

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

aardwolf

n
/ 'ärd.wulf /
Afrikaans
a striped hyenalike mammal of southern and eastern Africa that feeds chiefly on carrion and insects.
Termites are the favorite food of the aardwolf.

abacus

n
/ 'abəkəs /
Gk > L
a calculating instrument for performing arithmetical processes by sliding counters by hand on rods or in grooves.
The grocer used an abacus instead of a modern cash register.

abalienation

abalone

n
/ .abə'lōnē /
Sp
a gastropod mollusk that clings to rocks tenaciously with a broad muscular foot.
At the beach, Marta made a necklace from the shell of an abalone.

abandonment

abattoir

n
/ 'abə.twär /
F
slaughterhouse.
At the end of the day the battlefield at Hastings looked like an abattoir.

abbot

abbreviate

abbreviation

abdicate

v
/ 'abdəkāt /
L
relinquish formally, renounce.
The crown prince will abdicate his throne so that his brother may rule.

abdomen

n
/ 'abdəmən /
L > F
region of an insect's body.
The three main body parts of an insect are the head, the thorax, and the abdomen.

abdominal

abecedarium

abecedarius

n
/ .ābē(,)sē'da(a)rēəs /
L
a poem in which the lines or stanzas begin with the letters of the alphabet in regular order.
Geoffrey Chaucer wrote a famous abecedarius.

aberrant

aberration

n
/ .abə'rāshən /
L
deviation from the natural state or from a normal type.
Jane's outburst at the meeting was a shocking behavior aberration, for her manner is usually so reserved.

abeyance

n
/ ə'bāən(t)s /
L > F + EcF
[has homonym: obedience]
cessation or suspension (as of a customary practice).
Use of the swimming pool was put in abeyance until a new lifeguard could be hired.

abhor

abhorrence

abidance

n
/ ə'bīd'ən(t)s /
E
compliance.
Abidance with the golden rule helps one have a happy life.

ability

abiogenist

abjuration

ablution

n
/ ə'blüshən /
L
the washing of one's body or part of it as a religious rite.
A common example of ablution in Judaism is washing the hands before a meal that includes bread.

abolition

abominable

adj
/ ə'bām(ə)nəbəl /
L > F > E
worthy of or causing loathing or hatred.
Charlie's abominable pretense of being attracted to Jane was the result of a dare by his friends.

aborigine

n
/ .abə'rijə(,)nē /
L
[Note: Could be confused with aborigin.] one of the native people especially as contrasted with an invading or colonizing people.
Cathy Freeman, an Australian aborigine, carried the flame into the Olympic stadium.

abracadabra

n
/ .abrəkə'dabrə /
L
confused or unintelligible language
: nonsense.
Despite the abracadabra in the poem "Jabberwocky," its message is rather clear.

abrasion

n
/ ə'brāzhən /
L
wearing, grinding, or rubbing away by friction.
Moving glaciers caused abrasion on Earth's surface.

abrasive

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abrogated

abruptly

adv

/ ə'brəp(t)lē /

L

in a manner that produces the effect of a sudden ending.

George's mom stopped abruptly at the door of his room when she saw his pet python on the floor.

absciss

abscissa

n

/ ab'sisə /

L

the horizontal coordinate of a point in a plane Cartesian coordinate system obtained by measuring parallel to the x-axis.

Bill was asked to mark the point on the graph at which the abscissa is 4 and the ordinate is 7.

abscond

abscondence

abseil

n

/ 'äp.zil /

G

descent in mountaineering by means of a rope looped over a projection above.

In her wilderness survival class, Elisa learned how to perform an abseil without losing control.

absence

abstemious

adj

/ abz'tēmēəs /

L

sparing in eating and drinking.

Evelyn is abstemious by nature and never orders dessert.

abstention

n

/ əbz'tenchən /

L

withholding of a vote.

Helga resented her senator's abstention on the crime bill.

abstinence

abstractive

abstruse

adj

/ əbz'trüis /

L

[has obsolete variant with similar pronunciation: obtruse] difficult to comprehend or understand.

Mr. Thompson's abstruse calculations covered the blackboard.

absurdity

abundance

abysmal

adj

/ ə'bizməl /

Gk > L > E

having the characteristics of an abyss : bottomless.

Ahmet jumped his motorcycle over the abysmal gorge.

abysmally

acacia

n

/ ə'kāshə /

Gk > L

any plant of the genus of woody plants of warm regions having pinnate leaves and white or yellow flower clusters.

Giraffes have specialized teeth that help them comb leaves from the spiny branches of the acacia.

academia

n

/ ,akə'dēmyə /

Gk > L

life and interests associated with a school especially of higher learning.

Robert prefers academia to the business world.

academic

adj

/ ,akə'demik /

Gk > L > F

relating to a school, especially an institution of higher education.

Claudia postponed her academic pursuits after learning of her father's serious illness.

acarology

accede

accelerate

v

/ ik'selə.rāt /

L

add to the speed of or quicken the motion of.

To qualify for the finals, the jogger had to accelerate his pace.

accelerator

accentuator

acceptance

accessible

adj

/ ik'sesəbəl /

L

capable of being reached or easily approached.

Wilbur made sure his restaurant was accessible to those in wheelchairs.

accession

n

/ ik'seshən /

L > F

the act of attaining or coming to high office or a position of honor or power.

The best seller chronicled the accession of the new prince.

accessorial

accidental

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accipiter

n
/ ək'sipəd-ə(r) /

L
any hawk of the genus *Accipiter* (as the Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, goshawk).

Calvin spotted an accipiter darting among the trees.

acclimatization

n
/ ə'klīməd-ə'zāshən /
L > F + Ecff

the process of adapting to a new temperature, altitude, environment, or situation.

The wild fern's acclimatization to Mrs. Bennett's rock garden amazed her.

acclivity

n
/ ə'klivədē /

L
an ascending slope (as of a hill).
The biker hoped that a downhill stretch would soon follow what seemed to be an endless acclivity.

accolade

n
/ 'akə.lād /
L > F

a bestowal of praise.
Martin received one accolade after another at the awards banquet.

accommodable

accommodate

v
/ ə'kāmədāt /

L
provide with lodgings.
Leah begged the hotel clerk to accommodate her for just one more night.

accomplice

n
/ ə'kämpləs /
L > F > E
one that participates with another in a crime either as principal or accessory.
The juvenile was convicted as an accomplice in the robbery.

accordionist

accreditation

acrescent

adj
/ ə'kres-ənt /

L
growing continuously; specifically : growing larger after flowering.
After its flower had fallen away, the plant's accrescent calyx became noticeably larger.

accrual

accrue

accrued

v
/ ə'krüd /
L > F > E
came by way of increase or addition.
Helen argued that many advantages have accrued to society from the freedom of the press.

accumulate

v
/ ə'kyümyə.lāt /
L
heap up in a mass : pile up.
The weather forecaster said that as much as two feet of snow might accumulate overnight.

accurate

adj
/ 'akyərət /

L
correct, exact, precise.
The detective prided himself on making accurate reports of crime scenes.

accusatory

acerbity

n
/ ə'sərbədē /
L
acidity of temper or tone : astringency or sharpness of manner.
Rosemary remarked with acerbity that her son's chores hadn't been done in days.

acescent

adj
/ ə'ses-ənt /

L
turning sour or tending to turn sour.
Natalie spit out the acescent milk.

acetate

acetylene

n
/ ə'sed-ə-lən /
L + Gk + Gk
a colorless gaseous hydrocarbon that is explosive when compressed but safe if diluted with nitrogen or acetone.
The welder ran out of acetylene while cutting through the ship's hull.

achondrite

n
/ ā'kän.drīt /
Gk
a stony meteorite devoid of the granular structures known as chondrules.
The claim that the achondrite originated from the moon was based on compositional matches of lunar rocks obtained by the Apollo missions.

achromatism

acicular

adj
/ ə'sikyələr /
L + Ecf
like a needle in shape : slender and pointed.
Under the microscope, the crystals appear as single acicular structures.

acknowledge

acknowledging

acme

n
/ 'akmē /
Gk
the highest point or stage (as of growth or development).
Many of her fans think Barbra Streisand is at the acme of the music profession.

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acolyte

n
/ 'akə.līt /
Gk > L > F > E
one who attends or assists :
follower.
*Not one acolyte remained after the
cult leader's fall from grace.*

acorn

acoustician

acoustics

n pl
/ ə'küstiks /
Gk
the aggregate of qualities (as
absence of echo or reverberation)
of an enclosure (as an auditorium)
or other area that affects
production, control, transmission,
reception, and perception of sound.
*As a result of the renovation, the
acoustics of the concert hall have
improved dramatically.*

acquaintance

n
/ ə'kwāntʰn(t)s /
F > E
familiarity, experience.
*Ruth developed an acquaintance
with Tibetan musical tradition.*

acquiesce

acquiescence

acquittal

n
/ ə'kwidʰl /
L + L > F
[Note: The definition provided is
not the one most commonly
associated with this word.] release
or discharge from debt or other
liability.
*Mr. Churchill was deeply involved
in the game and was too much
indebted to it for his acquittal.*

acre

n
/ 'ākə(r) /
E
any of various units of land area.
*Miriam had to cross a 10-acre field
to get to her favorite swimming
hole.*

acrid

adj
/ 'akrəd /
L
unpleasantly sharp or strong to the
taste or to the smell.
*The acrid sulfur fumes made
Gustavo's eyes water.*

acrimonious

adj
/ .akrə'mōnēəs /
L > F
caustic, biting, or rancorous,
especially in feeling, language, or
manner : bitter.
*It was obvious that Marjorie's
comments were acrimonious and
complaining.*

acrobat

n
/ 'akrə.bat /
Gk > F
one who performs gymnastic feats
or exercises.
*Paul is developing the skills of a
first-rate acrobat.*

acronym

n
/ 'akrə.nim /
Gk + Gk
a word formed from the initial
letter or letters of each of the
successive parts or major parts of a
compound term.
*The word radar is an acronym of
radio detection and ranging.*

acropolis

acrostic

n
/ ə'kröstik /
Gk
a composition usually in verse in
which one or more sets of letters
when taken in order form a word, a
connected group of words, or the
regular sequence of the letters of
the alphabet.
*Mrs. Taylor was not at all pleased
with the acrostic her students made
using her name.*

acrylic

actinic

adj
/ ak'tinik /
Gk > L + Ecf
having photochemical properties or
effects.
*The stars emit actinic rays as well
as light and heat.*

actuary

n
/ 'akchə.werē /
L
one trained in mathematics and
statistics whose business it is to
calculate insurance and annuity
premiums, reserves, and dividends.
*An actuary uses such factors as age
and health status to determine a
person's life insurance premiums.*

acuate

adj
/ 'akyə.wāt /
L
having a sharp point : shaped like a
needle : sharpened.
*Cobb's beagle was distinctive
because of its acuate tail.*

aculeate

adj
/ ə'kyülēāt /
L
marked by incisiveness : stinging,
pointed.
*No actor was spared in the
reviewer's aculeate criticisms.*

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acumen

n
/ ə'kyümən /
L

acuteness of mind : keenness of perception, discernment, or discrimination : shrewdness especially in practical matters.
Della's business acumen helped her amass a fortune of over \$50 million.

acuminate

adj
/ ə'kyümənət /
L

tapering to a slender point : pointed.
Steve found one of his parakeet's acuminate tail feathers on the floor.

acupuncture

adactylous

adage

adagio

n
/ ə'dä(,)jō /
(L + L > OProv) > It
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a series of sustained and perfectly controlled dance movements displaying balance and grace.
The wicked fairy performed a perfect adagio just before Sleeping Beauty appeared.

adamantine

adj
/ .adə'man.tin /
Gk > L > E
rigidly firm : unyielding.
Debra's adamantine chain of logic bedazzled her philosophy professor.

