

BROADEN YOUR VOCABULARY WITH OVER 120,000
ALTERNATIVE AND OPPOSITE WORDS

Oxford



DICTIONARY OF Synonyms and Antonyms



The Oxford Dictionary of
**Synonyms
and Antonyms**

THIRD EDITION



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Oxford University Press 1999, 2007, 2014

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

Database right Oxford University Press (maker)

First Edition published in 1999

Second Edition published in 2007

Third Edition published in 2014

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013951374

ISBN 978-0-19-870518-5

Printed in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

The Oxford Dictionary of
**Synonyms
and Antonyms**

Oxford Paperback Reference

The most authoritative and up-to-date reference books for both students and the general reader.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Accounting | Irish History |
| Animal Behaviour | Islam |
| Archaeology | Kings and Queens of Britain |
| Architecture and Landscape | Law |
| Architecture | Law Enforcement |
| Art and Artists | Linguistics |
| Art Terms | Literary Terms |
| Arthurian Literature and Legend | London Place-Names |
| Astronomy | Mathematics |
| Battles | Marketing |
| Bible | Mechanical Engineering |
| Biology | Media and Communication |
| Biomedicine | Medical |
| British History | Modern Slang |
| British Place-Names | Music |
| Business and Management | Musical Terms |
| Card Games | Nursing |
| Chemistry | Opera Characters |
| Christian Church | Philosophy |
| Classical Literature | Physics |
| Classical World | Plant Sciences |
| Computing | Plays |
| Construction, Surveying, and Civil Engineering | Pocket Fowler's Modern English Usage |
| Cosmology | Political Quotations |
| Countries of the World | Politics |
| Critical Theory | Popes |
| Dance | Proverbs |
| Dentistry | Psychology |
| Earth Sciences | Quotations |
| Ecology | Quotations by Subject |
| Economics | Reference and Allusion |
| Education | Rhymes |
| English Etymology | Rhyming Slang |
| English Grammar | Saints |
| English Literature | Science |
| English Surnames | Scottish History |
| Environment and Conservation | Shakespeare |
| Everyday Grammar | Slang |
| Film Studies | Social Work and Social Care |
| Finance and Banking | Sociology |
| Foreign Words and Phrases | Statistics |
| Forensic Science | Superstitions |
| Geography | Synonyms and Antonyms |
| Hinduism | Theatre & Performance |
| Human Geography | Weather |
| Humorous Quotations | Weights, Measures, and Units |
| Idioms | Word Origins |
| | Zoology |

Many of these titles are also available online at www.oxfordreference.com

Introduction

A dictionary of synonyms and antonyms contains lists of words that have a similar meaning to another word. It can help you to express yourself more clearly, find a word that is on the tip of your tongue, or avoid repeating a word that you have already used. It can also be a very useful resource for crossword puzzles and other word games.

Extra help is provided by the boxed Word Links—words related in different ways to a selection of key entries. Under **bird**, for example, you will find the words **avian** (meaning ‘relating to birds’) and **ornithology** (meaning ‘the study of birds’).

New to this Third Edition are words such as **podcast**, **staycation**, **redact**, **chilled**, **coruscating**, **nemesis**, and **disruptive** (in the sense of ‘innovative’).

In addition, there is a useful centre section designed to improve your knowledge of the English language even further: a supplement of commonly confused words explains the crucial differences between similar words that are often mixed up, and a Wordfinder section offers more sources of vocabulary in the form of thematic lists—from chemical elements and clothing to phobias and flowers.

To explore language further, visit Oxford Dictionaries Online at www.oxforddictionaries.com. This free site, which is regularly updated, allows you to search our largest dictionary of current English, as well as dictionaries of French, German, Italian, and Spanish. It also offers fascinating information on usage, grammar, and writing, a Word of the Day, a language blog, and more.

Guide to the dictionary

Here is an explanation of the main features that you will find in this dictionary.

