

Beginner's Dictionary of American English Usage

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Illustrations by
Erasmio Hernandez



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About this dictionary

The *Beginner's Dictionary of American English Usage* has been carefully designed with the learner in mind. First, it contains the 4,000 most commonly used words in English. These are the words found in beginning and intermediate English-language textbooks. Secondly, each of the entries has at least one example sentence (in bold type) to show how the word is actually used in everyday speech and writing. Thus, more than a dictionary, this unique reference is a guide to contemporary American English usage.

In addition, this dictionary offers a variety of other features that make it a valuable reference for all students of English. The pronunciation of main entry words is clearly shown in brackets next to the word defined. Parts of speech are identified for all entries. The meaning of each word is explained as briefly and as simply as possible, using only the words contained in this dictionary. And whenever a word has several meanings, they are listed separately, each with its own example sentence.

You will also find many notes that give valuable advice on some of the more difficult aspects of English. (These and other useful language aids are highlighted in shaded boxes.) And throughout the dictionary, you will discover fully labeled drawings that illustrate important topics of everyday English vocabulary: the bathroom, bedroom, parts of the body, clothes, the country, kitchen, living room, office, restaurant, street, and travel. These drawings appear in the alphabetical order of the entry words they illustrate.

The *Beginner's Dictionary of American English Usage* offers students an important key to the everyday vocabulary, grammar, and usage of English. Used in class or by individuals, this book is an ideal reference that will lead its users to a more complete mastery of the English language.

Pronunciation

The way in which words are pronounced can vary widely according to the part of the country, and the speaker. The pronunciation shown in the dictionary is that which is most common in the U.S.A.

The following signs are used to show the pronunciation of words in the dictionary.

Words are also marked with a sign (') to show where the strong beat should be placed, but you must remember that this is only a guide, and that the pronunciation of a word can change depending on the position of the word in a sentence.

æ	back	əʊ	boat	dʒ	just	r	round
ɑ:	farm	ɜ	word	f	fog	s	some
ɒ	top	i:	freeze	g	go	ʃ	short
aɪ	pipe	ɪ	hit	h	hand	t	too
aʊ	how	ɪə	idea	j	yes	tʃ	chop
ɔ:	bought	u:	school	k	catch	θ	thing
ɔɪ	toy	ʊ	book	l	last	v	voice
e	fed	ʌ	but	m	mix	w	was
eə	hair	b	back	n	nut	z	zoo
eɪ	take	d	dog	ŋ	sing	ʒ	treasure
ə	afraid	ð	then	p	pick		

Alphabet

These are the letters of the English alphabet, showing how they are pronounced.

Aa	eɪ	Hh	eɪf	Oo	əʊ	Vv	vi:
Bb	bɪ:	Ii	aɪ	Pp	pɪ:	Ww	ˈdʌbəlju:
Cc	sɪ:	Jj	dʒeɪ	Qq	kju:	Xx	eks
Dd	di:	Kk	keɪ	Rr	ɑ:r	Yy	wai
Ee	i:	Ll	el	Ss	es	Zz	zi:
Ff	ef	Mm	em	Tt	ti:		
Gg	dʒi:	Nn	en	Uu	ju:		

Aa

a, an [ei, æn or ə, ən] article

(a) not a special one; I want a glass of water; a big car; he has a good job; an empty house; a useful knife.

(b) for each/in each; these oranges cost 30¢ a pound; the car was doing 70 miles an hour.

Note: *an* is used in front of words beginning with a, e, i, o, u and with h if the h is not pronounced (*an apple; an hour*); *a* is used in front of all the other letters and also u where u is pronounced ju, (*a university*)

a·ble ['eɪbl] adjective

he wasn't able to breathe = he could not breathe; will you be able to come to the party? = can you come to the party? he wasn't able to find the house.

Note: *able* is used with *to* and a verb

a·bil·i·ty [ə'biləti] noun

being able to do something; I'll do it to the best of my ability = as well as possible.

a·bout [ə'baʊt] adverb & preposition

(a) concerning; tell me about your vacation; what do you want to speak to me about? he is worried about his health.

(b) more or less; the room is about ten feet square; the next train leaves at about four o'clock; she's about twenty years old; the town is about ten miles from here.

(c) in several places; he left his papers lying about on the floor.

(d) to be about to do something = to be going to do something; I was just about to go out when you phoned.

a·bove [ə'baʊv] adverb & preposition

higher than; the plane flew above the clouds; the temperature was above 40°.

a·broad [ə'brɔ:d] adverb

in another country; to another country; he lives abroad; they are going abroad on their vacation.

ab·sence ['æbsns] noun

not being here/there; in the absence of Mr. Smith = when Mr. Smith is not here/there.

ab·sent ['æbsnt] adjective

not here/not there; three children are absent because they are sick.

ac·cept [ək'sept] verb

(a) to take (something which someone is giving you); will you accept this little present?