addlepated

adenoidal

adj
/ .əd'n'oid'əl /
Gk
typical or suggestive of one affected with abnormally enlarged glands in the back of the throat.
The critics panned the tenor, whose voice was terribly adenoidal and breathy.

adequate

adequation

adhere

adherence

adherent
n
/ .əd'hirənt /
L

a believer in or advocate of a particular thing, idea, or religion.
Julia has been an adherent of Buddhism since 1985.

adhesional

adiaphorism

adipose

adjacency

adjacent
adj
/ ə'jās'nt /
L
living nearby or sitting or standing relatively near or close together.
Citizens of Centerville and its adjacent communities banded together to form a volunteer fire department.

adjourn

adjudicate

adjunct

n
/ 'a.jəŋ(k)t /
L
something joined or added to another thing but not essentially a part of it.
Exercise is an adjunct to a long and healthy life.

adjuvant

admeasure

adminicle

n
/ ad'minəkəl /
L
support, auxiliary.
Shelly enjoyed serving as an adminicle of the local Girl Scout troop.

admiral

n
/ 'adm(ə)rəl /
Ar > L
a naval officer of high rank.
Petty Officer Pritchard saluted the admiral and continued to her post.

admire

admonitory

adolescence

Adonis

n
/ ə'dänəs /
Gk name
an exceptionally handsome young man.
Nearly all the eighth-grade girls think that Leonardo is an Adonis.

adsmith

adumbrate

v
/ 'adəm.brāt /
L
give a sketchy representation of : outline broadly, omitting details.
There was time to only adumbrate the escape plan.

advantageous

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adverb

adversary

adverse

advisory

n
/ əd'vīz(ə)rē /
L > F

a report giving information (as one issued by a weather bureau on the progress of a hurricane).
The weather advisory warned small craft that winds would be in excess of 34 knots today.

advocaat

advocate

n
/ 'advəkāt /
L

one that argues for, defends, maintains, or recommends a cause or proposal.
Isabella was sure nobody ought to be, or could be, a greater advocate for matrimony than she.

aerial

aerodynamic

adj
/ ,a(ə)rō(,)dī'namik /
Gk

of or relating to the science that treats of the motion of air and other gaseous fluids.
The aerodynamic design of race cars helps them achieve great speeds.

aeronautics

aerosol

n
/ 'a(ə)rəsəl /
Gk + L

a suspension of ultramicroscopic solid or liquid particles in air or gas.
Volcanic eruptions propel hydrogen sulfide into the stratosphere, where it reacts with oxygen to form an aerosol that can persist for more than a year.

Aeschylean

adj
/ ,eskə'lēən /
Gk name
of, relating to, or suggestive of the Greek tragic poet Aeschylus.
The Aeschylean chorus plays an important role in the plot of the tragedy.

affability

n
/ ,afə'bīlədē /
L
sociability.
Miss Smith was delighted with the affability with which Miss Woodhouse had treated her all the evening.

affable

affectionate

adj
/ ə'feksh(ə)nət /
L
having warm regard : loving, fond.
Tipper is the most affectionate collie Susan had ever owned.

affianced

v
/ ə'fīən(t)st /
L > F > E
solemnly promised (oneself or another) in marriage : betrothed.
The ruler of Austria affianced his daughter to the king of France.

affidavit

n
/ ,afə'dāvət /
L
a sworn statement in writing made especially under oath or before an authorized officer.
The police asked Heather to prepare an affidavit regarding what she saw when she surprised a burglar in her house.

affiliate

v
/ ə'filē.āt /
L
attach as a member or branch : bring or receive into close connection.
The university assists in trying to affiliate local high schools.

affiliation

n
/ ə'filē'āshən /
L
the state or relation of being attached as a member or branch.
Professor Bruner retired after a 30-year affiliation with Harvard University.

affinity

n
/ ə'finədē /
L
sympathy especially as marked by community of interest.
Marie felt an affinity with the new chess prodigy, remembering how she had followed Bobby Fischer's early career many years before.

affirmative

afflatus

n
/ ə'flādəs /
L
a divine imparting of knowledge or power : inspiration.
Most art students are familiar with Michelangelo's painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel depicting the afflatus from God to Adam.

affluence

aforementioned

afterwale

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agape

n
/ ä'gä.pä /
Gk

spontaneous self-giving love expressed freely without calculation of cost or gain to the giver or merit on the part of the receiver.

The question "What's in it for me?" is unheard of in agape.

agate

adj
/ 'agôt /
Gk > L > F

of or resembling a fine-grained chalcedony frequently mixed with opal and having various colors arranged in stripes or bands; especially : of the color of agate.
Rachel's brown agate eyes are extremely unusual and beautiful.

agelicism

agenda

agglomerate

n
/ ə'glämərət /
L

[Note: Could be confused with agglomerant.] a confused or jumbled mass, heap, or collection.
Helen's favorite jeans are somewhere in the agglomerate of clothing on her bedroom floor.

agglomeration

agglutinate

aggrandizement

n
/ ə'grandəzmənt /
L > F

the act, action, or result of making great or greater (as in power, honor, or wealth).
Because she was a commoner, Ruth was accused of marrying the prince for her own personal aggrandizement.

aggravate

v
/ 'agrə.vāt /
L

make worse, more serious, or more severe.

Shane worried that a game of one-on-one would aggravate his ankle injury.

aggregate

n
/ 'agrəgət /
L

a body of units or parts somewhat loosely associated with one another.

The protesters straggled toward the muddy park in a dispirited aggregate as the organizers set up tents and microphones.

aghost

agiotage

agitated

adj
/ 'əjə.tādəd /
L

troubled in mind : disturbed, excited.

The crowd became agitated when the candidate failed to appear.

agnostic

n
/ ag'nästik /
Gk

one who maintains a continuing doubt about the existence or knowability of a god or any ultimates.

Raymond and Olive have been happily married for ten years, even though she is an agnostic and he never misses Sunday morning mass.

agoraphobia

agrarian

agreeable

adj
/ ə'grēəbəl /
L > F

pleasing to the mind or senses : to one's liking : pleasant.

The famous ballplayer proved to be the most likable and agreeable man that Billy had ever met.

agriology

agronomy

n
/ ə'gränəmē /
L + Gk

the branch of agriculture that deals with field crop production and soil management.

Vince earned a degree in agronomy at the state university's school of agriculture.

aikido

ailanthus

n
/ ā'lan(t)thəs /
Amboinese

a tree of a small genus of East Indian and Chinese trees with greenish flowers.

The ailanthus is fast growing and its shallow, wide-spreading root system effectively anchors the soil.

aileron

n
/ 'ālərən /
L > F

a movable portion of an airplane wing or a movable airfoil external to the wing for imparting a rolling motion and thus providing lateral control.

An aileron is usually situated at the trailing edge of an airplane's wing near the wing tip.

airborne

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airedale

n
/ 'a(a)(ə)r.dāl /
E geog name
a large terrier with a wiry black and tan coat.
Shantha's airedale is registered with the American Kennel Club.

akimbo

adj
/ ə'kim(,)bō /
E
having the hands on the hips with the elbows projecting outward.
With her arms akimbo, Marion waited for Tim to explain himself.

akropodion

n
/ ,akrə'pōdēən /
Gk
the most prominent point on the back of the heel.
After the hike, Eli had a nasty blister on his left akropodion.

aktograph

alabaster

adj
/ 'alə.bastə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E
of or resembling alabaster; specifically : having a nearly white color and a light-diffusing surface.
Patsy's alabaster skin gives her a spectral appearance.

alacrity

n
/ ə'lakrədē /
L
cheerful readiness : eagerness.
Dr. Cameron's students always enter his class with alacrity and depart with reluctance.

alar

alary

adj
/ 'alərē /
L
wing-shaped or fan-shaped.
There was an alary membrane on each side of the seed.

albatross

n
/ 'albə.trōs /
Ar? > Pg or Sp
any of a number of large web-footed seabirds that are capable of long-continued flight.
The wingspan of an albatross can exceed ten feet.

albedo

n
/ al'bē(,)dō /
L
reflective power.
Arno researched the effects of soil albedo on vegetation.

albedometer

n
/ ,albə'dämədə(r) /
L + Gk
a device for measuring the reflection of light (as by snow).
David used an albedometer to measure the reflection of light by the clouds.

albeit

conj
/ ɔl'bēət /
E
although.
Sonia had a simple, albeit expensive, wedding.

albino

alchemy

n
/ 'alkəmē /
Gk > Ar > L > F
the medieval chemical science and speculative philosophy whose aims were the transmutation of base metals into gold.
The wizard's apprentice was determined to learn enough alchemy to turn lead into gold.

alcohol

alcoholature

alcoholism

alcove

n
/ 'alkōv /
Ar > Sp > F
a recessed part (as a breakfast nook) of a room.
Silvio found an alcove in the library that was a perfect place for taking a nap.

aleatoric

adj
/ ,ālēə'tōrik /
L
characterized by chance or random elements.
By digitizing thunder and traffic noises, Georgia was able to compose aleatoric music.

aleatory

alegar

n
/ 'aligə(r) /
E + L > F
sour ale or vinegar made of ale.
While studying in England as an exchange student, Judith developed a taste for fried potatoes with salt and alegar.

alfalfa

n
/ al'falfə /
Ar > Sp
an important European leguminous forage plant.
The farmer alternated his crops, growing alfalfa one season and corn the next.

alfresco

adj
/ al'fre(,)skō /
It
open-air.
Everyone looks forward to the alfresco party that the Smiths hold every Derby Day.

algorithm

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alibi

n
/ 'alə.bī /
L

the plea of having been elsewhere at the time an act was committed.

To support his alibi, Jake showed his lawyer a video made during his Hawaii trip.

alien

adj
/ 'ālēən /
L

different in nature or character : far removed.

Nguyen's response to his mother's question had results entirely alien from what he intended.

alienation

aliferous

alimentary

adj
/ .alə'mentərē /
L

[Note: Could be confused with elementary.] of, concerned with, or relating to nourishment or to the function of nutrition.

Pasta is sometimes called an "alimentary paste."

aliquot

alkali

allargando

adv
/ .ä.lär'gän(.)dō /
L

in a manner becoming gradually broader with the same or greater volume.

David's piano teacher indicated that the piece was to be played allargando.

allayment

allege

v
/ ə'lej /
L

assert, affirm, state without proof or before proving.

Residents of the area allege that the lake water has curative properties.

allegiance

n
/ ə'lējən(t)s /
F > E

the duty of fidelity owed by a subject or citizen to his sovereign or government.

The new citizens pledged allegiance to their adopted country.

allegory

n
/ 'alə.gōrē /
Gk

a story in which people, things, and happenings have a hidden or symbolic meaning.

Gail disliked the moralistic tone of the allegory.

allegro

n
/ ə'le(.)grō /
It > L

ballet steps performed in a lively, fast tempo.

After the allegro, Madame Delacroix instructed the dancers to cool down slowly.

allemande

v
/ 'alə.mand /
Gmc > L > F

perform a step with arms interlaced.

The caller told the square dancers to allemande left and swing their partners.

allergy

n
/ 'alə(r)jē /
Gk > G

exaggerated or pathological reaction (as by sneezing, itching, or skin rashes) to substances, situations, or physical states that are without comparable effect on the average individual.

Because of her allergy, Mrs. Griffin discouraged her students from bringing in any furry pets for show-and-tell.

alliance

n
/ ə'liən(t)s /
L > F > E

union or connection especially between families, states, parties, or individuals.

The alliance between the two nations has been strong for nearly 50 years.

alligator

n
/ 'alə.gādə(r) /
L > Sp

a reptile having a head not tapering to the snout and being in general much more sluggish than the typical crocodiles.