Entry word (known as a headword)	colourful : adjective 1 bright, vivid, vibrant, brilliant, radiant, gaudy, garish, multicoloured, psychedelic; <i>informal</i> jazzy; 2 a colourful account; vivid , graphic, lively, animated, dramatic, fascinating, interesting, stimulating, scintillating, evocative.	Example of use
Numbered sense of the entry word	OPPOSITES drab, dull.	Word closest in meaning to the entry word (in bold type)
Words meaning the opposite of the entry word		
Labels showing the region of the world in which the following synonyms are used	horse noun mount , charger, cob, nag, hack, colt, stallion, mare, filly; <i>N. Amer.</i> : bronco; <i>Austral./N.Z.</i> : moke; <i>informal</i> : gee-gee.	Label showing the level of English in which the following synonym is used
	WORD LINKS equine relating to horses equestrian relating to horse riding	Word links providing extra vocabulary related to the entry word
Different parts of speech of the entry word	root : noun: 1 source, origin, cause, reason, basis, foundation, bottom, seat. 2 his Irish roots origins , beginnings, family, birth, heritage. ● verb: rummage , hunt, search, rifle, delve, forage, dig, poke.	
Phrase for which synonyms are given	□: root out : eradicate, eliminate, weed out, destroy, wipe out, stamp out, abolish, end, put a stop to.	

Labels

Most of the synonyms in this dictionary are part of standard English, but some are used only in certain contexts or types of writing. These are grouped at the end of their sense, preceded by one of the following labels, as appropriate:

<i>informal</i>	normally used only in speech or informal writing or email (e.g. barmy or gawp)
<i>formal</i>	normally used only in writing, especially in official documents (e.g. dwelling)
<i>dated</i>	no longer used by most people (e.g. navvy)
<i>old use</i>	not in ordinary use today, though sometimes used to give an old-fashioned effect (e.g. comely)
<i>historical</i>	only used today to refer to things that are no longer part of modern life (e.g. alms)
<i>literary</i>	found only or mainly in works of literature (e.g. plenteous)
<i>technical</i>	normally used only in technical language (e.g. occlude)
<i>derogatory</i>	meant to convey a low opinion or to insult someone (e.g. pleb)

Geographical labels

English is spoken throughout the world, and while most of the words used in standard British English are also used in other varieties, there are some words which are only found in one type of English. If a word has the geographical label *Brit.* in this dictionary, this means that it is used in standard British English but not in American English, although it may be found in other varieties such as Australian English. The labels *US* and *N. Amer.*, on the other hand, mean that the word is typically American and is not standard in British English, though it may be found elsewhere.

Subject labels

These are used to show that a word or sense is connected with a particular subject or specialist activity such as *Medicine* or *Computing*.

Abbreviations used in this dictionary

<i>Austral.</i>	Australian
<i>Brit.</i>	British
<i>Canad.</i>	Canadian
<i>N. Amer.</i>	North American
<i>NZ</i>	New Zealand
<i>US</i>	United States

Trademarks

This dictionary includes some words which have, or are asserted to have, proprietary status as trademarks or otherwise. Their inclusion does not imply that they have acquired for legal purposes a non-proprietary or general significance, nor any other judgement concerning their legal status. In cases where the editorial staff have some evidence that a word has proprietary status this is indicated in the entry for that word by the label *trademark*, but no judgement concerning the legal status of such words is made or implied thereby.

Contents

Introduction vii

Guide to the dictionary ix

Labels xi

Abbreviations xiii

The Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms 1

Commonly confused words *Centre section*

Wordfinder *Centre section*

Aa

abandon *verb* **1** *he abandoned his wife* **desert**, leave, turn your back on, cast aside, finish with, jilt, throw over; *informal* walk/run out on, dump, ditch; *literary* forsake. **2** *she had abandoned painting* **give up**, stop, have done with; *informal* pack in, quit; *Brit.* jack in. **3** *they abandoned the car* **leave (behind)**, vacate, dump, quit, evacuate, discard, jettison. **4** *the party abandoned those policies* **renounce**, relinquish, dispense with, discard, give up, drop; *informal* ditch, scrap, junk; *formal* forswear.

- OPPOSITES keep.

● *noun* **uninhibitedness**, recklessness, lack of restraint, lack of inhibition.

