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COLLEGE EDITION

The Random House THESAURUS

COLLEGE EDITION

**Random
House,
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**EDITED BY JESS STEIN
and STUART BERG FLEXNER**

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To the Reader

The *Random House Thesaurus* was compiled to help you write and speak better by helping you find the most effective words to express yourself. It will lead you to the right word for every purpose or occasion, be it in personal letters and conversation; business and professional reports, letters, and talks; or student papers and compositions. In addition, of course, if you use it frequently, or browse through it regularly, you will find that it will improve both the range and exactness of your vocabulary.

The word *thesaurus* came into English from Latin, where it meant "a storehouse of knowledge." It is, indeed, a storehouse of knowledge about words—the proper choice and use of words. Therefore, this thesaurus belongs on your desk or bookshelf right by your dictionary, because these two reference books are the essential tools for anyone who wants to speak and write with clarity, effectiveness, and individuality.

The dictionary, it has been aptly said, provides the meanings or definitions for given words, whereas the thesaurus provides you with words for given meanings. Thus, when you encounter a word new to you, or a word whose meaning you have forgotten or know only vaguely, a good dictionary, such as *The Random House College Dictionary*, is your best source of reference. On the other hand, when you have a particular meaning or thought in mind but do not know, or cannot recall, the most effective word to express it, the thesaurus is your best guide. Together, the thesaurus and the dictionary offer you ready access to the complete range and unparalleled richness of the English language.

While almost everyone knows the value of using a dictionary, many people have been frustrated or discouraged by the complicated, time-consuming procedure required to use the index or many cross references of the old-fashioned type of thesaurus. In recent years, however, editors, linguists, and lexicographers have perfected ways to organize the thesaurus in the familiar, easy-to-use alphabetical form. We have tried to make this book achieve that easy-to-use and effective form as fully as possible.

The Random House Thesaurus, then, has been planned, edited, and designed for maximum usefulness, to help you find the right word or phrase—the one with just the right shade of meaning, the right overtone, the right level of usage—instantly.

Organization of Entries

Although anyone who opens this book at random should be able to use it immediately, the following notes may be useful:

1. All main entries are in **boldface** type and are arranged in one simple alphabetical list.
2. Each of these boldfaced main entries is followed by an indication of its part of speech. Standard abbreviations are used for this purpose: *n.* for noun, *v.* for verb, *adj.* for adjective, *adv.* for adverb, *prep.* for preposition, *conj.* for conjunction, and *interj.* for interjection. When a main entry word is given with more than one part of speech, each part of speech is listed separately.
3. When a main entry word is used with more than one meaning, each meaning is preceded by a boldfaced number and, of course, has its own separate list of synonyms.
4. Each meaning is introduced by one or more example sentences. This will help you identify which meaning is meant and show you how the main entry word is used in context.
5. The synonyms listed under each meaning are generally arranged so that the most common ones, and the ones closest in meaning to the main entry word, come first. Within each list of synonyms there may be clusters of words set off by semicolons to group together separate shades of meaning or levels of use.
6. *Italicized* labels are included before some synonyms to show that a word or phrase has certain limitations in usage (such as *Informal*, *Slang*, etc.), that it is used primarily in a specific field of knowledge or endeavor (such as *Medical*, *Nautical*, etc.), or that it is still primarily regarded as foreign (such as *French*, *Latin*, etc.), though used in English.
7. When highly specialized synonyms are offered, they are usually preceded by “(variously)” to indicate that caution must be used to select the appropriate specialized word. Similarly, when very broadly applicable synonyms are offered, they are usually preceded by “(loosely)” to point out their highly general character.
8. At the end of many synonym entries there are lists of antonyms, introduced by the abbreviation *Ant.* Each of these antonym lists is preceded, when necessary, by a boldfaced number that matches the number of the related synonym list.

To those unfamiliar with a thesaurus of synonyms and antonyms, it should be pointed out that only a very small number of words in the English language are completely identical in meaning, shade of meaning, and use. Most "synonyms" are actually words that have similar or closely related meanings but are not perfect substitutes for each other under all circumstances. They often refer to different aspects or shades of meaning or uses of the same general concept, item, or idea. For example, among the synonyms of *road* are *boulevard*, *highway*, *street*, and *path*, though there are obviously very significant differences between each of these terms. Even though not exact synonyms, each should be listed in a thesaurus, since one might be the exact word you are looking for.

This project has had the benefit of many outstanding contributors who have worked with exceptional care and devotion. Eugene F. Shewmaker, Gloria Mihalyi Solomon, Robert L. Hurtgen, Dorothy Gerner Stein, Regina B. Wilson, and Keith Hollaman have contributed much to the final project. We would also like to express our appreciation to Eric Stein, Sharon Leong, and Rose M. Price. We have had the advantage of access to much of the material in *The Family Word Finder* published by Reader's Digest, for which we are very grateful. The Random House Dictionary staff has been generous with its help and guidance and has checked the manuscript for accuracy and ease of use.

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A

abandon *v.* 1 *She abandoned her child on the doorstep of the church. Abandon ship!*: desert, forsake, leave, depart from, leave behind, withdraw from, evacuate; give up, quit, relinquish, jilt, run out on, let go, cast aside, turn one's back on, forswear, abdicate, renounce, repudiate. 2 *The scientist abandoned his research for lack of funds*: discontinue, give up, drop, stop, cease, forgo, waive, discard, junk, wash one's hands of, get rid of, relinquish, forfeit, surrender, scrap. —*n.* 3 *The Gypsies danced with abandon*: unrestraint, freedom; immoderation, intemperance; recklessness, wantonness, impulsiveness, impetuosity, spontaneity; enthusiasm, gusto, élan, exuberance, spirit, dash, verve, ardor, animation.

