

LONGMAN NEW GENERATION DICTIONARY

School Edition



Longman

Longman Group Limited,
*Longman House, Burnt Mill, Harlow,
Essex CM20 2JE, England
and Associated Companies throughout the world.*

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This edition first published 1982

ISBN 0 582 55648 1

Printed in Great Britain
by Richard Clay Limited (The Chaucer Press),
Bungay, Suffolk

Using your Dictionary

This dictionary tells you many things about English words, in a small space. To make full use of it, you should read this section first:

Finding a word

Alphabetical order The words are arranged in alphabetical order, from A to Z. This means that if you want to look up **tortoise**, you look among the words beginning with **t**. But there are a great many **t** words, so look next at the second letter of **tortoise**, which is **o**. Words beginning **to** come after the **ti** words like **tissue**, and before the **tr** words like **tracksuit**. But there are still quite a lot of **to** words, so look next at the third letter, which is **r**. Words beginning **tor** come after the **top** words like **topknot** and before **tos** words like **toss**. Then look at the fourth letter, and so on.

Guide letters The “guide letters” at the top of each page will help you to find a word quickly: for the page that has **tortoise** on it, the guide letters are **tou**. This comes after **tortoise: tou** after **tor**. But the guide letters for the page before are **too**, which comes before **tortoise: too** before **tor**. You will find **tortoise** on the pages that have the words between **too** and **tou**.

Spelling One important reason for looking up a word in the dictionary is to find out how to spell it. This is a problem, because when one cannot spell a word, how is one to find it in alphabetical order? If you were writing an essay about prehistoric animals, you might want to mention the **pterodactyl**. This word sounds as if it began **ter** like **terrible**, but you will not find it among the **ter** words. To get over this difficulty, we have included a Spelling Table on page 787, at the back of the book. This tells you that one of the possible ways of spelling the **t** sound is **pt**. You will find **pterodactyl** among the **p** words, on the page beginning with the guide letters **psa**.

Sound-alikes Sometimes two or more words have the same sound but different spellings, like **night** and **knight** or **rain**, **rein**, and **reign**. Here, again, the spelling table will suggest different possible spellings, so that if you want to write about *the reign of Henry VIII* you will find the word among the **rei** words, and if you want to write *It began to rain* you will find that one among the **rai** words. Notice that you can use the Table to spell the middles and endings of words as well as the beginnings: here it tells you that **ai**, **ei**, and **eig** are all possible ways to spell the vowel sound that is spell: with **a** in **make**.

The main entry

The words printed in alphabetical order in **black** letters, down the left of each column, are the “main entries” in the dictionary. A main entry is

usually a single word, like **house** or **go**; but it may also be

a two or more parts joined with a hyphen: **house-trained**; **go-kart**

b two or more words printed with spaces between them: **house agent**; **go on**

c letters that stand for a group of words: **GCE**

All these kinds of main entry are arranged in alphabetical order. That means that you will find **go on** among the **goo** words, after **goof** and **googly**.

Look-alikes Sometimes two or more words have the same spelling, but are still different words. Perhaps one is a noun and the other a verb:

lead¹ *v* to show somebody the way...

lead² *n* a guiding example...

Or perhaps they are pronounced differently, or have different word-histories and quite unrelated meanings:

lead³ *n* a soft heavy metal that is an element, used...

(Notice that **lead**¹ and **lead**² rhyme with “seed”, but **lead**³ rhymes with “bed”.)

These look-alike words are shown separately in the dictionary, with raised numbers after them.

If two words are different because one of them is always written with a capital letter, they are shown separately:

reformation *n* improvement...

Reformation *n* the religious movement in Europe...

If two words are different because one of them is always used in the plural, they are shown separately:

green¹ *adj* 1 of a colour between yellow and blue...

greens *n* green leafy vegetables...