- OPPOSITES self-control.

abate *verb* **subside**, die down/away/out, lessen, ease (off), let up, decrease, diminish, fade, weaken.

- OPPOSITES intensify.

abbreviate *verb* **shorten**, reduce, cut, contract, condense, compress, abridge, summarize, precis.

- OPPOSITES lengthen, expand.

abbreviation *noun* **short form**, contraction, acronym, initialism.

abdicate *verb* **resign**, retire, stand down, step down, renounce the throne.

abdomen *noun* **stomach**, belly, gut, middle; *informal* tummy, guts.

WORD LINKS

abdominal, ventral relating to the abdomen

abdominal *adjective* **gastric**, intestinal, stomach, duodenal, visceral, coeliac, ventral.

abduct *verb* **kidnap**, carry off, seize, capture, run away/off with, take hostage; *informal* snatch.

aberration *noun* **anomaly**, deviation, abnormality, irregularity, variation,

freak, oddity, peculiarity, curiosity, mistake.

abhor *verb* **hate**, detest, loathe, despise, shudder at; *formal* abominate.

- OPPOSITES love, admire.

abhorrent *adjective* **hateful**, detestable, loathsome, abominable, repellent, repugnant, repulsive, revolting, vile, odious, disgusting, horrible, horrid, horrifying, awful, heinous.

- OPPOSITES admirable.

abide *verb* **1** (*informal*) *I can't abide smoke* **stand**, bear; *Brit. informal* stick.

2 *one memory will abide* **continue**, remain, survive, last, persist, live on.

□ **abide by** comply with, obey, observe, follow, keep to, adhere to, stick to, go along with, heed, accept.

abiding *adjective* **enduring**, lasting, everlasting, perpetual, eternal, unending, permanent.

ability *noun* **1 capacity**, capability, power, potential, faculty, facility, wherewithal, means. **2 talent**, skill, aptitude, expertise, savoir faire, prowess, accomplishment, competence, proficiency, flair, gift, knack, genius; *informal* know-how.

- OPPOSITES inability.

able *adjective* **intelligent**, clever, talented, skilful, skilled, expert, accomplished, gifted, proficient, apt, adroit, adept, capable, competent; *informal* genius.

- OPPOSITES incompetent.

abnormal *adjective* **unusual**, uncommon, atypical, untypical, unexpected, unrepresentative, irregular, anomalous, deviant, aberrant, freak, strange, odd, peculiar, eccentric, bizarre, weird, unnatural, perverted, twisted, warped; *informal* funny, freaky, kinky.

- OPPOSITES normal.

a

abnormality *noun* deformity, defect, malformation, oddity, strangeness, irregularity, anomaly, deviation, aberration.

abolish *verb* put an end to, get rid of, scrap, cancel, end, remove, dissolve, stop, ban; *informal* do away with, axe, ditch.

abominable *adjective* loathsome, detestable, hateful, obnoxious, despicable, contemptible, disgusting, revolting, repellent, repulsive, repugnant, abhorrent, reprehensible, atrocious, execrable, foul, vile, wretched, horrible, awful, dreadful, appalling, nauseating; *informal* terrible, shocking, God-awful; *Brit. informal* beastly.

- OPPOSITES good, admirable.

abort *verb* the crew aborted the take-off halt, stop, end, call off, abandon, discontinue, terminate; *informal* pull the plug on.

abortion *noun* termination, miscarriage.

abortive *adjective* unsuccessful, failed, vain, ineffective, ineffectual, unproductive, futile, useless, unavailing.

- OPPOSITES successful.

abound *verb* be plentiful, be abundant, be numerous, be thick on the ground; *informal* grow on trees, be two/ten a penny.

about *preposition* regarding, concerning, referring to, with regard to, with respect to, relating to, on, dealing with, on the subject of.

● *adverb* approximately, roughly, around, in the region of, circa, of the order of, or so, or thereabouts, more or less; *Brit.* getting on for; *N. Amer. informal* in the ballpark of.

above *preposition* 1 over, higher (up) than, on top of, on. 2 superior to, senior to, over, higher (up) than, more powerful than, in charge of, commanding.