Ant. 1 claim, take; keep, hold, possess. 2 continue, maintain. 3 restraint, control, caution, prudence; moderation, tameness, deliberation.

abandoned *adj.* 1 *The abandoned house was finally torn down*: deserted, forsaken, vacant, desolate, unoccupied; discarded, cast aside, cast away, relinquished, rejected, jilted, left behind, marooned, neglected. 2 *The pleasure-seeker led an abandoned life*: debauched, debased, dissipated, dissolute, licentious, degraded, profligate, reprobate, shameless, immoral, disreputable, sinful, wild, wicked, loose, wanton, unprincipled; impure, unchaste, lewd; irreformable, irreclaimable, incorrigible, unrepentant.

Ant. 1 occupied; well-kept, kept, claimed. 2 virtuous, reputable, respectable, upright, high-principled, worthy, elevated, healthy, conscientious; moral, sinless, pure, chaste; reformed, redeemed, penitent, regenerate.

abase *v.* *The Bible says that the proud man shall be abased*: humble, bring low, cast down; *Informal* put down, badmouth, bring down a peg, cut down to size; humiliate, disgrace, dishonor, defame, discredit, belittle, malign, vilify, denigrate, vitiate; downgrade, degrade, demean, cheapen, devalue, besmirch, debase; shame, mock, mortify.

Ant. elevate, raise, exalt, uplift, lift; dignify, honor, acclaim, praise, laud, extol; promote, upgrade, inflate.

abashed *adj.* *He was abashed at forgetting his wife's birthday*: embarrassed, ashamed, chagrined, mortified, humiliated, humbled, self-conscious, dismayed, taken aback, bewildered, confused, dumbfounded, nonplussed, disconcerted, disheartened, daunted, confounded,

fazed; shy, bashful, cowed, overawed, subdued, crushed, intimidated.

Ant. proud, pleased, elated, exalted, buoyed; confident, poised, heartened, undaunted, emboldened, reassured.

abate *v.* *The wind abated after the storm*: decrease, diminish, reduce, lessen, subside, decline, fade, fade away, recede, dwindle, moderate, mitigate, weaken, wane, ebb, curtail, slack, slacken, go down, lower, fall off, fall away, taper off, lighten, soften, quiet, quell, slow, slow down, slake off, temper, cool, blunt; ease, relieve, alleviate, assuage, pacify, soothe, allay, mollify, palliate, dull; dampen, restrain, restrict. **Ant.** increase, intensify, magnify, enhance, heighten, aggravate, amplify, grow; multiply, rise, come up, strengthen, sharpen, heat up; quicken, accelerate, hurry, speed, speed up; prolong, extend.

abbey *n.* *The monks live in their abbey in the mountains. Westminster Abbey is in London*: monastery, friary, cloister, priory, hermitage, cenoby, convent, nunnery; seminary; church, cathedral, chapel.

abbreviate *v.* *You can abbreviate the word "Mister" as "Mr."* *As time was short, he abbreviated his visit*: shorten, abridge, curtail, condense, compress, summarize, synopsisize, contract, reduce, diminish; cut, cut down, cut short, boil down, trim, clip, truncate.

Ant. lengthen, extend, elongate, stretch, stretch out, draw out; expand, enlarge, amplify, increase, inflate, augment, add to, pad out; prolong, protract; write out, write in full.

abbreviation *n.* *"Mr." is the abbreviation of "Mister."* *The current edition is an abbreviation of an originally longer work*: shortened form, short form, shortening, condensed form, reduced form, compressed form, contracted form, cut-down form; reduction, contraction, diminution, abridgment, condensation, compression, abstraction, digest, synopsis, summary, abstract, brief, lessening, trimming, curtailment, cutting, clipping, pruning.

Ant. full form, written-out form; lengthening, extending, extension, elongation, stretching, stretching out, drawing out; expansion, enlargement, amplification, increase, increasing, augmentation, prolongation.

abdicate *v.* *Edward VIII of England abdicated to marry a commoner. He abdicated his throne*: renounce, resign, vacate the throne; re-

linquish, give up, abnegate, abandon, surrender, abjure, quit, forgo, cede, waive, yield.

Ant. accede to the throne; claim, possess, usurp, assume, seize; keep.

abdomen *n.* *She tried various exercises to flatten her abdomen:* stomach, visceral cavity, venter, epigastrium; belly, tummy; gut, paunch, breadbasket, bay window, pot, pot belly.

abduct *v.* *Kidnappers abducted the child:* kidnap, carry off, make off with, run off with, steal, take away, bear off, seize.

Ant. return, bring back; free, set free; restore, relinquish, surrender.

aberration *n.* *1 The flaw in a lens that doesn't focus properly is called spherical aberration. The new rules were confusing and full of aberrations:* irregularity, deviation, exception, departure, abnormality, anomaly, incongruity, divergence, digression, aberrance, aberrancy; wandering, rambling, straying, lapse. *2 His only aberration was an occasional lapse of memory:* minor mental disorder, mental lapse, abnormality, curiosity, quirk, peculiarity, idiosyncrasy, eccentricity, unconformity, nonconformity, oddity, singularity, strangeness, distortion, mutation; illusion, delusion, self-deception, hallucination; madness, insanity, lunacy, derangement.