Jason's favorite sight at the fair was a woman wrestling an alligator.

allision

alliteration

n
/ ə.lid-ə'rāshən /
L + Ecf

the repetition usually initially of a sound that is usually a consonant in two or more neighboring words or syllables (as in "daring deed").

Poor writers rely on alliteration when lacking ideas.

allocate

v
/ 'alə.kāt /
L

set apart and earmark or designate.

Leon hoped the committee would allocate funds for the new playground.

allocation

n
/ əl-ə'kāshən /
L

the act of apportioning.

The allocation of powers in the United States Constitution is clearly defined.

alluded

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alluviation

n
/ əˌlʊvᵊˈāshən /
L

the process that results in deposits of clay, silt, sand, or gravel at places in rivers or estuaries where stream velocity is decreased.
The effects of alluviation can be seen along the banks of a large river.

almond

n
/ ˈä(ɪ)mənd /
Gk > L > F > E

the fruit of a small tree; especially : the nutlike stone or kernel of this tree.
The almond is a nut that is easy to crack.

almoner

n
/ ˈalmənə(r) /
L > F > E

one who distributes charitable gifts, often for another.
In his role as the king's almoner, Jared tossed a few pennies to the audience.

alnico

n
/ ˈalnəˌkō /
L + G > Sw + G

a powerful permanent-magnet alloy containing iron, nickel, aluminum, and one or more of the elements cobalt, copper, and titanium.
Mr. Arkin's factory makes industrial magnets from alnico.

aloof

adj
/ əˈlʊf /
E + D? > F > E

removed or distant either physically or spiritually and usually by choice and with indifference to the feelings, opinions, or interests of others.
Greg's aloof personality discouraged his gregarious colleagues.

alopecia

n
/ ˌaləˈpēsh(ē)ə /
Gk

loss of hair, wool, or feathers : baldness.
Prescription drugs such as minoxidil have had limited success in treating alopecia.

alpaca

n
/ alˈpakə /
Aymara > Sp
an animal like a llama with fine long woolly hair and domesticated in Peru and adjacent countries.
The petting zoo featured four goats, an alpaca, a pony, and three lambs.

alpenglow

n
/ ˈalpənˌglō /
G + E
a reddish glow or sometimes the entire series of light phenomena seen near sunset or sunrise on the summits of mountains.
Jocelyn and Ruth enjoyed the rich alpenglow from the balcony of their cabin.

alphabet

altazimuth
n
/ alˈtazəməθ /
L + Ar > L

an instrument consisting of a telescope mounted so that it can swing horizontally and vertically.
Josh saw an antique altazimuth in the maritime museum.

altercation

n
/ ˌɔltə(r)ˈkāshən /
L
dispute carried on with feeling (as anger).
Police broke up a minor altercation between two street vendors.

altiplano

n
/ ˌaltəˈplä(ɪ)nō /
L > Sp
a high plateau or plain : tableland.
A cold northerly wind over the altiplano heralded the arrival of winter.

altitude

n
/ ˈaltəˌtūd /
L > E
position at a height.
When the plane suddenly lost altitude, the pilot told the passengers to fasten their seat belts.

altogether

adv
/ ˌɔltəˈgethə(r) /
E
wholly, completely, thoroughly.
The suffragettes argued that it was altogether fit and proper that women have the right to vote.

altruism

altruistically

alveolate

adj
/ alˈvēələt /
L + Ecf
pitted like a honeycomb.
The porous sandstone had an alveolate surface.

amadelphous

amalgam

n
/ əˈmalgəm /
Ar? > L > F
an alloy of mercury with another metal.
Because mercury will form an amalgam with most other metals, it can be used to extract them from ore.

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amanuensis

n
/ əˌmanyəˈwen(t)səs /

L
one who is employed to write from dictation or to copy what another has written.

During the six weeks that Chrissie's arm was in a cast, she completed her homework with her mother as her amanuensis.

amaryllis

n
/ ˌaməˈriləs /

L name
any of several African bulbous herbs grown for their large showy flowers.

Deborah's amaryllis bloomed just in time for the December holidays.

amateur

amber

n
/ ˈambə(r) /
Ar > L > F

a very hard yellowish to brownish translucent fossil resin that takes a fine polish.

Sarah was delighted when her mother gave her some earrings made of amber.

ambidextrous

ambiguity

n
/ ˌambəˈgyüədē /

L
the condition of admitting of two or more meanings, of being understood in more than one way, or of referring to two or more things at the same time.

The ambiguity of Mr. Mitchell's essay questions encouraged creative interpretations.

ambivalent

adj
/ ˌamˈbivələnt /

L
characterized by, suggestive of, motivated by, or exhibiting contradictory emotional or psychological attitude.
Because Tad has a grueling job lined up, he is ambivalent about the upcoming summer vacation.

amblyopia

n
/ ˌamblēˈɒpēə /

Gk
dimness of sight without apparent change in the eye structures associated especially with the toxic effects of certain drugs or chemicals or with dietary deficiencies.

The doctor told Henry to quit smoking if he wanted his amblyopia to improve.

ambrosia

n
/ ˌamˈbrɔzh(ē)ə /
Gk > F

a dessert of a fruit or of mixed fruits topped with shredded coconut.

Cyrus's favorite dessert is his grandmother's ambrosia.

ambulation

ambuscade

ambush

ameliorate

v
/ əˈmēlyəˌrāt /

L
make better : improve.
Activists lobbied to ameliorate prison conditions.

amelioration

n
/ əˈmēlyəˈrāshən /

L
the act of making better or the state of being made better : improvement.

The committee submitted its recommendations for the amelioration of the undesirable conditions at the overcrowded school.

amenable

adj
/ əˈmēnəbəl /
L > F

readily brought to yield or submit : responsive, tractable.

Horst is amenable to any ideas for the prom's theme.

amendment

n
/ əˈmen(d)mənt /
L + Ecf
the process of changing or modifying in any way for the better (as a motion, bill, act, or constitution).
A well-drafted constitution will provide for its own amendment.

amertoy

n
/ ˈamə(r).tɔi /
E geog name + E
a small terrierlike dog having a short sleek satiny coat and weighing between six and ten pounds.

Ricky was forever chasing Trixie, the family amertoy, out of the flower beds.

amethyst

amiable

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amicable

adj
/ 'aməkəbəl /
L

characterized by or as if by friendship and goodwill.
Carla and Jeanine have had an amicable relationship since they settled their initial dispute.

amice

n
/ 'aməs /
L
[has near homonyms: amas, amiss]
a liturgical vestment consisting of an oblong piece of cloth usually of white linen, worn about the neck and shoulders and partly under the alb.
Father Patrick put on a fresh white amice before serving mass.

amiss

amity

n
/ 'amədē /
L
friendship and goodwill, especially as characterized by mutual acceptance and tolerance of potentially antagonistic standpoints or aims.
The natural amity between Avital and her sister has helped them maintain strong ties through many family disagreements.

ammeter

n
/ 'a(m).medə(r) /
F + Gk
[has near homonym: amateur] an instrument for measuring electric current.
Perry and Ayrton's ammeter helped measure the efficiency of the battery.

ammonia

amnesia

n
/ am'nēzhə /
Gk
loss of memory : forgetfulness.
Alice suffered from amnesia as the result of a head injury.

amole

n
/ ə'mōlē /
Nahuatl > Sp
any of a number of plants utilized as a source of soap.
The discovery of an amole created much excitement among the castaways.

amortization

amphibian

n
/ am'fībēən /
Gk
[has homonym: amphibion] an animal or plant accustomed or adapted to life both on land and in the water.
The frog is perhaps the best-known amphibian.

amphibious

amphora

n
/ 'amfərə /
Gk > L
a Greek unit of capacity equal to 10.3 gallons or 39 liters.
The group ordered 1 amphora of punch for the Antiquity Party.

ampicillin

n
/ ,ampə'silən /
ISV
a penicillin that is effective against gram-negative and gram-positive bacteria and is used to treat various infections of the urinary, respiratory, and intestinal tracts.
Pneumonia has been successfully treated with ampicillin.

amulet

n
/ 'amyələt /
L
an inscribed charm believed to protect or aid the wearer.
The archaeologist discovered an amulet in the tomb of an ancient Egyptian ruler.

amuse

v
/ ə'myüz /
L > F
entertain or occupy in a pleasant manner.
The children seemed to tumble about and amuse themselves like good-natured collie puppies.

amygdaline

adj
/ ə'migdə.līn /
Gk
of or relating to a tonsil.
Because of a persistent amygdaline infection, Lana checked into the hospital to have her tonsils removed.

anabasis

n
/ ə'nabəsəs /
Gk
a going or marching up; especially : a military advance.
Hannibal is famous for his remarkable anabasis across the Alps into Italy.

anabibazon

n
/ ,anə'bibə.zän /
Gk
the ascending node of the Moon's orbit with the ecliptic.
Lars waited for the Moon to reach its anabibazon so he could confirm his findings.

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anabolic

adj

/ .anə'bälík /

Gk + Gk

relating to, characterized by, or promoting constructive metabolism.

The weightlifter was disqualified after it was discovered he had used anabolic steroids.

anachronism

anachronous

anaconda

n

/ .anə'kändə /

Singhalese

a large arboreal snake of the boa family of tropical South America.

The anaconda has been known to forage in trees for birds.

anaglyph

n

/ 'anə.glif /

Gk

a stereoscopic still or moving picture producing a three-dimensional effect when viewed through colored filters.

Troy begged his parents to take him to the newest anaglyph at the IMAX theater.

anagnorisis

n

/ .anə'gñrəsəs /

Gk

an incident or solution of plot in tragedy in which the main character recognizes his or her own or some other character's true identity or discovers the true nature of his or her own situation.

The moment of anagnorisis occurs when the boy finds out he is actually the king's son.

anagogic

adj

/ .anə'gäjik /

Gk > L

having a spiritual meaning or a sense referring to the heavenly life.

Terrance recited anagogic poems by a Greek mystic.

analects

analemma

n

/ .anə'lemə /

Gk

a graduated scale shaped like a figure 8 and showing the Sun's declination for each day of the year usually constituting part of a sundial and often shown on globes. *Katrina consulted the sundial's analemma to calculate the correct time.*

analgesic

analogy

n

/ ə'naləjē /

Gk

a figure of speech involving an extended or elaborate comparison between two things or situations. *Hugo used an analogy to illustrate his point, but no one understood the analogy either.*

analysand

n

/ ə'naləsənd /

Gk + L > Ecf

one that is analyzed; specifically : one who is undergoing psychoanalysis.

The psychotherapist encouraged the analysand to unburden herself of her anxieties.

anonym

n

/ 'anə.nim /

Gk

[has homonym: anonym] a fictitious name consisting of the real name written backwards.

Pat often uses the anonym Tap when writing secret messages to her friends.

anaphora

n

/ ə'naf(ə)rə /

Gk

repetition of a word or words at the beginning of two or more successive clauses or verses.

"The voice of the Lord" occurred three times in anaphora in the psalm Julie read.

anarchy

n

/ 'anə(r)kē /

Gk > L

a state of lawlessness or political disorder due to the absence of governmental authority.

After the revelation of election fraud, some observers feared that the tiny republic would succumb to anarchy.

anastomosis

n

/ ə.nastə'mōsəs /

Gk

a joining of the parts of a branched system.

Hal pointed out the anastomosis in the veined mulberry leaf.

anastrophe

n

/ ə'nastrə(,)fē /

Gk

inversion of the usual syntactical order of words for rhetorical effect.

In the poem "Jabberwocky," the line "So rested he by the TumTum tree" is an example of anastrophe.

anathema

n

/ ə'nathəmə /

Gk

one that is cursed by ecclesiastical authority.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council pronounced Pope Honorius anathema in A.D. 681.

anaudia

n

/ ə'nòdēə /

Gk

loss of voice : inability to articulate.

