

牛津高阶 英语词典

OXFORD ADVANCED LEARNER'S DICTIONARY

第7版
7th Edition

• The world's best-selling learner's dictionary

商務印書館

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牛津
高阶英语词典
Oxford
Advanced Learner's Dictionary

第七版·英语版

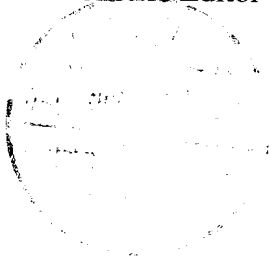
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The Commercial Press has made some changes to the original work in order to make this edition more appropriate for Chinese readers.

商务印书馆对原书进行了个别修改,使其更符合中国读者的需要。

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序

我与《牛津高阶英语词典》(The Advanced Learner's Dictionary)结缘于20世纪70年代初。当时,刚刚进入外国语学院英语系读书的我收到了一份来自我父亲的珍贵礼物——《牛津高阶英语词典》。我的父亲毕业于40年代初西南联大的外文系,作为驻外使节的他当然清楚国内一个英语专业的学生最需要哪本工具书。那时,《牛津高阶英语词典》还没有牛津大学出版社和国内出版社合作出版的双语版。虽然,词典中的英文解释对一个大学一年级的学生来说还有不少困难,但是,那是一个书籍极其匮乏的年代,更不用说是进口的原版书了,那本牛津词典着实招来了同学中不少羡慕的眼光。

80年代初我去美国读书时,为了买到一套《牛津英语大词典》(The Oxford English Dictionary,略称为OED)的缩印本(将正常的6个页面印到一张纸上),我加入了美国的“每月一书读书俱乐部”(Book of the Month Club)。后来,按其规定在那里购买的四本书都是可有可无的,只有这套两卷本的缩印本是我的至宝。我常对我的学生讲,OED是英语专业——特别是英美文学专业——学生必须学会使用的一本工具书;如果说个人拥有这样一套词典太“奢侈”的话,那么,每个大学的英文系资料室却必须备有这套工具书,以便教师和学生随时查阅。

然而,对于广大国内的英语学习者来说,更熟悉、更实用的则是《牛津高阶英语词典》,因为这本英语学习词典是以非母语学习者对象,在编写过程中充分考虑了读者将英语作为第二语言学习时的困难和需要,以更加详尽的解释、真实的例句和典型的用法,使学习者全面认识英语的规律和变化,以便最终达到运用自如的目的。

《牛津高阶英语词典》的第一版诞生于1948年,当时的英文书名是The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English,在第五版于1995年出版时,书名中的“of Current English”这三个词就被删去了。截止第七版于2005年在英国推出时,《牛津高阶英语词典》已印刷了291次,累积发行量已超过了3000万册。

第七版《牛津高阶英语词典》共收入了18.3万个词条、短语和释义,远远高于一般的学习词典。与第六版相比,第七版新增了2000多个新词。其中不少新词都与计算机、网络和信息技术有关,如:computerate(熟悉电脑操作),menu bar(菜单栏),message board(留言板),Multimedia Messaging Service(多媒体信息服务),blog(博客),active list(联系人名单),computational linguistics(计算机语言学)等。

有的新词与最新的商业运作有联系,如:offshoring(离岸外包业务),bait-and-switch(诱售法)。还有一些反映了文艺界、出版界的新说法,如:backlot(外景场地),backlist(存书目录)。

该词典对absurdism一词提供的英文解释是:the belief that humans exist in a world with no purpose or order.这一释义与荒诞派戏剧的领军人物、法国剧作家尤内斯库的定义非常接近,讲出了传统的中文译文“荒诞”所无法涵盖的内容。从收入了bird flu,life coach这几个词就可以看出:第七版将第六版中的“新词补编”部分以及近年出现的新词也全部收入了词典正文,进一步方便读者查阅。

新增词条Bakke decision则带有一定的百科知识性质,它所涉及的是美国最高法院于1978年对白人青年艾伦·贝克的诉讼所做出的裁决。贝克因为比他考分低的黑人学生被录取,起诉学校不录取自己违法。最后,最高法院裁决贝克应被录取,但是,在录取时考虑考生的种族因素并不违法。词典的释义没有提及美国的一个相关政策,即affirmative action(在词典中解释为positive discrimination)。这条由肯尼迪总统于1961年签署的法令中首次提及的政策,试图

给美国的少数种裔学生在申请美国的知名大学时相对多的照顾,这也是贝克未能被录取的主要原因。所以,1978年美国的最高法院做出 Bakke decision 时,并没有否定 affirmative action。

第七版的新意还体现在新增加的释义和例证之上。仅以第七版《牛津高阶英语词典》的第一页为例:在词条“AAA”下面增加了“(in the UK) Amateur Athletic Association (英国业余体育协会)”的释义。在词条“abandon”下面增加了“to leave a thing or place, especially because it is impossible or dangerous to stay (舍弃、丢弃、离弃)”的释义,同时增添了几个新的例句:“They had to abandon their lands to the invading forces.”(他们不得不丢弃国土,让侵略者占领);“They abandoned the match because of rain.”(他们因雨中止了比赛);“She abandoned hope of any reconciliation.”(她不再抱有和解的希望)。在词条“abacus”下面增加了“a frame with small balls which slide along wires. It is used as a tool or toy for counting”(算盘)的释义。

作为一本学习词典,第七版《牛津高阶英语词典》对使用者非常友好。词典中提供的8.5万个例句,7000个同义词和反义词对中国学习者来说都很有帮助。同时,词典中为2000个词目配备的素描式或黑白照片插图和32页彩色插图使词典的释义变得更加直观。词典最后的96页附录,也为英语学习者提供了有关英语语法、语音、论文写作、书信、文学评论术语、甚至电子邮件和手机短信常用缩略形式的快速查阅方式。附录中的“牛津3000常用词表”对于中国英语学习者,特别是初学者来说更是不可多得的“路标”,因为它清楚地告诉中国学生在英语词汇学习中应该从哪里起步。

《牛津高阶英语词典》从1948年第一版问世到第七版于2005年推出,57年间,六经修订,惠泽世界各地3000万余学子,这一事实足以说明《牛津高阶英语词典》在世界范围内的影响。现在,商务印书馆和牛津大学出版社在中国联手推出其英文版,相信这本新的词典很快会成为中国广大英语学习者争相购买的一本新的工具书。

何其莘
北京外国语大学教授、博导
2007年5月于北京

Contents

<i>inside front cover</i>	Abbreviations, symbols and labels used in the dictionary
	Key to verb patterns
ix	Foreword
xi	Key to dictionary entries
xiv	Numbers and symbols

1–1780 **The Dictionary**

Maps

Map 1	The earth and the solar system
Map 2	The world
Map 3	The British Isles
Map 4	Canada, the United States of America and the Caribbean
Map 5	Australia and New Zealand

Colour topic pages

R1	Cars
R2	Boats
R4	Computing
R6	Musical instruments
R8	Aircraft
R9	Buildings
R10	Cooking
R12	Fruit and vegetables
R14	Clothes
R16	Homes
R17	Houses
R18	Health
R20	The animal kingdom
R22	Sports
R24	Extreme sports

Reference section

R26	Grammar
R50	Study pages
R58	Other reference
R99	The Oxford 3000™
R118	Pronunciation and phonetic symbols in the dictionary

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Foreword

Professor Henry Widdowson

It happens that the publication of this, the seventh edition of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, comes 250 years after the appearance of the first comprehensive dictionary of the English language, compiled by Samuel Johnson. Much has changed since then. The English that Johnson described in 1755 was relatively well defined, still essentially the national property of the British. Since then, it has dispersed and diversified, has been adopted and adapted as an international means of communication by communities all over the globe. English is now the name given to an immensely diverse variety of different usages. This obviously poses a problem of selection for the dictionary maker: which words are to be included in a dictionary, and thus granted recognition as more centrally or essentially English than the words that are left out?

