

**ASBESTINITE**, *n.* [See *Asbestos*.] The actinolite or strolstein.

**Calceiferous abstinence**, a variety of stercorite.

**ASBESTUS**, *n.* [Gr. *ἀσβέστος*, inextinguishable; of a neg. and *σβέρω*, to extinguish.]

A mineral, which has frequently the appearance of a vegetable substance. It is always fibrous, and its fibers sometimes appear to be prismatic crystals. They are sometimes delicate, flexible, and elastic; at other times, stiff and brittle. Its powder is soft to the touch; its colors are some shade of white, gray or green, passing into brown, red or black. It is incombustible, and has been wrought into a soft, flexible cloth, which was formerly used as a shroud for dead bodies. It has been also manufactured into incombustible paper, and wicks for lamps.

*Kirwan. Encyc. Cleveland.*  
*Ligniform asbestos* is a variety of a brown color, of a splintery fracture, and if broken across, presents an irregular filamentous structure, like wood.

**ASCARIS**, *n.* plu. *ascaris*. [Gr.]

In zoology, a genus of intestinal worms. The body is cylindrical, and tapering at the ends. It includes two of the most common worms in the human intestines, the *ascariides*, and the *lumbrioides*.

**ASCEND**, *v. t.* [L. *ascendo*, from *scando*, to mount or climb; W. *esgyn*, to rise; *cyn*, first, chief. It has the same elements as *begin*.]

1. To move upwards; to mount; to go up; to rise, whether in air or water, or upon a material object.

2. To rise, in a figurative sense; to proceed from an inferior to a superior degree, from mean to noble objects, from particulars to generals, &c.

3. To proceed from modern to ancient times; to recur to former ages; as, our inquiries ascend to the remotest antiquity.

4. In a corresponding sense, to proceed in a line towards ancestors; as, to ascend to our first progenitors.

5. To rise as a star; to proceed or come above the horizon.

6. In music, to rise in vocal utterance; to pass from any note to one more acute.

**ASCEND**, *v. t.* To go or move upwards upon, as to ascend a hill or ladder; or to climb, as to ascend a tree.

**ASCENDABLE**, *a.* That may be ascended.

**ASCENDANT**, *n.* Superiority or commanding influence; as, one man has the ascendancy over another.

2. An ancestor, or one who precedes in genealogy, or degrees of kindred; opposed to descendant.

3. High; elevation. [Little used.]

4. In astrology, that degree of the ecliptic which rises above the horizon at the time of one's birth. That part of the ecliptic at any particular time above the horizon, supposed to have influence on a person's life and fortune.

**ASCENDANT**, *a.* Superior; predominant; surpassing.

2. In astrology, above the horizon.

**ASCENDED**, *pp.* or *a.* Risen; mounted up; gone to heaven.

**ASCENDENCY**, *n.* Power; governing or controlling influence.

Custom has an ascendancy over the understanding.

**ASCENDING**, *ppr.* Rising; moving upwards; proceeding from the less to the greater; proceeding from modern to ancient, from grave to more acute. A star is said to be ascending, when rising above the horizon, in any parallel of the equator.

**Ascending latitude** is the latitude of a planet, when moving towards the North pole.

**Ascending node** is that point of a planet's orbit, wherein it passes the ecliptic to proceed northward. It is also called the northern node.

**Ascending vessels**, in anatomy, are those which carry the blood upward or toward the superior parts of the body.

**ASCENSION**, *n.* [L. *ascensio*.]

1. The act of ascending; a rising. It is frequently applied to the visible elevation of our Savior to Heaven.

2. The thing rising, or ascending. [Not authorized.]

3. In astronomy, ascension is either right or oblique. Right ascension of the sun or of a star, is that degree of the equinoctial, counted from the beginning of Aries, which rises with the sun or star, in a right sphere. Oblique ascension is an arch of the equator, intercepted between the first point of Aries, and that point of the equator which rises together with a star, in an oblique sphere.