Ant. 1, 2 normality, regularity, uniformity, conformity. 2 sanity, soundness of mind.

abet *v.* *The criminal was aided and abetted by his brother:* encourage, support, endorse, sustain, back, give moral support to, sanction, advocate, promote, advance, uphold; urge on, goad, spur, incite, instigate; lead on, egg on; assist, help, aid, second, join with.

Ant. discourage, talk out of, dissuade, expose, denounce; deter, stop, check, hinder, impede, undermine, thwart, obstruct, balk.

abeyance *n.* *The building project will be held in abeyance until spring:* postponement, suspension, intermission, remission, deferral, adjournment, discontinuance, inaction, dormancy, latency; pause, delay, cessation, quiescence, recess, hiatus, waiting period, in a holding pattern; in cold storage, on ice, on a back burner.

Ant. continuance, continuation, continuity, ceaselessness.

abhor *v.* *Nature abhors a vacuum. She abhors snakes:* detest, hate, loathe, dislike, despise, disdain, scorn, shun, abominate, execrate; feel aversion toward, be revolted by, find repulsive, shudder at, recoil at, shrink from, regard with repugnance, view with horror, eschew, can't stand, can't stomach, be nauseated by.

Ant. love, adore, like, delight in, dote on, cherish, relish, treasure, prize, value, enjoy, admire; desire, crave, covet.

abide *v.* *1 I can't abide loud noise:* bear, stand, tolerate, put up with, endure, last, stomach, brook; suffer, submit to, accept, stand for. *2 Abide with me a while longer:* stay, remain,

tarry, linger, stop; live, reside, dwell; visit, sojourn, sit; *Slang* stick with, stick around.

Ant. 2 go, leave, quit, depart; escape, flee, fly; abandon, shun, avoid; move, migrate, journey.

abiding *adj.* *Abraham Lincoln had an abiding faith in the Union:* lasting, everlasting, enduring, eternal, unending, continuing, permanent, durable, firm, fast; changeless, unchanging, steadfast, constant, steady, unshakable, wholehearted, unquestioning, immutable, indissoluble.

Ant. temporary, passing, momentary, impermanent, ephemeral; weak, shaky, failing; changeable, fickle.

ability *n.* *A good salesman has the ability to sell anything:* capability, capacity, power, facility, faculty, aptitude, potential, potentiality, proficiency, knack, competence, qualification; skill, talent, knowhow, expertise, adeptness, adroitness, acumen; flair, genius, gift, mind for, bent.

Ant. inability, incapacity, incapability, inaptitude, incompetence, maladroitness; weakness, inadequacy, powerlessness, helplessness.

abject *adj.* *1 The old couple lived in abject poverty:* hopeless, inescapable, complete, thorough; wretched, miserable, deplorable, terrible, horrible. *2 The soldier deserted like an abject coward:* lacking courage, spiritless, cringing, groveling; contemptible, despicable, vile, base, mean, low, ignoble, sordid.

Ant. 1 hopeful; partial; dignified, honorable. 2 courageous, spirited, bold, staunch; manly, domineering, vain, arrogant, haughty, insolent; admirable, respected, esteemed, worthy.

abjure *v.* *1 Pacifism abjures the use of deadly force:* disclaim, disallow, repudiate, disavow, reject. *2 Some of the prisoners abjured their heresies and lived:* renounce, abandon, relinquish, desert, give up, forswear, recant.

Ant. maintain, embrace, swear by, uphold.

ablaze *adj.* *1 The house was completely ablaze when the fire trucks arrived:* burning, blazing, on fire, afire, conflagrant, flaming, aflame, in flames; ignited, alight; fiery, glowing. *2 The students were ablaze with enthusiasm after the coach's pep talk:* eager, excited, fervent, fervid, zealous, impassioned; feverish, flushed, intoxicated; red-hot, passionate, ardent; turned-on, hopped-up, switched-on.

able *adj.* *1 Our case was handled by two able lawyers:* skillful, proficient, capable, competent, expert, good, talented, highly qualified, accomplished, masterful, effective, efficient, adroit, adept, apt; experienced, practiced, learned. *2 The starving man was barely able to walk. We are not able to grant your request:* capable, fit, fitted, competent, having the means; equal to, adequate, qualified.

Ant. 1 unskillful, incapable, incompetent, inept, inept, inefficient, ineffective, amateurish; mediocre, indifferent, fair. 2 incapable, unfit, incompetent, inadequate, unqualified.

able-bodied *adj.* *We need four able-bodied men to move the piano:* muscular, brawny, robust, strong, vigorous, well-built, athletic, thewy, beefy, herculean, strapping, rugged, hardy, sturdy, stalwart, hearty, lusty, broad-shouldered.

Ant. weak, puny, flabby, feeble; frail, infirm.

ablution *n.* 1 *After ablutions in the river, the holy man continued on his way:* ceremonial washing, ritualistic washing; bathing, cleansing, purification. 2 *He had no time for his morning ablutions:* washing, bathing, cleaning, lavation; wash, bath.

abnegation *n.* *In a mood of abnegation, he gave up sweets and midnight snacks:* self-denial, sacrifice, renunciation, relinquishment, surrender, resignation, giving up, eschewal, forbearance, forbearing; abstinence, temperance, continence; rejection, refusal.

