

A

a¹ /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

a² /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

absolutely *adverb* 1. /'æbsəlu:tli/ completely ○ *I am absolutely sure I left the keys in my coat pocket.* 2. /,æbsə'lu:tli/ yes, of course ○ *Did you build it yourself?* – *Absolutely!*

absorb /əb'zɔ:b/ *verb* 1. to take in something such as a liquid ○ *The water should be absorbed by the paper.* ○ *Salt absorbs moisture from the air.* 2. to reduce a shock ○ *The car's springs are supposed to absorb any shock from the road surface.*

absurd /əb'sɜ:d/ *adjective* completely unreasonable or impossible to believe ○ *It's absurd to expect you will win the lottery if you only buy one ticket.*

abuse¹ /ə'bju:z/ *noun* 1. rude words ○ *The people being arrested shouted abuse at the police.* 2. very bad treatment ○ *the sexual abuse of children* ○ *She suffered physical abuse in prison.* (NOTE: [all senses] no plural)

abuse² /ə'bju:z/ *verb* 1. to treat someone very badly, usually physically or sexually ○ *She had been abused as a child.* 2. to make the wrong use of something ○ *He abused his position as finance director.* 3. to say rude things about someone ○ *The crowd noisily abused the group of politicians as they entered the building.*

academic /,ækə'demɪk/ *adjective* 1. relating to study at a university ○ *Members of the academic staff received a letter from the principal.* 2. only in theory, not in practice ○ *It is only of academic interest.* ■ *noun* a university teacher ○ *All her friends are academics.*

accelerate /æk'seləreɪt/ *verb* to go faster ○ *Don't accelerate when you get to traffic lights.*

accent /'æksənt/ *noun* 1. a particular way of pronouncing something ○ *He speaks with an American accent.* 2. the stronger or louder part of a word or sentence ○ *In the word 'letter' the accent is on the first syllable.* 3. a mark over a letter showing a particular way of pronouncing it ○ *Café has an accent on the 'e'.*

accept /æk'sept/ *verb* 1. to take and keep a present ○ *We hope you will accept this*

little gift. 2. to say 'yes' or to agree to something ○ *She accepted the offer of a job in Australia.* ○ *I invited her to come with us and she accepted.* (NOTE: Do not confuse with **except**.)

acceptable /æk'septəb(ə)l/ *adjective* good enough to be accepted, although not particularly good ○ *Fighting in the street is not acceptable behaviour.* ○ *Smoking is becoming less socially acceptable.* ○ *A small gift of flowers would be very acceptable.* ○ *The offer is not acceptable to the vendor.*

access /'ækses/ *noun* a way of reaching a place ○ *The concert hall has access for wheelchairs.* ○ *At present there is no access to the site.* □ **to have access to something** to be able to reach a place, meet a person, or obtain something ○ *I'll have access to the studio day and night.* ○ *The company has access to substantial funds.* ■ *verb* to get information from a computer ○ *She tried to access the address list.*

accident /'æksɪd(ə)nt/ *noun* 1. an unpleasant thing which happens and causes damage or injury ○ *He lost his leg in an accident at work.* ○ *She was involved in a car accident and had to go to hospital.* 2. something that happens unexpectedly ○ *Their third baby was an accident.* □ **by accident** without being planned or expected ○ *He found the missing papers by accident.*

accidental /,æksɪ'dent(ə)l/ *adjective* happening without being planned or expected ○ *an accidental meeting* ○ *accidental damage* ○ *His death was not accidental.*

accidentally /,æksɪ'dent(ə)li/ *adverb* without being planned or expected

accommodation /ə,kɒmə'deɪʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a place to live or somewhere to stay for a short time ○ *Are you still looking for accommodation?* ○ *Visitors have difficulty in finding hotel accommodation during the summer.* (NOTE: In British English, **accommodation** has no plural.)

accompany /ə'kʌmp(ə)ni/ *verb* 1. to go with someone or something ○ *She accompanied me to the door.* 2. to play a musical instrument while someone

else plays another instrument or sings ○ *She sang and was accompanied on the piano by her father.* (NOTE: accompanied **by** someone or something)

accomplish /ə'kʌmplɪʃ/ *verb* to do something successfully ○ *You won't accomplish anything by arguing.*

according to /ə'kɔːdɪŋ tuː/ *preposition* **1.** as someone says or writes ○ *The washing machine was installed according to the manufacturer's instructions.* ○ *According to the police, the car was going too fast.* **2.** in agreement with rules or a system ○ *Everything went according to plan or schedule.* **3.** in relation to ○ *The teachers have separated the children into classes according to their ages.*

account /ə'kaʊnt/ *noun* **1.** same as **bank account** **2.** □ *I was worried on her account* I was afraid something might happen to her ◇ **on account of** because of, due to ○ *The trains are late on account of the fog.* ○ *We don't use the car much on account of the price of petrol.* ◇ **take something into account** to consider something ○ *We have to take the weather into account.* ◇ **on no account** not at all

accurate /'ækjʊrət/ *adjective* correct in all details ○ *Are the figures accurate?* ○ *We asked them to make an accurate copy of the plan.*

accurately /'ækjʊrətli/ *adverb* correctly ○ *The weather forecast accurately predicted the storm.*

accuse /ə'kjuːz/ *verb* to say that someone has done something wrong ○ *The police accused her of stealing the money.* (NOTE: You accuse someone **of** a crime or **of** doing something.)

achieve /ə'tʃiːv/ *verb* to succeed in doing something after trying very hard ○ *Have you achieved all your aims?* ○ *The company has achieved great success in the USA.*

achievement /ə'tʃiːvmənt/ *noun* something which has been done successfully ○ *She is very modest about her achievements.* ○ *Coming sixth was a great achievement, since he had never entered the competition before.*

acid /'æsɪd/ *noun* a chemical substance that is able to dissolve metals

acknowledge /ə'k'nɒlɪdʒ/ *verb* **1.** to say that something has been received ○ *She didn't acknowledge receiving my letter.* **2.** to accept that something is true ○ *She acknowledged that she had seen me there.*

acknowledgement /ə'k'nɒlɪdʒmənt/ *noun* a letter or note sent to say that something has been received

acorn /'eɪkɔːn/ *noun* the fruit of an oak tree

acquaintance /ə'kweɪntəns/ *noun* a person you know slightly ○ *She has many acquaintances in the travel industry but no real friends.*

acquire /ə'kwɪə/ *verb* to become the owner of something ○ *She has acquired a large collection of old books.*

across /ə'krɒs/ *preposition* **1.** from one side to the other ○ *Don't run across the road without looking to see if there is any traffic coming.* **2.** on the other side of ○ *He saw her across the street.* ■ **adverb** from one side to the other ○ *The river is only twenty feet across.* ○ *The stream is very narrow – you can easily jump across.*

act /ækt/ *noun* **1.** something which is done ○ *He thanked her for the many acts of kindness she had shown him over the years.* **2.** a part of a play or show ○ *Act 2 of the play takes place in the garden.* **3.** a short performance ○ *The show includes acts by several young singers.* **4.** a law passed by Parliament ○ *an act to ban the sale of weapons* ■ **verb** **1.** to do something ○ *You will have to act quickly if you want to stop the fire.* ○ *She acted in a very responsible way.* □ **to act as someone or something** to do the work of someone or something ○ *The thick curtain acts as a screen to cut out noise from the street.* **2.** to behave in a particular way ○ *She's been acting very strangely.* ◇ **to get your act together** to organise yourself properly ○ *If they don't get their act together, they'll miss their train.*

action /'æksjən/ *noun* **1.** the fact of doing something ○ *We recommend swift ac-*