

**COLLINS
COBUILD**

COLLINS Birmingham University International Language Database

Essential English Dictionary

HELPING LEARNERS
WITH REAL ENGLISH

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柯 林 斯
精选英语词典
Essential
English
Dictionary



COLLINS
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柯林斯精选英语词典

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出版说明

柯林斯精选英语词典系根据1987年出版的柯林斯 COBUILD 英语大词典精选而成。COBUILD 英语大词典是英国柯林斯伯明翰大学国际语言数据库经过7年的研究,搜集了2000万字的新资料并运用计算机技术编辑而成的一本崭新的英语词典。它有别于一般传统辞书之处在于,以通俗易懂的解释和生动的典型实例而不是刻板、繁琐的定义来阐明词义和当代英语的用法。

精选英语词典除保留了前书的精华和新颖的编排方式外,还另有其新特色,如增添了系统介绍英语语法规则及其用法的专页,为一些词汇配有精细的插图,此外,还增录了近年来最新和最常用的英语词汇。

我公司经原书出版者英国威廉·柯林斯父子公司授权,按其提供的原版胶片在我国出版这本词典,以利于我国教师、学生和广大英语爱好者掌握、运用现代英语,提高英语水平。

Preface

Collins COBUILD Essential English Dictionary is the second *COBUILD* dictionary. The first one, *Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary*, was published in 1987 and offers learners a great deal of new information which they can use to help them learn the language. However, it was clear from the start that a smaller dictionary was also needed for everyday use. The *Essential* is that dictionary.

The *Essential* keeps all the main features of the original *COBUILD* dictionary, but it concentrates them into a smaller space. Also, we have added some new features that are designed to make the dictionary both more useful and more enjoyable to use.

The most important feature about *COBUILD* is that it is a completely new description of the English of today. The information in the entries comes from a study of about twenty million words of text. It is reliable and up-to-date, and has been made possible by using the latest computer techniques.

Because of this method of work, the examples given in the dictionary are from actual texts, and show the word or phrase as it has been used in these texts. The examples are not meant to show just the meaning of the word. The explanation does that. The examples are there to show you how to use it.

COBUILD is already famous for the way in which it sets out the explanations. They are in sentences, and the actual way they are written can help you use the words.

Here is the entry for **inside**:

inside /ɪn'saɪd/, insides . 1 Something or someone that is inside a place, container, or object is surrounded by its sides. EG <i>Two minutes later we were inside the taxi... You left your lighter inside... It is a fruit with a seed inside.</i> ▶ used as an adjective. EG <i>The door had no inside bolt.</i>	PREP OR ADV ATTRIB ADJ CLASSIF: ATTRIB	who is involved in a situation and therefore knows a lot about it.	ATTRIB
2 The inside of something is the part or area that its sides surround or contain. EG <i>The inside of my mouth was dry... ..the inside of the castle.</i>	N COUNT	6 If you are inside an organization, you belong to it. EG <i>Nobody inside the company will be surprised.</i>	PREP
3 You can also say that someone is inside when they are in prison.	ADV Informal	7 If you say that someone has a feeling inside them, you mean that they have not expressed this feeling. EG <i>His true feelings keep surging up inside him... I always felt inside that I wanted to write.</i>	PREP OR ADV
4 On a wide road, the inside lanes are the ones which are closest to the edge of the road.	ADJ CLASSIF: ATTRIB	8 If something such as a piece of clothing is inside out , the inside part has been turned so that it faces outwards.	PHRASE
5 Inside information is obtained from someone	ADJ CLASSIF:	9 Your insides are your internal organs, especially your stomach. EG <i>What we all need is a bit of food in our insides.</i>	N PLURAL USU + POSS Informal

Notice that paragraph 1 starts 'Something or someone . . .', while paragraph 2 has only 'something' and paragraph 3 has only 'someone'. This means that the kind of meaning in paragraph 2 applies to things, and not to people; and in paragraph 3 people, not things, are sent to prison.

In paragraph 4, this meaning of **inside** applies only to traffic lanes on a main road. Paragraph 5 is about a kind of information, and so on. As you can see, you can learn a lot by reading the explanations carefully.

A special feature of *COBUILD* is the extra column of information about the grammar and usage. There is a lot of very useful information in this column, and it is worthwhile making sure you understand the simple terms that are used: v = verb, ADJ = adjective, and so on. If you are not sure of any of the words or abbreviations in the Extra Column, you can look them up in their alphabetical place in the dictionary. So you will find ATTRIB on page 45 and ADJ PRED on page 12. Each one is in a box to make it easier to find. A list of everything used in the Extra Column is given on page vii.

You will also find helpful labels such as *Informal* and *American* in the Extra Column. These give you more information about the word and tell you when you can use it.

The Extra Column can also help you to find the meaning you want in a long entry. For example if you read 'The doctors had worked without a break', and you do not know the meaning of **break**, you can at least tell that it is a noun. So you can run your finger down the **break** entry, past the verbs until you find the nouns, starting at the end of paragraph 6, with the meaning you want in paragraph 10. You thus only need to read the noun meanings.