Ant. self-indulgence, indulgence, abandon; intemperance, incontinence; affirmation, concession.

abnormal *adj.* *That cat has an abnormal fear of birds. An abnormal amount of snow fell in October:* unnatural, atypical, unusual, irregular, aberrant, deviant, anomalous; uncommon, unconventional, exceptional, extraordinary, unexpected, unaccustomed, inordinate; strange, peculiar, rare, queer, odd, freakish, eccentric, bizarre, curious, outlandish, unheard of, grotesque, weird, monstrous, deformed.

Ant. normal, natural, typical, usual, ordinary, common; conventional, routine, regular, expected, customary, familiar, unexceptional.

abnormality *n.* *A clubfoot is an abnormality that can often be corrected by surgery:* deformity, malformation; irregularity, aberration, aberrance, anomaly, deviation, perversion; oddity, curiosity, peculiarity, idiosyncrasy, eccentricity, unconformity.

abode *n.* *The hermit's abode was a cave:* residence, place of residence, dwelling place, habitat, dwelling, habitation; house, home, living quarters, domicile, lodging, address, *Slang* pad, nest.

abolish *v.* *Prohibition was abolished in 1933:* eliminate, eradicate, erase, obliterate, extinguish, exterminate, annihilate, extirpate, terminate, end, put an end to, wipe out, stamp out, blot out, do away with, squelch, quash; repeal, revoke, annul, nullify, invalidate, declare null and void, rescind, cancel; abrogate, vitiate, set aside, repudiate.

Ant. establish, institute, introduce, create, inaugurate, build, found; support, promote, increase, sustain, continue; revive, reinstate, renew, repair, restore, reintroduce; authorize, legalize, enact.

abolition *n.* *The senator fought for abolition of the income tax:* elimination, ending, termination, eradication, dissolution, extinction, abolishment, invalidation, vitiation; repeal, annul-

ment, nullification, revocation, cancellation, recantation, retraction, rescinding, repudiation, abrogation.

Ant. establishment, institution, introduction, creation, inauguration, founding; authorization, legalization, enactment, passing; promotion; continuation; reinstatement, restoration, reintroduction.

abominable *adj.* 1 *Murder is the most abominable crime:* detestable, despicable, contemptible, reprehensible, loathsome, hateful, abhorrent, execrable, disgusting, revolting, repulsive, repugnant, repellent; odious; vile, base, wretched, heinous, ignominious, villainous, infamous, atrocious, horrid, horrible, foul, hellish, damnable, evil, cursed, accursed. 2 *The weather was abominable:* very unpleasant, disagreeable, miserable, terrible, deplorable, foul, extremely bad, unsuitable, awful, *Informal* lousy.

Ant. 1 laudable, praiseworthy, commendable, admirable, respectable, desirable, applaudable; satisfactory, gratifying, charming, enchanting, likable. 2 pleasant, agreeable, enjoyable, pleasing, delightful, good, wonderful, charming, suitable, *Informal* beautiful.

abomination *n.* 1 *The dirty streets of this city are an abomination!* abhorrence, anathema, evil, obscenity, horror, disgrace, torment, defilement, plague, affliction, annoyance, bugbear, *French* bête noire. 2 *My feeling of abomination for concentration camps has never changed:* revulsion, loathing, repugnance, disgust, detestation, hate, hatred, abhorrence, antipathy, aversion.

Ant. 1 delight, joy, pleasure, treat; benefit, blessing, boon, satisfaction, gratification. 2 love, liking, affection, fondness, relish, regard; admiration, appreciation, respect, approval, esteem.

aboriginal *adj.* *The Indians were the aboriginal people of America:* native, indigenous, original, endemic, autochthonous; earliest, first, ancient, primordial, primeval, primitive, primary, prime.

Ant. alien, foreign, immigrant, imported, exotic; late, recent, subsequent, successive, modern.

aborigine *n.* *The Australian aborigines still hunt with spears:* original inhabitant, primitive inhabitant, indigenous person; native, aboriginal.

Ant. alien, foreigner, immigrant; newcomer, late arrival, Johnny-come-lately.

abort *v.* 1 *Cows with Bang's disease often abort their calves:* miscarry, terminate the pregnancy of. 2 *The astronauts aborted the space flight when their oxygen began to run low:* terminate, end, halt, stop, call off; fail, fail to develop fully.

Ant. 1 give birth, bear, deliver. 2 carry through, see through, conclude, complete, finish; execute, perform, effect, achieve.

abortion *n.* 1 *Her pregnancy ended in an abortion:* miscarriage, termination of pregnancy. 2 *The attempt to redesign the airplane was an*

abortion: failure, unsuccessful attempt, fruitless attempt, fiasco, disaster; halting, calling off, ending, termination.

Ant. 1 childbirth, parturition, giving birth, delivery. 2 success, successful completion, realization, achievement.

abortive *adj.* *Efforts to raise the sunken ship proved abortive:* fruitless, useless, unsuccessful, unproductive, inefficacious, bootless, sterile, ineffective, profitless, unavailing, vain, ineffectual, futile, worthless, unfruitful, unprofitable, unrewarding, nonviable.