Part of speech

The dictionary tells you how each main entry is used in a sentence; what its “part of speech” is. Here are the short forms used:

abbrev. for abbreviation for: **GCE**

adj adjective: **tail**

adv adverb: **partly**

conj conjunction: **and**, **but**

interj interjection (used as a sudden remark): **ouch!**

n noun: **dog**, **wine**

prep preposition: **in**, **of**

pron pronoun: **it**, **them**

v verb: **make**, **sew**

v adv verb + adverb: **go on**

v adv prep verb + adverb + preposition: **put up with**

v adv; prep verb + adverb *or* verb +

preposition: **lay off**

v prep verb + preposition: **fall for**

Combined parts of speech Sometimes when a word can be used in two ways in a sentence, the two parts of speech are combined:

miaow *n*, *v* (to make) the crying sound a cat makes

When **miaow** is a noun, it means “the crying sound a cat makes”, as in *I heard a loud miaow*. When it is a verb, it means “to make the crying sound a cat makes”, as in *The cat began to miaow*.

Word forms

After the part of speech, the dictionary will often tell you how the form of the main entry word can change. It may tell you the plural of a noun:

man *n* **men**

or the past tense, past participle, and present participle of a verb:

sing *v* **sang, sung, singing**

or the comparative and superlative forms of an adjective:

bad¹ *adj* **worse, worst**

These word forms are shown only where they may cause difficulty. The plural of **car** *n* is **cars**, but **cars** is not shown in the dictionary because it is formed in the ordinary way, by adding **-s**. (See **Word parts**, page 784).

When only the end part of a word changes, only part of the word is written out:

dirty *adj* **-ier, -iest**

Here, we show **dirtier**, which means "more dirty", and **dirtiest**, which means "most dirty".

When a letter is doubled, or a *k* added to a final *c*, it is shown like this:

beg *v* **-gg-**
picnic² *v* **-ck-**

The full spelling is **begged, begging; picnicked, picnicking**

Choosing the right sense

Often one main entry word may have two or more different meanings. Each meaning is clearly numbered, and usually the meaning that is used most often comes first:

canker¹ *n* **1** a sore caused by a disease which attacks wood and the flesh of animals and people **2** (a) spreading evil:

Violence is the canker in our society

Some words have many different meanings, so it is important to find the right one. If you hear the word **canker** in a sentence like "Our cat has a canker in its ear" you will want to look at sense **1**. If you read it in a piece of writing about politics, you will look at sense **2**. The example sentences will often help you to choose the right meaning: "Violence" may be a spreading evil, but it can't be a "sore".

Punctuation of meanings

To understand the meanings properly, you will need to know the special ways in which certain punctuation marks are used.

Round brackets () are used :

a to show the kind of subject or object used with a verb, or the kind of noun used with an adjective:

lay¹ *v* **4** (of birds, insects, etc.) to produce (an egg or eggs)

This means that *birds* and *insects* are the usual subjects of the verb **lay** in this meaning, and **eggs** are the usual objects, as in *The hen laid an egg*.

gnarled, *adj* **1** (of a tree, its trunk or branches) rough and twisted, with hard lumps, esp. as a result of age **2** (of hands and fingers) twisted, with swollen joints, and rough skin...

The first meaning usually applies to trees, the second to hands.

b to give various other kinds of information about a word:

offside *adj*, *adv* **1** (in certain sports)...

c to show that something can be either included or left out:

magenta *n*, *adj* (of) a dark purplish red...

This means that the word *of* is needed in the explanation of **magenta** when it is used as an adjective: *a magenta dress* (= a dress of a dark purplish red) but not when it is used as a noun: *Magenta is her favourite colour* (= A dark purplish red is her favourite colour.)

The slash / means that either of two choices is possible:

occupy *v* 3... *occupy a bed/a taxi*

The straight line | is used to separate examples of a single meaning:

on ¹ *prep* 5a during; at the time of: *on Tuesday|on June 1st*

Related words

At the end of a word's explanation, you will sometimes find words that can be built up by adding an ending to the main entry word being explained. These built-up words are not explained, because if you understand the main entry word and you understand the ending, you will know what the two of them mean when added together. (For a list of endings, see **Word parts** on page 784).

Punctuation of related words There are three ways of showing these words:

a **dark** ¹ *adj.*... ~ **ness** *n*

This means that **-ness** is added onto **dark** to make a noun **darkness** (see **Word parts**).

b **violate** *v.*...-**lation** *n*

Sometimes the main word changes its spelling slightly before the ending is added. Only part of the new word **violation** is written out; just enough to show the spelling clearly.

c **curly** *adj.*...**curliness** *n*

Here the main word is a short one with a slight change in spelling before the ending, and so the new word is written out in full.