(b) to agree (to do something); I invited her to the party and she accepted.

accepts—accepting—accepted—has accepted

ac·ci·dent ['æksɪdənt] noun

(a) something which happens by chance; I met her by accident at the bus stop.

(b) unpleasant thing which happens; she had an accident and had to go to the hospital; three people were killed in the traffic accident.

ac·ci·den·tal·ly [æksə'dentli] adverb
by chance; I found the missing watch accidentally.

ac·cord·ing to [ək'ɔ:rdɪŋ tu] adverb

as someone says or writes; according to the newspaper, today is a public holiday; according to the TV, it will be sunny tomorrow.

ac·count [ə'kaʊnt] noun

(a) amount of money kept in a bank; how much money do you have in your account? he put \$10 into his account.

(b) accounts = record of the money paid and received by a company; the money is

shown as a loss in the company accounts.
on account of = because of; the trains are late on account of the fog.

ache [eɪk] 1. *noun*

pain; (used with other words to show where you have a pain: see **backache**, **headache**, **toothache**)

2. *verb*

to hurt; my tooth aches.

aches—aching—ached—has ached

across [ə'krɔ:s] *adverb & preposition*

(a) from one side to the other; he swam across the river; don't run across the road; the river is 50 yards across.

(b) on the other side; he lives across the street; their house is across the street from ours = it is just opposite our house.

act [ækt] 1. *noun*

one large part of a play; "Hamlet" has five acts; Act I takes place in a castle.

2. *verb*

(a) to take part in a play/film, etc.; she has acted on TV many times; he acted the part of Hamlet in the film.

(b) to do something; he had to act quickly to save his sister.

acts—acting—acted—has acted

action ['ækʃn] *noun*

thing which has been done; he was sorry for his actions = he was sorry for what he had done.

active ['æktɪv] *adjective*

lively/doing something; although he is over eighty, he is still very active.

actor ['æktər] *noun*

man who acts in a play.

actress ['æktɹəs] *noun*

woman who acts in a play.

plural actresses

act up on, *verb*

to do something as the result of something which has been said; he acted upon your suggestion.

actual ['æktʃuəl] *adjective*

real; what are the actual figures for the number of students in high school?

actually, *adverb*

really; is he actually going to sell his store?

ad [æd] *see advertisement***add** [æd] *verb*

(a) to put numbers together; if you add ten and fifteen you get twenty-five.

(b) to put in more of something; if your coffee isn't sweet enough, add some more sugar; she added a few words at the end of the letter.

(c) to say something more; he added that it was time to go to bed.

adds—adding—added—has added

addition [ə'dɪʃn] *noun*

putting numbers together; she is good at addition, but not at multiplication.

addition-al, *adjective*

more/extra; the local tax is an additional 8%; the airline runs additional flights at Christmas.

add up, *verb*

to put several numbers together; if you add up all these figures, the answer should be a thousand.

Note: add the numbers up or add up the numbers, but only add them up

add up to, *verb*

to make a total; the sums of money we have spent add up to over \$100.

ad-dress 1. *noun* ['ædres]

number of a house, name of a street and town where someone lives or where an office is; what is the address of the new bookstore? write all their addresses on a piece of paper; her address is: 1510 York St., Adamsville.

plural addresses

2. *verb* [ə'dres]

to write the details of name, where someone is/where a house is, on an envelope; the letter is addressed to your father.

addresses—addressing—addressed—has addressed

ad-jec-tive ['ædʒektɪv] *noun*

word used to describe what a noun is like; in the phrase "a big green door," "big" and "green" are both adjectives.

ad-mire [əd'maɪr] *verb*

to look at something with pleasure; to

think that something is good; he was admiring my new car.

admires—admiring—admired—has admired

ad-mi-ra-tion [ædmə'reɪʃn] *noun*
feeling of pleasure in something; I have a great deal of admiration for his work.

ad-mir-ing-ly, *adverb*

with pleasure/showing that you think something is good; she looked admirably at her son's painting.

ad-mit [əd'mɪt] *verb*

(a) to allow (someone) to go in; this ticket admits one person; children are admitted free.

(b) to say that something is true; he admitted he was the person who broke the window/he admitted to having broken the window.

admits—admitting—admitted—has admitted

ad-ult [ædʌlt, ɔ'dʌlt] *noun & adjective*
grown-up (person); fully grown (animal); the price of a ticket for adults is \$1; an adult elephant.

ad-van-tage [əd'ventɪdʒ] *noun*

(a) something useful which will help you to be successful; it will be an advantage if you can speak Italian.