All the headwords are written in a phonetic transcription which shows you how to pronounce a word. A key to the symbols is given on page ix – they are all symbols of the International Phonetics Association. We have added some information on what happens to a word in connected speech, because many words can vary in pronunciation. This information is in tiny numbers above vowel letters, and you can ignore it if you want to say just one word out loud.

These are all features of the original dictionary. The *Essential* has some new features, which we hope will make the dictionary easier and more interesting to use. For example, the illustrations have been specially drawn for this book, to help where an object is not easy to describe, but is easy to recognize.

The grammar notes have been written specially for use by students. In addition to the short explanations, we have taken a whole page for each of seventeen major points of grammar. The list is on page viii, and the page-long entries are as near as possible to their alphabetical places. In these entries we have gathered together a lot of information and examples about the main categories of English grammar.

We have also added over 400 language activities, called *Checkpoints*. You will find one at the bottom of the right-hand column on each left-hand page. They are puzzles or points for discussion, and all the information you need is somewhere on the two pages that will be open around the *Checkpoint*. A key to these activities is given on pages 945-948.

These activities can be used to make you think a bit about words and to extend your vocabulary range. They can also be used during a class lesson, and should help to make the dictionary a regular tool for language learning. I hope that you, the user, will enjoy these activities. They won't interfere with using the dictionary in the normal way, but they should add some interest to your learning of English.

On pages 938-944 we have included a list of the words that we have found useful in explaining the meanings and uses of English. Teachers may also find this list useful as the basis of a syllabus, to develop students' dictionary skills. The language we have used has been kept as simple as possible but we have avoided the restrictions and awkwardness of a fixed defining vocabulary. In this book only about 2000 words have been used ten times or more, and there are only a total of 3000 different forms in the Wordlist.

These new features are part of *COBUILD*'s general policy of trying out new ways to present information about the English Language. I would be glad to hear what things you find easy or difficult, useful or useless. I have had a lot of valuable criticism from users of the first *COBUILD* dictionary, and some of the points made have already been used to improve this new one.

John Sinclair
Editor in Chief

1 Finding words

1.1 Main entries

The order of entries is alphabetical, with no notice being taken of capital letters, hyphens, or spaces between words. So the order of words in a small section of 'B' is:

backbiting
backbone
back-breaking
backdate
backdoor
backer
backfire
backgammon
background

1.2 Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs are put in paragraphs immediately after the simple verb. So you will find **close down** and **close in** at the end of the entry for **close** and before the entry for **close-cropped**, so that the dictionary headword list reads:

close
close down
close in
closed

1.3 Phrases

Phrases are fixed combinations of words which have their own special meanings, so that you cannot normally guess the meaning from the individual words.

Phrases are printed in bold type in the entry for the most important word in the phrase. When the phrase is close in meaning to another meaning of the word, the phrase will be found in the same paragraph as that meaning, but will be introduced by a ●. For example:

If a part of your body is **bare**, it is not covered by any clothing. ● If someone does something **with their bare hands**, they do it without using any weapons or tools.

Other phrases are put in separate paragraphs or sometimes a number of phrases are put in one paragraph. For example:

12 Back is also used in these phrases. **12.1** If you PHRASES are wearing something **back to front**, you are wearing it incorrectly, with the back of it on the front of your body. **12.2** If you do something **behind someone's back**, you do it without them knowing about it.

1.4 Cross-references

If you cannot find the explanation of a phrase, expression, or compound at the word you have looked up, you will often find a note telling you which entry has the explanation. For example, at the entry for **bag**, **bag 6** reads:

6 a **bag of bones**: see **bone**.

Similarly, **face 9.14** reads:

9.14 at **face value**: see **value**.

At the end of **cover up 2** you will find:

● See also **cover-up**.

1.5 Words which are defined together

The dictionary tells you how to use all the important members of a word family, such as adjectives, adverbs, and nouns. Where the meaning of the words is similar, the meaning is only given for the headword. The other words in the family are printed at the end of a paragraph dealing with that meaning. Each word of this kind is introduced by a ◊, to show that you have a word with a new word class but with very little change of meaning.

The different endings that can be added to form the new words are all explained in alphabetical order in the text of the dictionary. So there are entries for **-ly**, **-ness**, **-ation**, and so on.

Even though these words are not defined separately, they always have grammatical information in the Extra Column and an example in the main text to show how they have been used.

eager /i:ɡə/. If you are **eager** to do something, you ADJ QUALIT: want to do it very much. OPT + TO-INF OR *EG The majority were ^{for} eager to express their opinions... people eager for a quick cure.* ◊ ◊ **eagerly**. ADV *EG They began to talk eagerly.* ◊ ◊ **eagerness**. N UNCOUNT *EG ...my eagerness to learn... an eagerness for total freedom.*

Words which belong to the same family but which have differences in meaning are treated as separate headwords and will be found in their correct alphabetical place. So there are different entries for words such as **hopeful** and **hopefully**, and **sure** and **surely**.

There is sometimes very little difference in meaning between words with different grammatical functions. When this is the case, one word is defined, and the other is treated in the same paragraph, preceded by a ►. For example:

When you **amble**, you walk slowly and in a relaxed V:USU+A manner. EG I ambled home through the village. ► used as a noun. EG He slowed down to his usual ► N SING steady amble.