Special expressions

Sometimes a phrase has a special meaning, which cannot be guessed even if you know the meanings of all the words in it. For example, **split hairs** is nothing to do with the hair on your head; it means "to concern oneself with unimportant differences". Many of these phrases are shown, not as main entries (which would mean looking for this particular phrase under **s**) but at the main entry for the most important or unusual word in the phrase, after the ordinary meanings. You will find **split hairs** in **black** letters as part of the explanation of **hair**.

Sometimes a word or meaning is most often used in some particular expression. Such expressions are shown like this:

glazing *n* 2 the piece of glass used to fill a window (esp. in the phrase **double glazing**)

Variants

Sometimes there is more than one way to spell a main entry word:

caftan, kaftan *n* a long loose garment...

Either spelling is correct, but the commonest one comes first. This is the spelling that you will want to use yourself. For long words, only the part which is spelt differently is shown:

generalize, -ise *v.* . . .

Sometimes there is another word with the same meaning as the main entry word:

lapwing also **pewit, peewit**—*n* a type of bird. . .

This means that **lapwing** is the usual word, but **pewit** or **peewit** can be used instead.

A word may have the same meaning as the main entry word, but be used in special circumstances:

collarbone also (*medical*) **clavicle**—*n* either of a pair of bones. . .

Here, **clavicle** is the special word for **collarbone** that doctors use.

For many kinds of animal and person there is a general word that is used for both sexes, and a more particular word that is used for only one sex. In such cases, we show the general word first:

fox *n* 1 (*fem.* **vixen**)—*a* any of several types of small doglike flesh-eating wild animal. . .

duck *n* 1 (*masc.* **drake**)—any of various common swimming birds. . .

Special words

Most of the words in the dictionary would be used and understood, both in speaking and writing, anywhere in the world where English is used. But some words, or meanings of words, are used particularly in one country or area:

checkers *n* *US* draughts

This tells you that the game we call “draughts” is called **checkers** in America.

Other words are no longer used, but may be found in old books, or in the Bible:

thee *old use* (object form of *THOU*) you

A word may belong particularly to literature or poetry:

slay *v* **slew, slain, slaying** *literature* to kill. . .

Words used by specialists are marked *law, medicine, or technical*:

quark *n* *technical* the smallest possible piece of the material. . .

Words that belong particularly to serious writing are marked *esp. written*; you would be unlikely to use these words in everyday talk with your friends. On the other hand, words that belong more to friendly conversation are marked *esp. spoken*; you may prefer not to use these when writing a composition. Words marked *sl* (slang) would not often be used at all in writing or for serious purposes, though everyone uses slang words and meanings sometimes in talking:

fatigue ² *v* *esp. written* to make tired

telly *n* *esp. spoken* television

fag ³ *n* *sl* a cigarette

Unpleasant words connected with the body are marked *vulgar*, and should be avoided when talking to strangers or at a polite party. Words showing that the speaker dislikes the person or thing he is talking about are marked *offensive*. On the other hand, polite words for things felt to be sad, dirty, or unpleasant are marked *polite*. Words used in a joking way are marked *humour*, and those that sound foolishly overimportant are marked *pompous*.

senior citizen *n* *polite* an old person

Words or phrases marked *not standard* may be in common use, but are considered by many people to be incorrect. They should be avoided in writing:

ain't *not standard* a shortened form of *am not, is not* . . .

Words or phrases that are borrowed from foreign languages and still felt to be foreign are marked *French*, *German*, *Latin*, etc.:

ad hoc *adj*, *Latin* made, arranged, etc. for a particular purpose. . .

The official names under which products are sold are marked *trademark*:

biro *n trademark* a ballpoint.

Cross-references

There are several ways of drawing your attention to related words in other parts of the dictionary. These related words are usually shown in SMALL CAPITALS:

a A more exact or specialized word is needed in an explanation:

salt ¹ *n* 1 a very common colourless or white solid substance (SODIUM CHLORIDE) used to preserve. . .

b A word is used only in combination with another word:

laureate *adj* see POET LAUREATE

(At **poet laureate** you will find out how **laureate** is used.)

c Two words have an important likeness or difference:

legato *adj, adv* (of music) played with the notes sliding. . .

