 7. a corrupt or improper practice. —**a-bu'sive**, *adj.* —**a-bu'sive-ly**, *adv.* —**a-bu'sive-ness**, *n.*

a-but (ə but'), *v.*, **a-but-ted**, **a-but-**