Johnson did not have to deal with such diversity, but he too was exercised with this question. In his *Plan of an English Dictionary*, published in 1747, he considers which words it is proper to include in his dictionary; whether 'terms of particular professions', for example, were eligible, particularly since many of them had been derived from other languages. 'Of such words,' he says, 'all are not equally to be considered as parts of our language, for some of them are naturalized and incorporated, but others still continue aliens...'. Which words are deemed to be sufficiently naturalized or incorporated to count as 'parts of our language', 'real' or proper English, and thus worthy of inclusion in a dictionary of the language, remains, of course, a controversial matter. Interestingly enough, even for Johnson the status of a word in the language was not the only, nor indeed the most important consideration. For being alien did not itself disqualify words from inclusion: in a remark which has considerable current resonance he adds: 'some seem necessary to be retained, because the purchaser of the dictionary will expect to find them'. And, crucially, the expectations that people have of a dictionary are based on **what they want to use it for**. What Johnson says of his own dictionary would apply very aptly to *OALD*: 'The value of a work must be estimated by its use: It is not enough that a dictionary delights the critic, unless at the same time it instructs the learner...'

Instructing the learner is what *OALD* is all about. Its value, as with any learner's dictionary, must be estimated by its use, that it is to say its **usefulness** for learning. This is something that recent developments in language description might distract us into forgetting. Computers have now revolutionized the collection and analysis of language data, and the information about words that Johnson spent years of dedicated drudgery to compile is now made available in a matter of seconds: information in precise detail about word frequencies, for example, common patterns of collocation, and so on. Now that all these new descriptive facts are at our disposal, it seems self-evident that they should be recorded in the dictionary. They are, after all, 'naturalized', 'parts of the language', properties of actually occurring, 'real' English. But if the value of the work is to be estimated by its use, we need to consider how far this information about usage is relevant to the learner's purposes.

The importance of words and meanings for the learner of English cannot simply be measured by their frequency in current native-speaker usage. For one thing, infrequent words are always likely to make an unexpected appearance, and to pose problems of receptive understanding. And there are words which may not show up as being of very common occurrence overall, but which are prominent in certain domains of use which learners will need to engage with, or have become current in communities of users of English as an international language. We also need to bear in mind that a corpus of contemporary written texts will only tell us about what has been currently **written**, not what is currently **read**. Learners of English will often need to read texts which are not recent, where they will encounter words of literary or outdated usage. They will, reasonably enough, expect to find infrequent words of this kind in a dictionary that claims to be designed to meet their needs. They will find words of this kind in this edition of *OALD*.

Descriptive facts have to be related to pedagogic factors. This applies not only to what information about words and meanings it is appropriate to include, but also how it is to be presented. *OALD*, like other dictionaries,

deals with word meanings in two ways: by **explanation** and by **exemplification**. In a learner's dictionary especially, it is obviously necessary to explain the meaning of a word by defining it in simple terms. One way of doing this is to compile a restricted list of words which is custom-made for defining purposes. *OALD* makes use of such a defining vocabulary (the *Oxford 3000*). Many of these, of course, are high-frequency words that occur across a wide range of usage. But again, frequency is not the only criterion. The *Oxford 3000* is not simply a list of the 3000 most frequent words of English. It includes words which would fall outside such a list, but which are useful for learning as well as relevant for defining purposes. It is again usefulness that is the deciding factor.

Although explanations make use of words of high frequency in naturally occurring usage, they themselves bear little resemblance to what naturally occurs, and there is no reason why they should. With exemplification, however, it is precisely such usage that has to be exemplified. The convention in the past was to cite authentic examples of written language, especially that produced by the 'best' writers. In recent dictionaries, **authenticity** remains a prime consideration, but it is no longer linked with the authority of prestigious written texts. Corpus analysis now makes it possible to draw authentic examples from a vast range of attested contemporary usage. A concordance will display hundreds or thousands of them to choose from. The question is whether there is any particular reason for choosing one rather than another.

A corpus is an abundant source of **samples** of English usage. If they are to function as **examples**, however, then we need to ask just what it is they are intended to be examples of. If this is to be of the meaning that has been previously explained in the entry, they cannot just be picked out of the corpus at random. This is because the context in which the sample of usage originally occurs will usually make it unnecessary to spell the meaning out. Samples

of the language, isolated from their natural context of use, will not normally exemplify word meanings, but will simply show one instance, among innumerable others, of the word's actual occurrence, which, in itself, is of little if any help to the learner.

It is not only the previously explained meaning of the word that we might want a sample to exemplify, however, but also its collocational tendencies, how it commonly co-occurs with others. Again, similar problems arise. If learners were presented with a range of samples displayed in a concordance, they might be able to infer what these tendencies are by effectively converting samples to examples. But they clearly cannot do this on the basis of only a sample or two in a dictionary entry.

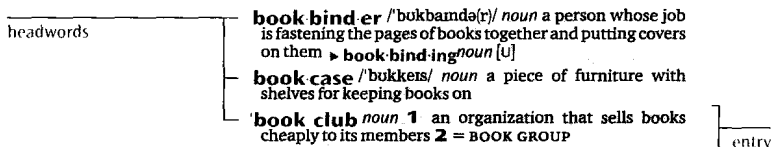
In view of these obvious difficulties, rather than insist on the use of authentic samples, it would seem to make more sense for a learner's dictionary to follow the quite different principle of **pedagogic appropriateness** and to provide, as *OALD* does, examples that are designed for the express purpose of exemplification. This does not mean that any less account is taken of the findings of corpus descriptions, but only that they are taken into account in ways which make them more accessible and relevant to learners.

Again it is the needs of the learner that are given priority, and this is what, from its early beginnings, has always marked *OALD* as distinctive. Although, in a way, all dictionaries of English date back to 1755, *OALD* has its own unique origins in a dictionary published by Oxford University Press in 1948, with A S Hornby as its principal editor. It bore the title: *A Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Though the title has changed, *OALD* follows the same basic principle: how much of the English now current in the world is to be included, and how it is to be presented, will depend on who the dictionary is designed for. *OALD* is not just another dictionary of current English, but essentially a **learner's** dictionary. And this makes all the difference.

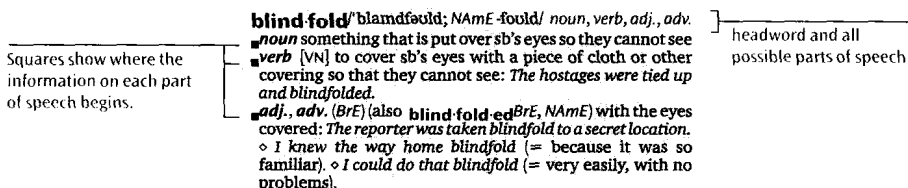
Key to dictionary entries

Finding the word

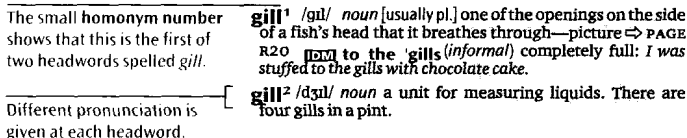
Information in the dictionary is given in **entries**, arranged in alphabetical order of **headwords**. **Compound words** are in separate entries, also arranged alphabetically.