—compare STACCATO

d Some additional information can be found by looking up another word:

lama *n* a type of Buddhist priest—see also DALAI LAMA


rain ² *v*. . .—see also RAIN OFF

e A word has the same meaning as another main entry of two or more words:

divining rod *n* DOWSING ROD

This tells you that **dowsing rod** is itself a main entry.

f Two words are often confused with each other:

decided *adj*. . .  DECISIVE


This sign means “Be careful!”


g Several words are compared in a Usage Note:

adorn *v* 1. . .—see DECORATE (USAGE)

(If you turn to **decorate**, you will find a Usage Note explaining the difference between **adorn**, **decorate**, **garnish**, etc.)

h The main entry word is illustrated in a picture:

drill ² *n* 1. . .  OIL

electricity *n* 1. . . 

(There is a picture of a **drill** on the **oil** page. There is a picture of electrical processes and equipment on the same page as the word **electricity**.)

i There is another word with the opposite meaning:

offside *adj, adv* 2 being on the right-hand side, esp. of an animal or of a car, road, etc.—opposite **nearside**

(Here, **nearside** is not printed in CAPITALS, because you do not need to look it up in order to understand its difference from **offside**.)

Usage notes

Sometimes you will find a Usage Note after all the meanings of a main entry word. The Usage Notes explain small differences between the meanings of words. They also give useful advice about the best use of words, and how to avoid common mistakes in your writing.

Janet Whitcut

Preface

Our main intention in compiling this dictionary has been to provide a work for older children and young adults from which they will obtain the real satisfaction that a competent user of traditional reference books enjoys; thus the dictionary concentrates on developing the skills of consulting and understanding the main components of the monolingual dictionary entry, that is headword (or entry word) and definitions (meanings or senses).

Once a person has gained the experience (and resultant confidence) of finding what he or she requires in a dictionary, a habit is established which goes well beyond satisfying the immediate need. Dictionaries, too often for many people the representatives of a forbidding (and perhaps even frightening) linguistic authority, have traditionally lagged behind the real needs of their purchasers. We wished to change this at a seminal stage, so that enjoyment of our text will lead on to the facility to get the most out of dictionaries in future years. Being able to make real use of the great scholarly English dictionaries available in libraries (whether of British or American origin), is almost a prerequisite in many areas of further education, formal or informal. And yet for many people there are seemingly insuperable barriers to be overcome. We have tackled the problem of removing these in the following ways:

1 Finding the entry one wants

Research has shown us that certain methods of presenting dictionary entries on the page are very much easier to use than others. It happens that the majority of British dictionaries (with some notable exceptions) use a system that is inherently (and quite unnecessarily) difficult. Even for a skilled user this is a source of frustration. But for a beginner to dictionaries it can be permanently demotivating.

The logical smallest unit of vocabulary is not, as one might at first expect, the word but might be several words. Orthographic practice suggests for quite separate reasons that *toothbrush* is written as one word, whereas *top hat* is not. And this practice is inconsistent even between publishers and printers in one English-speaking area. Similarly a verb like to *make up* and a noun like *make-up* clearly belong close together in any sensible dictionary sequencing. The technique used in this dictionary is to provide separate main entries for compounds, whether spelt as one word, hyphenated, or as more than one word (with spaces). This makes for a page with a much larger number of short entries rather than fewer long entries. An overwhelming preference for this approach has been demonstrated to us in market research.

2 Providing the right vocabulary

Now that the reader has found the right page and position, we must try to ensure that the word or meaning that he or she is looking for is there. We cannot of

course guarantee, in a small dictionary, that this will be the case. But if we make sure that *every word is entered for good reason*, then our chances of success are much higher. Most dictionaries contain entries that nobody ever looks up. This can only be avoided by adopting a scientific approach to what is entered. Dictionaries like this one are compiled by large teams selected for their breadth of knowledge and writing skills. Through the use of the computer as a highly efficient filing system, we can extract and analyse a special area of vocabulary, at the touch of a button.

Mathematics, earth sciences, and all the other subjects (whether major school disciplines or not) can be listed separately, edited separately, and submitted to the inspection of those few individuals who have spent a lifetime studying their vocabulary (and the chief needs of a person tackling a subject in the first years). An analysis of textbooks up to those used in preparation for fifth-form examinations is one technique that we have used. The result should be a vocabulary that accurately reflects everyday needs – not biased towards the literary or scholarly – but covering the whole spectrum from pure science through technology and crafts to history, literature, and the arts, with special attention paid to new and important ideas and concepts.