(b) to take advantage of = to use something to help yourself; we took advantage of the fine weather and went on a picnic.

ad-ven-ture [əd'ventʃər] *noun*

new and exciting thing which happens; he told us of his adventures while he was crossing the desert.

ad-verb [əd'veɜ:b] *noun*

word which is used to describe a verb or an adjective; in the sentence "he drives quickly," the word "quickly" is an adverb.

ad-ver-tise [əd'veɜ:təɪz] *verb*

to show that something is for sale/that you want something; he advertised his car in the newspaper; the company is advertising for new secretaries; jobs are advertised in the local paper.

advertises—advertising—advertised—has advertised

ad-ver-tise-ment [ædvər'taɪzmənt],
ad [æd] *noun*

notice which shows that something is for sale/that you want something; if you want to sell the carpet, put an ad in the paper; I sold the carpet through an ad in the paper; she answered an advertisement in the paper and got a better job.

Note: ad is used in ordinary speaking, but not usually in writing

ad-vice [əd'veɪs] *noun*

suggestion about what should be done; he went to the teacher for advice on how to do his homework; she would not listen to my advice; my advice to you is that you should take a long trip abroad; the doctor's advice was to stay in bed; he took the doctor's advice and went to bed.
no plural: some advice; a piece of advice

ad-vise [əd'veɪz] *verb*

to suggest what should be done; the doctor advised him to stay in bed; she advised me to sell my car; I would advise you to drive slowly.

advises—advising—advised—has advised

ad-vise a-against, *verb*

to suggest that something should not be done; I wanted to learn to fly, but she advised against it; the doctor advised against going to bed late.

af-ford [ə'fɔ:rd] *verb*

to have enough money to pay for something; I can't afford a new pair of shoes; how can you afford two vacations a year?
affords—affording—afforded—has afforded

a-fraid [ə'freɪd] *adjective*

(a) to be afraid (of) = to be frightened (by); I am afraid of snakes; she's afraid of the dark; he's afraid to climb onto the roof.

(b) to be afraid = to be sorry to say; I'm afraid we have no seats left; I'm afraid she's sick; do you have a watch?—no, I'm afraid not.

Note: afraid cannot be used in front of a noun: she's afraid but a frightened girl

af·ter ['æftər] 1. *preposition*

(a) following/next; if today is Monday, the day after tomorrow is Wednesday; he arrived after me; I must go to bed—it's after midnight; they came in one after the other; after you = please go first.

(b) to be after = to be looking for/to be angry with; the police are after him; if you eat all the cake, your mother will be after you; what's he after? = what does he want?

2. *conjunction*

following a time; after the rain came, the grass started to grow; after the driver got in, the bus set off; call me after you get home.

Note: after is used with many verbs: look after; take after, etc.

af·ter all, *adverb*

(a) in the end/considering everything; he changed his mind and decided to go to the party after all.

(b) in any case; I think I'll stay at home—after all, I have no work to do at the office and it's a fine day.

af·ter·noon [æftərˈnuːn] *noun*

part of the day between the morning and the evening; I always have a rest in the afternoon; she doesn't work on Tuesday afternoons; we met at 3 o'clock in the afternoon; I will try to catch the afternoon train; can you come to see me this afternoon or tomorrow afternoon?

af·ter·thought, *noun*

something which you think of later; he added as an afterthought, that he was going downtown.

af·ter·ward, **afterwards**, *adverb*
later/next; we'll go shopping first, and visit the museum afterward; he was fine before lunch, but felt ill afterward.

a·gain [əˈɡen] *adverb*

another time/once more; he sang the song again; you must come to see us again.

once a·gain = another time; once again, the car refused to start.

yet a·gain = once more after many times; he is back in the hospital yet again.

a·gainst [əˈɡenst] *preposition*

(a) touching; the ladder is leaning against the wall; he hit his head against a low branch.

(b) against the rules/against the law = not as the rules say/as the law says; it's against the law to sell beer on Sunday; you can't kick a ball in tennis—it's against the rules; do you have anything against my going out this evening? = do you agree that I can go out? she was against the idea of going to the theater.

(c) opposite; it's difficult riding against the wind; swimming against the current makes you tired.

age [eɪdʒ] 1. *noun*

(a) number of years which you have lived; what will his age be on his next birthday? he was sixty years of age; she looks younger than her age; old age = period when you are old.

(b) for ages = for a very long time; I've been waiting here for ages.

(c) period of history; the Middle Ages = period from about 1000 to 1500; the Space Age = period since men started to explore space.

2. *verb*

to grow old; he has aged since I saw him last year.

ages—aging/ageing—aged—has aged

ag·ed, *adjective*

(a) [eɪdʒd] with a certain age; a boy aged twelve; he died last year, aged 64.