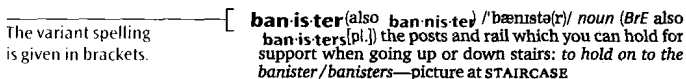
Some headwords can have more than one part of speech.



There are some words in English that have the same spelling as each other but different pronunciations.



There are also some words in English that have more than one possible spelling, and both spellings are acceptable. Information about these words is given at the most frequent spelling.



At the entry for the less frequent spelling a cross-reference directs you to the main entry.

ban-nis-ter = BANISTER

American English forms and irregular forms of verbs are treated in the same way.

Some words that are **derivatives** of other words do not have their own entry in the dictionary because they can be easily understood from the meaning of the word from which they are derived (the root word). They are given in the same entry as the root word, in a specially marked section.

be-lated /bɪ'leɪtɪd/ *adj.* coming or happening late: *a belated birthday present* ▶ **be-lated-ly** *adv.*

The blue triangle shows where the derivative section starts.

You can find **idioms** and **phrasal verbs** in separate sections, marked with special symbols.

fetch 0-**rw** /fetʃ/ verb

1 (especially BrE) to go to where sb/sth is and bring them/it back: [VN] to fetch help / a doctor ◊ The inhabitants have to walk a mile to fetch water. ◊ She's gone to fetch the kids from school. ◊ [VNN] Could you fetch me my bag? **2** [VN] to be sold for a particular price **3** [V] **SELL FOR:** The painting is expected to fetch \$10 000 at auction **4** [V] **fetch and 'carry (for sb)** to do a lot of little jobs for sb as if you were their servant **PHRV**, fetch 'up (informal, especially BrE) to arrive some

idioms section with symbol **IDM** (see page R 49)

phrasal verbs section with symbol **PHRV** (see pages R 40–1)

Finding the meaning

Some words have very long entries. It is not usually necessary to read the whole entry from the beginning, if you already know something about the general meaning that you are looking for.

spin 0-**rw** /spɪn/ verb, noun

■ **verb** {spin-ning, spun, spun /spʌn/}

- **TURN ROUND QUICKLY 1 ~ (sth) (round / around)** to turn round and round quickly; to make sth do this: [V] The plane was spinning out of control. ◊ a spinning ice skater ◊ My head is spinning (= I feel as if my head is going around and I can't balance). ◊ [VN] to spin a ball / coin / wheel **2 ~ (round / around)** to turn round quickly once; to make sb do this: [V] He spun around to face her. [also VN]
- **MAKE THREAD 3 ~ (A into B) | ~ (B from A)** to make thread from wool, cotton, silk, etc. by twisting it: [V] She sat by the window spinning. ◊ [VN] to spin and knit wool ◊ spinning silk into thread
- **OF SPIDER / SILKWORM 4** [VN] to produce thread from its body to make a web or COCOON: a spider spinning a web

Meanings that are closely related share the same short cut.

Short cuts show the context or general meaning.

Understanding and using the word

spin 0-**rw** /spɪn/ verb, noun

■ **verb** {spin-ning, spun, spun /spʌn/}

Words printed in larger type and with a 0-**rw** symbol are part of the Oxford 3000 list of important words (see pages R 99–113).

aardvark /'ɑ:dvɑ:k; NAmE 'ɑ:rdvɑ:k/ noun an animal from southern Africa that has a long nose and tongue and that eats insects

pronunciation, with American pronunciation where it is different (see pages R 118–9).

Stress marks show stress on compounds.

baby grand noun a small GRAND PIANO

Irregular forms of verbs, with their pronunciations. Irregular plurals of nouns are also shown.

cling /klɪŋ/ verb {clung, clung /kɪŋŋ/} [V] **1 ~ (on) to sb/sth** | ~ on / together to hold on tightly to sb/sth: survivors clinging to a raft ◊ She clung on to her baby. ◊ Cling on tight! ◊ They clung together, shivering with cold. ⇨ note at **HOLD 2 ~ (to sth)** to stick to sth: a dress that clings (= fits closely and shows the shape of your body) ◊ The wet shirt clung to his chest. **3 ~ (to sb)** (usually disapproving) to stay close to sb, especially because you need them emotionally: After her

prepositions, adverbs and structures that can be used with this word

examples of use in italic type

label giving information about usage (see inside front cover)

comparatives and superlatives of adjectives

hearty /'hɑ:ti; NAmE 'hɑ:ti/ adj., noun

■ **adj.** heartier, heartiest **1** [usually before noun] showing friendly feelings for sb: a hearty welcome **2** (sometimes disapproving) loud, cheerful and full of energy: a hearty and boisterous fellow ◊ a hearty voice **3** [only before noun] (of a

information on use of adjectives (see page R 47)

dock /dɒk; NAmE dɔ:k/ *noun, verb*

noun 1 [C] a part of a port where ships are repaired, or where goods are put onto or taken off them: *dock workers*
 ◦ *The ship was in dock.*—see also DRY DOCK 2 docks [pl.] a group of docks in a port and the buildings around them that are used for repairing ships, storing goods, etc.
3 [C] (NAmE) = JETTY **4** [C] (NAmE) a raised platform for loading vehicles or trains **5** [C] the part of a court where the person who has been accused of a crime stands or sits during a trial: *He's been in the dock* (= on trial for a crime) *several times already.* **6** [U] a wild plant of northern Europe with large thick leaves that can be rubbed on skin that has been stung by NETTLES to make it less painful: *dock leaves*
verb 1 if a ship docks or you dock a ship, it sails into a HARBOUR and stays there: [V] *The ferry is expected to dock at 6.* [also VN] **2** if two SPACECRAFT dock, or are docked, they are joined together in space: [VN] *Next year, a technology module will be docked on the space station.* [also V]

information on different types of noun (see pages R42–3)

word used in definition that is not in the Oxford 3000

fixed form of noun

common phrase in bold type in example (see page R48)

verb pattern codes (see pages R36–9)

Build your vocabulary

The dictionary also contains a lot of information that will help you increase your vocabulary and use the language productively.

stable ɒ-/ˈsteɪbəl/ *adj., noun, verb*

adj. 1 firmly fixed; not likely to move, change or fail
SYN STeady: *stable prices* ◦ *a stable relationship* ◦ *This ladder doesn't seem very stable.* ◦ *The patient's condition is stable* (= it is not getting worse).
2 (of a person) calm and reasonable; not easily upset **SYN** BALANCED: *Mentally, she is not very stable.* **3** (technical) (of a substance) staying in the same chemical or ATOMIC state: *chemically stable* **OPP** UNSTABLE ▶ **stably**/ˈsteɪbli/

WORD FAMILY
stable *adj* (≠ unstable)
stability *n.* (≠ instability)
stabilize *v.*

Special symbols show synonyms and opposites.

Word families show words related to the headword.

Notes help you choose the right word, and also help with difficult grammar points. They are all listed on pages R93–6.

SYNONYMS

pay

foot the bill • **pick up the bill/tab**

These words all mean to give sb money for work they have done or goods they have supplied.

pay to give sb money for work, goods, services, etc.: *I'll pay for the tickets.* ◦ *Her parents paid for her to go to Canada.* ◦ *She pays £200 a week for this apartment.*
 ◦ *I'm paid \$100 a day.*

foot the bill (rather informal) to pay the cost of sth:
Once again it will be the taxpayer who has to foot the bill.

pick up the bill/tab (rather informal) to pay the cost of sth:
The company will pick up the tab for your hotel room.

