

P R E

1. Superior in excellence; distinguished for something commendable or honorable.
To goodness and in power *preeminent*.
Milton.

2. Surpassing others in evil or bad qualities; as *pre-eminent* in crime or guilt.

PRE-EMINENTLY, *adv.* In a preeminent degree; with superiority or distinction above others; as *pre-eminently* wise or good.

2. In a bad sense; as *pre-eminently* guilty.

PRE-EMPTION, *n.* [L. *præ*, before, and *emptio*, a buying; *emo*, to buy.] The act of purchasing before others.

2. The right of purchasing before others. Prior discovery of unoccupied land gives the discoverer the prior right of occupancy. Prior discovery of land inhabited by savages is held to give the discoverer the *pre-emption*, or right of purchase before others.

3. Formerly, in *England*, the privilege or prerogative enjoyed by the king, of buying provisions for his household in preference to others, abolished by statute 19. Charles II.

PREEN, *n.* [Scot. *prein*, *prin*, a pen; Dan. *preen*, the point of a graving tool, a bodkin; D. *pricm*, a pin, a spike; G. *pfrieme*, a punch. These are probably the same word, a little varied.]

A forked instrument used by clothiers in dressing cloth.

PREEN, *v. t.* [Scot. *proyne*, *prunyie*; Chaucer, *proine*. This word is probably the same as the foregoing, denoting the use of the beak in cleaning and composing the fethers. So *pikith*, in Chaucer, is from *pke*, *pick*.]

He kembeth him; he *proineth* him and *pikith*.
Cant. Tales, 9885.

If not, the word may be contracted from the Fr. *provigner*, to propagate vines by laying cuttings in the ground.]

To clean, compose and dress the fethers, as fowls, to enable them to glide more easily through the air or water. For this purpose they are furnished with two glands on their rump, which secrete an oily substance into a bag, from which they draw it with the bill and spread it over their fethers.
Bailey. Encyc.

PRE-ENGAGE, *v. t.* [pre and engage.] To engage by previous contract.

To tipseus by his friends his suit he mov'd,
But he was *pre-engag'd* by former ties.
Dryden.

2. To engage or attach by previous influence.

The world has the unhappy advantage of *pre-engaging* our passions.
Rogers.

3. To engage beforehand.

PRE-ENGAGED, *pp.* Previously engaged by contract or influence.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT, *n.* Prior engagement; as by stipulation or promise. A would accept my invitation, but for his *pre-engagement* to B.

2. Any previous attachment binding the will or affections.

My *pre-engagements* to other themes were not unknown to those for whom I was to write.
Boyle.

PRE-ENGAGING, *ppr.* Previously engaging.

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PREE'NING, *ppr.* Cleaning and composing the fethers, as fowls.

PRE-ESTABLISH, *v. t.* [pre and establish.] To establish or settle beforehand.

Covey.
PRE-ESTABLISHED, *pp.* Previously established.

PRE-ESTABLISHING, *ppr.* Settling or ordaining beforehand.

PRE-ESTABLISHMENT, *n.* Settlement beforehand.

PRE-EXAMINATION, *n.* Previous examination.

PRE-EXAMINE, *v. t.* To examine beforehand.

PRE-EXIST, *v. i.* [pre and exist.] To exist beforehand or before something else. It has been believed by many philosophers that the souls of men *pre-exist*, that is, exist before the formation of the body.

PRE-EXISTENCE, *n.* Existence previous to something else.

Wisdom declares her antiquity and *pre-existence* to all the works of this earth.
Burnet.

2. Existence of the soul before its union with the body, or before the body is formed; a tenet of eastern sages.
Addison.

PRE-EXISTENT, *a.* Existing beforehand; preceding in existence.

What mortal knows his *pre-existent* state?
Pope.

PRE-EXISTIMATION, *n.* Previous esteem. [Not in use.]
Brown.

PRE-EXISTING, *ppr.* Previously existing.

PRE-EXPECTATION, *n.* Previous expectation. [Qu. is not this tautology?]
Gerard.