2 Forms and spelling

The spelling for each form of word is given in bold letters at the beginning of an entry. For example:

earthquake /ɜːkweɪk/, **earthquakes**.

echo /ekəʊ/, **echoes**, **echoing**, **echoed**.

easy /iːzi/, **easier**, **easiest**.

light /laɪt/, **lights**, **lighting**, **lighted**, **lit** /lɪt/; **lighter**, **lightest**.

If there is anything unusual about the use of the forms, this is explained in a note immediately after they are given. For example:

burst /bɜːst/, **bursts**, **bursting**. The form **burst** is used in the present tense and is the past tense and past participle of the verb.

If the word is spelled differently in American English, this is explained in a note immediately after the forms, for example:

fuel /fjuːl/, **fuels**, **fuelling**, **fuelled**; also spelled **fueling**, **fuelled** in American English.

3 Pronunciation

The pronunciation is normally given after the first form of the word. For example:

key /kiː/, **keys**.

But if the word is pronounced in different ways, this is explained after all the forms. For example:

bow, **bows**, **bowing**, **bowed**; pronounced /bəʊ/ for paragraphs 1 to 4 and for the phrasal verbs, and /baʊ/ for paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

When the pronunciation of one of the forms is very different from the first form given, then its pronunciation is also given immediately after it. For example:

give /gɪv/, **gives**, **giving**, **gave** /geɪv/, **given**.

For further information about pronunciation and a key to symbols used see pages viii-ix.

4 Explanations

Words are explained in simple English, easy to understand, and with a lot of information about their uses. If you read the explanations carefully, you should be able to use the word yourself in good, natural English.

5 Examples

The dictionary contains a large number of examples, showing how the words have been used by English writers and speakers. The examples have been chosen to show the most typical grammatical patterns in which the words are used, and also to show the situations in which you are most likely to find each word used. Examples are printed in italic type after the explanation of meaning. For example:

1 When you **leave** a place, you go away from it. eg *They left the house to go for a walk after tea.*

6 Grammar

All the words that are explained in the dictionary have grammatical information given about them in the Extra Column. Explanations of the labels used in the Extra Column are in the main dictionary text, in alphabetical order but inside a box, to show that we are talking about the language used in the dictionary. For example:

COMPAR stands for comparative

Adjectives which have the label COMPAR in the Extra Column are in the comparative form. A few adverbs are also labelled COMPAR.

See the entry headed ADJECTIVES for more information.

Here is a list of the grammatical labels used in the Extra Column, all of which have special entries in the dictionary text:

A	MODAL	PRON REL
ADJ	N	QUANTIF
ADJ AFTER N	N COLL	QUOTE
ADJ CLASSIF	N COUNT	RECIP
ADJ COLOUR	N ING	REPORT
ADJ PRED	N MASS	SUBMOD
ADJ QUALIT	N MOD	SUFFIX
ADV	N PART	SUPERL
ADV SEN	N PLURAL	SUPP
ADV AFTER VB	N PROPER	USU
ADV BRD NEG	N SING	V
ATTRIB	N UNCOUNT	V+A
AUX	NEG	V+C
BROAD NEG	NUMBER	V+O
C	O	V+O+A
COMPAR	ORDINAL	V+O+C
CONJ	POSS	V+O+O
CONT	PREDET	V-ERG
DET	PREFIX	V-PASS
DET POSS	PREP	V-REFL
EXCLAM	PRON	V-SPEECH
IMPER	PRON INDEF	VB
INF	PRON POSS	VOCATIVE
-ING	PRON REFL	WH

The following punctuation marks are used in the Extra Column.

- , A comma comes between basic word classes if more than two are mentioned – for example V+O, V+O+O, or V+O+A. Commas also come between pieces of extra information that follow a basic word class. For example, ADJ PRED + *to* – INF, REPORT, OR *for*.
- :
- / Sometimes, the Extra Column tells you what preposition is likely to come after a particular verb, adjective, or noun. If more than one preposition is likely, they are separated by a slash. For example, V + *for/of*.

- + A plus sign introduces information about whether a verb has an object (V+O), a complement (V+C), a quote structure (V+QUOTE), and so on. Plus signs are also used with other word classes to introduce the sort of words or structures that typically occur with the word being explained. For example, N COUNT+POSS.

7 Style and Usage

In addition to the grammar codes, the Extra Column also has information about how and when you should use a word. It tells you, for example, whether a word is formal or informal, whether it is British or American, or whether it is used mainly in technical or literary writing. For example:

ignominious /ɪgnəˈmɪniəs/. **Ignominious** behaviour is considered shameful or morally unacceptable. ADJ QUALITY Formal

inferno /ɪnfɛˈnɔʊ/. **Inferno**. You can refer to a very large, dangerous fire as an **inferno**. N COUNT Literary

The explanations for many words tell you the situations in which you would be likely to use the word or hear it used. So, if a word is used mainly by someone who is angry or worried or frightened, then the explanation says so. For example, in the entry for **help**, you find:

10 You shout **'Help!'** when you are in danger, in order to attract someone's attention.

There is a lot of information of this kind in the explanations in this dictionary. It is there in order to help you to use the right language for each particular situation.