- OPPOSITES below.

● *adverb* overhead, on/at the top, high up, on high, up above, (up) in the sky.

□ **above all** most importantly, most of all, chiefly, primarily, first and foremost, essentially, in essence, at bottom; *informal* at the end of the day, when all is said and done.

abrasion *noun* 1 graze, cut, scrape, scratch, gash, laceration. 2 erosion, wearing away/down.

abrasive *adjective* 1 rough, coarse, harsh, scratchy, chafing. 2 curt, brusque, sharp, harsh, caustic, grating. - OPPOSITES gentle.

abridge *verb* shorten, cut (down), edit, abbreviate, condense, compress, truncate, prune, summarize, precis, synopsisize; (**abridged**) concise. - OPPOSITES extend.

abridgement *noun* summary, synopsis, precis, abstract, outline, résumé, digest, cut-down version.

abroad *adverb* overseas, out of the country, to/in foreign parts, to/in a foreign country/land.

abrupt *adjective* 1 sudden, rapid, quick, hasty, unexpected, unanticipated, unforeseen, precipitate. 2 curt, brusque, blunt, short, rude, sharp, terse, brisk, unceremonious. - OPPOSITES gradual, gentle.

abscond *verb* run away, run off, escape, bolt, flee, make off, take flight, take off, decamp; *informal* scarper, vamoose, do a bunk, do a runner.

absence *noun* 1 non-attendance, absenteeism, truancy, leave, holiday, vacation, sabbatical. 2 lack, want, non-existence, unavailability, scarcity, shortage, dearth. - OPPOSITES presence.

absent *adjective* 1 away, off, out, elsewhere, off duty, on holiday, on leave, playing truant; *informal* AWOL. 2 non-existent, lacking, missing. 3 distracted, preoccupied, inattentive, vague, absorbed, dreamy, faraway, blank, empty, vacant.

- OPPOSITES present.

□ **absent yourself** stay away, be absent, go away, leave, withdraw.

absent-minded *adjective* forgetful, distracted, scatterbrained, preoccupied, inattentive, vague; *informal* with a mind/memory like a sieve.

absolute *adjective* **1** *absolute silence* | *an absolute disgrace* **complete**, total, utter, out-and-out, outright, perfect, pure, thorough, unqualified, unreserved, downright, unmitigated, sheer, unadulterated. **2** *absolute power* **unlimited**, unrestricted, unrestrained, infinite, total, supreme, unconditional. **3** *an absolute ruler* **autocratic**, dictatorial, all-powerful, omnipotent, supreme.
- **OPPOSITES** partial, qualified, limited.

absolutely *adverb* **completely**, totally, utterly, perfectly, entirely, wholly, fully, quite, thoroughly, unreservedly, definitely, certainly, unquestionably, undoubtedly, without (a) doubt, without question, in every way/respect, one hundred per cent.

absorb *verb* **1** *soak up*, suck up, draw up/in, take up/in, mop up. **2** *engross*, captivate, occupy, preoccupy, engage, rivet, grip, hold, immerse, involve, enthral, spellbind, fascinate.

absorbent *adjective* **spongy**, sponge-like, porous, permeable.

absorbing *adjective* **fascinating**, interesting, captivating, gripping, engrossing, compelling, compulsive, enthralling, riveting, spellbinding; *informal* unputdownable.
- **OPPOSITES** boring.

absorption *noun* **1** *soaking up*, sucking up. **2** *involvement*, immersion, raptness, preoccupation, captivation, fascination, enthrallment.

abstain *verb* **refrain**, desist, forbear, give up, renounce, avoid, eschew, forgo, go/do without, refuse, decline; *informal* cut out.

abstemious *adjective* **moderate**, restrained, temperate, self-disciplined, self-restrained, self-denying, sober, austere, ascetic, puritanical, spartan.
- **OPPOSITES** self-indulgent.

abstinence *noun* **self-denial**, self-restraint, teetotalism, temperance, sobriety, abstemiousness.

abstract *adjective* **theoretical**, conceptual, intellectual, metaphysical, philosophical, academic.
- **OPPOSITES** actual, concrete.