Ant. successful, fruitful, profitable, rewarding, productive.

abound *v.* *Our garden abounds with roses. Tulips abound in Holland:* teem, overflow, spill over, be flooded, be filled, have plenty of, luxuriate, be well supplied, be rich in, swarm, run wild, proliferate, superabound; exist in great numbers, be plentiful, flourish, thrive, be numerous; *Informal* gush.

Ant. lack, want, have too few, be deficient in, fall short, be scant; be in short supply.

about-face *n.* *The senator did an about-face on his support of tax cuts:* reversal, rightabout, turnaround, tergiversation, reverse, turnabout, switch, shift. *French* volte-face; change of heart, disavowal, recantation, retraction.

aboveboard *adj.* *All of his criticisms seemed fair and aboveboard:* candid, open, honest, truthful, forthright, straightforward, sincere, frank, straight, square-dealing, plain-dealing, straight-shooting, undissembling, on the up and up, square, foursquare; guileless, ingenuous, artless; blunt, direct, plain, unconcealed.

Ant. devious, roundabout, evasive, underhand.

abracadabra *n.* *You may have to use some abracadabra to get that lock to work:* hocus-pocus, mumbo-jumbo, open sesame; witchcraft, sorcery, voodoo, magic, magic spell, incantation, invocation, spell, charm, exorcism.

abrasion *n.* 1 *The abrasion on his knee soon healed:* scraped spot, scrape; scratch, lesion. 2 *Years of abrasion had worn the stones smooth:* scraping, grating, rubbing, friction, excoriation, scouring, chafing; erosion, wearing away, wearing down.

abrasive *n.* 1 *Use sandpaper or some other abrasive to remove the paint:* scraping material, grinding material, scouring material; smoothing substance. —*adj.* 2 *The speaker's abrasive remarks insulted the audience:* harsh, coarse, annoying, irritating, excoriating; rasping, grating, rough, caustic, sharp, cutting, biting, nasty, hurtful, galling, chafing.

Ant. 2 mild, soothing, healing, comforting, gentle, pleasant, agreeable.

abreast *adv., adj.* *The soldiers marched three abreast:* side by side, in a line across, in rank, aligned, in alignment.

Ant. one behind another, one after another, in single file, Indian file.

abridge *v.* 1 *The book was abridged to a more readable length:* shorten, condense, reduce, compress, digest, abbreviate, cut, cut down, scale down, pare down, trim, telescope, truncate. 2 *No one can abridge your legal rights:* restrict, limit, curtail, diminish, lessen, reduce, decrease; deprive one of, take away.

Ant. 1 expand, enlarge, lengthen, increase, extend, amplify; prolong; augment, add to, supplement. 2 increase, augment, add to.

abridgment *n.* 1 *Have you seen the new abridgment of Gibbon's Roman history?:* shortened form, condensed form, condensation, abbreviation, digest, truncation. 2 *The city council voted for an abridgment of the mayor's power:* restriction, limitation, restraint, curtailment, reduction, lessening, decrease, diminishing, diminution.

Ant. 1 lengthened version. 2 expansion, enlargement, amplification, increase, augmentation, extension, inflation.

abroad *adv.* 1 *On our trip abroad we visited relatives in England:* overseas, out of the country. 2 *It's unsafe to be abroad at night in some parts of New York City:* out of doors, outside, out, out of the house, forth, out in the open air. 3 *A thousand rumors were abroad:* in circulation, at large, making the rounds, all around, round and about; spread far and wide, rife, astir.

Ant. 1 nearby, near home; in one's native land, within the country. 2 indoors, inside, in, in the house, at home, within four walls; *French* chez soi, *German* zuhause.

abrogate *v.* *Congress must abrogate the new tax law:* abolish, cancel, terminate, put an end to, end, do away with, quash; repeal, revoke, rescind, annul, nullify, void, invalidate, set aside, override, reverse, undo, negate, dissolve, vitiate; retract, countermand, recall withdraw, repudiate, renounce, abjure; *Informal* junk, throw out.

Ant. institute, establish, create, found; enact, ratify, fix; confirm, sustain, uphold, support, sanction; continue; revive, renew.

abrupt *adj.* 1 *The car came to an abrupt stop at the barricade:* sudden, unexpected, unforeseen, unanticipated, impulsive, unlooked for, unannounced; hasty, quick, rapid, swift, instantaneous, precipitate. 2 *His abrupt reply hurt our feelings:* curt, brusque, blunt, brisk, gruff, short, crisp; discourteous, impolite, uncivil, ungracious, unceremonious, rude, rough. 3 *The cliff made an abrupt descent to the sea:* steep, sheer, sharp, precipitous.

Ant. 1 anticipated, expected, foreseen; gradual, leisurely, unhurried, deliberate, slow, easy. 2 courteous, polite, gracious, thoughtful, civil; gentle, easy. 3 gradual, smooth, easy, slow.

abscond *v.* *The thief absconded with the jewels:* flee, take flight, fly, vanish, disappear, depart hastily, leave suddenly; take off, make off, steal

off, steal away; escape, run away, run off; *Informal* skip; *Slang* split.

absence *n.* 1 *The teacher noted the student's absence:* not being present, nonattendance, nonpresence, nonappearance, absenteeism; truancy, cut. 2 *He shows an absence of initiative:* lack, unavailability, nonexistence; scarcity, deficiency, insufficiency, scantiness, want, dearth.