PATTERNS AND COLLOCATIONS

- to pay/foot the bill/pick up the bill/tab for sth
- to have to pay/foot the bill/pick up the bill/tab

words listed in order of how frequent they are

Cross-references refer you to information in other parts of the dictionary.

bear ɒ-/beə(r); NAmE ˈber/ *verb, noun*

noun 1 a heavy wild animal with thick fur and sharp CLAWS (= pointed parts on the ends of its feet). There are many types of bear: *a black bear*—see also GRIZZLY BEAR, POLAR BEAR, TEDDY BEAR **2** (finance) a person who sells shares in a company, etc., hoping to buy them back later at a lower price—compare BULL—see also BEARISH **IDM** **like a bear with a sore head** (informal) bad-tempered or in a bad-tempered way

Compare refers you to a word with a contrasting meaning.

See also refers you to a word with a similar or related meaning.

Numbers

- 1040 form** /,ten 'fɔ:ti fɔ:m; *NAmE* 'fɔ:rti fɔ:rm/ *noun* (in the US) an official document in which you give details of the amount of money that you have earned so that the government can calculate how much tax you have to pay
- 12** /twelv/ *noun* (in Britain) a label that is given to a film/movie to show that it can be watched legally only by people who are at least twelve years old; a film/movie that has this label: *I can take the kids too – it's a 12.*
- 1471** /'wʌn fɔ: sevn wʌn; *NAmE* fɔ:r/ (in Britain) the telephone number you can use to find out the telephone number of the person who called you most recently, and the time the call was made
- 15** /,fif'ti:n/ *noun* (in Britain) a label that is given to a film/movie to show that it can be watched legally only by people who are at least fifteen years old; a film/movie that has this label
- 18** /,eɪ'ti:n/ *noun* (in Britain) a label that is given to a film/movie to show that it can be watched legally only by people who are at least eighteen years old; a film/movie that has this label
- 18-wheeler** /,eɪtɪ:n 'wi:lə(r)/ *noun* (*NAmE*) a very large truck with nine wheels on each side
- 20/20 vision** /,twenti twenti 'vi:ʒn/ *noun* the ability to see perfectly without using glasses or CONTACT LENSES
- 2.1** /,tu: 'wʌn/ *noun* the upper level of the second highest standard of degree given by a British or an Australian university: *I got a 2.1*
- 2.2** /,tu: 'tu:/ *noun* the lower level of the second highest standard of degree given by a British or an Australian university

Symbols

- = equals; is the same as
- ≠ does not equal; is different from
- ≈ is approximately equal to
- > is more than
- < is less than
- ∵ because
- ∴ therefore
- ✓ correct
- ✗ incorrect
- * used to mark important points (called an **ASTERISK**)
- & and (called an **AMPERSAND**)
- # (*BrE*) **HASH** (*NAmE* **POUND SIGN**) the symbol used for example on telephones, and in addresses in the US
- " **DITTO**; the same word as above

- 24-hour clock** /,twenti fɔ:r əvə 'klɒk; *NAmE* əvər 'klɔ:k/ *noun* the system of using twenty four numbers to talk about the hours of the day, instead of dividing it into two units of twelve hours
- 24/7** /,twenti fɔ: 'sevn; *NAmE* fɔ:x/ *adv.* (*informal*) twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (used to mean 'all the time'): *She's with me all the time—24/7.*
- 3-D** (also**three-D**) /,θri: 'di:/ *noun* [U] the quality of having, or appearing to have, length, width and depth: *These glasses allow you to see the film in 3-D.*
- 35mm** /,θɜ:tifav 'mɪlɪmɪtə(r); *NAmE* ,θɜ:rti- / *noun* the size of film that is usually used in cameras for taking photographs and making films/movies
- 4 × 4** /,fɔ: baɪ 'fɔ:; *NAmE* ,fɔ:r baɪ 'fɔ:r/ *noun* a vehicle with a system in which power is applied to all four wheels, making it easier to control
- the \$64,000 question** /,sɪkstɪ fɔ: ,θauznd ,dɒlə 'kwɛstʃən; *NAmE* fɔ:r ,dɑ:lər/ *noun* (*informal*) the thing that people most want to know, or that is most important: *It's a clever plan, but the sixty-four thousand dollar question is: will it work?*
- 911** /,nɪn wʌn 'wʌn/ the telephone number used in the US to call the police, fire or ambulance services in an emergency: (*NAmE*) *Call 911.*
- 99** /,nɑ:mti 'nɑ:m/ *noun* (*BrE*) an ice cream in a cone with a stick of chocolate in the top
- 999** /,nɪn nɑ:m 'nɑ:m/ the telephone number used in Britain to call the police, fire or ambulance services in an emergency: (*BrE*) *Dial 999.*

- @ at
- ☹ (on an envelope) care of. You address a letter to a person 'care of' sb else when the place you are sending it to is not their permanent home.
- £ pound sterling
- \$ dollar
- € euro
- © copyright
- ⓘ information
- Ⓟ parking
- ♂ male
- ♀ female
- ♻ used on the packaging of products to show that they are made from recycled materials (= that have been used once then treated so that they can be used again), or to show that they can be recycled after use

A a

A /eɪ/ *noun, symbol, abbr.*

- **noun** (also **a**) (pl. **As**, **A's**, **a's** /eɪz/) **1** [C, U] the first letter of the English alphabet: 'Apple' begins with (an) **A**/'A'. **2** **A** [C, U] (music) the 6th note in the SCALE of C MAJOR **3** [C, U] the highest mark/grade that a student can get for a piece of work or course of study: *She got (an) A in/for Biology.* ◊ *He had straight A's* (= nothing but A's) *all through high school.* **4** **A** [U] used to represent the first of two or more possibilities: *Shall we go for plan A or plan B?* **5** **A** [U] used to represent a person, for example in an imagined situation or to hide their identity: *Assume A knows B is guilty.*—see also **A-FRAME**, **A LEVEL**, **A-ROAD** **IDM** **from A to B** from one place to another: *For me a car is just a means of getting from A to B.* **from A to Z** including everything there is to know about sth: *He knew his subject from A to Z.*
- **symbol** **1** used in Britain before a number to refer to a particular important road: *the A34 to Newbury* **2** used (but not in the US) before numbers which show standard METRIC sizes of paper: *a sheet of A4 paper* (= 297×210mm) ◊ **A3** (= 420×297mm) ◊ **A5** (= 210×148mm)
- **abbr.** (in writing) **AMP(s)**

a 0w /ə; strong form eɪ/ (also **an** /ən; strong form æn/) *indefinite article*

HEP The form **a** is used before consonant sounds and the form **an** before vowel sounds. When saying abbreviations like 'FM' or 'UN', use **a** or **an** according to how the first letter is said. For example, **F** is a consonant, but begins with the sound /e/ and so you say: *an FM radio*. **U** is a vowel but begins with /j/ and so you say: *a UN declaration*. **1** used before countable or singular nouns referring to people or things that have not already been mentioned: *a man/horse/unit* ◊ *an aunt/egg/hour/x-ray* ◊ *I can only carry two at a time.* ◊ *There's a visitor for you.* ◊ *She's a friend of my father's* (= one of my father's friends). **2** used before uncountable nouns when these have an adjective in front of them, or phrase following them: *a good knowledge of French* ◊ *a sadness that won't go away* **3** any; every: *A lion is a dangerous animal.* **4** used to show that sb/sth is a member of a group or profession: *Their new car's a BMW.* ◊ *She's a Buddhist.* ◊ *He's a teacher.* ◊ *Is that a Monet* (= a painting by Monet)? **5** used in front of two nouns that are seen as a single unit: *a knife and fork* **6** used instead of *one* before some numbers: *A thousand people were there.* **7** used when talking about prices, quantities and rates **EXM** **PER**: *They cost 50p a kilo.* ◊ *I can type 50 words a minute.* ◊ *He was driving at 50 miles an hour.* **8** a person like sb: *She's a little Hitler.* **9** used before sb's name to show that the speaker does not know the person: *There's a Mrs Green to see you.* **10** used before the names of days of the week to talk about one particular day: *She died on a Tuesday.*

a- /eɪ/ *prefix* (in nouns, adjectives and adverbs) not; without: *atheist* ◊ *atypical* ◊ *asexually*