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A blow to the throat can cause temporary anaudia.

anautogenous

ancestor

anchovy

n
/ 'an.chōvē /
Gk > L? > It > Sp
any of a number of small herringlike fishes; especially : a common Mediterranean form esteemed for its rich and peculiar flavor.
Joshua informed his mother that one anchovy had rendered the entire pizza inedible.

ancillary

adj
/ 'ansə.lerē /
L
serving to aid or assist : auxiliary : supplementary.
Electronic media usually include radio, film, and television, as well as the ancillary industries of audio and video recording.

anecdote

n
/ 'anik.dōt /
F&Gk
a usually short narrative of an interesting, amusing, or curious incident.
The speaker's presentation ended with a touching anecdote.

anemochore

n
/ ə'neməkō(ə)r /
Gk > F + Gk
a plant that has seeds or spores adapted to distribution by wind.
The dandelion is a familiar anemochore.

anemometer

n
/ .anə'mämədə(r) /
Gk > F + Gk > Ecf
an instrument for measuring and indicating the force or speed of the wind.
The anemometer spun furiously as the hurricane approached.

anemone

n
/ ə'nemənē /
Heb name > Gk
a plant or flower of a widely distributed genus of plants with showy flowers that lack petals but have showy sepals.
Xantha picked an anemone from the flower bed.

aneroid

adj
/ 'anə.rōid /
Gk > F
containing no liquid or functioning without the use of liquid.
Tasha carefully monitored the aneroid manometer throughout the course of the experiment.

anglaise

adj
/ äŋ'glāz /
Gmc > F
boiled and served without sauce.
Carrots anglaise are not very tasty.

anguish

anhydride

anise

n
/ 'anəs /
Gk
an herb cultivated for its aromatic seeds.
The flavor of anise is similar to that of licorice.

anisettes

ankh

n
/ 'aŋk /
Egypt
a cross having a loop instead of an upper vertical arm used especially in ancient Egypt.
Roger's first discovery as an Egyptian archeologist was a gold ankh.

anklet

anneal

annihilate

v
/ ə'nīə.lāt /
L
destroy a considerable part of.
Armyworms can annihilate a beautiful lawn in just a few days.

anniversary

n
/ .anə'vərs(ə)rē /
L
the annual recurrence of a date marking an event or occurrence of notable importance.
Next Thursday will be the 23rd anniversary of our family grocery store's first day of operation.

annotation

annoyance

n
/ ə'nōiən(t)s /
F > E
a source of vexation or irritation : bothersome disturbance.
Vera enjoyed raking leaves on the warm autumn day, but the loud music from the neighbor's yard was an annoyance.

annual

annuity

n
/ ə'n(y)üədē /
L
an amount payable yearly or at other regular intervals (as quarterly) for a certain or uncertain period.
Carl's grandparents set up a trust fund that will provide him with an annuity for the next 20 years.

annul

v
/ ə'nəl /
L > F > E
cause to cease to exist : reduce to nothing.
The legislator's motion to annul the out-of-date law met with the approval of his colleagues.

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anodyne

adj
/ 'anəˌdɪn /
Gk

serving to assuage pain : soothing.
Before aspirin was developed, certain spirits and herbs were valued for their anodyne properties.

anomalous

anomaly

n
/ ə'namələ /
Gk > L

the angular distance of a planet from its perihelion as seen from the Sun.
The anomaly in a planet's orbit is caused by the gravitational influence of other planets.

anon

adv
/ ə'nän /
E

in a little while : soon, presently.
Anon he arrived at his destination.

anonymous

adj
/ ə'nänəməs /
Gk > L

of unknown or unnamed source or origin (as authorship, donorship, workmanship).
An anonymous 18th-century painting recently sold for two million dollars.

anorthopia

n
/ .a(ɪ)nɔr'thɒpɛə /
Gk

distorted vision in which straight lines appear bent.
When Liz put on Jan's glasses, she was overcome with anorthopia.

anosmic

adj
/ ə'näzmik /
Gk > L

of or characterized by loss or impairment of the sense of smell.
Anesthesia can leave a patient temporarily anosmic.

anschluss

n
/ 'än.shlʊs /
G

union; especially : political or economic union of one government or territory with another.
Hitler's annexation of Austria to Germany in the 1930s is what is generally meant by "the anschluss."

anserous

Antarctic

adj
/ ant'ärktik /
Gk

relating to the South Pole or the region near it.
Samuel's stamp collection included a complete collection of the stamps of the French Antarctic Territory.

antecedent

n
/ .antə'sɛd'nt /
L

a substantive word, phrase, or clause referred to by a pronoun, typically by a following pronoun.
In the sentence "I saw John and spoke to him," John is the antecedent of him.

antecessor

n
/ 'antəsɛsə(r) /
L > E

one that goes before.
Phoebe's antecessor in the presidency served six terms.

antediluvian

antelope

n
/ 'ant'ɛlɒp /
Gk > L > F > E

any of various ruminant mammals of Africa and southwest Asia that differ from the true oxen especially in lighter racier build and horns directed upward and backward.
The bounding antelope managed to outdistance the pursuing lion.

antenna

anterior

adj
/ an'tirɛə(r) /
L

relating to or situated near or toward the head or front.
The portion of the flower which faces the subtending bract is the anterior.

anteroom

anthography

n
/ an'thəgrəfɛ /
Gk + Gk + EcF
the description of flowers.
A botanist, Wilbur excelled in anthography.

anthology

n
/ an'thəlɔjɛ /
Gk
a usually representative collection of selected literary pieces or passages.
John hopes to find "The Raven" in his mom's anthology of American literature.

anthroponymy

anticyclone

n
/ 'an(ɪ)tɛ.sɪ.klɒn /
Gk + Gk
a system of winds that rotates about a center of high atmospheric pressure.
The warm, dry winds blowing into southern California are from an anticyclone over the deserts of Nevada.

antifoulant

n
/ .an(ɪ)tɪ'fəʊlənt /
L + E
a substance (as paint for use on the bottom of a boat) designed to prevent, reduce, or eliminate an accumulation of deposits.
Antifoulant was applied to the ship's bottom in dry dock.

antilogy

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antimacassar

n
/ antēmə'kasə(r) /
Gk + Celebes island geog name
a cover to protect the back or arms
of furniture from Macassar oil or
other hair preparations.
*Fran found the missing
antimacassar under one of the sofa
cushions.*

antimony

n
/ 'antə.mōnē /
Ar? > L > E
a metalloid element that is
commonly metallic silvery white,
crystalline, and brittle and is used
especially as a constituent of alloys.
*Pewter is an alloy of antimony and
tin.*

antipasto

n
/ .antē'pastō /
L > It
any of various savory foods usually
served as appetizers : hors
d'oeuvre.
*Herbert ordered antipasto for the
table.*

antipodal

adj
/ an'tipəd' /
Gk
situated at the opposite sides of the
earth.
*Regina imagined that she could
reach an antipodal town
somewhere in China if she
continued digging in her garden.*

antiquarian

adj
/ .antə'kwērēən /
L
dealing in old and rare books or in
secondhand books.
*Pamela went to an antiquarian
bookseller to have her first edition
of Oliver Twist appraised.*

antique

antiquity

antiseptic

antithesis

n
/ an'tithəsəs /
Gk
the rhetorical opposing or
contrasting of ideas by means of
grammatically parallel
arrangements of words, clauses, or
sentences.
*A Tale of Two Cities opens with the
famous antithesis: "It was the best
of times, it was the worst of times."*
antonomasia
n
/ (i)an.tänə'māzh(ē)ə /
Gk
the making of a common noun or
verb from a proper name.
*The formation of the verb
pasteurize from the name Pasteur
is an example of antonomasia.*

antonym

anxiety

apartheid

n
/ ə'pär.tāt /
D > Afrikaans
a policy of segregation and political
and economic discrimination
against certain population groups.
*The end of apartheid in South
Africa was one of the great world
events of the decade.*

apastron

n
/ a'pastrən /
Gk
the point in the orbit of one star of
a binary where it is farthest from
the other.
*In binary star systems the motion in
the orbits is not uniform but is least
rapid near apastron.*

apathetic

apathy

n
/ 'apəthē /
Gk
absence or lack of interest or
concern : listlessness, indifference.
*The active interest women are
taking in today's issues strongly
contrasts with the apathy many
women had a century ago.*

aperitif

aperture

n
/ 'apə(r).chù(ə)r /
L
an opening that restricts a beam of
radiation or a stream of particles;
specifically : the opening in a
photographic lens that admits the
light passing through.
*A photographer typically has to
adjust the shutter speed and set the
aperture.*

apex

n
/ 'āpeks /
L
[Note: The definition provided is
not the one most commonly
associated with this word.] the
point of the heavens toward which
a celestial body is moving at a
given time.
*Helga tracked the planet's
movement towards the apex.*

aphasia

n
/ ə'fāzh(ē)ə /
Gk
[has near homonym: aphagia] the
loss or impairment of the power to
use words as symbols of ideas that
results from a brain lesion.
*As a speech therapist, Tonya takes
a particular interest in patients
struggling with aphasia.*

aphelion

n
/ a'fēlyən /
Gk
the point of a planet's or comet's
orbit most distant from the Sun.
*Earth generally reaches aphelion
around July 4.*

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aphid

n

/ 'äfäd /

Gk > L

any of numerous small sluggish insects that suck the juices from plants, causing damage to the plants.

An aphid can cause wilting, distorted growth, or gall formation in plants.

aphorism

n

/ 'afə.rizəm /

Gk > L > F

a terse and often ingenious formulation of a truth or sentiment usually in a single sentence.

Clark lives his life by the aphorism "Clothes make the man."

apiarian

apiary

apiculus

aplomb

n

/ ə'pläm /

L > F

complete confidence or assurance in oneself : poise.

A seasoned public relations officer, Karen handles difficult situations with aplomb.

apocalypse

apocope

n

/ ə'pākə.pē /

Gk

the loss of one or more sounds or letters from the end of a word.

The song title "Singin' in the Rain" exemplifies apocope.

apocryphal

adj

/ ə'päkrəfəl /

Gk

of doubtful authenticity : fictitious, spurious, untrustworthy.

The historian thought the story about the cemetery apocryphal.

apogee

n

/ 'apə(,)jē /

Gk

the point in the orbit of a satellite of Earth (as the Moon or an artificial body) at the greatest distance from the center of Earth.

The transmission delay was longest when the spacecraft reached apogee.

apolaustic

adj

/ ,apə'löstik /

Gk

devoted to enjoyment.

The students spent the vacation in apolaustic pursuits.

apologue

n

/ 'apə.lög /

Gk

an allegorical narrative (as a beast fable) usually intended to convey a moral.

Most schoolchildren are familiar with the apologue of the tortoise and the hare.

apology

n

/ ə'päləjē /

Gk > L > F

an admission to another of a wrong or discourtesy done him or her accompanied by an expression of regret.

The teacher received an apology from the tardy student.

apoplexy

n

/ 'apə.pleksē /

Gk

a sudden loss of consciousness followed by paralysis caused by hemorrhage within the brain—called also "stroke."

When Ray regained consciousness, his doctor told him he was recovering from severe apoplexy.

aporia

n

/ ə'pōrēə /

Gk

a passage in speech or writing incorporating or presenting a difficulty or doubt.

The Bible verse "Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do?'" is an aporia.

aposiopesis

n

/ ,apə.sīə'pēsəs /

Gk

the leaving of a thought explicitly incomplete in writing or speaking often by a sudden breaking off and shifting of grammatical construction.

Gail answered with an aposiopesis when she replied, "His problem is—how shall I say?"

apostle

n

/ ə'päsəl /

Gk > L > E

one who is sent forth : messenger.

Many voters regard Ralph Nader as the apostle of protected environments.

apostrophe

apothecary

n

/ ə'päthə.kerē /

Gk > L > E

one who prepares and sells drugs or compounds for medicinal purposes : pharmacist.