Ant. 1 presence, attendance, appearance. 2 existence, supply; abundance, plenty, sufficiency, adequacy, surfeit, plethora.

absent *adj.* 1 *Why were you absent from class yesterday?:* not present, nonpresent, nonattendant; away, gone, missing, out, truant. 2 *He gave her an absent look:* inattentive, unthinking, heedless, oblivious, unaware, unconscious, absent-minded, preoccupied, distracted; vacant, blank, faraway, removed, empty, vague, dreamy, musing; *Slang* out of it, tuned out, out to lunch. —*v.* 3 *Why did you absent yourself from the meeting yesterday?:* cause to be not present, fail to attend, not appear, stay away, keep away, play truant, *Informal* not show up, cut.

Ant. 1 present, in attendance, attendant. 2 attentive, thoughtful, meaningful, conscious, aware, alert; *Slang* with it, tuned in. 3 attend, appear at, show up.

absentee *n.* *There was a sharp rise in the number of absentees during the summer holidays:* truant, deserter, runaway; apostate, renegade, backslider; slacker, shirker, malingering, quitter.

absent-minded *adj.* *He's so absent-minded he's lost three bats:* forgetful, distracted, withdrawn, unheeding, unmindful, preoccupied, absent, faraway, woolgathering, oblivious, engrossed, absorbed, lost in thought, daydreaming, distraught; out of it, not with it.

Ant. attentive, alert, heedful, observant; with it, hip.

absolute *adj.* 1 *The Dalai Lama was an absolute monarch:* unrestricted, unrestrained, unlimited, unconditional, unqualified, unbounded; complete, supreme, pure, full, *Informal* out-and-out. 2 *His story was an absolute lie:* complete, pure, total, definite, thorough, unqualified, unrestricted, unadulterated, unmitigated, utter, sheer, unlimited; perfect, consummate, outright; *Informal* out-and-out, through and through. 3 *The police have absolute proof of his guilt:* positive, definite, conclusive, sheer, certain, sure, decisive; real, genuine, reliable, unqualified, unmitigated, unquestionable, undeniable, confirmed, infallible, unequivocal.

Ant. 1 restricted, restrained, conditional, limited, provisional, qualified; constitutional. 2, 3 qualified, limited, partial, conditional, provisional, questionable, dubious, unconfirmed, equivocal; not complete, incomplete.

absolutely *adv.* 1 *I am absolutely sure he was the one who held up the bank:* entirely, com-

pletely, thoroughly, wholly, utterly, definitely, positively; unconditionally, without limitation. 2 *Good nutrition is absolutely essential for your health:* positively, certainly, utterly, definitely, decidedly, truly, really, indeed; undoubtedly, unquestionably, unequivocally, indubitably.

Ant. 1 somewhat, fairly, reasonably, approximately. 2 probably, conditionally.

absolution *n.* *The pilgrims came to the shrine, seeking absolution for their sins:* pardon, amnesty, forgiveness, mercy, deliverance, vindication, quittance, exculpation, exoneration, remission, acquittal, clearance, dispensation, indulgence, liberation, release.

Ant. blame, censure, condemnation, conviction, prosecution.

absolve *v.* 1 *The priest absolved their sins:* pardon, forgive, shrive, declare removed. 2 *The jury absolved him of the crime:* acquit, find not guilty, judge innocent; exonerate, vindicate, exculpate, clear. 3 *I was absolved of having to pay my partner's debts:* release, free, set free, excuse from, exempt, discharge, loose, deliver.

Ant. 1 accuse, blame; condemn. 2 convict, charge, find guilty. 3 obligate, oblige, bind, hold to, be held responsible.

absorb *v.* 1 *The sponge absorbed all the spilled water:* soak up, take up, suck up, swallow up, drink in, sponge up. 2 *Can the students absorb this lesson in an hour?:* take in completely, assimilate, incorporate, digest, ingest; *Informal* drink in, make part of oneself. 3 *I was so absorbed in this book that I didn't hear you:* engross, immerse, occupy, preoccupy, consume, engage, enwrap; arrest, rivet, fix, fascinate.

Ant. 1 exude, eject, cast off, cast out, disperse, dispel; drip. 2 give out, disperse, impart. 3 unoccupy; distract.

absorbent *adj.* *Blotting paper and terry cloth are extremely absorbent materials:* permeable, spongy, penetrable, absorptive, porous, thirsty, pervious, bibulous, osmotic, assimilative.

Ant. moistureproof, waterproof, water-repellent, impermeable, watertight, impenetrable.

absorbing *adj.* *Boys find Tom Sawyer an absorbing book:* fascinating, interesting, engrossing, captivating, intriguing, engaging; exciting, thrilling.

abstain *v.* *Vegetarians abstain from eating meat:* refrain, desist, forbear, eschew, avoid, forgo, hold back, decline, refuse; deny oneself, resist.

Ant. partake of, indulge in, yield to, surrender, give in to; overdo, abandon oneself to, make a slave of oneself to.

abstemious *adj.* *His abstemious habits allowed him few pleasures:* abstinent, ascetic, austere, temperate, continent, nonindulgent, teetotal, self-denying, sparing, self-disciplined, abstentious.

Ant. self-indulgent, abandoned, undisciplined, uncontrolled, hedonistic, profligate, licentious, unrestrained, immoderate.

abstention *n.* *Vegetarians are known for their abstention from eating meat:* abstaining, non-indulgence, refraining, desisting, holding back, forbearance, eschewing, eschewal, avoidance, refusal; nonparticipation, denying oneself, resistance.