A1 *adj.* (informal) very good: *The car was in A1 condition.*

A2 (level) /eɪ 'tu: levəl/ *noun* [C, U] a British exam usually taken in Year 13 of school or college (= the final year) when students are aged 18. Students must first have studied a subject at AS level before they can take an A2 exam. Together AS and A2 level exams form the A-level qualification, which is needed for entrance to universities: *A2 exams* ◊ *Students will normally take three A2 subjects.* ◊ *He's doing an A2 (level) in History.* ◊ *More than 20 subjects are on offer at A2 level at our college.*

AA /eɪ 'eɪ/ *abbr.* **1** (usually the **AA**) Automobile Association (a British organization which provides services for car owners) **2** ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

AAA /eɪ eɪ 'eɪ/ *abbr.* **1** American Automobile Association (an American organization which provides services for car owners) **2** (in the UK) Amateur Athletic Association

A & E /eɪ and 'i:/ *abbr.* ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY

A and P /eɪ and 'pi:/ *abbr.* the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company (a US company that has food shops/stores in all the states of the US)

A & R /eɪ and 'ɑ:(r)/ *abbr.* artists and repertoire (= the department in a record company that is responsible for finding new singers and bands and getting them to sign a contract with the company)

aardvark /'ɑ:dvɑ:k; NAmE 'ɑ:rdvɑ:rk/ *noun* an animal from southern Africa that has a long nose and tongue and that eats insects

aargh /ɑ:/; NAmE ɑ:r/ *exclamation* used to express fear, anger, or some other strong emotion: *Aargh—get that cat off the table!*

aback /ə'bæk/ *adv.* **IDM** **be taken a back (by sb/sth)** to be shocked or surprised by sb/sth: *She was completely taken aback by his anger.*—see also **TAKE SB ABACK** → **note at SURPRISE**

aba-cus /'æbəkəs/ *noun* (pl. **aba-cuses** /-kəsɪz/) a frame with small balls which slide along wires. It is used as a tool or toy for counting.

abaft /ə'ba:ft; NAmE ə'bæft/ *adv.* (technical) in or behind the STERN (= back end) of a ship

aba-lone /æbə'ləʊni; NAmE 'lɒl-/ *noun* [C, U] a SHELL-FISH that can be eaten and whose shell contains MOTHER-OF-PEARL

abandon 0w /ə'bændən/ *verb, noun*

■ **verb** [VN] **1** ~ **sb** (to **sth**) to leave sb, especially sb you are responsible for, with no intention of returning: *The baby had been abandoned by its mother.* ◊ *The study showed a deep fear among the elderly of being abandoned to the care of strangers.* **2** ~ **sth** (to **sb/sth**) to leave a thing or place, especially because it is impossible or dangerous to stay **EXM** **LEAVE**: *Snow forced many drivers to abandon their vehicles.* ◊ *They had to abandon their lands to the invading forces.* ◊ *He gave the order to abandon ship* (= to leave the ship because it was sinking). **3** to stop supporting or helping sb; to stop believing in sth: *The country abandoned its political leaders after the war.* ◊ *By 1930 he had abandoned his Marxist principles.* **4** to stop doing sth, especially before it is finished; to stop having sth: *They abandoned the match because of rain.* ◊ *She abandoned hope of any reconciliation.* **5** ~ **yourself** to **sth** (literary) to feel an emotion so strongly that you can feel nothing else: *He abandoned himself to despair.*

■ **noun** [U] (formal) an uncontrolled way of behaving that shows that sb does not care what other people think: *He signed cheques with careless abandon.* **IDM** see **GAY adj.**

abandoned 0w /ə'bændənd/ *adj.*

1 left and no longer wanted, used or needed: *an abandoned car/house* ◊ *The child was found abandoned but unharmed.* **2** (of people or their behaviour) wild; not following accepted standards

abandon-ment /ə'bændənmənt/ *noun* [U] (formal)

1 the act of leaving a person, thing or place with no intention of returning **2** the act of giving up an idea or stopping an activity with no intention of returning to it: *the government's abandonment of its new economic policy*

abase /ə'beɪs/ *verb* [VN] ~ **yourself** (formal) to act in a way that shows that you accept sb's power over you ▶ **abase-ment noun** [U]

abashed /ə'bæʃt/ *adj.* [not before noun] embarrassed and ashamed because of sth that you have done **EXM** **UN-ABASHED**

abate /ə'beɪt/ *verb* (formal) to become less strong; to make sth less strong: [V] *The storm showed no signs of abating.* ◊ [VN] *Steps are to be taken to abate pollution.* ▶ **abate-ment noun** [U]

A

ab-at-toir /æbətwa:(r)/ *noun* (BrE) = SLAUGHTERHOUSE

abaya /ə'beɪjə; NAmE ə'barjə/ *noun* a full-length piece of clothing worn over other clothes by Arab men or women

abba /'Abə/ (also **appa** /'Apə/) *noun* (IndE) (especially as a form of address) a father

ab-bess /'æbəs/ *noun* a woman who is the head of a CONVENT

abbey /'æbi/ *noun* a large church together with a group of buildings in which MONKS or NUNS live or lived in the past: Westminster Abbey *o* a ruined abbey

abbot /'æbət/ *noun* a man who is the head of a MONASTERY or an ABBEY

ab-bre-viate /ə'brɪvi:ət/ *verb* [VN] [usually passive] ~ **sth** (to **sth**) to make a word, phrase or name shorter by leaving out letters or using only the first letter of each word **SYN** SHORTEN: the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (usually abbreviated to JPL) ▶ **abbreviated** *adj.*: Where appropriate, abbreviated forms are used.

ab-bre-viation /ə'brɪvi:əʃn/ *noun* 1 [C] ~ (of/for **sth**) a short form of a word, etc.: What's the abbreviation for 'Saint'? 2 [U] the process of abbreviating **sth**

ABC /eɪ bi: 'si:/ *noun, abbr.*

noun [sing.] (BrE) (NAmE ABCs [pl.]) 1 all the letters of the alphabet, especially as they are learnt by children: Do you know your ABC? 2 the basic facts about a subject: the ABC of gardening **IDIOM** SEE EASY

abbr. American Broadcasting Company (a large national American television company)

ab-di-cate /'æbdɪkeɪt/ *verb* 1 to give up the position of being king or queen: [V] He abdicated in favour of his son. *o* [VN] She was forced to abdicate the throne of Spain. 2 [VN] ~ responsibility/your responsibilities to fail or refuse to perform a duty ▶ **ab-di-ca-tion** /'æbdɪkeɪʃn/ *noun* [U, C]

ab-do-men /'æbdəmən/ *noun* 1 the part of the body below the chest that contains the stomach, BOWELS, etc. 2 the end part of an insect's body that is attached to its THORAX—picture *o* PAGE R21

ab-dom-inal /'æbdəmɪnəl/ *adj., noun*

adj. [only before noun] (anatomy) relating to or connected with the abdomen: abdominal pains

noun **abdominals** (also informal **abs**) [pl.] the muscles of the abdomen

ab-duct /'æbdʌkt/ *verb* [VN] to take sb away illegally, especially using force **SYN** KIDNAP ▶ **ab-duc-tion** /'æbdʌkʃn/ *noun* [U, C]

ab-duct-ee /'æbdʌk'ti:/ *noun* a person who has been abducted

ab-duct-or /'æbdʌktə(r)/ *noun* 1 a person who abducts sb 2 (also **abductor muscle**) (anatomy) a muscle that moves a body part away from the middle of the body or from another part—compare ADDUCTOR

abed /'æbed/ *adv.* (old use) in bed

Aberdeen Angus /'æbədi:n 'æŋɡəs; NAmE 'æbər-/ *noun* a breed of cow that is black, has no horns and is used for its meat