3 Clear definitions by the use of formal controls

Now that the word has been found, how can we ensure that the user understands the definition? Too often dictionaries claim simple and clear explanations but fail to provide them – because the writing teams are so familiar with the specialist terminology in their own fields that they fail to realise when they are using it. We all of us fall into this trap when talking to those outside our own discipline or specialist area. Only by adopting a degree of formal control on the vocabulary permitted in definition – made possible again by the vast resources of the computer – can we justify our claim. This is that *the definitions are always written using simpler terms than the words they describe*. The stylishness and elegance of the definitions written within this vocabulary are a tribute to the writing team who have shown so much ability in writing within these constraints.

4 The illustrations and pictures

Our major break with dictionary tradition in this work has been to supplement the text with information which we hope will stimulate and interest our readers and make the book fun to use. Pictures are much better than words in conveying certain kinds of information – and they enable us to operate outside the limitations of alphabetical order.

We are able to give an overview to a subject (or subdivision of a subject) and provide extra vocabulary; to show how named parts relate to a whole; how grouped items relate and compare. We make no excuses for introducing this feature. Tests in schools and with parents and children have shown us that when exposed to the material, the vast majority are enthusiastic. We believe that the grey and tedious connotations that the word *dictionary* conjures up for most people are not an essential part of the book's nature. Dictionaries can be both useful and enjoyable.

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Oxford Illustrators Ltd.

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Computaprint Ltd.

Computer Data

Processing Ltd.

*Organisation and**Methods*

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Acknowledgments

The publishers and the editorial team of this dictionary wish to express their thanks to all those who have contributed advice and suggestions, particularly:

Professor Randolph Quirk, University College London

B. T. Bellis, Headmaster, The Leys School, Cambridge

Christopher Candlin, Director, Institute for English Language Education,
University of Lancaster

Tudor David, Managing Editor of *Education*

Dr. Dennis Hamley, County English Adviser, Hertfordshire

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R. Howes, Assistant County Librarian (Reference & Information),
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the authors of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*

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A

A, a *A's, a's or As, as* 1 the first letter of the English alphabet 2 from A to Z from beginning to end

A¹ the 6th note in the musical scale of C major or the musical key based on this note

A² *abbrev. for:* ampere

A³ *n, adj* (a film) that may be unsuitable for children under 14 —compare AA, U, X

a also (before a vowel sound) *an*—indefinite article 1 one: *I gave him a pound/an egg* 2 one member of a class or group: *a cat spits* 3 each; every: *6 times a day*

A-1 *adj* 1 of the best quality; very good 2 in good health: *Today I am feeling A-1*

AA¹ *n, adj* (a film) that children under 14 are not admitted to see in a cinema —compare A, U, X

AA² *abbrev. for:* Automobile Association

abacus *n* a frame holding wires on which small balls can be moved, used for teaching children how to count, or, esp. in eastern countries, for calculating

abandon¹ *v* 1 to leave completely and for ever: *They abandoned the burning ship* 2 to give up, esp. without finishing: *The search was abandoned* 3 to give (oneself) up completely to a feeling, desire, etc. —*-donment* *n*

abandon² *n* the state when one's feelings and actions are uncontrolled: *They shouted in gay abandon*

abase *v* *abased, abasing* to make (esp. oneself) humble —*~ment* *n*

abash *v* to cause to feel uncomfortable or ashamed: *He stood abashed as his mistakes were pointed out*

abate *v* *abated, abating* 1 to become less strong: *The ship waited till the storm abated* 2 literature to make less: *His pride was not abated by his mistakes* —*~ment* *n*

abattoir *n* a slaughterhouse

abbess *n* a woman who is the head of a convent for women —compare ABBOT

abbey *n* *abbeys* (esp. formerly) a building in which Christian monks or nuns live apart from other people and work as a group for God; monastery or convent

abbot *n* a man who is the head of a monastery for men —compare ABBESS

abbreviate *v* *-ated, -ating* to make shorter

abbreviation *n* 1 the act of making shorter 2 a shortened form of a word (such as *Mr*)