Ant. indulgence, abandon.

abstinence *n.* *I admire Quakers for their abstinence:* nonindulgence, self-denial, self-restraint, self-control, discipline, forbearance, abstention; (variously) temperance, sobriety; continence, chastity.

Ant. indulgence, self-indulgence, abandon, excess; (variously) intemperance, dissipation; wantonness; gorging, gluttony; greediness, covetousness, graspingness, acquisitiveness.

abstract *adj.* *1 Abstract ideas may lead to concrete plans:* theoretical, theoretic, conceptual, unapplied, general, generalized, imaginary, visionary, intangible, hypothetical, indefinite, non-specific, remote, impractical; subtle, profound, abstruse, obscure, esoteric, recondite, arcane, intellectual. —*n.* *2 Please write an abstract of this scientific article:* summary, synopsis, précis, résumé, brief, recapitulation; digest, extract, condensation, abridgment; outline. —*v.* *3 This machine abstracts salt from sea water:* extract, remove, withdraw, take out, take; separate, dissociate, isolate. *4 Please abstract this scientific article:* summarize, synopsisize; digest, condense, abridge, compress; outline.

Ant. 1 concrete, obvious, specific, clear, uncomplicated, material; practical; factual, definite, real, actual. 2 amplification, enlargement, expansion. 3 add, inject; mix, unite, combine.

abstruse *adj.* *Mathematics can be an abstruse subject:* hard to understand, obscure, incomprehensible, unfathomable, complex, complicated, puzzling, perplexing, arcane, enigmatic; profound, deep, subtle, abstract, remote, esoteric, recondite.

Ant. simple, direct, easy, obvious, straightforward, clear, uncomplicated; superficial, light, amusing, entertaining.

absurd *adj.* *It's absurd to believe that the earth is flat. The clown wore an absurd costume:* unreasonable, illogical, irrational, preposterous, senseless; ridiculous, foolish, inane, silly, stupid, ludicrous, idiotic, nonsensical, asinine, comical, farcical; funny, laughable; *Informal* crazy, wild; *Slang* screwy, kooky.

Ant. reasonable, logical, sensible, rational, sound; smart, intelligent, sagacious, judicious, prudent, wise.

absurdity *n.* *His story of being kidnapped by little green men was sheer absurdity. The absurdities of the playful little monkeys amused us:* nonsense, unreasonableness, unbelievability, idiocy, inanity, asininity, irrationality, ridicu-

lousness, drivel; falsehood, fallacy, delusion; foolishness, buffoonery, comicalness, silliness.

Ant. truth; reasonableness, credibility; wisdom, sagacity.

abundance *n.* *There was such an abundance of food that we all overate:* ample amount, great supply, full measure, profusion, sufficiency; excess, more than enough, plenty, surplus, glut, plenitude, repletion, plethora, surfeit, cornucopia, copiousness; heap, flood, bounty, wealth, richness.

Ant. scarcity, deficiency; lack, dearth, scantiness, sparseness, paucity.

abundant *adj.* *There is abundant water despite the dry spell:* ample, sufficient, enough, plenty, more than enough, profuse, copious, prolific, bounteous, bountiful, abounding, lavish, rich, luxuriant, brimming, teeming; rife, replete, galore.

Ant. insufficient, scant, sparse, meager, uncommon, scarce, skimpy, sparing.

abuse *v.* *1 A good workman doesn't abuse his tools. Stop abusing that dog!* misuse, use improperly, exploit, take advantage of, ill-use; mistreat, maltreat, ill-treat; harm, hurt, injure, torment, excoriate; impose upon. *2 The old shrew abused everyone in a loud voice:* insult, speak ill of, scold, berate, carp at, rail at, revile, vilify, castigate; speak harshly to, reproach, criticize, censure, bawl out, upbraid; belittle, deride, malign; ridicule, slur, denigrate; curse, slander, *Slang* badmouth, denounce, defame, disparage, inveigh against. —*n.* *3 Borrowing money is sometimes an abuse of friendship:* misuse, unfair use, improper use, misapplication, misemployment; exploitation, imposition. *4 Child abuse is a punishable offense:* mistreatment, maltreatment, oppression, ill-use, torment, cruelty; injury, harming, beating, assault. *5 I'll listen to no more of your abuse!* insulting language, insults, harsh language, torments; berating, railing, invective, tirade; reproach, criticism, tongue-lashing, censure, scolding, upbraiding, castigation, diatribe, carping; belittling, sneering, disparagement, slander, ridicule, derision, vilification; cursing, defamatory remarks, defamation.

Ant. 1 respect, protect, care for. 2 praise, speak well of, compliment, extol, laud, flatter, sweet-talk, acclaim. 5 praise, compliment, acclaim; flattery.

abusive *adj.* *1 Please don't use such abusive language:* insulting, harsh, vituperative, mean railing, acrimonious; offensive, obscene, foul-mouthed, vile, rude, gross; derogatory, disparaging, defamatory, scurrilous, deprecatory, castigating, critical, censorious, slanderous, reviling, maligning, vilifying, scornful. *2 He was arrested for his abusive treatment of the dog:* cruel, improper; harmful, hurtful, injurious.