Aber-do-nian /'æbə'dəʊniən; NAmE 'æbər'dou-/ *noun* a person from Aberdeen in Scotland ▶ **Aber-do-nian** *adj.*

ab-er-rant /'æbərənt/ *adj.* (formal) not usual or not socially acceptable: aberrant behaviour

ab-er-ra-tion /'æbərə'ʃn/ *noun* [C, U] (formal) a fact, an action or a way of behaving that is not usual, and that may be unacceptable

abet /'æbet/ *verb* (-tʃ) [VN] to help or encourage sb to do sth wrong: He was abetted in the deception by his wife. **IDIOM** SEE AID V.

abey-ance /'əbeɪəns/ *noun* [U] **IDIOM** in abeyance (formal) not being used, or being stopped for a period of time

ABH /eɪ bi: 'ɛɪtʃ/ *abbr.* (BrE, law) ACTUAL BODILY HARM

abhor /ə'bhɔ:(r)/ *verb* (-rʃ) [VN] (not used in the progressive tenses) (formal) to hate sth, for example a way of

behaving or thinking, especially for moral reasons

SYN DETEST, LOATHE

ab-hor-rence /əb'hɔ:rəns; NAmE 'hɔ:r-; 'hɑ:r-/ *noun* [U, sing.] (formal) a feeling of strong hatred, especially for moral reasons

ab-hor-rent /əb'hɔ:rənt; NAmE 'hɔ:r-; 'hɑ:r-/ *adj.* (formal) ~ (to sb) causing hatred, especially for moral reasons **SYN** REPUGNANT: Racism is abhorrent to a civilized society.

abide /ə'baɪd/ *verb* (abided abided **HELP** in sense 2 **abode** is also used for the past tense and past participle. 1 [VN] **can't/couldn't** ~ **sb/sth** to dislike sb/sth so much that you hate having to be with or deal with them **SYN** BEAR, STAND: I can't abide people with no sense of humour. *o* He couldn't abide the thought of being cooped up in an office. 2 [V + *adv./prep.*] (old use or formal) to stay or live in a place: May joy and peace abide in us all. **IDIOM** 'abide by sth to accept and act according to a law, an agreement, etc.: You'll have to abide by the rules of the club. *o* We will abide by their decision.

abid-ing /ə'baɪdɪŋ/ *adj.* (formal) (of a feeling or belief) lasting for a long time and not changing

ability /ə'biləti/ *noun* (pl. -ies) 1 [sing.] ~ to do sth the fact that sb/sth is able to do sth: The system has the ability to run more than one program at the same time. *o* Everyone has the right to good medical care regardless of their ability to pay. *o* A gentle form of exercise will increase your ability to relax. **OPP** INABILITY 2 [C, U] a level of skill or intelligence: Almost everyone has some musical ability. *o* He was a man of extraordinary abilities. *o* students of mixed abilities *o* A woman of her ability will easily find a job. *o* I try to do my job to the best of my ability (= as well as I can).

-ability /-ə'bɪləti/ *ABLE*

ab ini-tio /æb 'ɪnɪʃiəʊ; NAmE -oʊ/ *adv., adj.* (from Latin, law or formal)

adv. from the beginning: The agreement was declared void ab initio.

adj. starting from the beginning: the ab initio design of a new car

abi-ot-ic /ə'baɪə'tɪk; NAmE 'a:ɪtɪk/ *adj.* (technical) not involving biology or living things: abiotic processes

ab-ject /'æbdʒekt/ *adj.* (usually before noun) (formal) 1 terrible and without hope: abject poverty/misery/failure 2 without any pride or respect for yourself: an abject apology ▶ **ab-ject** /ə'dʒekt/ *adv.*

ab-ject-ly /'æbdʒə'tli/; NAmE 'æb'dʒɔ:l/ *verb* [VN] (formal) to promise publicly that you will give up or reject a belief or a way of behaving **SYN** RENOUNCE

ab-la-tion /ə'blæʃn/ *noun* [U] (geology) the loss of material from a large mass of ice, snow or rock as a result of the action of the sun, wind or rain

ab-la-tive /'æblətɪv/ *noun* (grammar) (in some languages) the form that a noun, a pronoun or an adjective can take to show, for example, who or what sth is done by or where sth comes from—compare ACCUSATIVE, DATIVE, GENITIVE, NOMINATIVE, VOCATIVE ▶ **ab-la-tive** *adj.*

ablaze /'æbleɪz/ *adj.* [not before noun] 1 burning quickly and strongly: The whole building was soon ablaze. *o* Cars and buses were set ablaze during the riot. 2 ~ (with sth) full of bright colours or light: The trees were ablaze with the colours of autumn. *o* There were lights still ablaze as they drove up to the house. 3 ~ (with sth) full of strong emotion or excitement: He turned to her, his eyes ablaze with anger.

able /eɪ'bl/ *etbl/ adj.*

1 ~ to do sth (used as a modal verb) to have the skill, intelligence, opportunity, etc. needed to do sth: You must be able to speak French for this job. *o* A viral illness left her barely able to walk. *o* I didn't feel able to disagree with him. *o* Will you be able to come? **OPP** UNABLE *o* note at CAN 1 2 (**able** /'eɪblə(r), **ables** /'eɪblɪz/)

WORD FAMILY
able *adj.* (≠ unable)
ability *n.* (≠ inability)
disabled *adj.*
disability *n.*

intelligent; good at sth: *the ablest student in the class* ◊ *We aim to help the less able in society to lead an independent life.*—see also **ABLE**

-able, -ible *suffix* (in adjectives) **1** that can or must be: *calculable* ◊ *taxable* **2** having the quality of: *fashionable* ◊ *comfortable* ◊ *changeable* ► **-ability, -ibility** (in nouns): *capability* ◊ *responsibility* ► **-ably, -ibly** (in adverbs): *noticeably* ◊ *incredibly*

able-bodied *adj.* physically healthy, fit and strong in contrast to sb who is weak or disabled

able-ism /'eɪblɪzəm/ *noun* [U] unfair treatment of disabled people by giving jobs or other advantages to **ABLE-BODIED** people

able seaman *noun* a sailor of lower rank in the British navy

ab-lu-tions /ə'bluːʒnz/ *noun* [pl.] (*formal* or *humorous*) the act of washing yourself

ably /'eɪblɪ/ *adv.* skilfully and well: *We were ably assisted by a team of volunteers.*—see also **ABLE** (2)