ABC *n* 1 the alphabet, as taught to children 2 the simplest facts about something: *classes in the ABC of cooking*

abdicate *v* *-cated, -cating* to give up (officially): *to abdicate (from) the throne* | *He abdi-*

cated all responsibility for the child —*-cation* *n*

abdomen *n* *medical* a main part of the body in animals, being in man the part between the chest and legs and in insects the end part of the body joined to the thorax *RESPIRATION, INSECT* —*-dominal* *adj*

abduct *v* to take away (a person) unlawfully, often by force: *She has been abducted* —*abduction* *n*

aberrant *adj* changed from what is usual: *aberrant behaviour under the influence of drugs*

aberration *n* a usu. sudden change away from habitual behaviour; sudden forgetfulness: *She hit him in a moment of aberration*

abet *v* *-tt-* to encourage or give help to (a crime or criminal): *The police claim he aided and abetted the thief* —*~tor* *n*

abeyance *n* *esp. written* the condition of not being in force or in use: *The custom has fallen into abeyance*

abhor *v* *-rr-* to feel very great hatred and dislike for: *Most people abhor cruelty to children*

abhorrent *adj* hateful; detestable: *Cruelty is abhorrent to him* —*-rence* *n*

abide¹ *v* to bear; tolerate: *I can't abide rude people*

abide² *v* *abode, abided, abiding* literature and old use 1 to stay: *'Abide with Me'* 2 to live (in or at a place)

abide *v* *prep* *abided, abiding* by 1 to be faithful to; obey: *abide by the club rules* 2 to wait for or accept: *You must abide by the judgment* —*abidance* *by* *n* *esp. written*

abiding *adj* without end; lasting: *an abiding friendship*

ability *n* *-ties* power and skill: *great musical ability* —see GENIUS (USAGE)

abject *adj* 1 as low as possible; deserving great pity: *abject slavery* 2 not deserving respect; showing lack of self-respect: *an abject slave* —*~ly* *adv* —*abjection* *n*

abjure *v* *-jured, -juring* *esp. written* to swear a solemn promise, esp. publicly, to give up —*abjuration* *n*

ablative *adj, n* (of or concerning) a particular form of a Latin noun with the meaning of *by, with, or from* the noun

ablaze *adj* 1 on fire: *The house was quickly ablaze* 2 shining brightly: *The ladies were ablaze with jewels*

able *adj* 1 having the power, skill, knowledge, time, etc., necessary to do something: *I was able to help her* —opposite *unable* 2 skilled: *an able rider*

able-bodied *adj* strong and active

ablutions *n* *pompous or humour* the act of washing oneself

ably *adv* in an able manner: *He could play the horn very ably*

abnormal *adj* different (usu. in a bad sense) from what is ordinary or expected: *Is the child*

abnormal in any way? -see NATURAL (USAGE)
— ~ly adv — ~ity *n*

aboard *adv, prep* on or into (a train, aircraft, bus, etc.): *They went aboard the ship*

abode¹ *n* *literature, old use, or esp. written place* where one lives; home

abode² *past tense* of ABIDE

abolish *v* to stop: *Bad laws ought to be abolished*

abolition *n* the act of putting an end to something: *the abolition of slavery* — ~ist *n*

A-bomb *n* ATOM BOMB

abominable *adj* detestable: *Their treatment of prisoners was abominable* — ~bly adv

abominate *v* -nated, -nating *esp. written* to have great hatred and dislike for

abomination *n* 1 great hatred; disgust 2 a very hateful or nasty thing or act

aboriginal *adj* of or about people or living things existing in a place from the earliest times or since the place was first described

aborigine *n* a member of a group, tribe, etc., that has lived in a place from the earliest times or since the place was first described, *esp. in Australia*

abort *v* 1 to give birth too early to —compare MISCARRY 2 to cause to be born too soon so that the child cannot live: *The doctor had to abort the baby* 3 *technical* to end before the expected time because of some trouble

abortion *n* 1 the act or an example of giving birth or causing to give birth early, *esp. within the first 20 weeks of the baby's existence inside a woman, so that the child cannot live* 2 a badly-formed creature produced by such a birth-3 a plan or arrangement which breaks down before it can develop properly —compare MISCARRIAGE, STILLBIRTH