● *noun* **summary**, synopsis, precis, résumé, outline, abridgement; *N. Amer.* wrap-up.

abstruse *adjective* **obscure**, arcane, esoteric, rarefied, recondite, difficult, hard, cryptic, over/above your head, incomprehensible, unfathomable, impenetrable.

absurd *adjective* **irrational**, illogical, inappropriate, ridiculous, ludicrous, farcical, comical, stupid, idiotic, asinine, hare-brained, foolish, silly, pointless, senseless, preposterous; *informal* crazy, cockeyed; *Brit. informal* barmy, daft.
- **OPPOSITES** sensible.

abundance *noun* **plenty**, plentifulness, plethora, profusion, exuberance, riot, cornucopia, superabundance.
- **OPPOSITES** scarcity.

abundant *adjective* **plentiful**, copious, ample, profuse, large, huge, great, bumper, prolific, overflowing, teeming, superabundant; *informal* galore.
- **OPPOSITES** scarce.

abuse *verb* **1** *misuse*, exploit, take advantage of. **2** *mistreat*, maltreat, ill-treat, hurt, harm, beat, molest, interfere with. **3** *insult*, be rude to, swear at, shout at, vilify, curse.

● *noun* **1** *misuse*, exploitation. **2** *mistreatment*, maltreatment, ill-treatment, molestation. **3** *insults*, expletives, swear words, swearing, name-calling, invective, vilification, curses.

abusive *adjective* **1** *insulting*, rude, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, slanderous, libellous. **2** *violent*, brutal, cruel, harsh, oppressive.
- **OPPOSITES** polite.

abysmal *adjective* **terrible**, dreadful, awful, appalling, frightful, atrocious, disgraceful, deplorable, lamentable;

a

informal rotten, pathetic, pitiful, woe-ful, useless, lousy, dire, poxy, the pits; *Brit. informal* chronic, shocking.

abyss *noun* **chasm**, crevasse, gulf, pit, void.

academic *adjective* **1** educational, scholastic. **2** scholarly, learned, literary, intellectual, erudite, high-brow, bookish, studious. **3** theoretical, hypothetical, notional, speculative, conjectural, irrelevant, beside the point.

● *noun* **scholar**, intellectual, don, professor, man/woman of letters, thinker; *informal* egghead; *Brit. informal* boffin.

academy *noun* **college**, school, university, institute.

accelerate *verb* **1** speed up, go faster, gain momentum, increase speed, pick up speed, gather speed. **2** hasten, quicken, speed up, further, advance, expedite; *informal* crank up.

- OPPOSITES decelerate, delay.

accent *noun* **1** pronunciation, intonation, enunciation, articulation, inflection. **2** emphasis, stress, priority, importance, prominence.

accentuate *verb* focus attention on, draw attention to, point up, underline, underscore, accent, highlight, spotlight, foreground, bring to the fore, emphasize, stress.

accept *verb* **1** receive, take, get, obtain, acquire, pick up. **2** agree to, accede to, consent to, acquiesce in, concur with, endorse, comply with, go along with, defer to, put up with, recognize, acknowledge, admit. **3** believe, trust, credit, be convinced of, have faith in; *informal* buy, swallow.

- OPPOSITES reject.

acceptable *adjective* satisfactory, adequate, reasonable, fair, good enough, sufficient, tolerable, passable.

acceptance *noun* **1** receipt, receiving, taking. **2** respect, acknowledgement, belief, toleration, consent, agreement, assent, compliance, acquiescence.

accepted *adjective* recognized, acknowledged, established, traditional,

orthodox, agreed, approved, customary, normal, standard.

- OPPOSITES unorthodox.

access *noun* **1** a side access entrance, entry, approach, path, drive, way in.

2 they were denied access admission, admittance, entry.

accessible *adjective* approachable, attainable, reachable, obtainable, available, understandable, comprehensible, intelligible; *informal* get-at-able.

accessory *noun* **1** extra, add-on, addition, supplement, attachment, fitment.