Ant. 1 laudatory, flattering, complimentary,

praising, extolling, mild, courteous, respectful, polite. 2 kind; just.

about *v.* *There is a fence where the two yards about meet* end to end, meet, join, adjoin, touch; border, be contiguous, be adjacent to, be next to.

abysmal *adj.* *The serfs were maintained in a state of abysmal ignorance:* thorough, endless, unending, complete; bottomless, boundless, incredible, unbelievable, unimaginable, unfathomable, deep, profound, enormous, extreme, vast, stupendous, immense.

abyss *n.* *One slip on this mountain and you'll fall into the abyss:* bottomless pit, vast chasm, crevasse, fissure, gorge, gully; void, depth, nadir, gulf.

Ant. elevation, height; mountain, hill, mount; summit, zenith.

academic *adj.* 1 *He remembered his academic days fondly:* school, scholastic, educational; collegiate, university. 2 *A good historian must have an academic mind:* scholarly, studious; learned, educated, erudite; pedantic, bookish. 3 *One brother went to an academic high school, the other to a trade school:* general, liberal-arts, scholastic, college-preparatory; nontechnical, nonvocational, nonspecialized. 4 *How to talk to a Martian is rather an academic question:* theoretical, hypothetical, abstract, moot, speculative, conjectural, suppositional, presumptive; not practical, remote, ivory-towered.

Ant. 1 nonscholarly, nonstudious, unpedantic; uneducated, unschooled, untaught, unlettered, unlearned. 3 technical, vocational, trade, specialized. 4 practical, realistic, immediate, common-sense; everyday, functional, ordinary, matter-of-course, matter-of-fact.

accede *v.* 1 *The mayor acceded to the citizens' demands:* consent to, approve, agree to, grant, assent to, accept, concur with; concede, permit, yield to, submit to, defer to, acquiesce, surrender to; subscribe to, abide by, comply with, conform to; admit, acknowledge, endorse. 2 *When the king dies, the crown prince will accede to the throne:* succeed to, inherit.

Ant. 1 reject, refuse, disallow, spurn, decline, veto; oppose, object to, resist, protest, disapprove, demur; shy away from, balk at.

accelerate *v.* 1 *The car suddenly accelerated:* to go faster, to move faster, speed up, pick up speed, quicken pace. 2 *Fertilizer will accelerate the growth of these tomato plants:* speed up, hurry, quicken, hasten, rush, step up, augment, spur; expedite, further, promote, advance, precipitate, facilitate, intensify, impel.

Ant. 1, 2 slow, slow down, decelerate, brake. 2 delay, retard, slacken, hinder, impede, hamper, obstruct.

accent *n.* 1 *The word "woman" has its accent on the first syllable:* stress, emphasis; primary accent, primary stress. 2 *She speaks with a German accent:* pronunciation, enunciation, artic-

ulation, inflection, manner of speaking, twang, drawl; intonation, tone, modulation, tonality. 3 *The room was all white with a few red accents:* hint, touch, embellishment, detail; ornament, adornment, trimming. —*v.* 4 *Accent the word "woman" on the first syllable:* stress, emphasize, accentuate, punctuate, give prominence to; underline, underscore, feature, spotlight, highlight.

accept *v.* 1 *She accepted his invitation to dance:* take something offered, receive willingly, receive with favor. 2 *I accept your apology.* *The police accepted his story as true:* agree to, consent to, grant as satisfactory, accede to, go along with, assent to, receive with approval, acknowledge; *Slang* swallow, buy, fall for. 3 *The boy accepted full responsibility for breaking the window:* assume, undertake, bear, acknowledge, admit, avow.

Ant. 1, 2 refuse, reject, decline, spurn, turn down, resist. 3 disown, repudiate; deny, disavow, disacknowledge.

acceptable *adj.* 1 *The lawyers found the contract acceptable:* capable of being accepted, agreeable, proper, suitable, admissible, satisfactory; worthy, good. 2 *His grades are acceptable, but he's not on the honor roll:* adequate, suitable, passable, tolerable, allowable, fair; barely satisfactory, *Informal* so-so.

Ant. 1, 2 unacceptable, unsatisfactory, unsuitable, inadmissible, substandard.

acceptance *n.* 1 *His acceptance of bribes led to his arrest:* accepting, taking, receiving; receipt, reception. 2 *The employer gave his acceptance to the worker's suggestions:* approval, consent, agreement, permission, concession, acquiescence; *Informal* O.K., stamp of approval; sanction, endorsement, affirmation. 3 *It took years for Einstein's theory to gain acceptance:* approval, approbation, belief, recognition, acknowledgment; affirmation, confirmation.

Ant. 1, 2 rejection, refusal, repudiation; disapproval. 3 rejection; disavowal.

accepted *adj.* *Camels are an accepted means of transportation in the desert:* agreed upon, approved, acceptable, confirmed, acknowledged, established; common, normal, usual, conventional, standard, regular, customary, universal, time-honored.

access *n.* 1 *How could the thief have gained access to the vault? The senator has access to the President:* admittance; entrance, entrée. 2 *Switzerland has access to the sea via the Rhine River:* a means of reaching, an approach, passage, passageway, gateway, entrance, entry; road, path, way, avenue, course.

accessible *adj.* 1 *A doctor must have a telephone accessible at all times:* available, ready, at hand, on hand, handy, within reach, nearby; obtainable, attainable, reachable, possible. 2 *The principal was always accessible to the students:* available, approachable, reachable.