(b) [eɪdʒd] very old; an aged man.

a·gent [eɪdʒnt] *noun*

person who acts, for you, often in another country; he is the agent for Japanese cars; Mr. Smith is our agent in Australia.

a·go [əˈɡoʊ] *adverb*

in the past; I saw him five minutes ago; she left home two years ago; it all happened a long time ago.

a·gree [əˈɡriː] *verb*

(a) to say that you think the same way as someone; I agree with you that we need a new car.

(b) to say yes; we asked her to come with us and she agreed.

agree—agreeing—agreed—has agreed

agree·ment, noun

action of agreeing; he nodded to show his agreement; they are in agreement with our plan = they agree with it.

a·head [ə'hed] adverb

in front; our team was losing, but now we are ahead; ahead of us was a big old house; he has a lot of work ahead of him; we walked on ahead of the others; run ahead and save some seats for us.

aid [eid] noun

help; he gets aid from his university; they ran to the aid of the drowning boy; in aid of = to help; we are collecting money in aid of poor families; see also first aid.

aim [eim] verb

(a) to point at; he aimed his gun at the policeman.

(b) to intend to do something; we aim to save enough money to go on vacation.

aims—aiming—aimed—has aimed

air [eə] noun

mixture of gases which you can't see, but which you breathe; the air felt cold; he kicked the ball up into the air.

by air = in an airplane; we are traveling to France by air; I must send this letter by air.

air·base, noun

place where airplanes used in war are based.

air·craft, noun

machine which flies in the air; the pilot got into the aircraft.

Note: plural is aircraft: one aircraft, six aircraft

air·field, noun

place where airplanes can land.

air force, noun

all the aircraft used in war, with the people who fly them; he's joining the U.S. Air Force.

air·line, noun

company which runs passenger services by air; airlines are cutting fares.

air·mail, noun

sending mail by air; send this letter by airmail.

air·plane, noun

machine which flies in the air; the pilot flew the airplane through the storm.

air·port, noun

place where aircraft land and take off; we are due to leave O'Hare Airport at five o'clock; you can take a bus to the airport.

air·sick, adjective

feeling sick because of traveling by air.

a·larm [ə'lɑ:m] noun

signal which warns of danger; when the alarm went off, everyone left the hotel.

a·larm (clock), noun

clock which can wake you up by ringing a bell; set the alarm for 6 o'clock; he always takes an alarm clock with him when he travels.

a·l·c·o·h·ol ['ælkəhɔ:l] noun

liquid which makes you drunk if you drink too much of it.

a·l·c·o·h·ol·ic [ælkə'hɔ:lɪk] adjective

containing alcohol; an alcoholic drink.

a·like [ə'laɪk] adjective

almost the same; the two brothers look alike.

Note: alike is only used after a verb

a·live [ə'laɪv] adjective

living/not dead; the fish is still alive, even though it was caught an hour ago; my grandfather was alive when the first airplanes flew.

Note: alive cannot be used in front of a noun: the fish is alive but a live fish

all [ɔ:l] 1. adjective & pronoun

every; everything/everyone; all the tomatoes are red; are all the children here? we all like chocolate; let's sing the song all together = everyone at the same time.

2. adverb

completely; the ground was all white after the snow fell.

all at once/all of a sudden = suddenly; all at once the telephone rang.
not at all = certainly not; do you mind waiting for ten minutes?—not at all!

all by your·self = alone; he was all by himself; I'm all by myself; she did it all by herself.

all over = (a) everywhere; there was sugar all over the cake; she poured water all over the table.

(b) finished; when it was all over we went home.

all right, *adjective*

(a) fine/well; I was sick yesterday, but I'm all right now.

(b) will you answer the telephone for me?—all right = yes, I will.

all the same, *adverb*

anyway; I don't like parties, but I'll come to yours all the same.

all-Amer-i-can, *adjective*
 representing the whole U.S.; an all-American football player.

all-im·por·tant, *adjective*

most important; he kept the all-important ticket in his pocket.

all-star, *adjective*

with many stars in it; an all-star show; an all-star baseball team.

al-low [ə'ləʊ] *verb*

to say that someone can do something; you are not allowed to walk on the grass; he allowed me to see his stamp collection; are we allowed to sit down?

allows—allowing—allowed—has allowed

al-low·a·ble, *adjective*

which can be allowed.

al-low·ance, *noun*

money given to someone regularly.

al-most ['ɔ:l·məʊst] *adverb*

nearly; not quite; he is almost as tall as I am; hurry up, it's almost time for the train to leave.

a-lone [ə'ləʊn] *adjective*

with no one else; she was all alone in the house; I want to talk to you alone = just the two of us together.

a-long [ə'ləŋ] 1. *preposition*

by the side of; there are trees along both sides of the road; he was walking along the bank of the river.

2. *adverb*

to go along/to come along = to go/to come; came along with us; he went along to the police station to report the accident.

a-long·side, *adverb & preposition*

by the side of: 'he police car was parked alongside mine.

a-loud [ə'laʊd] *adverb*

in a voice which can be heard; he was reading the newspaper aloud; I was just thinking aloud = just saying what I was thinking.

al·pha·bet ['ælfəbet] *noun*

the 26 letters which are used to write words; A is the first letter of the alphabet.

al·pha·bet·i·cal [ælfə'betɪkl] *adjective*

like in the alphabet; the telephone book has all the names in alphabetical order = arranged by letters as they come in the alphabet.

al-read-y [ɔ:l'redɪ] *adverb*

by this time; it is already past ten o'clock; has he finished work already? = so quickly; I've seen that film already = I have seen it before.

al-so ['ɔ:lsəʊ] *adverb*

as well/at the same time; he sings and can also play the piano; she came to dinner, and her son also came.

al-though [ɔ:l'dəʊ] *conjunction*

even if; although it was snowing, it was not very cold; although he is eighty, he still goes running every morning; see also though.

al-ways [ɔ:l·weɪz] *adverb*

every time/all the time; he is always late; it always rains when we want to go for a walk; in some countries it is always hot; she's always in a hurry.

am [æm] *see be*

A.M., a.m. ['eɪ'ɛm] *adverb*

in the morning; I have to get up at 6

A.M. every day; she's going to catch the 10 a.m. flight to Seattle.

Note: **A.M.** is usually used to show the exact hour and the word o'clock is left out

a·maze [ə'meɪz] *verb*

to surprise; it amazes me how he can eat so many pancakes.

amazes—amazing—amazed—has amazed

a·maze·ment, *noun*

surprise; he watched the fire in amazement.

a·maz·ing, *adjective*

surprising; he's an amazing teacher = very good; it's amazing how many people are left-handed.

am·bu·lance ['æmbjələns] *noun*

vehicle for taking sick people to the hospital; the man was taken away in an ambulance.

A·mer·i·ca [ə'merikə] *noun*

(a) large area of land (North America and South America) between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

(b) the United States; they came to America on vacation; they live in America.

A·mer·i·can, 1. *adjective*

referring to the United States; the American President; she drives an American car.

2. *noun*

person who lives in or comes from the United States; Americans enjoy watching football on TV; she is married to an American.

a·mong [ə'mʌŋ] *preposition*

(a) in the middle of; the birds built their nests among the leaves; among the people at the party was a man who reads the news on TV.

(b) between; the cake was divided among the children.

a·mount [ə'maʊnt] 1. *noun*

how much there is of something; she drinks a large amount of tea.

2. *verb*

to add up (to); the bill amounted to \$100.

amounts—amounting—amounted—has amounted

a·muse [ə'mju:z] *verb*

to make someone happy; they amused themselves playing football; the teacher amused the children by showing them a movie.

amuses—amusing—amused—has amused

a·muse·ment, *noun*

being happy; he poured a bucket of water over his head to the great amusement of the children.

a·mus·ing, *adjective*

which makes you happy; the TV show was very amusing; I didn't find the book very amusing.

an [æn or ən] *see a*

and [ænd or ən] *conjunction*

(showing two things are connected in some way) my mother and father; he likes apples and oranges; he was running and singing at the same time; come and sit down.

Note: and is used to say numbers after 100: seven hundred and two (702)

and so on, *adverb*

in the same way; he talked about gardens, flowers, and so on = and other similar things.

an·ger ['æŋgə] *noun*

being mad; he showed his anger by banging on the table.

no plural

an·gry ['æŋɡri:] *adjective*

mad; he's angry with his children because they broke a window; she gets angry if the trains are late; everyone is angry about the gasoline prices.

angry—angrier—angriest

an·gri·ly, *adverb*

in an angry way.

an·i·mal ['æniml] *noun*

living and moving thing; dogs and cats are animals, and man is also an animal; we went to see the animals in the zoo.

an·kle ['æŋkl] *noun*

place where your foot is connected to

announce

your leg: he twisted his ankle = he hurt it by bending it in an odd direction.

an·nounce [ə'naʊns] *verb*

to tell everyone (something); the mayor announced the result of the vote; she announced that her son was going to marry the girl next door.

**announces—announcing—
announced—has announced**

an·nounce·ment, *noun*

public statement; I read the announcement in the local paper.

an·nounc·er, *noun*

person who announces the programs on radio/TV.

an·oth·er [ə'nʌðər] *adjective & pronoun*

(a) one more; would you like another cup of coffee?