abortionist *n* a person who intentionally causes an abortion

abortive *adj* coming to nothing; unsuccessful: *an abortive attempt to build a railway* — ~ly adv

abound *v* to exist in large numbers: *Animals abound here*

about¹ *adv* 1 also around— here and/or there: *I've left my purse somewhere about* 2 *esp. spoken* almost: *I'm about ready* —see also COME ABOUT

about² *prep* 1 also around— here and there in: *They walked about the streets* 2 also around— surrounding: *the wall about the prison* 3 concerning: *What about father?* 4 concerned with: *Do the shopping and don't be long about it* —see also SET ABOUT

about³ *adj* 1 moving; active: *He was up and about very early* 2 just ready: *We're about to start*

above¹ *adv* 1 in or to a higher place: *the clouds above* 2 on an earlier page or higher on the same page: *See above for the address* 3 higher; more: *20 and above*

above² *prep* 1 higher than: *We flew above the*

clouds. | *An admiral is above a captain* | *He's above stealing* —compare **above** someone's HEAD 2 over and above in addition (to) 3 above oneself a self-satisfied b excited

aboveboard *adj* without any attempt to deceive: *He was quite open and aboveboard*

abracadabra *n, interj* (a word spoken to encourage the working of magic)

abrade *v* **abraded, abrading** *technical* to wear or cause to wear away by rubbing

abrasion *n* *technical* 1 loss of surface by rubbing 2 a place where the surface, *esp. of the skin*, has been worn away

abrasive¹ *adj* 1 causing the wearing away of a surface 2 tending to annoy; rough: *an abrasive voice* — ~ly adv

abrasive² *n* a substance, such as sand, used for polishing or removing a surface

abreast *adv* 1 side by side: *cycling 2 abreast* 2 *keep/be abreast of* to have the latest information on

abridge *v* **abridged, abridging to make shorter by using fewer words**

abridgment, abridgement *n* 1 the act of making shorter 2 something, such as a book, that has been made shorter

abroad *adv* 1 to or in another country: *living abroad* 2 over a wide area: *The news spread abroad that the results were out* 3 *old use* out of doors: *He was abroad early*

abrogate *v* -gated, -gating *esp. written* to put an end to the force or effect of: *to abrogate a law* Δ ARROGATE — -gation *n*

abrupt *adj* 1 sudden and unexpected: *an abrupt stop* 2 rough and impolite — ~ly adv — ~ness *n*

abscess *n* a pus-filled swelling on or in the body

abscond *v* *esp. written* to go away suddenly and secretly because one has done something wrong

absence *n* 1 the state or a period of being away: *Behave yourself during my absence* 2 non-existence; lack: *absence of information*

absence of mind *n* a state in which one forgets one's surroundings or what one is doing

absent¹ *adj* 1 not present: *How many are absent today?* 2 showing lack of attention: *an absent look* — ~ly adv

absent² *v* *esp. written* to keep away: *He absented himself from the meeting*

absentee *n* a person who stays away: *There were many absentees*

absenteeism *n* regular absence without good cause, *esp. from work*

absent-minded *adj* so concerned with one's thoughts as not to notice what is going on — ~ly adv — ~ness *n*

absinth, absinthe *n* a bitter green very strong alcoholic drink

absolute *adj* 1 complete; perfect: *absolute honesty* 2 having complete power: *An absolute ruler can do just as he pleases* 3 not allowing any doubt: *absolute proof of his guilt* 4 without any

conditions: *an absolute promise* 5 not depending on or measured by comparison with other things —opposite *relative* — *~ness* *n*

absolutely *adv* 1 completely: *You are absolutely wrong* 2 without conditions: *You must agree absolutely* 3 *esp. spoken* certainly: *'Do you think so?' 'Absolutely!'*

absolute zero *n* the lowest temperature that is thought to be possible

absolution *n* forgiveness for wrongdoing

absolutism *n* the principle that complete power should be held by one or a limited number of rulers

absolve *v* 1 (of a priest) to give forgiveness for wrongdoing 2 to free from fulfilling a promise or a duty

absorb *v* 1 to take or suck in (liquids) 2 to take in (knowledge, ideas, etc.) 3 to take up all the attention, time, etc., of: *absorbed in a book* 4 (of a big country, business, etc.) to make into a part of itself; take over