8 Study Pages

As well as having grammar explanations in the main dictionary text, more detailed information is given on Study Pages, where the main grammatical categories, such as adjectives, phrasal verbs, and pronouns, are dealt with. Here is a list of the topics covered in the Study Pages:

ADJECTIVES	NUMBER
ADJUNCTS	PHRASAL VERBS
ADVERBS	PHRASES
COMPLEMENTS	PRONOUNS
CONJUNCTIONS	QUANTIFIERS
CONVENTIONS	SEMI-MODALS
DETERMINERS	SUBMODIFIERS
MODAL VERBS	VERBS
NOUNS	

The verbs **BE** and **HAVE** are also explained on full pages, rather than in the main text.

There are also special entries for **AGE**, **DATE**, **MEASUREMENT**, **MONEY**, and **TIME**, where examples are given of the different ways in which these can be expressed.

Pronunciation

In this dictionary a guide is given to the pronunciation of English words using the International Phonetic Alphabet. The accent represented is Received Pronunciation, or RP for short, which is an accent used by many speakers of Southern British English. There are several other accents of English, but RP is perhaps the most widely used as a norm for teaching purposes.

Two kinds of information are needed if a word is to be appropriately pronounced. We need to know about each of the sounds that make up the word, and we need to know about stress. In each of the pronunciations shown in this dictionary, at least one vowel symbol is in heavier type and underlined. Sometimes more than one vowel is in heavier type and underlined:

result /rɪzʌlt/

disappointing /dɪsəˈpɔɪntɪŋ/

Heavy type and underlining give important information both about stress and the sounds that make up a word.

When a word is spoken in isolation, stress falls on all the syllables that contain vowels that are in heavier type and underlined. When two syllables are marked in this way, the second syllable has primary stress while the first has secondary stress; if only one is marked, it has primary stress. A word spoken in isolation is called the citation form.

When a word is used in context, either or both of the stresses found in the citation form may be absent. The one-stress or two-stress patterns of English speech are associated not with individual words but with the information units that a speaker constructs:

The result was disappointing
/ðə rɪzʌlt wəz dɪsəˈpɔɪntɪŋ/

A disappointing result
/ə dɪsəˈpɔɪntɪŋ rɪzʌlt/

Very disappointing indeed
/veriˈ dɪsəˈpɔɪntɪŋ ɪnˈdiːd/

Because stress patterns are associated with linguistic units larger than the word, a dictionary

cannot state in advance which of the stresses present in a citation form will be absent when a word is used in context.

Vowels that are in heavier type and underlined are called protected vowels. This means that, irrespective of whether a vowel is stressed or unstressed in a particular context, there is very little variation in the way a speaker pronounces it. Unprotected vowels, conversely, which are always unstressed, may show considerable variation in the way they are pronounced.

In this dictionary, the range of possible variation is shown by the tiny superscript numbers printed just above and to the right of the vowel symbol. In the word /sɪtɪ¹/ (*city*), for example, the protected vowel is always pronounced /ɪ/, irrespective of whether it is stressed or not. Conversely, the key at the foot of this page shows that the pronunciation of the unprotected vowel may be made in the range between /i:/ and /ɪ/. In the word /ju:slɪ²s/

(*useless*) the protected vowel is always pronounced /u:/, irrespective of whether it is stressed or not, while the pronunciation of the unprotected vowel may be made in the range between /ɪ/ and /e/.

Some unprotected vowels are pronounced in only one way. For example, the second vowel in /hɔ:lmɑ:k/ (*hallmark*) is stressed neither in its citation form nor when the word is used in context, but there is still very little variation in the way it is pronounced.

Some sounds, both vowels and consonants, are heard only in rather slow and careful speech. /ju:ʒʊəl/ (*usual*) and /kɒləmnɪst/ (*columnist*) are often heard as /ju:ʒəl/ and /kɒləst/. In such cases, the superscript ⁰ indicates that the sound in question is often omitted:

usual /ju:ʒʊəl/
columnist /kɒləmn⁰ɪst/

All superscripts and the variations they stand for are given in the key below.

Pronunciation Key

Vowels

ɑ:	heart, start, calm.
æ	act, mass, lap.
aɪ	dive, cry, mind.
aɪə	fire, tyre, buyer.
aʊ	out, down, loud.
aʊə	flour, tower, sour.
ɛ	met, lend, pen.
eɪ	say, main, weight.
ɛə	fair, care, wear.
ɪ	fit, win, list.
i:	feed, me, beat.
ɪə	near, beard, clear.
ɒ	lot, lost, spot.
əʊ	note, phone, coat.
ɔ:	more, cord, claw.
ɔɪ	boy, coin, joint.
ʊ	could, stood, hood.
u:	you, use, choose.
ʊə	sure, pure, cure.
ɜ:	Turn, third, word.
ʌ	but, fund, must.
ə	the weak vowel in butter, about, forgotten.