(b) a different (one); she fell down and made her dress dirty, so she had to change into another one; see also **each other**, **one another**.

an·swer ['ænsər] 1. *noun*

reply/words spoken or written when someone has spoken to you or asked you a question; I phoned the office, but there was no answer; have you received an answer to your letter yet?

2. *verb*

to reply/to speak or write words after someone has spoken to you or asked you a question; he hasn't answered my letter; when he asked them if they had enjoyed the book, they all answered "no"; to answer the phone = to speak into it when it rings.

**answers—answering—
answered—has answered**

an·swer back, *verb*

to answer in a rude way; if you answer back like that the teacher will be mad at you.

an·y ['eni] 1. *adjective & pronoun*

(a) it doesn't matter which; wear any hat you like; come any day next week.

(b) some; do you have any salt? is there any cake left? would you like any more coffee?

apartment

(c) not ... any = none; there aren't any cakes left; give me your money—I don't have any.

2. *adverb*

not ... any + comparative = not even a little; I can't sing any louder; the car won't go any faster.

an·y·bod·y ['eni'bɒdi] see **anyone**.

an·y·how ['eni'həʊ] see **anyway**.

an·y·one ['eniwʌn] *pronoun*

(a) it doesn't matter who; anyone can learn to ride a bicycle; anyone could have written that letter.

(b) some person; can anyone loan me ten dollars? I didn't meet anyone = I met no one.

an·y·thing ['eniθɪŋ] *pronoun*

(a) it doesn't matter what; you can take anything you want; our dog will eat anything.

(b) something; did anything happen during the night? has anything made you sick? do you want anything more to drink? he didn't eat anything = he ate nothing.

an·y·way ['eniweɪ], **an·y·how** ['eni'həʊ] *adverb*

in any case; whatever may happen; it was raining but I didn't want to go out anyway; the doctor told me to stay in bed, but I'm going to the party anyway.

an·y·where ['eni'hweər] *adverb*

(a) it doesn't matter where; put the book down anywhere.

(b) somewhere; is there anywhere where I can put this box? I haven't seen it anywhere.

a·part [ə'pɑ:t] *adverb*

separate; the two towns are very far apart; the watch came apart in my hands = it came to pieces; they live apart now = they don't live together any more.

a·part from = except; they all wore black hats, apart from me.

a·part·ment [ə'pɑ:tment] *noun*

separate group of rooms for one family, usually in a building with other similar groups of rooms; they live in an apart-

appear

ment building in downtown Dallas; his apartment is on the fifth floor.

ap·pear [ə'piə] verb

(a) to start being seen; a ship suddenly appeared in the distance; a man appeared at the door.

(b) to seem; he appears to be ill; it appears to be raining.

appears—appearing—appeared—has appeared

ap·pear·ance [ə'pi:əns] noun

how a person or thing looks; you could tell from her appearance that she had been climbing trees; he put in an appearance at the meeting = he came for a short time.

ap·ple [ˈæpl] noun

common hard round sweet fruit, growing on a tree; apple pie; don't eat that green apple—it isn't ripe yet.

ap·ple·sauce, noun

cooked apples which have been squashed; do you want some more applesauce?

ap·ple tree, noun

tree which apples grow on.

ap·ply [ə'plai] verb

(a) to ask for a job; she applied for a job as a teacher; he applied to join the police force.

(b) to refer to; this applies to all of you; the rule applies to visitors only.

applies—applying—applied—has applied

ap·pli·ca·tion [æpli'keiʃn] noun

asking for a job (usually in writing); if you are applying for the job, you must fill in an application form.

ap·point [ə'point] verb

to give someone a job; he was appointed sales manager.

appoints—appointing—appointed—has appointed

ap·point·ment, noun

(a) giving someone a job; on his appointment as manager = when he was appointed manager.

(b) arrangement to see someone at a

arithmetic

particular time; I have an appointment with the doctor/to see the doctor on Tuesday; can I make an appointment to see Dr. Jones? I'm very busy—I have appointments all day.

ap·proach [ə'prəʊtʃ] verb

to go/to come nearer; as the cops approached, all the children ran away; the time is approaching when we will have to decide what to do.

approaches—approaching—approached—has approached

A·pril [ˈeɪprəl] noun

fourth month of the year; his birthday is in April; she died on April 20, 1922; we went on vacation last April; today is April 5. *Note:* April 5: say "April fifth," "April the fifth," or "the fifth of April"

a·pron [ˈeɪprən] noun

cloth or plastic cover which you wear in front of your clothes to stop them from getting dirty; put on an apron if you are going to wash the dishes.

are [ɑː] see be

ar·ea [ˈeəriə] noun

(a) measurement of the space occupied by something; to measure the area of a room you must multiply the length by the width; the area of the garage is 250 square feet.