PREF'ACE, *n.* [Fr. from L. *præfatio*; *præ*, before, and *for*, *fari*, *fatus*, to speak.]

Something spoken as introductory to a discourse, or written as introductory to a book or essay, intended to inform the hearer or reader of the main design, or in general, of whatever is necessary to the understanding of the discourse, book or essay; a proem; an introduction or series of preliminary remarks.
Milton.

PREF'ACE, *v. t.* To introduce by preliminary remarks; as, to *preface* a book or discourse. The advocate *prefaced* his argument with a history of the case.

2. To face; to cover; a *tudicrous* sense.
Not *prefacing* old rags with plush.

Cleveland.
PREF'ACE, *v. i.* To say something introductory.

Spectator.
PREF'ACED, *pp.* Introduced with preliminary observations.

PREF'ACER, *n.* The writer of a preface.
Dryden.

PREF'ACING, *ppr.* Introducing with preliminary remarks.

PREF'ATORY, *a.* Pertaining to a preface; introductory to a book, essay or discourse.
Dryden.

PREFECT, *n.* [L. *præfectus*; *præ*, before, and *factus*, made; but directly from *præfici*, *præfectus*.]

1. In *ancient Rome*, a chief magistrate who governed a city or province in the absence of the king, consuls or emperor. *Encyc.*

2. A governor, commander, chief magistrate or superintendent. *Hammond. Addison.*

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PREFECTSHIP, } The office of a chief
PREFECTURE, } magistrate, commander or viceroy.

2. Jurisdiction of a prefect.

PREFER, *v. t.* [L. *præfero*; *præ*, before, and *fero*, to bear or carry; Fr. *preferer*; It. *preferire*; Sp. *preferir*.]

1. Literally, to bear or carry in advance, in the mind, affections or choice; hence, to regard more than another; to honor or esteem above another.

It is sometimes followed by *above*, *before*, or *to*.

If I *prefer* not Jerusalem *above* my chief joy.
Ps. cxxxvii.

He that cometh after me, is *preferred* before me. John i.

2. To advance, as to an office or dignity; to raise; to exalt; as, to *prefer* one to a bishopric; to *prefer* an officer to the rank of general.

3. To offer; to present; to exhibit; usually with solemnity, or to a public body. It is our privilege to enjoy the right of *preferring* petitions to rulers for redress of wrongs.

My vows and prayers to thee *preferred*.
Sandys.

Prefer a bill against all kings and parliaments since the conquest.
Collier.

4. To offer or present ceremoniously, or in ordinary familiar language.

He spake, and to her hand *preferr'd* the bowl.
Pope.

[This is allowable, at least in poetry, though not usual.]

PREF'ERABLE, *a.* [Fr.] Worthy to be preferred or chosen before something else; more eligible; more desirable. Virtue is far *preferable* to vice, even for its pleasures in this life.

2. More excellent; of better quality; as, Madeira wine is *preferable* to claret.

PREF'ERABLENESS, *n.* The quality or state of being preferable. *Mountague.*

PREF'ERABLY, *adv.* In preference; in such a manner as to prefer one thing to another.

How comes he to choose Plautus *preferably* to Terence?
Dennis.

PREF'ERENCE, *n.* The act of preferring one thing before another; estimation of one thing above another; choice of one thing rather than another.

Leave the critics on either side to contend about the *preference* due to this or that sort of poetry.
Dryden.

It has *to, above, before, or over*, before the thing postponed. All men give the *preference* to Homer as an epic poet. The human body has the *preference above* or *before* those of brutes.

The knowledge of things alone gives a value to our reasonings, and *preference* of one man's knowledge *over* another's.
Locke.

PREFERMENT, *n.* [It. *preferimento*.] Advancement to a higher office, dignity or station. Change of manners and even of character often follows *preferment*. A profligate life should be considered a disqualification for *preferment*, no less than want of ability.

2. Superior place or office. All *preferments* should be given to competent men.

3. Preference. [Not used.] *Brown.*