The visits of Mr. Perry, the apothecary, were one of the few comforts of Mr. Woodhouse's life.

appalling

adj

/ ə'pōliŋ /

L > F > E

inspiring dismay : shocking.

There was something about the night that was mysterious and appalling.

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Appaloosa

n
/ ˌapəˈlūsə /
American Indian
one of a breed of rugged saddle horses distinguished by a mottled skin and a patch of white hair over the rump and loins that is blotched or dotted with darker color.
Sherry begged her father to buy her an Appaloosa for her birthday, but to no avail.

apparatchik

n
/ ˌäpəˈrächik /
Russ
a Communist secret agent.
Oren and Elaine went to see an old movie in which an apparatchik tries to blow up the Empire State Building.

apparatus

n
/ ˌapəˈradəs /
L
any compound instrument or appliance designed for a specific mechanical or chemical action or operation.
The trainer went into much detail about which apparatus is better for a cardiovascular workout.

apparel

apparition

n
/ ˌapəˈrɪʃən /
L > E
ghost, phantom, specter.
The apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head, haunts this enchanted region.

appealed

appease

appellation

appellative

appendages

n pl
/ əˈpendɪjəz /
L
things accompanying or appended to another thing and usually subordinate or not essential to it.
The Abbey-Mill Farm, with all its appendages of prosperity and beauty, was a favorable spot for a walk.

appendant

appendicitis

n
/ əˈpendəˈsɪdəs /
L + Ecf
an inflammation of the appendix characterized usually by abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting.
The doctor diagnosed Sharon's illness as appendicitis.

appetite

n
/ ˈapəˌtɪt /
L > F > E
the immediate desire to eat when food is present.
George went back to his meal with a good appetite.

apprentice

n
/ əˈprentəs /
L > F > E
one who learns a trade, art, or craft by practical experience under skilled workers.
Jake hopes to become an apprentice in the stained-glass studio.

approbation

n
/ ˌäprəˈbāʃən /
L
an act of approving formally or authoritatively : sanction.
The mayor's actions have the approbation of none of the other members of the city council.

appropriate

adj
/ əˈprəʊpreət /
L
specially suitable : fit, proper.
Calvin had orange hair and the appropriate freckles to go with it.

appurtenance

appurtenant

adj
/ əˈpərt(ə)nənt /
F
annexed or belonging legally to some more important thing.
The property insurance covers any additions to the building and to private structures appurtenant to the building.

apricot

apropos

adj
/ ˌäprəˈpō /
F
pertinent, relevant.
Rachel wondered if Herman had understood her question, for his answer was not very apropos.

apsidal

adj
/ ˈapsədˈl /
Gk > L
of or relating to the point of a celestial body's orbit at which it is farthest from the center of attraction.
Laura researched apsidal ocean tidal levels.

aquatic

adj
/ əˈkwədɪk /
L
living wholly or chiefly in or on water.
Porpoises and seals are aquatic mammals.

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aqueduct

n
/ 'akwədəkt /
L

an artificial channel for conveying water.

The ancient Romans used the aqueduct to provide water to the city's residents.

aquiline

adj
/ 'akwəlin /
L

curving or hooked like an eagle's beak.

The senator was easily recognizable by his aquiline nose.

arabesque

n
/ ,arə'besk /
Ar > It > F

a posture (as in ballet dancing) in ballet in which the body is bent forward from the hip on one leg with one arm extended forward and the other arm and leg backward in a line parallel to the floor.

The painting depicts a ballerina in a flawless arabesque.

arability

n
/ ,arə'bɪlədē /
L + Ecf

the state of being fit for tillage and crop production.

Before Caleb bought Jed's property, he had the land checked for arability.

arachnid

arbiter

arboreal

adj
/ ər'bōrēəl /
L

inhabiting or frequenting trees.

The arboreal fauna of Madagascar are endangered by logging.

arboret

n
/ ər'bə'ret /
L + Ecf

a small tree or shrub.

Gwen trekked purposefully through the forest, dodging an occasional arboret but generally heading in a straight line.

arbuscle

n
/ ər'bəsəl /
L

a dwarf tree or treelike shrub.

The gardener recommended that Micah purchase an arbuscle to plant next to the house.

arcanum

n
/ ər'kānəm /
L

a secret or mysterious knowledge or information known only to the initiate.

Ralph developed a secret handshake as an arcanum for his club.

archaic

archangel

n
/ ər'kānjəl /
Gk + Gk

a being in the heavenly hierarchy ranking above an angel.

Joan of Arc had visions of the archangel Michael and saints Catherine and Margaret telling her to raise an army.

archeology

archery

n
/ ər'ch(ə)rē /
F > E

the art, practice, or skill of shooting with bow and arrow.

Joe chose archery as one of his physical education electives.

archipelago

n
/ ər'kə'peləgō /
Gk > It

a group or cluster of islands.

The country of Indonesia is an enormous archipelago.

architecture

n
/ ər'kə'tekchər /
Gk > L

the art or science of building; specifically : the art or practice of designing and building structures in accordance with principles determined by aesthetic and practical or material considerations.

The building that housed the department of architecture was, to many students, the most hideous-looking edifice on campus.

archivalia

n pl
/ ər'kə'vālēə /
Gk > L

material preserved in or suitable for preservation in rooms for the exhibition of a collection.

Included in the library's archivalia is a copy of the first edition of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.

arcing

v
/ ər'kiŋ /
L

following or describing a curving course.

Waterfalls arcing outward into white plumes plummet down and flow into Cayuga Lake.

arctic

ardency

ardent

adj
/ ər'dənt /
L

extremely loyal : devoted, faithful.
Bickford was an ardent supporter of environmental causes.

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arduous

adj
/ 'ärjəwəs /

L
hard to accomplish or achieve :
difficult.

*Alan was not prepared for the
arduous demands of his
construction job.*

arenaceous

adj
/ ,arə'nāshəs /

L
growing in sandy places.
*Arenaceous plants develop
blossoms after the first spring rain.*

arenicolous

adj
/ ,arə'nikələs /

L + L
inhabiting or burrowing in sand :
growing in sand soil.
*Numerous arenicolous organisms
can be found at the beach.*

areology

n
/ ,arē'äləjē /

Gk
the scientific study of the planet
Mars.
*Todd's interest in areology was
spurred by the discovery of
possible life forms on Mars.*

aretalogy

n
/ ,arə'taləjē /

Gk
a narrative of the miraculous deeds
of a god or hero.
*Owen was fascinated by the
aretalogy of Hercules' labors.*

argillaceous

adj
/ ,ärjə'lāshəs /

L
of, relating to, or containing clay or
clay minerals.
*The geologist determined that a
large part of the mountain
consisted of argillaceous limestone.*

argosy

n
/ 'ärgəsē /

It
a fleet of ships or of anything
likened to ships.
*The lone schooner had gotten
separated from the argosy in the
inclement weather.*

argot

n
/ 'ärgət /

F
the special vocabulary and idiom
(as slang) of a particular social
group or class.
*Nowadays the argot of many
teenagers includes the word cool.*

argumentative

adj
/ ,ärgyə'mentədɪv /

L
given to or fond of disagreement :
contentious.
*Jill is so argumentative that no one
likes to sit beside her on the bus.*

aristoi

n pl
/ 'arə'stōi /

Gk
citizens of high rank making up a
governing body.
*When the aristoi ignore the needs
of the common people, they are
sowing the seeds of rebellion.*

arithmocracy

n
/ ,a(ɹ)riθ'mäkrəsē /

Gk + Gk
rule of the majority.
*The United States is an
arithmocracy as well as a republic.*

armadillo

n
/ ,ärmə'di(ɹ)lō /

L > Sp
any of several burrowing chiefly
nocturnal mammals having body
and head encased in an armor of
small bony plates.
*Using its long, sticky tongue to
extract ants from their nests, the
armadillo may eat up to 40,000
ants at a sitting.*

Armageddon

n
/ ,ärmə'gedʰn /

Gk > L
final and conclusive conflict
between the forces of good and
evil.
*In the Bible, the book of Revelation
mentions Armageddon.*

armaments

armature

n
/ 'ärməchü(ə)r /

L
[has near homonym: armiger]
armor.
*As part of the preparation for the
contest at the medieval fair, the
jousts were given their choice of
armature.*

armistice

n
/ 'ärməstəs /

L > F
temporary suspension of hostilities
as agreed upon by those engaged in
the hostilities.
*Fortunately, the armistice that
ended World War I turned out to be
permanent.*

arpeggio

n
/ är'pejē.ō /

Gmc > It
production of the tones of a chord
in succession and not
simultaneously.
*The opening measure of Ryan's
piano recital piece featured a
difficult arpeggio.*

arraignment

n
/ ə'rānmənt /

F > E
an act of finding fault with :
denunciation.
*It seems that every few years there
is a wholesale arraignment of
existing educational standards.*

arrasene

arrive

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arrogance

n
/ 'arəgən(t)s /
L

a genuine or assumed feeling of superiority that shows itself in an overbearing manner.

After Sam won the contest, he displayed an annoying arrogance.

arrogant

adj
/ 'arəgənt /
L

exhibiting a level of superiority that is inconsistent with one's position.

Jack's arrogant attitude annoyed his more qualified colleagues.

arsenal

n
/ 'ärs(ə)nəl /
Ar > It

a storehouse or source of supply for arms, ammunition, or other military equipment.

In early 1941 Franklin Roosevelt believed that America's most immediate role was to act as an arsenal for democratic nations.

arsenic

n
/ 'ärs(ə)nik /
Gk > L&F > E

a metalloid element that is used in small amounts in alloys and in the form of its compounds chiefly as poisons (as insecticides), in pharmaceutical preparations, and in glass.

Ingestion of arsenic was listed as the official cause of Tim's mysterious death.

artesian

adj
/ ä'r'tēzhən /
F

involving, relating to, or supplied by the upward movement of water under hydrostatic pressure in rocks or unconsolidated material beneath Earth's surface.

The water bubbling up in the pasture was coming from an artesian spring.

arthritis

n
/ ä'r'thrīd'əz /
Gk

inflammation of one or more joints due to infectious, metabolic, or constitutional causes.

Theo's arthritis kept him from playing tennis.

arthroscopy

artichoke
n
/ 'ärdə'chōk /
Ar > It

the flower head of a tall herb that resembles a thistle and is cooked as a vegetable.

Norm demonstrated the proper way to eat an artichoke.

article

articulacy

artifice
n
/ 'ärdəf'əs /
L

a wily or artful stratagem.
Emma saw the artifice of Jane's reserved response, and she returned to her first surmises.

artificial

artillerist

artillery
n
/ ä'r'til(ə)rē /
F > E

the missiles discharged by the weapons of war.

The May Day parade in Red Square was widely known for its display of artillery.

arviculture

ascend

ascension

n
/ ə'senchən /
L

the act or process of going upward from a lower level or degree.

The article describes Tiger Woods's rapid ascension to the top rank of golfers.

ascertained

v
/ ,asə(r)'tānd /
L > F > E

made sure of : discovered.

In the moonlight, the form of the heretofore unknown might now be ascertained.

asceticism

ascribable

adj
/ ə'skrībəbəl /
L

capable of being attributed to a supposed cause, source, or author.

Dad explained that the two books were ascribable to the same author under different pen names.

asinine

askew

adv
/ ə'skyü /
E + F > E

out of line : to one side.

Jared's house was leaning because one of the joists had gone askew.

asparagus

n
/ ə'sparəgəs /
Gk > L

a plant widely cultivated for its tender edible young shoots.

Jack didn't touch the asparagus his mother served him.