(b) district; the houses in this area are very expensive; the police are searching the area around the school; several million people live in the area around Boston.

aren't [ɑːnt] see be

ar·gue [ˈɑːɡjuː] verb

to discuss something without agreeing/to fight; she argued with the waiter about the check.

argues—arguing—argued—has argued

ar·gu·ment [ˈɑːɡjʊmənt] noun

discussing something without agreeing; they got into an argument about money.

a·rith·me·tic [ə'riθmətiːk] noun

working with numbers.

arm [ɑ:rm] *noun*

(a) part of the body which goes from your hand to your shoulder; his arm hurt after he fell down; she broke her arm skiing; lift your arms up above your head.

(b) part of a chair which you can rest your arms on; he sat on the arm of my chair.

(c) arms = weapons.

arm-chair, *noun*
chair with arms.

armed, *adjective*

(person) who carries weapons; the soldiers were armed with knives; are the policemen all armed? the armed forces = the Army, Navy and Air Force.

army [ɑ:mi] *noun*

all the soldiers of a country; the Mexican army; he left school and joined the army.
plural armies

around [ə'raʊnd] *preposition & adverb*

(a) on all sides of; the water was all around the house; the area around Chicago.

(b) about; the car cost around \$4,000.

(c) in a circle; the earth turns around the sun.

(d) backwards; he turned around.

(e) from one person to another; pass around the plate of cookies.

(f) in various places; we walked around the town.

arrange [ə'reɪndʒ] *verb*

(a) to put in order; she arranged the chairs in rows; the books are arranged in alphabetical order.

(b) to organize; we arranged to meet at 6 o'clock.

arranges—arranging—arranged—has arranged

arrangement, *noun*

way in which something is put in order; way in which something is organized; I don't like the arrangement of the chairs; all the arrangements have been made for the party.

arrest [ə'rest] *verb*

to catch someone and keep him (usually at a police station) because the police believe he has done something wrong;

the policeman arrested the burglar; he was arrested as he was climbing out of the window.

arrests—arresting—arrested—has arrested

arrive [ə'raɪv] *verb*

to reach a place; the plane arrives in London at 4 o'clock; we arrived at the theater after the film had started; she arrived home tired out.

arrives—arriving—arrived—has arrived

Note: you arrive in a town, but arrive at a place

arrival, *noun*

(a) reaching a place; the time of arrival is 4 o'clock.

(b) person who has arrived; he's a new arrival.

art [ɑ:t] *noun*

painting/drawing, etc.; he collects Russian works of art.

art gallery, *noun*

building where paintings, etc., are put on show.

article [ɑ:tɪkl] *noun*

(a) thing/object; article of clothing = piece of clothing.

(b) word which shows a noun (such as a house, the tree).

(c) piece of writing in a newspaper; did you read the article on Germany in yesterday's paper?

artificial [ɑ:tɪ'fɪʃl] *adjective*

which is made by man/which is not the real thing; an artificial Christmas tree; he has an artificial leg.

artist [ɑ:tɪst] *noun*

person who paints/draws, etc.

as [æz or əz] *conjunction*

(a) because; as you can't drive, you must go by bus.

(b) at the same time; as he was opening the door, the telephone rang.

(c) in a certain way; leave it as it is; you must do as the teacher tells you.

as for = referring to; as for you—you must stay here.

as if = in the same way as; he walks very slowly, as if he had hurt his leg; she

ash

looks as if she's going to cry; it looks as if it's going to rain.

as of = from a time; as of tomorrow = starting from tomorrow.

as ... as = like; he is as tall as me; as green as grass.

as though = as if

as well = also/too; he ate his piece of cake and mine as well; we visited the castle and the old town as well.

as well as = together with; he has a house in the country as well as a house in town; as well as teaching English, he also teaches football.

ash [æʃ] *noun*

gray dust left when something has burned; he dropped cigarette ashes onto the carpet.

no plural: some ash; a pile of ash; ashes means small pieces of ash

a-shamed [ə'ʃeɪmd] *adjective*

sorry because you have done something wrong; he was ashamed of what he had done; don't be ashamed of making mistakes; she was ashamed of her old clothes.

ask [æsk] *verb*

(a) to put a question; ask someone to teach you how to swim; he asked the policeman the way to the post office; she went to the station to ask about cheap fares to Montreal.