ABM /,et bi 'em/ *noun* (*CanE*) automated banking machine; a machine inside or outside a bank, in a shopping centre, etc. from which you can get money at any time of day by putting in a special card

ab-neg-ation /æbni'geɪʃn/ *noun* [U] (*formal*) the act of not allowing yourself to have sth that you want; the act of rejecting sth ► **ab-neg-ate** /'æbni'geɪt/ *verb* [VN]

ab-normal /æb'nɔːml/; *NAME* 'nɔːrml/ *adj.* different from what is usual or expected, especially in a way that is worrying, harmful or not wanted: *abnormal levels of sugar in the blood* ◊ *They thought his behaviour was abnormal.* **OPP** **NORMAL** ► **ab-nor-mally** /æb'nɔːmli/; *NAME* 'nɔːrml-/ *adv.* *abnormally high blood pressure*

ab-nor-mal-ity /æb'nɔːmələti/; *NAME* 'nɔːr'm-/ *noun* [pl. -ies] [C, U] a feature or characteristic in a person's body or behaviour that is not usual and may be harmful, worrying or cause illness: *abnormalities of the heart* ◊ *congenital/foetal abnormality*

Abo /'æbəʊ/; *NAME* 'æbəʊ/ *noun* (pl **Abos**) (*AustralE, taboo, informal*) an extremely offensive word for an Aboriginal

aboard /ə'boːd/; *NAME* ə'boːrɔːd/ *adv., prep.* on or onto a ship, plane, bus or train **SYN** ON BOARD: *We went aboard.* ◊ *He was already aboard the plane.* ◊ *The plane crashed killing all 157 passengers aboard.* ◊ **All aboard!** (= the bus, boat, etc. is leaving soon) ◊ **Welcome aboard!** (= used to welcome passengers or a person joining a new organization, etc.)

abode /ə'boʊd/; *NAME* ə'boʊd/ *noun* [usually sing.] (*formal* or *humorous*) the place where sb lives: *homeless people of no fixed abode* (= with no permanent home) ◊ *You are most welcome to my humble abode.*—see also **ABIDEV., RIGHT OF ABODE**

abol-ish /ə'boʊlɪʃ/; *NAME* ə'boːlɪ-/ *verb* [VN] to officially end a law, a system or an institution: *This tax should be abolished.*

abo-li-tion /ə'boʊlɪʃn/ *noun* [U] the ending of a law, a system or an institution: *the abolition of slavery*

abo-li-tion-ist /ə'boʊlɪʃnɪst/ *noun* a person who is in favour of the abolition of sth

'A-bomb *noun* = **ATOM BOMB**

abom-in-able /ə'boʊnməbl/; *NAME* ə'boːmɪ-/ *adj.* extremely unpleasant and causing disgust **SYN** **APPALLING, DISGUSTING**: *The judge described the attack as an abominable crime.* ◊ *We were served the most abominable coffee.*

► **abom-in-ably** /ə'boʊnməbli/; *NAME* ə'boːmɪ-/ *adv.* *She treated him abominably.*

A, bominable 'Snowman *noun* = **YETI**

abom-in-ate /ə'boʊmɪneɪt/; *NAME* ə'boːmɪ-/ *verb* [VN] (not used in the progressive tenses) (*formal*) to feel hatred or disgust for sth/sb

abom-in-ation /ə'boʊmɪneɪʃn/; *NAME* ə'boːmɪ-/ *noun* (*formal*) a thing that causes disgust and hatred, or is considered extremely offensive

ab-or-ig-inal /ə'boːrɪdʒənəl/ *adj., noun*

adj. **1** (usually **Aboriginal**) relating to the original people living in Australia: *the issue of Aboriginal land rights* **2** relating to the original people, animals, etc. of a place and to a period of time before Europeans arrived: *the aboriginal peoples of Canada* ◊ *aboriginal art/culture*

noun (usually **Aboriginal**) a member of a race of people who were the original people living in a country, especially Australia—see also **KOORI**

ab-or-ig-ine /ə'boːrɪdʒəni/ *noun* **1** a member of a race of people who were the original people living in a country **2** **Aborigine** a member of the race of people who were the original people of Australia—see also **KOORI**

ab-ort /ə'boːt/; *NAME* ə'boːrt/ *verb* **1** [VN] to end a **PREGNANCY** early in order to prevent a baby from developing and being born alive: *to abort a child/pregnancy/foetus* **2** [V] (*technical*) to give birth to a child or young animal too early for it to survive: *The virus can cause pregnant animals to abort.*—see also **MISCARRY** **3** [often passive] to end or cause sth to end before it has been completed, especially because it is likely to fail: [VN] *We had no option but to abort the mission.* ◊ [V] (*computing*) *If the wrong password is given the program aborts.*

ab-ort-ion /ə'boːʃn/; *NAME* ə'boːrʃn/ *noun* **1** [U] the deliberate ending of a **PREGNANCY** at an early stage: *to support/oppose abortion* ◊ *a woman's right to abortion* ◊ *abortion laws* ◊ *I've always been anti-abortion.* **2** [C] a medical operation to end a **PREGNANCY** at an early stage: *She decided to have an abortion.* **SYN** **TERMINATION**—compare **MISCARRIAGE**

ab-ort-ion-ist /ə'boːʃnɪst/; *NAME* ə'boːrʃ-/ *noun* a person who performs abortions, especially illegally

ab-ort-ive /ə'boːtɪv/; *NAME* ə'boːrtɪv/ *adj.* (*formal*) (of an action) not successful; failed **SYN** **UNSUCCESSFUL**: *an abortive military coup* ◊ *abortive attempts to divert the course of the river*

ab-ound /ə'baʊnd/ *verb* [V] to exist in great numbers or quantities: *Stories about his travels abound.* **PHRV**

a bound with/in sth to have sth in great numbers or quantities: *The lakes abound with fish.*—see also **ABUNDANCE, ABUNDANT**

about **01** /ə'baʊt/ *adv., prep., adj.*

adv. **1** a little more or less than; a little before or after **SYN** **APPROXIMATELY**: *It costs about \$10.* ◊ *They waited (for) about an hour.* ◊ *He arrived (at) about ten.* **2** nearly; very close to: *I'm just about ready.* ◊ *This is about the best we can hope for.* **3** (*especially BrE*) in many directions; here and there: *The children were rushing about in the garden.*

4 (*especially BrE*) in no particular order; in various places: *Her books were lying about on the floor.* **5** (*especially BrE*) doing nothing in particular: *People were standing about in the road.* **6** (*especially BrE*) able to be found in a place: *There was nobody about.* ◊ *There's a lot of flu about.* **7** (*technical* or *formal*) facing the opposite direction: *He brought the ship about.* ⇒ note at **AROUND** **IDM** **that's**

about **all** **that's** **about** **it** used to say that you have finished telling sb about sth and there is nothing to add: *'Anything else?' 'No, that's about it for now.'*—more at **JUST** **adv., OUT** **adv.**

prep. **1** on the subject of sb/sth; in connection with sb/sth: *a book about flowers* ◊ *Tell me all about it.* ◊ *What's she so angry about?* ◊ *There's something strange about him.* ◊ *I don't know what you're on about* (= talking about). ◊ *There's nothing you can do about it now.* **2** used to describe the purpose or an aspect of sth: *Movies are all about making money these days.* ◊ *What was all that about?* (= what was the reason for what has just happened?) **3** busy with sth; doing sth: *Everywhere people were going about their daily business.* ◊ *And while you're about it ...* (= while you're doing that) **4** (*especially BrE*) in many directions in a place; here and there: *We wandered about the town for an hour or so.* ◊ *He looked about the room.* **5** (*especially BrE*) in various parts of a place; here and there: *The papers were strewn about the room.* **6** (*especially BrE*) next to a place or person; in the area

A

mentioned: *She's somewhere about the office.* 7 (literary) surrounding sb/sth: *She wore a shawl about her shoulders.*