Consonants

b	bed	t	talk
d	done	v	van
f	fit	w	win
g	good	x	loch
h	hat	z	zoo
j	yellow	ʃ	ship
k	king	ʒ	measure
l	lip	ŋ	sing
m	mat	tʃ	cheap
n	nine	θ	thin
p	pay	ð	then
r	run	dʒ	joy
s	soon		

Superscripts

ə ⁰	(ə ↔ ʊ)	ɪ ⁰	(ɪ ↔ ʊ)
ə ¹	(ə ↔ ɪ)	ɪ ¹	(ɪ ↔ ə)
ə ²	(ə ↔ ɛ)	ɪ ²	(ɪ ↔ ɛ)
ə ³	(ə ↔ æ)	ɪ ³	(ɪ ↔ eɪ)
ə ⁴	(ə ↔ ʊ)	ɪ ⁵	(ɪ ↔ aɪ)
ə ⁵	(ə ↔ ɜ:)	ɪ ¹	(ɪ ↔ i:)
ə ⁶	(ə ↔ əʊ)	ɛ ¹	(ɛ ↔ ɪ)
ə ⁷	(ə ↔ ɒ)	u ¹	(u: ↔ ʊ)
ə ⁸	(ə ↔ ɔ:)	m ¹	(m ↔ n)
ə ⁹	(ə ↔ ʌ)	ŋ ¹	(ŋ ↔ n)

⁰ after a consonant symbol indicates probable omission; k⁰, t⁰, h⁰, etc

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A a

A, a /eɪ/ or /ə/, **A's, a's**. **A** is the first letter of the English N COUNT alphabet.

A stands for adjunct

Verbs which have the label +A in the Extra Column need an adjunct to complete their meaning. See the entry headed ADJUNCTS for more information.

a /eɪ/ or /ə/, **an** /æn/ or /ən/.

1 You use **a** or **an** at the beginning of noun groups DET when you are referring to someone or something and you do not want to say which particular person or thing you mean. EG *Tom could see a hallway... She wanted to be an actress.*

2 You can use **a** or **an** instead of the number 'one'. DET EG *...a year or two ago... in an hour's time.*

3 When you express rates, prices, and measurements, you can use **a** or **an** to say how many units apply to each of the items being measured. EG *He charges 100 dollars an hour.*

4 You can use **a** or **an** in front of uncount nouns DET when they are preceded by adjectives or followed by words that describe the uncount noun more fully. EG *...a happiness that he couldn't quite hide.*

5 You use **a** or **an** in front of the names of people DET when you are referring to someone who you do not know personally. EG *You don't know a Mrs Burton, do you?*

aback /əbæk/. See **take aback**.

abacus /əbəkəs/, **abacuses**. An **abacus** is a N COUNT frame used for counting. It has rods with sliding beads on them.

abandon /əbændən/, **abandons, abandoning, abandoned**. **1** If you **abandon** a place, thing, or person, you leave it permanently or for a long time. EG *You're not supposed to abandon your car on the motorway.*

2 If you **abandon** a plan, activity, or piece of work, you stop doing it before it is finished. EG *I abandoned the search.*

3 If you **abandon** an idea or way of thinking, you stop thinking in that way. EG *I have abandoned the idea of consistency.*

4 If you **abandon** yourself to an emotion, you think about it a lot and feel it strongly. EG *She abandoned herself to grief.*

5 If you do something with **abandon**, you do it in a carefree way. EG *The food was consumed with joyous abandon.*

abandoned /əbændənd/. An **abandoned** place or building is no longer used or occupied. ADJ CLASSIF

abandonment /əbændənmənt/. **1** The **abandonment** of a place, thing, or person is the act of leaving it permanently or for a long time. EG *...the abandonment of the farms.* N UNCOUNT: USU + of

2 The **abandonment** of a piece of work or a plan is the act of stopping doing it before it is finished. N UNCOUNT: USU + of

abashed /əbæʃt/. If you are **abashed**, you feel embarrassed and ashamed. EG *The students looked guilty and abashed.* ADJ PRED

abate /əbeɪt/, **abates, abating, abated**. When something **abates**, it becomes much less strong or widespread. EG *My terror abated a little.* Formal

abattoir /əbətwaː/, **abattoirs**. An **abattoir** is a place where animals are killed for meat. N COUNT

abbess /æbɪs/, **abbesses**. An **abbess** is a nun who is in charge of the other nuns in a convent. N COUNT

abbey /æbi/, **abbeys**. An **abbey** is a church with buildings attached to it in which monks or nuns live or used to live. EG *...Westminster Abbey.* N COUNT

abbot /æbɒt/, **abbots**. An **abbot** is a monk who is in charge of the other monks in a monastery or abbey. N COUNT

abbreviate /əbrɪvi'eɪt/, **abbreviates, abbreviating, abbreviated**. **1** If you **abbreviate** a piece of writing or a speech you make it shorter. V + O

EG *...an abbreviated version of a talk.* ADJ CLASSIF

2 A word or phrase that is **abbreviated** is made shorter by leaving out some of the letters or by using only the first letters of each word. EG *...the Ultra-Intelligent Machine (or UIM as it is abbreviated).* V + O: USU PASS

abbreviation /əbrɪvi'eɪʃən/, **abbreviations**. An **abbreviation** is a short form of a word or phrase, made by leaving out some of the letters or by using only the first letters of each word. N COUNT

abdicate /æbdɪkeɪt/, **abdicates, abdicating, abdicated**. **1** If a king or queen **abdicates**, he or she resigns. V EG *...the abdication of 1936.* N UNCOUNT

2 If you **abdicate** your responsibility for something, you refuse to accept the responsibility for it any longer. EG *...an abdication of political responsibility.* N UNCOUNT - SUPP

abdomen /æbdə'mɒn/, **abdomens**. Your **abdomen** is the part of your body below your chest where your stomach and intestines are. N COUNT

EG *...a patient suffering from abdominal pains.* ADJ CLASSIF

abduct /əbdʌkt/, **abducts, abducting, abducted**. If someone **abducts** another person, they take the person away, using force. EG *...the recent abduction of his son.* V + O

aberration /æbə'reɪʃən/, **aberrations**. An **aberration** is an action or way of behaving that is not normal. EG *This is a temporary aberration and will soon be put right.* N COUNT

abet /əbet/, **abets, abetting, abetted**. If you **abet** someone, you help them to do something wrong. EG *...aiding and abetting the enemy.* V + O

abhor /ə'bhɔː/, **abhors, abhorring, abhorred**. If you **abhor** something, you hate it very much. EG *She abhors any form of cruelty.* V + O

abhorrent /ə'bhɔːrənt/. If something is **abhorrent** to you, you hate it very much or consider it completely unacceptable. EG *...a ruthless and utterly abhorrent system.* ADJ QUALIT

EG *...an abhorrence of war.* N UNCOUNT

abide /əbaɪd/, **abides, abiding, abided**. **1** If you **can't abide** something, you dislike it very much. EG *He likes you but he can't abide Dennis.* PERASE

2 If something **abides**, it continues to happen or exist for a long time. EG *...a constant and abiding joy.* ADJ CLASSIF: ATTRIB

abide by. If you **abide by** a law, agreement, or decision, you do what it says you should do. EG *Both parties must agree to abide by the court's decision.* PHRASAL VB: V + PREP

ability /əbɪlə'tɪ/, **abilities**. Your **ability** to do something is the quality or skill that you have which makes it possible for you to do it. EG *...the ability to see... his ability as a journalist.* N COUNT OR N UNCOUNT

EG *...the ability to do something to the best of your ability or to the best of your abilities.* PHRASE

-ability is added in place of '-able' at the end of adjectives to form nouns. These nouns are often not defined in this dictionary, but are treated with

the related adjectives. EG...the suitability of particular courses... their vulnerability to criticism.

abject /æbdʒekt/. 1 You use abject to emphasize that a situation or quality is shameful or depressing. EG...abject poverty.

2 Someone who is abject shows no self-respect or courage. EG Even the most abject slaves joined in the revolt.

ablaze /əbleɪz/. 1 Something that is ablaze is burning fiercely. EG In a moment the tents were ablaze.

2 If a place is ablaze with lights or colours, it is very bright because of them.

able /eɪbəl/, abler, ablest. 1 If someone or something is able to do something, 1.1 they have the physical skill or the knowledge to do it. EG The frog is able to jump three metres... I wasn't able to do these quizzes. 1.2 they have enough freedom, power, time, or money to do it. EG I thought I wouldn't be able to visit you this week... I was able to buy a caravan after a long search.

2 Someone who is able is very clever or very good at doing something. EG He was an unusually able detective.

-able is added to some verbs to form adjectives. These adjectives describe someone or something as able to have the thing done to them described by the verb. For example, something that is identifiable can be identified. EG They are both immediately recognizable... Only the titles were readable.

able-bodied /eɪbəl bɒdɪd/. An able-bodied person is physically strong and healthy.

ably /eɪbli/ means skilfully and successfully. EG They were ably supported by the Party members.

abnormal /æbnɔːməl/. Someone or something that is abnormal is unusual, especially in a way that is worrying. EG Maybe my child is abnormal... an abnormal interest in food. abnormality /æbnɔːməlɪti/, abnormalities. EG...an abnormality in the blood.

abnormally /æbnɔːməli/ means 1 to a much greater extent than usual. EG...the abnormally warm day. 2 in an unusual, often worrying way. EG...people who are behaving abnormally.

aboard /əbɔːd/. If you are aboard a ship or plane, you are on or in it. EG The plane crashed, killing all 271 aboard.

abode /əbəʊd/, abodes. Your abode is the place where you live. EG He took his new bride directly to their new abode.

abolish /əbɒlɪʃ/, abolishes, abolishing, abolished. If you abolish a system or practice, you formally put an end to it. EG They believed the death penalty should be abolished. abolition /əbɒlɪʃən/. EG...the abolition of slavery.

abominable /əbɒmɪnəbəl/. Something that is abominable is very unpleasant or very bad. EG They work in abominable conditions. abominably. EG She had been treated abominably.

abort /əbɔːt/, aborts, aborting, aborted. 1 If a woman's pregnancy is aborted or if she aborts, her pregnancy is ended deliberately and the baby dies.