(b) to invite; we asked them in for a cup of coffee; don't ask her to go out with you—she always wants expensive dinners.

asks—asking—asked—has asked

ask for, verb

to say that you want something; he asked for more money; someone knocked at the door and asked for my father; he asked for his pencil back = said that he wanted to have the pencil which he had loaned.

a-sleep [ə'sli:p] *adjective*

sleeping; he was asleep and didn't hear the telephone ring; she fell asleep in front of the TV = she began to sleep.

Note: asleep cannot be used in front of a noun: the cat is asleep but a sleeping cat

attack

as-sis-tant [ə'sɪstənt] *noun*

person who helps; my assistant will come to meet you.

as-ton-ish [ə'stɒnɪʃ] *verb*

to surprise; I was astonished to hear that she was married.

astonishes—astonishing—

astonished—has astonished

as-ton-ish-ing, adjective

which surprises; it's astonishing how many people speak English well; an astonishing number of the students passed their exams.

as-ton-ish-ment, noun

great surprise; to his astonishment, she suddenly started to sing.

at [æt or at] *preposition*

(a) (showing time) at ten o'clock; at night; at noon.

(b) (showing place) meet me at the corner of the street; at the top of the mountain; she's not at home; he's at work.

(c) (showing speed) the train was traveling at 50 miles an hour.

at first = in the beginning; at first she walked slowly, and then started to run.

at last = in the end; we drove for miles, and at last reached the mountains.

at once = immediately; I'll do it at once.

at the mo-ment = right now; she's busy at the moment.

at times = sometimes; at times I feel like quitting my job.

Note: at is often used after verbs: look at; point at, etc.

ate [eɪt] *see eat*

at-tach [ə'tætʃ] *verb*

to fix/to fasten; the seat belt is attached to the floor of the car; the boat was attached with a chain.

attaches—attaching—attached—has attached

at-tack [ə'tæk] 1. *noun*

(a) starting to fight; they made an attack on the castle.

(b) sudden illness; he had an attack of fever.

2. *verb*

to start to fight; three big men attacked

attempt

him and stole his money; the old lady was attacked by robbers.

attacks—attacking—attacked—has attacked

at·tempt [ə'tempt] 1. *noun*

try; he made an attempt to break the record for the high jump.

2. *verb*

to try; she attempted to climb the mountain.

attempts—attempting—attempted—has attempted

at·tend [ə'tend] *verb*

to be present at; will you attend the meeting tomorrow?

attends—attending—attended—has attended

at·tend to, *verb*

to take care of; the doctor is attending to his patients.

at·ten·tion [ə'tenʃn] *noun*

careful thinking; the boy in the back row was not paying attention to what the teacher was saying; attention please!

Aug·ust ['ɔ:gəst] *noun*

eight month of the year; my birthday is in August; today is August 15; I start my new job next August.

Note: August 15; say "August fifteenth," "August the fifteenth" or "the fifteenth of August"

aunt [ænt] *noun*

sister of your mother or father; wife of your uncle; here is Aunt Mary.

au·to·mat·ic [ɔ:tə'mætɪk] *adjective*

which works by itself, with no one making it work; an automatic door = door which opens as you come to it.

au·to·mat·ic·al·ly [ɔ:tə'mætɪkli] *adverb*

working by itself; the door opens automatically; when smoke comes into the room, it automatically makes a bell ring.

au·to·mo·bile [ɔ:tə'mə'bi:l] *noun*

car; he works in the automobile industry.

au·tumn ['ɔ:təm] *noun* = fall.

av·er·age ['ævərɪdʒ] 1. *noun*

middle figure out of two or more; we scored 10, 12 and 17, so our average is

awful

13; to work out an average you must add all the figures together and then divide by the number of figures which you have added.

2. *adjective*

ordinary/not very good; he gets average grades in school; she is just an average worker.

a·void [ə'vɔɪd] *verb*

to try not to do something; to keep away from something; I want to avoid going out in the rain; leave early to avoid the traffic.

avoids—avoiding—avoided—has avoided

a·wake [ə'weɪk] 1. *verb*

(a) to wake someone up; he was awoken by the sound of thunder.

(b) to wake up; he awoke when he heard the sound of thunder.

awakes—awaking—awoke—has awoken

2. *adjective*

not asleep; he was still awake at 2 o'clock; the baby is wide awake = very awake.

Note: awake cannot be used in front of a noun

a·wak·en, *verb*

to wake up; he awakened to the sound of rain.

awakens—awakening—awakened—has awakened

a·way [ə'weɪ] *adverb*

(a) not here; far; the nearest town is six miles away; go away! put that knife away.

(b) not at home; they went away on vacation; my husband was away on business.

Note: away is used with many verbs: go away; keep away, etc.

aw·ful ['ɔ:fl] *adjective*

very bad; what an awful smell! he has an awful cold.

aw·ful·ly, *adverb*

very; it is awfully cold outside; I'm awfully hungry.