

PRISM, *n.* [Fr. *prisme*; Low L. Sp. It. *prisma*; Gr. *πρισμα*, from *πρω*, to cut with a saw, to press or strain, Russ. *pru*.] A solid whose bases or ends are any similar, equal and parallel plane figures, and whose sides are parallelograms.

D. Olmsted.

A prism of glass is one bounded by two equal and parallel triangular ends and three plain and well polished sides which meet in three parallel lines, running from the three angles of one end to the three angles of the other end.

Newton.

PRISMATIC, { *a.* Resembling a prism;
PRISMATICAL, { as a *prismatic* form.

2. Separated or distributed by a prism; formed by a prism; as *prismatic* colors.

3. Pertaining to a prism.

PRISMATICALLY, *adv.* In the form or manner of a prism.

Boyle.

PRISMATOIDAL, *a.* [L. *prisma* and Gr. *ειδος*.] Having a prismatic form.

Ure.

PRISMOID, *n.* [L. *prisma* and Gr. *ειδος*, form.]

A body that approaches to the form of a prism.

Johnson.

PRISMY, *a.* Pertaining to or like a prism.

Am. Review.

PRISON, *n.* *priz'n.* [Fr. from *pris*, taken, from *prendre*, to take, L. *prendo*; Sp. *prision*; Arm. *prison*.]

1. In a general sense, any place of confinement or involuntary restraint; but appropriately, a public building for the confinement or safe custody of debtors and criminals committed by process of law; a jail. Originally, a prison, as Lord Coke observes, was only a place of safe custody; but it is now employed as a place of punishment. We have *state-prisons*, for the confinement of criminals by way of punishment.

2. Any place of confinement or restraint.

The tyrant Æolus,

With power imperial curbs the struggling winds,

And sounding tempests in dark *prisons* binds.

Dryden.

3. In *Scripture*, a low, obscure, afflicted condition. *Eccles. iv.*

4. The cave where David was confined. *Ps. cxlii.*

5. A state of spiritual bondage. *Is. xlii.*

PRISON, *v. t.* To shut up in a prison; to confine; to restrain from liberty.

2. To confine in any manner.

Shak.

3. To captivate; to enchain.

Milton.

[This word is proper, but *imprison* is more commonly used.]

PRISON-BASE, *n.* A kind of rural sports; commonly called *prison-bars*.

Sandys.

PRISONED, *pp.* Imprisoned; confined; restrained.

PRISONER, *n.* One who is confined in a prison by legal arrest or warrant.

2. A person under arrest or in custody of the sheriff, whether in prison or not; as a *prisoner* at the bar of a court.

3. A captive; one taken by an enemy in war.

4. One whose liberty is restrained, as a bird in a cage.

PRISON-HOUSE, *n.* A house in which prisoners are confined; a jail. *Judges xvi.*

Shak.

PRISONING, *ppr.* Confining; imprisoning.

PRISONMENT, *n.* Confinement in a prison; imprisonment.

[The latter is commonly used.]

Shak.

PRISTINE, *a.* [L. *pristinus*. See *Prior* and *Præ*.]

First; original; primitive; as the *pristine* state of innocence; the *pristine* manners of a people; the *pristine* constitution of things.

Newton.

PRITHEE, a corruption of *pray thee*, as I *prithe*; but it is generally used without the pronoun, *prithe*.

PRIVACY, *n.* [from *private*.] A state of being in retirement from the company or observation of others; secrecy.

2. A place of seclusion from company or observation; retreat; solitude; retirement. Her sacred *privacies* all open lie.

Rowe.

3. Privy. [Not used.] [See *Privy*.]

Arbutnot.

4. Taciturnity. [Not used.]

Ainsworth.

5. Secrecy; concealment of what is said or done.

PRIVADO, *n.* [Sp.] A secret friend. [Not used.]

Bacon.