2 accomplice, abettor, collaborator, co-conspirator, henchman, associate.

accident *noun* **1** mishap, misadventure, disaster, tragedy, catastrophe, calamity. **2** crash, collision, smash, bump, derailment; *N. Amer.* wreck; *informal* smash-up, pile-up; *Brit. informal* shunt. **3** chance, fate, fortune, luck, good luck, fluke, coincidence.

accidental *adjective* **1** chance, coincidental, unexpected, incidental, fortuitous, serendipitous. **2** unintentional, unintended, unplanned, inadvertent, unwitting, unpremeditated.

- OPPOSITES intentional.

acclaim *verb* praise, applaud, cheer, commend, approve, welcome, hail, celebrate, eulogize; *formal* laud.

- OPPOSITES criticize.

● *noun* praise, applause, tributes, plaudits, approval, admiration, congratulations, commendation, eulogies.

- OPPOSITES criticism.

acclimatize *verb* adjust, adapt, get used, familiarize yourself, find your feet, get your bearings; *N. Amer.* acclimate.

accommodate *verb* **1** refugees were accommodated in army camps lodge, house, put up, billet, board. **2** the cottages accommodate six people hold, take, have room for, sleep, seat. **3** we tried to accommodate her help, assist, oblige, cater for, fit in, satisfy, meet the needs of.

accommodating *adjective* obliging, cooperative, helpful, amenable,

hospitable, flexible.

accommodation *noun* **housing**, homes, lodging(s), (living) quarters, rooms, billet, shelter, a roof over your head; *informal* digs, pad; *formal* residence, dwelling, abode.

accompaniment *noun* **1** *a musical accompaniment* **backing**, support, background, soundtrack. **2** *wine is a good accompaniment to cheese* **complement**, addition, adjunct, accessory, companion.

accompany *verb* **1** **escort**, go with, travel with, keep someone company, chaperone, partner, show, see, usher, conduct. **2** **occur with**, go along with, go together with, attend, be linked with, go hand in hand with. **3** *he accompanied the choir on the piano* **back**, play along with, support.

accomplice *noun* **partner in crime**, abettor, accessory, collaborator, co-conspirator, henchman, associate; *informal* sidekick.

accomplish *verb* **achieve**, succeed in, realize, attain, manage, bring off, carry through, execute, effect, perform, complete.

accomplished *adjective* **expert**, skilled, skilful, masterly, virtuoso, master, proficient, polished, practised, consummate, talented, gifted, able, capable; *informal* mean, nifty, crack, ace.

accomplishment *noun* **1** **achievement**, success, act, deed, exploit, effort, feat, coup. **2** **talent**, skill, gift, ability.

accord *verb* **1** **give**, grant, present, award, confer on, bestow on. **2** **correspond**, agree, tally, match, concur, be in harmony, be in tune.

– OPPOSITES disagree, differ.

● *noun* **1** *a peace accord* **pact**, treaty, agreement, settlement, deal, entente, protocol. **2** *the two sides failed to reach accord* **agreement**, consensus, unanimity, harmony.

– OPPOSITES disagreement.

□ **of your own accord** voluntarily, of

your own free will, of your own volition, by choice, willingly, freely, readily.

account *noun* **1** **description**, report, version, story, statement, explanation, tale, chronicle, narrative, history, record, log. **2** **financial record**, ledger, balance sheet, financial statement; (**accounts**) books. **3** *his background is of no account* **importance**, import, significance, consequence, value.

□ **account for** **1** explain, answer for, give reasons for, justify. **2** constitute, make up, comprise, represent, be responsible for, produce.

accountability *noun* **responsibility**, liability, answerability.

accountable *adjective* **responsible**, liable, answerable, to blame.

accumulate *verb* **gather**, collect, amass, stockpile, pile up, build up, store (up), hoard, lay in/up, increase, accrue, run up.