IDIOM **how/what about ... ?** 1 used when asking for information about sb/sth: *How about Ruth? Have you heard from her?* ◊ *I'm having fish. What about you?* 2 used to make a suggestion: *How about going for a walk?* ◊ *What about a break?*

adj. **IDIOM** **be about to do sth** to be close to doing sth; to be going to do sth very soon: *I was just about to ask you the same thing.* **not be about to do sth** to not be willing to do sth; to not intend to do sth: *I've never done any cooking and I'm not about to start now.*

a bout·turn (BrE) (also **a bout·face** NAmE, BrE) *noun* [sing.] a complete change of opinion, plan or behaviour: *The government did an about-turn over nuclear energy.*

above **0** *prep.*, *adv.*, *adj.*

prep. 1 at or to a higher place or position than sb/sth: *The water came above our knees.* ◊ *We were flying above the clouds.* ◊ *the people in the apartment above mine* ◊ *A captain in the navy ranks above a captain in the army.* ◊ *They finished the year six places above their local rivals.* 2 more than sth; greater in number, level or age than sb/sth: *Inflation is above 6%.* ◊ *Temperatures have been above average.* ◊ *We cannot accept children above the age of 10.* 3 of greater importance or of higher quality than sb/sth: *I rate her above most other players of her age.* 4 too good or too honest to do sth: *She's not above lying when it suits her.* ◊ *He's above suspicion* (= he is completely trusted). 5 (of a sound) louder or clearer than another sound: *I couldn't hear her above the noise of the traffic.* **IDIOM** **above 'all** most important of all; especially: *Above all, keep in touch.*

a'bove yourself (disapproving) having too high an opinion of yourself—more at **OVER** *prep.*

adv. 1 at or to a higher place: *Put it on the shelf above.* ◊ *Seen from above the cars looked tiny.* ◊ *They were acting on instructions from above* (= from sb in a higher position of authority). 2 greater in number, level or age: *increases of 5% and above* ◊ *A score of 70 or above will get you an 'A'.* ◊ *children aged 12 and above* 3 earlier in sth written or printed: *As was stated above ...* ◊ *See above, page 97.*

adj. [only before noun] mentioned or printed previously in a letter, book, etc.: *Please write to us at the above address.*

► **the above** *noun* [sing.+ sing./pl. v.]: *Please notify us if the above is not correct.* ◊ *All the above* (= people mentioned above) *have passed the exam.*

WHICH WORD?

above · over

Above and over can both be used to describe a position higher than something: *They built a new room above/over the garage.* When you are talking about movement from one side of something to the other, you can only use **over**: *They jumped over the stream.* **Over** can also mean 'covering': *He put a blanket over the sleeping child.*

Above and over can also mean 'more than'. **Above** is used in relation to a minimum level or a fixed point: *2000 feet above sea level* ◊ *Temperatures will not rise above zero tonight.* **Over** is used with numbers, ages, money and time: *He's over 50.* ◊ *It costs over £100.* ◊ *We waited over 2 hours.*

a,bove 'board *adj.*, *adv.* legal and honest; in a legal and honest way: *Don't worry; the deal was completely above board.* **IDIOM** If card players keep their hands above the table (the board), other players can see what they are doing.

a,bove-mentioned *adj.* [only before noun] mentioned or named earlier in the same letter, book, etc.

abra-ca-dabra /æbrəkeɪ'dæbrə/ *exclamation* a word that people say when they do a magic trick, in order to make it successful

ab·rade /ə'breɪd/ *verb* [VN] (technical) to rub the surface of sth, such as rock or skin, and damage it or make it rough

ab·ra·sion /ə'breɪʒn/ *noun* (technical) 1 [C] a damaged area of the skin where it has been rubbed against sth hard and rough: *He suffered cuts and abrasions to the face.* 2 [U] damage to a surface caused by rubbing sth very hard against it: *Diamonds have extreme resistance to abrasion.*

ab·ra·sive /ə'breɪsɪv/ *adj.*, *noun*

adj. 1 an abrasive substance is rough and can be used to clean a surface or to make it smooth: *abrasive kitchen cleaners* 2 (of a person or their manner) rude and unkind; acting in a way that may hurt other people's feelings

► **ab·ra·sive·ness** *noun* [U]

noun a substance used for cleaning surfaces or for making them smooth

ab·reast /ə'breɪst/ *adv.* ~ (of sb/sth) next to sb/sth and facing the same way: *cycling two abreast* ◊ *A police car drew abreast of us and signalled us to stop.* **IDIOM** **keep abreast of sth** to make sure that you know all the most recent facts about a subject: *It is almost impossible to keep abreast of all the latest developments in computing.*

ab·ridge /ə'brɪdʒ/ *verb* [VN] to make a book, play, etc. shorter by leaving parts out ► **abridged** *adj.*: *an abridged edition* / *version* **OPP** UNABRIDGED **abridge·ment** (also **abridgment**) *noun* [U, C]

abroad **0** *adv.* (especially BrE)

1 in or to a foreign country: *to be/go/travel/live abroad* ◊ *She worked abroad for a year.* ◊ *imports of cheap food from abroad* ◊ *He was famous, both at home and abroad* (= in his own country and in other countries). 2 (formal) being talked about or felt by many people: *There was news abroad that a change was coming.* 3 (old use) outside; outdoors

ab·ro·gate /ə'brəɡeɪt/ *verb* [VN] (technical) to officially end a law, an agreement, etc. **SYN** REPEAL ► **abroga·tion** /ə'brəɡeɪʃn/ *noun* [U]

ab·rupt /ə'brʌpt/ *adj.* 1 sudden and unexpected, often in an unpleasant way: *an abrupt change/halt/departure* 2 speaking or acting in a way that seems unfriendly and rude; not taking time to say more than is necessary **SYN** BRUSQUE, CURT: *an abrupt manner* ◊ *She was very abrupt with me in our meeting.* ► **abruptly** *adv.* **abrupt·ness** *noun* [U]

ABS /eɪ bi 'es/ *abbr.* anti-lock braking system

abs /æbz/ *noun* [pl.] (informal) = ABDOMINALS

ab·scess /'æbses/ *noun* a swollen and infected area on your skin or in your body, full of a thick yellowish liquid (called pus)

ab·scissa /æb'sɪsə/ (pl. *ab-scissae*/si:/ or *ab-scissae*) *noun* (mathematics) the COORDINATE that gives the distance along the horizontal AXIS—compare ORDINATE

ab·scond /əb'skɒnd/; NAmE əb'skɑnd/ *verb* [V] 1 ~ (from sth) to escape from a place that you are not allowed to leave without permission 2 ~ (with sth) to leave secretly and take with you sth, especially money, that does not belong to you: *He absconded with the company funds.*

ab·seil /'æbsel/ (BrE) (NAmE **rap·pe**) *verb* [V] ~ (down, off, etc. sth) to go down a steep CLIFF or rock while attached to a rope, pushing against the slope or rock with your feet—picture ⇒ PAGE R24 ► **abseil** (BrE) (NAmE **rap·pe**) *noun*

ab·sence **0** /'æbsəns/ *noun*

1 [U, C] ~ (from ...) the fact of sb being away from a place where they are usually expected to be; the occasion or period of time when sb is away: *absence from work* ◊ *repeated absences from school* ◊ *The decision was made in my absence* (= while I was not there). ◊ *We did not receive any news during his long absence.*—see also LEAVE 2 [U] the fact of sb/sth not existing or not being available; a lack of sth: *The case was dismissed in the absence of any definite*