2 If you abort a process, plan, or activity, or if it aborts, you stop it before it has been completed. EG Harris tried to abort the operation half-way through.

abortion /əbɔːʃən/, abortions. If a woman has an abortion, she ends her pregnancy deliberately and the baby dies.

abortive /əbɔːtɪv/. An abortive attempt or action is unsuccessful. EG...a year of demonstrations and abortive revolts.

abound /əbaʊnd/, abounds, abounding, abounded. If things abound, or if a place abounds with things, there are very large numbers of them. EG Rumours abounded... Its hills abound with waterfalls.

about /əbaʊt/. 1 If you talk, write, or think about a particular thing, it is the subject of what you are saying, writing, or thinking. EG I'll have to think about that... He had to talk about his profession... This is a book about India.

2 If you do something about a problem, you take action in order to solve it. EG They knew they had to do something about their mother's unhappiness.

3 When you say that there is a particular quality about someone or something, you mean that they have this quality. EG There's something peculiar about him.

4 About in front of a number means that the number is approximate, not exact. EG We went about forty miles.

5 If someone or something moves about, they keep moving in different directions. EG We saw them walking about... I stood waving my arms about.

6 About is used in phrasal verbs such as 'sit about' or 'mess about' to indicate that someone is not achieving very much.

7 If someone or something is about, they are present or available. EG There was no money about.

8 If you are about to do something, you are going to do it very soon. EG Her father is about to retire.

about-turn, about-turns. An about-turn or an about-face is a complete change of attitude or opinion. EG The Conservatives performed a swift about-turn.

above /əbaʊ/. 1 If one thing is above another one, it is directly over it or higher than it. EG...the branches above their heads... A noise was coming from the bedroom above.

2 You use above in writing to refer to something that has already been mentioned. EG All the above items can be obtained from Selfridges... The meanings of the terms used above are given in leaflet NI 12.

3 If an amount or measurement is above a particular level, it is greater than that level. EG...children above the age of 5... aged 15 and above.

4 If someone is above you, they are in a position of authority over you. EG He will have an executive above him to whom he reports.

5 If someone thinks that they are above a particular activity, they do not want to get involved in it because they do not approve of it. EG They consider themselves above such mercenary transactions.

6 If someone is above criticism or suspicion, they cannot be criticized or suspected because of their good qualities or their position.

above board. If an arrangement or deal is above board, it is completely honest.

abrasion /əbreɪʒən/, abrasions. An abrasion is an area on a person's body where the skin has been scraped. EG...abrasions to the side of the neck.

abrasive /əbreɪsɪv/. 1 Someone who is abrasive is unkind and rude. EG He could be abrasive and insensitive... an abrasive manner.

2 An abrasive substance is rough and can be used to clean hard surfaces. EG...an abrasive cleaner.

abreast /əbreɪst/. 1 If people or things walk or move abreast, they are next to each other, side by side. EG...carts pulled by donkeys three abreast.

2 If you keep abreast of a subject, you know all the most recent facts about it. EG The press kept abreast of each development.

abridged /əbrɪdʒd/. A book or play that is abridged has been made shorter by removing some parts of it. EG...an abridged version of the novel.

abroad /əbrɔːd/. 1 If you go abroad, you go to a foreign country. EG...a holiday abroad... I just got back from abroad.



2 If a story or feeling is **abroad**, people generally know about it or feel it.

abrupt /əbrʌpt/. **1** If an action is **abrupt**, it is very sudden and often unpleasant. EG *It came to an abrupt end... an abrupt movement.* ◊ **abruptly**. ◊ ADV EG *I had to apply the brakes abruptly.*

2 Someone who is **abrupt** is rather rude and unfriendly. EG *...David's abrupt and bullying manner.* ◊ **abruptly**. EG *I wouldn't have spoken so abruptly if I'd realized you were ill.*

abscess /æbsɪs/, **abscesses**. An **abscess** is a painful swelling on your skin, containing pus.

abscond /ə'bskɒnd/, **absconds, absconding, absconded**. **1** If someone **absconds** with something, they run away with it. EG *He absconded with everyone's wages.*

2 If someone **absconds** from somewhere such as a prison, they run away from it.

absence /æbsəns/, **absences**. **1** Someone's **absence** from a place is the fact of their not being there. EG *They remained in their seats during my absence... frequent absences from school.*

2 The **absence** of something is the fact that it is not there. EG *The absence of electricity made matters worse.*

absent /æbsənt/. **1** If someone or something is **absent** from a place or situation, they are not there. EG *You have been absent twenty minutes... something which is still absent from your work.*

2 If someone appears **absent**, they are not paying attention because they are thinking about something else. EG *...an absent stare.* ◊ **absently**. EG *'Did you?' Boylan said absently.*

absentee /æbsɪnti/, **absentees**. An **absentee** is a person who should be in a particular place but who is not there. EG *...absentees from school.*

absent-minded. Someone who is **absent-minded** often forgets things. ◊ **absent-mindedly**. EG *...if you absent-mindedly drop a diamond ring down the sink.*

absolute /æbsə'lu:t/, **absolutes**. **1** **Absolute** means total and complete. EG *...the necessity for absolute secrecy.*

2 You use **absolute** to emphasize something that you are saying. EG *The script is an absolute mess.*

3 An **absolute** ruler has complete power and authority over his or her country.

4 **Absolute** rules and principles are believed to be true or right for all situations.

5 An **absolute** is a rule or principle that is believed to be true or right in all situations. EG *...rigid absolutes, such as 'divorce is always wrong'.*

absolutely /æbsə'lu:tli/. **1** **Absolutely** means totally and completely. EG *That's an absolutely fascinating piece of work.*

2 You say **absolutely** as an emphatic way of saying yes or agreeing with someone. EG *'She's excellent though.'* - *'Absolutely.'*

absolution /æbsə'lu:ʃən/. If someone is given **absolution**, they are forgiven for something wrong that they have done.

absolve /ə'bzɒlv/, **absolves, absolving, absolved**. If someone is **absolved** from blame or responsibility, a formal statement is made that they are not guilty or are not to blame. EG *The captain is absolved from all blame and responsibility for the shipwreck... Before you die you're absolved of your sins.*

absorb /ə'bsɔ:b, -zɔ:b/, **absorbs, absorbing, absorbed**. **1** If something **absorbs** a liquid, gas, light, or heat, it soaks it up or takes it in. EG *Frogs absorb water through their skins.*

2 If a group is **absorbed** into a larger group, it becomes part of the larger group and loses its individuality. EG *Small businesses are absorbed by larger ones.*

3 If a system or society **absorbs** changes or effects, it is able to deal with them without being badly affected.

4 If you **absorb** information, you learn and understand it.

5 If something **absorbs** you, it interests you very much and you pay a lot of attention to it. ◊ **absorbed**. EG *I was utterly absorbed in what I was doing.* ◊ **absorbing**. EG *The work is absorbing.*

absorbent /ə'bsɔ:bənt, -zɔ:-/. **Absorbent** material soaks up liquid easily.

absorption /ə'bsɔ:pʃən, -zɔ:p-/. **1** If you have an **absorption** in something, you are very interested in it. EG *...her growing absorption in the study of natural history.*

2 **Absorption** is the action of absorbing something. EG *...the absorption of foreign minorities.*

abstain /ə'bstem/, **abstains, abstaining, abstained**. **1** If you **abstain** from doing something enjoyable, you deliberately do not do it. EG *He abstained from eating for six days.*

2 If you **abstain** during a vote, you do not vote. **abstemious** /ə'bstɪ:mɪəs/. Someone who is **abstemious** avoids doing too much of something enjoyable such as eating or drinking.

abstention /ə'bstɛnʃən/. **abstentions**. An **abstention** is a formal act of not voting either for or against a proposal. EG *There were 4 abstentions.*

abstinence /æbstɪ'nəns/ is the practice of abstaining from something that you enjoy doing, especially from drinking alcoholic drinks. EG *He practised total abstinence for a month.*

abstract, abstracts, abstracting, abstracted; pronounced /æbrækkt/ when it is an adjective or a noun, and /ə'brækt/ when it is a verb.

1 An idea or argument that is **abstract** is based on general ideas rather than on particular things and events. EG *...our capacity for abstract reasoning... an abstract principle.*

2 **Abstract** art is a style of art which uses shapes and patterns rather than representing people or things. EG *...abstract sculptures.*

3 An **abstract** noun is a noun that describes a quality or idea rather than a physical object.

4 An **abstract** of an article or speech is a short piece of writing that summarizes the main points of it.

5 If you **abstract** information from an article or other piece of writing, you make a summary of the main points in it.

abstracted /ə'bræktɪd/. Someone whose behaviour is **abstracted** is thinking so deeply that they do not notice what is happening around them. EG *...a dreamy, abstracted stare.*

abstraction /ə'brækʃən/, **abstractions**. **1** An **abstraction** is a general idea rather than one relating to a particular object, person, or situation. EG *...abstractions of philosophy and religion.*

2 **Abstraction** is the state of being very deep in thought.

absurd /ə'bsɜ:d/. Something that is **absurd** is ridiculous. EG *It seemed absurd to try to carry a twenty-five-pound camera about.* ◊ **absurdity** /ə'bsɜ:di'ti/, **absurdities**. EG *...the oddities and absurdities of the language.* ◊ **absurdly**. EG *...an absurdly low rent.*

abundance /ə'bʌndəns/. **1** An **abundance** of something is a large quantity of it. EG *...an abundance of evidence.*

2 If something is **in abundance**, there is a lot of it. EG *There was grass in abundance.*

abundant /ə'bʌndənt/. Something that is **abundant** is present in large quantities. EG *...an abundant supply of food.*

abundantly /ə'bʌndəntli/. **1** If something is **abundantly** obvious, it is extremely obvious. EG *It has become abundantly clear that there is no time to lose.*

2 Something that occurs **abundantly** is present in large quantities. EG *...a plant growing abundantly at the edges of a road.*