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aspartame

n
/ 'aspə(r)tām /
L > ISV

a noncarbohydrate crystalline compound that is formed from the amino acids phenylalanine and aspartic acid and is used as a low-calorie sweetener.
Since Bertha began her diet, she prefers foods that are sweetened with aspartame.

aspersion

n
/ ə'spərzən /
L

a calumnious or defamatory expression or reflection.
Questions about Tom's handling of the club's petty cash cast an aspersion on his honesty.

asphalt

asphodel

n
/ 'asfədəl /
Gk

any of various Old World usually perennial herbs that bear their flowers in long erect racemes.
Bernice thought that an asphodel would complete the bouquet nicely.

asphyxiant

asphyxiate

asphyxiated

v
/ ə'sfiksē.ādəd /
Gk

killed or made unconscious by obstruction of normal breathing.
When the volcano erupted, many of the town's inhabitants were asphyxiated by the dust and ashes.

aspirin

n
/ 'asp(ə)rən /
ISV

a white crystalline compound of salicylic acid used especially in tablet form as a pain-killer.
Tests have shown that small, daily doses of aspirin can reduce the risk of stroke.

assailant

assassin

assassinate

v
/ ə'sas'n.āt /
L > F

murder (usually a prominent person).
The newspapers carried gripping accounts of an attempt to assassinate the prime minister.

assemblage

assess

v
/ ə'ses /
L

determine the rate or amount of.
Joyce's job with the insurance company was to assess damages.

asseveration

n
/ ə.sevə'rāshən /
L

positive or emphatic affirmation or assertion : solemn declaration.
The jury did not believe the defendant's asseveration of innocence.

assiduously

adv
/ ə'sijəwəslē /
L + Ecf

in a diligent, attentive, or solicitous manner.
Lucinda questioned her brother assiduously before his interview.

assimilate

v
/ ə'simə.lāt /
L

receive into the mind and consider and thoroughly comprehend.
Sandy needs time to sort things out and assimilate them properly.

assimilation

assonance

n
/ 'as'nən(t)s /
L + Fcf

relatively close juxtaposition of similar sounds especially of vowels.
"Zip your lips" was the teacher's favorite example of assonance.

assuage

v
/ ə'swāj /
L > F > E

reduce to a state of peace, calm, or quiet : mollify, pacify.
No one could assuage Bertina after she dropped her ice-cream cone.

assuagement

Assyrian

adj
/ ə'sirēən /
geog name
of, relating to, or characteristic of Assyria, an ancient empire of western Asia.
The doorways of the Assyrian palace of Nineveh were flanked by large winged bulls.

asthmatic

adj
/ əz'mad:ik /
Gk > L
caused by or affected with labored breathing.
Because of Pam's asthmatic condition, her mother had to dust and vacuum the house every day.

astigmatism

n
/ ə'stigmə.tizəm /
Gk + Ecf
a defect of an optical system (as of the eye) that prevents light from focusing accurately and results in a blurred image.
Amy's new eyeglasses correct her astigmatism.

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astringe

v
/ ə'strinj /
L

cause (tissue) to draw together :
constrict.

*Larry uses witch hazel to astringe
his facial pores.*

astrogator

astronomy

n
/ ə'stränəmə /
Gk

the science that treats of the
celestial bodies.

*Astronomy is a popular topic for
science writers.*

astuteness

n
/ ə'st(y)ütnəs /
L + Ecf

the quality or state of having or
displaying shrewd discernment and
sagacity.

*The candidate showed political
astuteness in attacking his
opponent's weak arguments.*

asylum

asymmetry

atelier

n
/ ,ad'lyā /
L > F

an artist's studio or workroom.

*Ken hoped to find some affordable
loft space downtown for his atelier.*

athletic

atmosphere

n
/ 'atmə'sfi(ə)r /
Gk

the air of a given place especially
as affected by a particular
characteristic (as heat, moisture,
wholesomeness, or
unwholesomeness).

*Christy could barely tolerate the
close atmosphere of her one-room
schoolhouse.*

atmospheric

adj
/ ,atmə'sfirik /
Gk + Gk > L > F

of or relating to the whole mass of
air surrounding Earth.

*Only two elements are known to be
liquid under atmospheric
conditions: mercury and bromine.*

atomic

atrabilious

atrichia

n
/ ā'trikēə /
Gk

congenital or acquired baldness.

*Some dogs are afflicted with
atrichia from birth.*

atrium

atrocious

adj
/ ə'trōshəs /
L

markedly inferior in quality.

*Mrs. Diamond vowed to do
something about her grandson's
atrocious table manners.*

atrophy

v
/ 'atrəfē /
Gk > L

undergo a wasting away or
progressive decline.

*Jay knows that his muscles will
atrophy while he recuperates from
surgery.*

attenuate

adj
/ ə'tenyə,wət /
L

tapering gradually often into a long
slender point.

*The locust tree has narrow
attenuate leaves.*

attitude

n
/ 'adətüd /
L > It

[Note: The definition provided is
not the one most commonly
associated with this word.] any
posture held momentarily in
dancing.

*The premier danseur held his final
attitude briefly, then leapt offstage
to thunderous applause.*

attitudinal

attrition

n
/ ə'trishən /
L

a usually gradual loss of personnel
from causes normal or peculiar to a
given situation (as death,
retirement, and resignation in a
labor force) often without filling
the vacancies.

*The CEO promised that all of the
cuts would come from attrition; no
employees would be laid off.*

aubade

auctioneer

n
/ ,økshə'ni(ə)r /
L + Ecf

one who conducts the sale of goods
at public auction usually as an
agent on commission.

*The auctioneer at the antique sale
had a booming voice.*

audacious

adj
/ ò'dāshəs /
L

recklessly venturesome :
presumptuously bold.

*Tom's audacious disregard for
physical limitations will catch up
with him sooner or later.*

audacity

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audience

n
/ ˈɒdɪəns(t)s /
L

[has homonym: audients] those attending a stage or film production or viewing a televised program.
The audience erupted with thunderous applause at the act's conclusion.

audition

n
/ ɒˈdɪʃən /
L or F

a trial performance to appraise an entertainer's merits.
After hearing Alice's stunning audition, the director offered her the role without hesitation.

auger

augment

augur

v
/ ˈɒɡə(r) /
L

[has homonym and near homonym: auger and agar] give indirect evidence of : portend.
The club members' enthusiasm and dedication augur success for the club's projects.

augury

auk

n
/ ˈɒk /
ON > Norw or Icelandic
any of several black and white short-necked diving seabirds that nest in colder parts of the Northern Hemisphere.
In one of her books, Laura Ingalls Wilder writes of a strange midwinter encounter with a stray bird resembling an auk.

aureate

adj
/ ˈɔːrɪəʃ /
L

marked by a rhetorical style that is affected, grandiloquent, and heavily ornamental.
Many students today have little appreciation of the aureate language of English Renaissance poetry.

aureity

n
/ ɒˈrɪədɪ /
L + Ecf

the distinctive properties of gold.
Pyrite's apparent aureity has fooled many a prospector.

aurelian

n
/ ɒˈrɪljən /
L + Ecf

a collector and breeder of moths and butterflies.
Sarah admired the beautiful butterflies pictured in the book by Mr. Jacobson, a well-known aurelian.

auricle

n
/ ˈɔːrɪkəl /
L

[has homonym: oracle] a chamber of the heart that receives blood from the veins and forces it into the ventricle or ventricles.
The heart of a fish has one auricle and one ventricle.

auricular

adj
/ ɒˈrɪkjələ(r) /
L

of, relating to, or using the ear or the sense of hearing.
George's understanding of unfamiliar words is auricular; that is, he must hear out loud the words he reads before he can comprehend them.

auriferous

adj
/ ɒˈrɪfərəs /
L + Ecf

gold-bearing—used of gravels and rocks.
The auriferous quartz veins sparkled in the sunlight.

aurora

n
/ əˈrɔːrə /
L

the redness of the sky just before the Sun rises.
As the aurora began to brighten the sky, the airline passengers eagerly looked out their windows to see the rising Sun.

auscultation

n
/ ˌɒskəlˈtæʃən /
L

the act of listening to sounds arising within organs (as the lungs or heart) as an aid to diagnosis and treatment.
Warming her stethoscope with her hands before performing auscultation has become second nature to Dr. Harris.

auslander

auspices

n pl
/ ˈɒspəˈsɪz /
L

patronage and kindly guidance : protection.
The medical team entered the country under the auspices of the International Red Cross.

austere

adj
/ ɒˈsti(ə)r /
GK > L > F > E

stern and unyielding in appearance and manner.
The substitute teacher was austere and humorless.

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authentic

adj

/ ˈɒsthenɪk /

Gk > L > F > E

worthy of acceptance or belief by reason of conforming to fact or reality.

The restoration society aims to provide an authentic reproduction of the colonial village.

author

authoritative

adj

/ əˈθäɾəˌtädɪv /

L

exercising or assuming power to influence the outward behavior of others.

Dr. Martin issued the instructions in an authoritative manner.

autobahn

n

/ ˈaʊd̥ɔːbän /

Gk > G + G

a road in Germany with double traffic lanes in each direction separated by a parkway.

Klaus pulled his Mercedes over to the side of the autobahn to read the map.

autodidact

autonomous

autonomy

n

/ ɔːˈtänəmə /

Gk

the quality or state of being independent, free, and self-directing.

After years of fighting the colonial government, the island was finally granted autonomy.

autopsy

n

/ ˈɔːtäpsē /

Gk

examination of the body after death, usually with dissection.

An autopsy showed that arsenic was the cause of death.

autumn

autumnal

adj

/ (ɪ) ɔːtəmənəl /

L

characterized by qualities associated with or suggested by the season between summer and winter.

Jessica's new paintings have a serene, autumnal warmth.

auxiliary

adj

/ ɔːgˈzɪlyərē /

L

offering or providing help, assistance, or support especially by interaction.

Roland volunteers as an auxiliary guide for the local Youth Mountaineers Club.

available

avalanche

n

/ ˈavəˌlanch /

F

a large mass of snow, ice, earth, rock, or other material in swift motion down a mountainside.

The tiny Swiss village was destroyed by an avalanche.

avalement

avarice

n

/ ˈavərəs /

L > F > E

excessive desire for wealth or gain.

Pride, avarice, and gluttony are among the seven deadly sins.

avaricious

averred

aviator

avionics

avocado

n

/ ˌavəˈkä(ɪ)dō /

Nahuatl > Sp

the pulpy green or purple somewhat pear-shaped edible fruit of various tropical American trees.
Tanisha's first taste of sushi was a roll containing avocado, crab, and cucumber.

avocet

n

/ ˈavəˌset /

F&It

any of several rather large long-legged shore birds having webbed feet and a slender upwardly curved bill.

Making their way through the marsh, the birds happened on a foraging avocet.

avoirdupois

avuncular

adj

/ əˈvŋkyələ(r) /

L

acting or speaking with the familiarity, kindness, or indulgence of an uncle.

Morris took an avuncular tone with Susan when he advised her on her college plans, even though he was her elder by only three years.

awe

n

/ ˈō /

ON > E

[has homonym: aw] abashed reverence and fear inspired by authority or power.