absorbent *n, adj* (something) that is able to absorb

absorbing *adj* taking all one's attention; very interesting

absorption *n* 1 the act or action of absorbing or of being absorbed 2 the taking up of all one's attention, time, etc. 3 the taking over of little countries, businesses, etc. by big ones

abstain *v* to keep oneself from — *~er* *n*

abstemious *adj* having, being, or allowing (oneself) only a little food, drink, or pleasure: *an abstemious meal* — *~ly* *adv* — *~ness* *n*

abstention *n* the act or an example of keeping oneself from doing something, *esp.* from voting

abstinence *n* the act of keeping away from pleasant things — *~nent* *adj*

abstract¹ *adj* 1 technical thought of as a quality rather than as an object or fact: *'Hunger' is an abstract noun* 2 general as opposed to particular: *Your ideas seem a little abstract* 3 (in art) connected with or producing abstracts —compare REPRESENTATIONAL

abstract² *n* 1 a shortened form of a statement, speech, etc. 2 a painting, drawing, etc., that does not try to represent an object realistically

abstract³ *v* technical to remove by drawing out gently

abstracted *adj* inattentive to what is happening; deep in thought — *~ly* *adv*

abstraction *n* the state of not attending to what is going on

abstruse *adj* *esp. written or humour* difficult to understand — *~ly* *adv* — *~ness* *n*

absurd *adj* 1 against reason or common sense: *Even sensible men do absurd things* 2 funny because clearly unsuitable, false, foolish, or impossible: *You look absurd in your wife's hat!* — *~ly* *adv* — *~ity* *n*

abundance *n* a great quantity: *an abundance of food and drink*

abundant *adj* more than enough: *abundant supplies of firewood* — *~ly* *adv*

abuse¹ *v* *abused, abusing* 1 to say unkind or rude things to or about 2 to put to wrong use: *to abuse one's power*

abuse² *n* 1 unkind or rude words: *He shouted a stream of abuse* 2 wrong use: *the use and abuse of figures to prove things* 3 an unjust or harmful custom

abusive *adj* using or containing unkind or rude language: *an abusive letter* — *~ly* *adv* — *~ness* *n*

abut on *v prep* -*tt.* *esp. written* (of land or buildings) to lie next to or touch on one side

abysmal *adj* very bad: *The food was abysmal*

abyss *n* a great hole which appears bottomless
A/C *abbrev. for:* account

academic¹ *adj* 1 concerning teaching or studying 2 concerning those subjects taught to provide skills for the mind —compare TECHNICAL 3 of a college or university: *academic dress* 4 offensive not concerned with practical examples: *The question of how many souls exist in heaven is academic*

academic² *n* a member of a college or university, *esp.* one who teaches

academician *n* a member of an academy

academy *n* -*mies* 1 a society of people interested in the advancement of art, science, or literature, to which members are usu. elected as an honour 2 a school for training in a special art or skill: *a military academy*

accede *v* *acceded, acceding* *esp. written* 1 to agree: *He acceded to our request* 2 to take a high post or position after someone has left it

accelerate *v* -*rated, -rating* 1 to move faster 2 *esp. written* to cause to happen earlier —compare DECELERATE

acceleration *n* 1 the act of increasing speed 2 the rate at which speed is increased in a certain time: *The new car has good acceleration*

accelerator *n* 1 the apparatus used to increase the speed of a machine (*esp.* a car) 2 technical a machine for making very small pieces of matter (PARTICLES) move very quickly

accent¹ *n* 1 importance given to a word, a vowel, or syllable by saying it with more force or on a different musical note: *The accent in the word 'important' is on the 2nd syllable* 2 the mark used, *esp.* above a word or part of a word, in writing or printing to show how to say it 3 a particular way of speaking, usu. connected with a country, area, or class: *a thick German accent*

accent² *v* 1 to pronounce with added force or on a different musical note 2 to mark with an accent 3 to accentuate

accentuate *v* -*ated, -ating* 1 to pronounce with great force 2 to give more importance to: *The dark frame accentuates the brightness of the picture* — *-ation* *n*

accept *v* 1 to take or receive, *esp.* willingly; *I cannot accept your gift* 2 to believe; admit; agree to: *I accept your reasons for being late* 3 to take responsibility for: *I'll accept the blame*

acceptable *adj* good enough to be received: