

# A

**a**<sup>1</sup> /eɪ/, **A** *noun* the first letter of the alphabet, followed by B ○ *Do you mean 'dependant' spelt with an 'a' or 'dependent' with an 'e'?* ◇ **from A to Z** completely, all the way through

**a**<sup>2</sup> /ə, eɪ/, **an** /ən, æn/ *article* **1.** one ○ *an enormous hole* ○ *a useful guidebook* ○ *She's bought a new car.* ○ *I want a cup of tea.* ○ *We had to wait an hour for the bus.* (NOTE: **an** is used before words beginning with **a, e, i, o, u** and with **h** if the **h** is not pronounced: *an apple* or *an hour.* **a** is used before words beginning with all other letters and also before **u** where **u** is pronounced /ju:/ : *a useful guidebook*) **2.** for each or to each ○ *Apples cost £1.50 a kilo.* ○ *The car was travelling at 50 kilometres an hour.* ○ *He earns £100 a day.*

**abandon** /ə'bændən/ *verb* **1.** to leave someone or something in an unkind way ○ *The dog had been abandoned by its owner.* **2.** to give up or stop doing something ○ *The company has decided to abandon the project.* ○ *We abandoned the idea of setting up a London office.*

**abbreviation** /ə,bri:vi'eɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a short form of a word

**ability** /ə'bɪlɪti/ *noun* **1.** a natural tendency to do something well ○ *I admire his ability to stay calm in difficult situations.* ○ *We can develop their natural abilities.* (NOTE: The plural is **abilities**.) □ **I'll do it to the best of my ability** I'll do it as well as I can **2.** the fact of being clever ○ *suitable for different levels of ability* (NOTE: no plural)

**able** /'eɪb(ə)l/ *adjective* **1.** □ **to be able to do something** to be capable of something or have the chance to do something ○ *They weren't able to find the house.* ○ *Will you be able to come to the meeting?* **2.** good at doing something, or good at doing many things ○ *She's a*

*very able manager.* ○ *There are special activities for able children.*

**about** /ə'baʊt/ *preposition* **1.** referring to something ○ *He told me all about his operation.* ○ *What do you want to speak to the doctor about?* **2.** □ **to be about to do something** to be going to do something very soon ○ *We were about to go home when you arrived.* **3.** not exactly ○ *I've been waiting for about four hours.* ○ *She's only about fifteen years old.* ◇ **how about?** **1.** what do you think about? ○ *We can't find a new chairperson for the club – What about Sarah?* **2.** would you like a cup of tea? ◇ **while you're about it** at the same time as the thing you are doing ○ *While you're about it, can you post this letter?*

**above** /ə'baʊ/ *preposition* **1.** higher than ○ *The plane was flying above the clouds.* ○ *The temperature in the street was above 30 degrees.* ○ *At prices above £20, nobody will buy it.* **2.** older than ○ *If you are above 18, you have to pay the full fare.* **3.** louder than ○ *I couldn't hear the telephone above the noise of the drills.*

**abroad** /ə'brɔ:d/ *adverb* in or to another country ○ *They've gone abroad on holiday.* ○ *I lived abroad for three years.*

**absence** /'æbsəns/ *noun* the fact of being away from a place ○ *She did not explain her absence from the meeting.* ○ *The former president was sentenced in his absence.* □ **in the absence of** because someone or something is not there ○ *In the absence of the chairman, his deputy took over.* ○ *In the absence of any official support, we had to raise our own funds.*

**absent** /'æbsənt/ *adjective* not there ○ *Ten of the staff are absent with flu.*

**absolute** /'æbsəlu:t/ *adjective* complete or total