The good people of Sleepy Hollow were often filled with awe at hearing his nasal melody floating from the distant hill.

awestruck

awl

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awry

adv
/ ə'ri /
E

wrong, amiss.
Gayle's plans for the victory parade went hopelessly awry.

axiology

axiom

n
/ 'aksēəm /
Gk

a proposition, rule, or maxim that has found general acceptance or is thought worthy thereof.
"Early to bed, early to rise" is Uncle Abdul's favorite axiom.

axunge

n
/ 'ak.sənj /
L

fat or grease usually of pigs or of geese.
Suzanne's cookbook of home remedies recommended axunge to soothe minor burns.

ayatollah

n
/ ɪə'tɒlə /
Ar > Per

a religious leader among Shiite Muslims—used as a title of respect especially for one who is not an imam.
When Ayatollah Khomeini gained political control of Iran in 1979, he re-created it as a religious Islamic republic.

azimuth

n
/ 'azəməθ /
Ar

an arc of the horizon measured between a fixed point and the vertical circle passing through the center of an object.
Using a compass, the navigator estimated the azimuth of the star.

azotea

azure

adj
/ 'azhə(r) /
Per > Ar > Sp > F
resembling the color of the unclouded sky.
Sarah prefers to call her eyes "azure" instead of "blue."

babblative

adj
/ 'bablədɪv /
E imitative?
given to excessive talking : garrulous.
The babblative waitress called everyone at our table "sweetheart."

baboon

n
/ ba'bün /
F > E
a large primate with a short tail and a doglike snout.
The children at the zoo were entertained by the strange sounds of the baboon.

babushka

n
/ bə'büşkə /
Russ
a triangularly folded kerchief worn over the head and usually tied under the chin.
Emma's Ukrainian doll wears a red babushka and an elaborately embroidered apron.

Babylonian

adj
/ .babə'lɒnyən /
Heb > Gk
of, relating to, or characteristic of Babylonia, an ancient country of southern Mesopotamia.
Houses and temples of the Old Babylonian Kingdom have square open courts, arched doorways, and battlemented walls.

baccalaureate

n
/ .bakə'lôrēət /
L
the degree of bachelor conferred by universities and colleges.
Marika earned a baccalaureate at the age of 12.

bacchanalian

bacciferous

adj
/ bak'sɪf(ə)rəs /
L + Ecf
bearing berries.
Sylvia took care not to park her car under any bacciferous trees.

bachelor

n
/ 'bach(ə)lə(r) /
Celt > L > F > E
an unmarried man of marriageable age.
Kendrick was the only bachelor living in the apartment building.

bacillus

n
/ bə'sɪləs /
L
a disease-producing bacterium.
Kendra will use a powerful disinfectant to kill any bacillus that might be lurking on the counter top.

backfisch

backgammon

n
/ 'bak.gamən /
E
a game played with dice and counters on a board divided into two tables each marked with 12 points in which each player tries to move his own counters from point to point and off the board.
Ed explained to Tim that the game board edged with tall, thin triangles was used to play backgammon.

bacteriolytic

adj
/ bak.tirēə'lidɪk /
Gk > L
of, relating to, or producing the destruction or dissolution of bacterial cells.
The bacteriolytic power of blood helps the body overcome many diseases.

badgeringly

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badigeon

n
/ bə'dijən /
F

a cement or paste (as of plaster and powdered freestone) used to fill holes or cover defects in wood or stone.

The plasterer smeared badigeon in the pockmarks on the wall.

badinage

n
/ ˌbəd'n'əzh /
L > OProv > F

light and playful repartee or wit : banter.

Mrs. Lopez, our bus driver, frequently engages in badinage with her lively passengers.

badminton

n
/ ˌbəd.mɪnt'n /
E geog name
a court game played by two or four persons with light long-handled rackets and a shuttlecock volleyed over a net.
After lunch John suggested a leisurely game of badminton.

Baedeker

n
/ ˌbādəkə(r) /
G name
guidebook, handbook.
By the time his Italian vacation was over, Ronnie's Baedeker had come apart at the spine.

bagatelle

n
/ ˌbægə'tel /
L > It > F
a game played with a cue and usually nine balls on an oblong table having cups or both cups and arches at one end.
Aaron is an excellent snooker player but is unfamiliar with the rules of bagatelle.

bagel

baignoire

n
/ bān'wār /
L > F
[Note: Could be confused with peignoir.] a theater box having low partitions that is in the lowest tier.
Seats in the baignoire afforded an unobscured view of the stage.

bailiff

n
/ ˈbālɪf /
F > E
a court officer who seats witnesses and spectators, announces the entrance of the judge, and keeps order in the court.
Judge Cantor asked the bailiff to remove Mr. Sims from the courtroom.

bailiwick

n
/ ˈbālē.wɪk /
E
field of activity : sphere of operations.
Only when the topic was birdwatching, his particular bailiwick, did Robin feel at ease talking to strangers.

baize

balaclava

n
/ ˌbalə'klävə /
Crimean geog name
a hoodlike knitted cap covering the head, neck, and part of the shoulders and worn especially by soldiers and mountaineers.
Every climber wore a balaclava for protection from the cold air.

balalaika

n
/ ˌbalə'likə /
Russ
an instrument of the guitar kind having a triangular wooden body and from two to four strings.
Vladimir strummed the balalaika and sang a Ukrainian folk song.

balbriggan

n
/ bəl'brɪgən /
Ir geog name
a plain-stitch knitted often tubular usually cotton fabric used especially for underwear, hosiery, or sweaters.
Moirá's imported Irish sweater was made of balbriggan.

balcony

n
/ ˈbalkənē /
Gmc > It
an interior projecting gallery in a public building (as a theater); specifically : such a gallery immediately above the main floor.
Tickets for seats in the balcony sold out before those in the orchestra.

balestra

ballast

ballerina

n
/ ˌbalə'rēnə /
L > It
a female ballet dancer.
Although the ballerina seemed a bit nervous before her performance, her dancing was faultless.

balletomane

n
/ bə'ledə.mān /
L > It > F + Ecff + Gk > L > E
one who takes extraordinary delight in artistic dance performances.
The well-known balletomane took roses to every performance.

ballistic

adj
/ bə'listɪk /
Gk > L
of or belonging to the hurling of missiles.
Simon used ballistic laws to determine where the arrow would land.

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ballistics

n pl
/ bə'listiks /
Gk > L

the science of the motion of powder-propelled projectiles in flight.

An expert in ballistics testified that the fatal bullet had been fired from the defendant's gun.

balloon

balminess

n
/ 'bämēnəs /
Semitic? > Gk > L > F > E + Ecff
the quality or state of being mild or soothing.
The balminess of the evening breeze helped Kate forget the accident.

balmoral

n
/ bal'morəl /
Scottish geog name
a boot or shoe that is laced in front; especially : an oxford shoe with quarters meeting and centered over a separate tongue.
The balmoral first became fashionable in the 1850s, when Prince Albert popularized this type of shoe.

balneation

n
/ balnē'āshən /
L
the act or action of bathing.
Alicia uses a sponge to assist in her daily balneation.

balsam

n
/ 'bōlsəm /
L
an aromatic substance flowing spontaneously or by incision from a plant and not necessarily remaining liquid.
When Henrietta retrieved the ball from the branches of the fir tree, the balsam made her fingers sticky.

balustrade

n
/ 'baləstrād /
It > F
a row of short supports topped by a rail to serve as an open parapet.
Juliet leaned on the balustrade and gazed down at Romeo with adoring eyes.

bamboo

bamboozle

v
/ bam'büzəl /
unknown
conceal one's true motives from someone, especially by elaborately feigning good intentions so as to gain an end or achieve an advantage : mislead, hoodwink.
Gavin tried to bamboozle his neighbor into offering her garage for his party by saying how much it needed a good airing out.

banality

n
/ bā'nalədē /
F
the quality of lacking originality, freshness, or novelty.
Pearl's English teacher commented on the banality of much of the class's poetry.

banana

n
/ bə'nanə /
African > Sp or Pg
the elongated often curved and usually tapering fruit of the banana plant having soft pulpy flesh and a rind that is usually yellow when ripe.
To introduce fractions, the teacher showed her students how a banana can be divided lengthwise into thirds.

banausic

adj
/ bə'nōsik /
Gk
moneymaking, breadwinning : vocational.
Brandon showed no inclination toward banausic pursuits.

bandage

n
/ 'bandij /
F
a narrow length of fabric used to cover a wound, hold a dressing in place, immobilize an injured part, or apply pressure.
Mom immediately cleaned and put a bandage on Ted's scraped knee.

bandalore

n
/ 'bandə.lō(ə)r /
unknown
a toy with an automatically winding cord by which it is brought back to the hand when thrown.
Jeffrey brought a bandalore to school for show-and-tell.

bandicoot

n
/ 'bandē.küt /
Telugu
any of certain small active insectivorous and herbivorous marsupial mammals found in Oceania.
Some species of bandicoot are endangered.

banditry

n
/ 'bandətrē /
Gmc > It
the practice of roving about and pillaging especially in semiorganized groups.
With the government in chaos, outbreaks of banditry were common throughout the country.

banishment

banjo

banjorine

bankruptcy

banquet

baobab

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baptismal

adj

/ bap'tizmə /

Gk > L > F

of or relating to the ceremony of admitting one into membership in a Christian church with the use of water by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling.

The church's new baptismal font is made of Italian marble.

baragouin

n

/ 'barə'gwa /

F

outlandish unintelligible speech.

The explorer was taken aback by the baragouin of the excited natives.

barbaric

adj

/ bār'barik /

Gk > L

of, relating to, or characteristic of one who lacks refinement, gentleness, learning, or artistic or literary culture.

Harold was embarrassed by his little brother's barbaric table manners.

barbarism

barbarous

barbellate

adj

/ 'bārbə'lāt /

L

having short stiff hooked bristles or hairs.

The biology students were asked to identify animals with barbellate hides.

barbican

n

/ 'bārbəkən /

L > F > E

an outer defensive work of a city or castle.

The invaders aimed their catapult at the castle's barbican.

barbiturate

n

/ bār'bichərət /

Gk

any of a large group of acids or their salts that are used as sedatives, hypnotics, and antispasmodics.

Even a mild barbiturate can be habit-forming if used incorrectly.

bardiglio

n

/ bār'dēl(,)yō /

L? > Sp > It

an Italian marble commonly having a dark gray or bluish ground traversed by veins.

The most exquisite mantel in the country estate was made of bardiglio.

bargain

bargello

bariolage

n

/ 'barēō.lāzh /

F

a special effect in violin playing obtained by playing in rapid alternation upon open and stopped strings.

Bjorn's deft bariolage during the third movement thrilled the audience.

barker

barnacle

n

/ 'bārnəkəl /

E

any of numerous marine crustaceans that are free-swimming as larvae but fixed to rocks or floating objects as adults.

The sailors scraped many a barnacle from the sides of the ship.

barnacled

barnstorm

v

/ 'bārnz.tōrm /

E + E

tour through rural districts staging theatrical performances in large farm buildings or makeshift theaters.

The troupe set off in buses to barnstorm the Midwest with their version of The Music Man.

barognosis

n

/ .baräg'nōsəs /

Gk > L

the perception of weight by the cutaneous and muscle senses.

The loss of barognosis is a symptom of some muscle diseases.

barometer

n

/ bə'rämədə(r) /

Gk + Gk

an instrument for determining the pressure of the atmosphere.

Erica predicts the weather by using the barometer located on her kitchen wall.

baronet

n

/ .barə'net /

Gmc > F > E

the holder of a dignity or degree of honor ranking immediately below a baron and above a knight.

The baronet swaggered among the knights but quailed before the baron.

baronial

adj

/ bə'rōnēəl /

F > E

splendid, stately, spacious, ample.

The baronial fireplace had enough room to hold six-foot logs.

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baroque

adj

/ bə'ro̩k /

It name? > F

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a style of artistic expression prevalent especially in the 17th century, marked by elaborate and sometimes grotesque ornamentation.

The baroque style in art and architecture was marked by the use of curved figures.

barothermograph

n

/ .bərō'thərmə,graf /

Gk + Gk + Gk

an instrument for recording both pressure and temperature (as of the atmosphere).

The barothermograph was first used to collect atmospheric data in 1895.

barouche

n

/ bə'rūsh /

L > It > G

a four-wheeled shallow carriage with a driver's seat high in front, two double seats inside, one facing back and the other front, and a folding top over the back seat.

Michelle and Phil rode to the prom in a barouche.

barracks

n pl

/ 'barəks /

Catal > F

an often permanent building or set of buildings used especially for lodging soldiers.