PRIVATE, *a.* [L. *privatus*, from *privo*, to bereave, properly to strip or separate; *privus*, singular, several, peculiar to one's self, that is, separate; It. *privare*, Sp. *privar*, Fr. *priver*, to deprive. *Privo* is probably from the root of *bereave*, Sax. *bereafian* or *gereafian*, from *reafian*, to strip, to spoil, L. *rapio*, *diripio*, *eripio*; *privo* for *perivo* or *berivo*; W. *rhaib*, a snatching; *rheibian*, to snatch. See *Rip*, *Reap* and *Strip*.]

1. Properly, separate; unconnected with others; hence, peculiar to one's self; belonging to or concerning an individual only; as a man's *private* opinion, business or concerns; *private* property; the king's *private* purse; a man's *private* expenses. Charge the money to my *private* account in the company's books.

2. Peculiar to a number in a joint concern, to a company or body politic; as the *private* interest of a family, of a company or of a state; opposed to *public*, or to the general interest of nations.

3. Sequestered from company or observation; secret; secluded; as a *private* cell; a *private* room or apartment; *private* prayer.

4. Not publicly known; not open; as a *private* negotiation.

5. Not invested with public office or employment; as a *private* man or citizen; *private* life.

Shak.

A *private* person may arrest a felon.

Blackstone.

6. Individual; personal; in contradistinction from *public* or *national*; as *private* interest.

Private way, in law, is a way or passage in which a man has an interest and right, though the ground may belong to another person. In common language, a *private* way may be a secret way, one not known or public.

A *private* act or statute, is one which operates on an individual or company only; opposed to a *general law*, which operates on the whole community.

A *private* nuisance or wrong, is one which affects an individual.

Blackstone.

In *private*, secretly; not openly or publicly.

Scripture.

PRIVATE, *n.* A secret message; particular business. [Unusual.] *Shak. B. Jonson.*

2. A common soldier.

PRIVATEER, *n.* [from *private*.] A ship or vessel of war owned and equipped by a private man or by individuals, at their own expense, to seize or plunder the ships of an enemy in war. Such a ship must be licensed or commissioned by government, or it is a pirate.

PRIVATEER, *v. i.* To cruise in a commissioned private ship against an enemy, for seizing their ships or annoying their commerce.

PRIVATELY, *adv.* In a secret manner; not openly or publicly.

2. In a manner affecting an individual or company. He is not *privately* benefited.

PRIVATENESS, *n.* Secrecy; privacy.

Bacon.

2. Retirement; seclusion from company or society.

Wotton.

3. The state of an individual in the rank of common citizens, or not invested with office.

PRIVATION, *n.* [Fr. from L. *privatio*, from *privo*. See *Private*.]

1. The state of being deprived; particularly, deprivation or absence of what is necessary for comfort. He endures his *privations* with wonderful fortitude.

2. The act of removing something possessed; the removal or destruction of any thing or quality. The garrison was compelled by *privation* to surrender.

For what is this contagious sin of kind

But a *privation* of that grace within?

Davies.

3. Absence, in general. Darkness is a *privation* of light.

Encyc.

4. The act of the mind in separating a thing from something appendant.

Johnson.

5. The act of degrading from rank or office.

Bacon.

[But in this sense, *deprivation* is now used. See *Deprivation*.]

PRIVATIVE, *a.* Causing privation.

2. Consisting in the absence of something; not positive. *Privative* is in things, what negative is in propositions; as *privative* blessings, safeguard, liberty and integrity.

Taylor.

PRIVATIVE, *n.* That of which the essence is the absence of something. Blackness and darkness are *privatives*.

Bacon.

2. In grammar, a prefix to a word which changes its signification and gives it a contrary sense, as *a*, in Greek; *αδικο*, unjust; *a* and *δίκη*; *un* and *in* in English, as *unwise*, *inhuman*. The word may also be applied to suffixes, as *less*, in *harmless*.

PRIVATIVELY, *adv.* By the absence of something.

2. Negatively.

The duty of the new covenant is set down first *privatively*. [Unusual.] *Hammond.*

PRIVATIVENESS, *n.* Notation of the absence of something. [Little used.]

PRIVET, *n.* A plant of the genus *Ligustrum*. The evergreen *privet* is of the genus *Rhamnus*. *Mock privet* is of the genus *Phillyrea*.

Fam. of Plants.