**ASCENSION-DAY**, *n.* A festival of some christian churches, held ten days or of the Thursday but one, before Whitsuntide, which is called Holy Thursday, in commemoration of our Savior's ascension into heaven, after his resurrection.

**Ascensional difference** is the difference between the right and oblique ascension of the same point on the surface of the sphere.

**ASCENSIVE**, *a.* Rising; tending to rise, or causing to rise.

**ASCENT**, *n.* [L. *ascensus*.]

1. The act of rising; motion upwards, whether in air or water or other fluid, or on elevated objects; rise; a mounting upwards; as the ascent of vapors from the earth.

2. The way by which one ascends; the means of ascending.

3. An eminence, hill or high place.

**ASCERTAIN**, *v. t.* [from the L. *ad certum*, to a certainty.]

1. To make certain; to define or reduce to precision, by removing obscurity or ambiguity.

The divine law ascertains the truth.

2. To make certain, by trial, examination or experiment, so as to know what was before unknown; as, to ascertain the weight of a commodity, or the purity of a metal.

3. To make sure by previous measures.

The ministry, in order to ascertain a majority in the house of lords, persuaded the king to create twelve new peers.

4. To make certain or confident, followed by a pronoun; as, to ascertain us of the goodness of our work. [Unusual.]

5. To fix; to establish with certainty; to render invariable, and not subject to will. The mildness and precision of their laws ascertained the rule and measure of taxation.

**ASCERTAINABLE**, *a.* That may be made certain in fact, or certain to the mind; that may be certainly known or reduced to a certainty.

**ASCERTAINED**, *pp.* Made certain; defined; established; reduced to a certainty.

**ASCERTAINER**, *n.* The person who ascertains or makes certain.

**ASCERTAINING**, *ppr.* Making certain; fixing; establishing; reducing to a certainty; obtaining certain knowledge.

**ASCERTAINMENT**, *n.* The act of ascertaining; a reducing to certainty; certainty; fixed rule.

**ASCESANCY**, *n.* [See *Ascency*, *Ascensancy*.]

**ASCETIC**, *a.* [Gr. *ἀσκητός*, exercised, hardened; from *ασκω*, to exercise.]

Retired from the world; rigid; severe; austere; employed in devotions and mortifications.

**ASCETIC**, *n.* One who retires from the customary business of life, and devotes himself to the duties of piety and devotion; a hermit; a recluse.

2. The title of certain books, on devout exercises; as the *ascetics* of St. Basil.

**ASCIAN**, *n.* [L. *ascit*, from Gr. *a priv.* and *εἶνα*, a shadow.]

A person, who, at certain times of the year, has no shadow at noon. Such are the inhabitants of the torrid zone, who have, at times, a vertical sun.

**ASCITANS**, *n.* [Gr. *ἀσχος*, a bag or bottle of skin.]

A sect or branch of Montanists, who appeared in the second century. They introduced into their assemblies, certain bacchanals, who danced around a bag or skin distended with air, in allusion to the bottles filled with new wine.

**ASCITES**, *n.* [Gr. *ἀσχος*, a bladder.]

A dropsy or tense elastic swelling of the belly, with fluctuation, from a collection of water.

**ASCITIC**, *a.* Belonging to an ascites; ascitical, *a.* dropsical; hydropical.

**ASCITIOUS**, *a.* [L. *ascitus*; Low L. *ascitius*; from *ascisco*, to take to or associate.]

Additional; added; supplemental; not inherent or original.

Homer has been reckoned an ascititious name.

**ASCLEPIAD**, *n.* In ancient poetry, a verse of four feet, the first of which is a spondee, the second, a choriamb, and the last two, dactyls; or of four feet and a cesura, the first, a spondee, the second, a dactyl, then the cesura, followed by two dactyls; as, Meer' [nas ata] vis [edite] regibus.

**ASCRIBABLE**, *a.* [See *Ascribe*.] That may be ascribed or attributed.

**ASCRIBE**, *v. t.* [L. *ascribo*, of *ad* and *scribo*, to write.]

1. To attribute, impute, or set to, as to a cause; to assign, as effect to a cause; as, losses are often to be ascribed to imprudence.