– OPPOSITES disperse.

accumulation *noun* **mass**, build-up, pile, collection, stock, store, stockpile, hoard.

accuracy *noun* **correctness**, precision, exactness, fidelity, truth, truthfulness, authenticity, realism.

accurate *adjective* **1** **correct**, precise, exact, right, factual, literal, faithful, true, truthful, on the mark, authentic, realistic; *Brit. informal* spot on, bang on; *N. Amer. informal* on the money, on the button. **2** **well aimed**, on target, unerring, deadly, true.

accusation *noun* **allegation**, charge, indictment, impeachment, claim, assertion, imputation.

accuse *verb* **1** **charge**, indict, impeach, prefer charges against, arraign.

2 **blame**, hold responsible, condemn, criticize, denounce; *informal* point the finger at.

accustom *verb* **adapt**, adjust, acclimatize, habituate, familiarize, become reconciled, get used to, come to terms with, learn to live with; *N. Amer.* acclimate.

accustomed *adjective* **customary**, established, habitual, usual, normal, regular, routine; *literary* wonted.

ache *noun* **pain**, twinge, pang, soreness, tenderness, irritation, discomfort, burning, throbbing, cramp.

● *verb* **hurt**, be sore, be painful, be tender, burn, be in pain, throb.

achieve *verb* **attain**, reach, realize, bring off, pull off, accomplish, carry through, fulfil, complete, succeed in, manage, effect; *informal* wrap up, swing.

achievement *noun* **1 attainment**, realization, accomplishment, fulfilment, implementation, completion. **2 feat**, exploit, triumph, coup, accomplishment, act, action, deed, effort, work, handiwork.

acid *adjective* **1 sour**, acidic, tart, sharp, vinegary. **2 sharp**, sharp-tongued, catty, sarcastic, scathing, cutting, biting, stinging, caustic; *informal* bitchy.

- OPPOSITES sweet.

acknowledge *verb* **1 admit**, accept, grant, agree, own, allow, concede, confess, recognize. **2 greet**, salute, address, nod to, wave to, say hello to. **3 answer**, reply to, respond to.

- OPPOSITES deny, ignore.

acquaint *verb* **familiarize**, make aware of, inform of, advise of, brief; *informal* fill in on, clue in on.

acquaintance *noun* **1 a business acquaintance** **contact**, associate, colleague. **2 my acquaintance with George** **association**, relationship. **3 some acquaintance with the language** **familiarity with**, knowledge of, experience of, awareness of, understanding of, grasp of.

acquire *verb* **get**, obtain, come by, receive, collect, gain, buy, earn, win, come into, secure, pick up, procure; *informal* get your hands on, get hold of, land, bag, score.

- OPPOSITES lose.

acquisition *noun* **purchase**, addition, investment, possession, accession; *informal* buy.

acquit *verb* **1 clear**, exonerate, find innocent, absolve, discharge, free, release; *informal* let off (the hook). **2 the boys acquitted themselves well** **behave**, conduct yourself, perform, act.

- OPPOSITES convict.

acid *adjective* **pungent**, bitter, sharp, harsh, stinging, burning.

acrimonious *adjective* **bitter**, angry, rancorous, harsh, vicious, nasty, bad-tempered, ill-natured.

act *verb* **1 take action**, take steps, take measures, move. **2 behave**, conduct yourself, react. **3 I'll act as lookout** **function**, work, serve, operate. **4 perform**, play, appear; *informal* tread the boards.

● *noun* **1 deed**, action, step, move, gesture, feat, exploit. **2 law**, decree, statute, bill, edict, ruling, order.

3 performance, turn, routine, number, sketch. **4 pretence**, show, front, facade, masquerade, charade, pose; *informal* put-on.

acting *adjective* **temporary**, interim, caretaker, pro tem, provisional, stop-gap; *N. Amer. informal* pinch-hitting.

- OPPOSITES permanent.

action *noun* **1 deed**, act, undertaking, feat, exploit, behaviour, conduct, activity. **2 measures**, steps, initiatives, activism, campaigning, pressure. **3 operation**, working, effect, influence, process, power. **4 battle**, combat, hostilities, fighting, conflict, active service. **5 lawsuit**, suit, case, prosecution, litigation, proceedings.

activate *verb* **start (up)**, switch on, turn on, set going, trigger (off), set off, energize.

active *adjective* **1 busy**, lively, dynamic, vigorous, sprightly, spry, mobile; *informal* on the go, full of beans.

2 hard-working, industrious, tireless, energetic, diligent, enthusiastic, keen, committed, devoted, zealous. **3 working**, operative, functioning, operational, in action, in operation, in force; *informal* (up and) running.

- OPPOSITES inactive.

activity *noun* **1** action, bustle, movement, life, hurly-burly; *informal* toing and froing, comings and goings. **2** pursuit, occupation, hobby, pastime, recreation, diversion, venture, undertaking, enterprise, project, scheme.

actor, actress *noun* performer, player, thespian, star, starlet; *Brit. informal* luvvy.

actual *adjective* real, true, genuine, authentic, bona fide, confirmed, definite, hard, concrete; *informal* real live.
- OPPOSITES imaginary.

actually *adverb* really, in (actual) fact, in point of fact, as a matter of fact, in reality, in truth, if truth be told, to tell the truth.

acute *adjective* **1** severe, dire, terrible, grave, serious, desperate, urgent, pressing. **2** excruciating, sharp, severe, stabbing, agonizing, racking, searing. **3** quick, astute, shrewd, sharp, keen, penetrating, razor-sharp, quick-witted, agile, nimble, intelligent, canny, discerning, perceptive.
- OPPOSITES mild, dull.

adamant *adjective* unshakeable, unwavering, unswerving, immovable, resolute, resolved, determined, firm, dead set.

adapt *verb* **1** the policy can be adapted **modify**, alter, change, adjust, remodel, reorganize, customize, tailor; *informal* tweak. **2** he adapts well to new surroundings **adjust**, conform, acclimatize, accommodate, get used, get accustomed, habituate yourself.

add *verb* **1** attach, append, tack on, join on. **2** they added the figures up **total**, count (up), reckon up, tally; *Brit.* tot up.
- OPPOSITES subtract.

□ **add to** increase, augment, magnify, amplify, enhance, intensify, heighten, deepen, exacerbate, aggravate, compound, reinforce. **add up to** amount to, come to, run to, make, total, equal, number.

addict *noun* **1** abuser; *informal* junkie, druggie, -head, freak; *N. Amer. informal* hophead. **2** (*informal*) enthusiast, fan,

lover, devotee, aficionado; *informal* buff, freak, nut, fanatic.

addicted *adjective* dependent, obsessed, fixated, fanatical, passionate, a slave to; *informal* hooked.

addiction *noun* dependency, dependence, habit, obsession, infatuation, passion, love, mania, enslavement.

addictive *adjective* habit-forming, compulsive; *Brit. informal* moreish.

addition *noun* **1** adding, inclusion, incorporation, introduction. **2** add-on, extra, adjunct, appendage, supplement, rider, addendum, postscript, appendix.

- OPPOSITES subtraction.

□ **in addition** see additionally.

additional *adjective* extra, added, supplementary, further, more, spare, other, new, fresh.

additionally *adverb* also, in addition, besides, too, as well, on top (of that), furthermore, moreover, into the bargain, to boot, to say nothing of.

address *noun* **1** house, flat, apartment, home, location, whereabouts; *formal* residence, dwelling, domicile.

2 speech, lecture, talk, presentation, dissertation, sermon, oration.

● **verb** **speak to**, talk to, give a talk to, lecture, make a speech to, hold forth to.

adept *adjective* expert, proficient, accomplished, skilful, practised, masterly, consummate.

- OPPOSITES inept.

adequate *adjective* **1** he has adequate financial resources **sufficient**, enough.

2 an adequate service **satisfactory**, acceptable, passable, reasonable, tolerable, fair, average, not bad, all right, middling; *informal* OK.

- OPPOSITES insufficient, inadequate.

adhere *verb* stick, cling, bond, hold.

□ **adhere to** abide by, stick to, hold to, comply with, conform to, follow, obey, heed, observe, respect, uphold, fulfil.

adherent *noun* follower, supporter, upholder, defender, advocate, disciple,