Each new recruit was assigned a bunk in the barracks.

barrage

n

/ bə'rāzh /

F

a massive concentrated and usually continuous discharge or shower (as of missiles or blows).

In Puritan New England, those who broke the law were sometimes put to death by a barrage of stones.

barratry

n

/ 'barətrē /

F > E

the persistent incitement of litigation.

Barratry has overloaded our country's courts.

barrel

n

/ 'barəl /

F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a unit of measure for petroleum equal to 42 gallons.

Sheiks wept as the price of oil dropped below 17 dollars per barrel.

barren

adj

/ 'barən /

F > E

[has homonym: baron] deficient in producing vegetation : bare, desolate.

The overcultivated land, once fertile, was now barren.

barricade

n

/ 'barəkād /

F

a barrier or obstacle that prevents passage.

A police barricade kept the crowds at a safe distance from the burning building.

barrio

n

/ 'bārē.ō /

Ar > Sp

a Spanish-speaking neighborhood or quarter in a city or town in the United States especially in the Southwest.

The politician continually reminded the public of his roots in the barrio.

bartizan

n

/ 'bārd-əzən /

E

a small structure overhanging or projecting from a building for lookout or defense.

The guard posted at the bartizan was the first to spot the approaching army.

bascule

n

/ 'baskyül /

F

an apparatus or structure in which one end is counterbalanced by the other on the principle of the seesaw or by weights (as in a bascule bridge).

The castle architect proposed building a bascule over the moat.

bashful

basilica

basilisk

n

/ 'basə,lisk /

Gk > L > E

a legendary reptile that has a fatal breath and glance.

Jessie debated whether to incorporate a basilisk or a poisonous snake into her fable.

basin

basmati

n

/ .bāz'mādē /

Hindi

a cultivated South Asian long grain rice.

Jacques enjoys the aroma of basmati.

bassoon

bastion

n

/ 'baschən /

Gmc > Prov > F

a projecting part of a fortification.

Matthew paused at the castle bastion to look out over the countryside.

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bathymeter

n
/ bə'thimədə(r) /
Gk > ISV + Gk > F
a device for the sounding of depths.
Proper use of the bathymeter was crucial as Captain Byron navigated through the shallows in the fog.

bathymetry

bathyscaphe

batik

n
/ bə'tɛk /
Javanese > Malay
an Indonesian method of hand-printing textiles by coating parts of the fabric with wax to resist dye and dipping in a cold dye solution.
Sheila used both batik and tie-dye in her T-shirt creations.

batiste

batrachoid

battalion

n
/ bə'talyən /
L > It > F
a considerable body of troops organized to act together : army.
The commander advanced the battalion confidently when he saw the pitifully few defenders remaining at the castle walls.

bauble

bavardage

n
/ .bavə(r)'dāzh /
L > F
small talk, chitchat.
After a stressful math class, Cora welcomed the opportunity for bavardage with her friends in the cafeteria.

bayonet

bayou

n
/ 'bī(y)ü /
Choctaw > Louisiana F
a creek, secondary watercourse, or minor river that is tributary to another river or other body of water.
Dale's grandfather lives near a bayou in southern Alabama.

bazooka

n
/ bə'zükə /
Amer E
a light portable usually crew-served shoulder weapon used especially to launch armor-piercing rockets.
Lenny begged his mother for the tank, bazooka, and toy soldiers that he had seen in a commercial.

beachcomber

beacon

n
/ 'bēkən /
E
a signal fire or lighthouse commonly on a hill, tower, or pole.
That lighthouse once served as a beacon for ships nearing the shore.

beaker

n
/ 'bēkə(r) /
Old Saxon > ON > E
a deep openmouthed thin vessel that often has a projecting lip for pouring and is used especially by chemists and pharmacists.
As Frank reached for the pipette, he knocked an acid-filled beaker off the lab bench.

beatitude

beaujolais

beaumontage

n
/ bō'mäntij /
unknown > French
a composition used by artisans to fill and conceal holes or cracks in wood or metal.
Bart asked the conservator to replace all the old beaumontage in the statuette.

beauteous

bedizenment

bedlam

n
/ 'bedləm /
Palestinian geog name > E
a place or scene of wild mad uproar.
After the final game of the championship, the parking lot was bedlam.

bedstead

beflustered

beforehand

beggar

beguile

v
/ bə'gīl /
E
gain the notice of by the use of wiles : charm.
The teenager tried to beguile her teacher into giving her a good grade.

beguiling

adj
/ bə'gīliŋ /
E
provoking pleased interest and diverting from concern or vexation.
Todd blamed the beguiling influence of TV for his low grades.

beguine

n
/ bə'gēn /
F
a vigorous popular dance of the islands of Saint Lucia and Martinique somewhat like the rumba.
Cole Porter's song "Begin the Beguine" started the beguine on the road to popularity in this country.

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behemoth

n
/ bə'hēməθ /
Heb > L > E
something of oppressive or monstrous size or power.
Anwar's wrestling opponent was a behemoth of a man.

beige

adj
/ 'bāzh /
Per? > Gk? > L? > It? > F
of a variable color averaging light grayish yellowish brown.
Tired of the beige walls in her home, Ellen decided to repaint all the rooms with bold colors.

beleaguer

v
/ bə'lēgə(r) /
D
subject to oppressive or grievous forces.
In June the black flies will invade the campsite and beleaguer the unsuspecting campers.

belemnoid

adj
/ 'beləm.nōid /
Gk
shaped like a dart.
The museum's collection included belemnoid carvings of unknown origin.

believe

bellicose

belligerent

adj
/ bə'lij(ə)rənt /
L
waging war.
The victorious faction is setting up an interim government and purging its belligerent enemies.

bellipotent

adj
/ be'lipədənt /
L + L
mighty in war.
The nation's desire to become a bellipotent power resulted in a drastic increase in its defense budget.

bellwether

n
/ 'bel.wethə(r) /
E
one that takes the lead or initiative : leader.
Brooke's firm has long been considered a bellwether in the industry.

bellwort

belomancy

belton

benediction

n
/ .benə'dikshən /
L
an expression or utterance of blessing or good wishes.
Alta's mother orated an impressive benediction at her wedding reception.

beneficence

beneficent

adj
/ bə'nefəsənt /
L + Ecf
performing acts of kindness and charity.
Thanks to the generosity of a beneficent contributor, the symphony will be funded for another season.

benevolence

n
/ bə'nevələn(t)s /
L
kindly disposition to do good and promote the welfare of others.
As a result of his grandfather's benevolence, Chad was able to afford an Ivy League education.

benevolent

adj
/ bə'nevələnt /
L > E
marked by a kindly disposition to promote the happiness and prosperity of others.
Elmer received a commendation for his benevolent actions.

benignant

adj
/ bə'nignənt /
L
kindly, mild, gentle.
The department store always chose a Santa Claus with a benignant countenance.

benison

n
/ 'benəsən /
L > F > E
[Note: Could be confused with venison.] the pronouncing of a blessing : benediction.
Tim's favorite vocal benison is his youth choir's rendition of the Irish Blessing.

bequeath

berceuse

n
/ ber'sə(r)z /
F
a vocal or instrumental composition of a soothing character.
Maya hummed a berceuse to her son to soothe him to sleep.

bereave

bereavement

n
/ bə'rēvmənt /
E
deprivation; especially : loss of a loved one by death.
Some scientific studies have shown that bereavement, such as the loss of a spouse, can affect one's immunity to illness.

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beret

n
/ bə'rā /
Prov > F
a soft flat visorless cap of woolen material originally worn by Basque peasants.
The painter's beret was a bit tattered and moth-eaten.

bergamot

n
/ 'bɜrgə.mät /
Turk > It > F
an essential oil much used in perfumery.
Elisa was wearing cologne scented with bergamot.

bergschrund

n
/ 'berk.shrünt /
G
a deep and often broad crevasse or series of such crevasses frequently occurring near the head of a mountain glacier.
The rescuers descended into the bergschrund to reach the injured mountain climber.

beriberi

n
/ .berē'berē /
Sinhalese
a disease caused by a lack of or inability to assimilate vitamin B-1.
The symptoms of beriberi usually respond well to dietary improvements.

berouged

berylloid

n
/ 'berə.lōid /
Indic > Gk > L > F + Ecf
a form consisting of a double 12-sided pyramid.
The jeweler decided to cut the unusual crystal into a berylloid to heighten its allure to potential buyers.

besmirched

besom

n
/ 'bēzəm /
E
a broom made with a bundle of twigs.
Milena pretended she was a pioneer, sweeping out the garage with a crudely constructed besom.

bestial

betacism

bethel

n
/ 'bethəl /
Heb
a place of worship, as a chapel for nonconformists.
The shelter overlooking the waterfall has become a bethel for Sunday morning hikers who want to contemplate the grandeur of nature.

bevel

v
/ 'bevəl /
F
cut or shape to an angle : put a slant on the edge of.
Rhoda wants the glass shop to bevel her mirror before it is framed.

bevy

n
/ 'bevē /
E
a usually large group or collection.
A bevy of reporters crowded around the gold medal winner.

bewilder

bewitched

v
/ bə'wicht /
E
cast a spell over.
Some say a sorceress bewitched the valley during the early days of settlement.

bialys

bibelot

n
/ 'bēbəlō /
Gk > L > F
a small household ornament or decorative object : trinket.
Mrs. Carnes gave her toddler a bibelot to play with while the women discussed plans for the rally.

biblioclast

bibliography

biblioklept

bibliopegy

n
/ .biblē'äpəjē /
Gk + Gk
the art of binding books.
A local bookbinder visited the class and explained how bibliopegy is both a craft and an art.

bibliothecarial

adj
/ .biblēəthə'ka(a)rēəl /
Gk + Lcf
of or related to a library.
Thurmond has great interest in the Dewey decimal system and other things bibliothecarial.

bibliotics

n pl
/ .biblē'ädiks /
Gk
the scientific study of handwriting, documents, and writing materials especially for determining genuineness or authorship.
Several experts in bibliotics were asked to examine the scroll.

bicameral

adj
/ bī'kam(ə)rəl /
L
having or made up of two distinct legislative bodies.
The U.S. Congress is bicameral, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

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bicentennial

n
/ bī.sən'tenē.əl /
Lcf + L + L > E
a 200th anniversary or its celebration.
Bargersville will celebrate the bicentennial of its founding next year.

biceps

biennial

bifurcation

n
/ bī.fər'kā.shən /
L > F
the point at which separation or branching into two parts, areas, aspects, or connected segments occurs.
Satish pulled his car over and studied the map when he reached a bifurcation in the road.

bijou

bijouterie

n
/ bē'zhüt.ərē /
F
jewelry in which delicate or intricate metalwork contributes more to the value than do the constituent materials.
Marge scoured the display case in the antique shop for an addition to her collection of bijouterie.

bikini

n
/ bə'kē.nē /
Pacific geog name
a woman's abbreviated two-piece bathing suit.
Joan's father does not approve of the bikini she would like to purchase.

bilateral

adj
/ bī'lād.ərəl /
L > Ecf + L
of or relating to the right and left sides of a central area.
The maple leaf exhibits bilateral symmetry.

bilge

n
/ 'bilj /
unknown
water that collects by seepage or leakage in the bottom of a ship or other vessel.
Jeannie awoke to find bilge sloshing against her bunk.

bilharzia

bilingual

billeted

v
/ 'biləd.dəd /
L > F > E
served with an official order directing that a member of a military force be provided with board and lodging (as in a private home).
During the Civil War it was not uncommon for homeowners to be billeted.

billiards

n pl
/ 'bilyə(r)dz /
Celt > F
any of several games played on an oblong table in which small balls are driven against one another or into pockets by means of a cue.
Honorita supplemented her scholarship money by playing billiards for pocket change.

billionaire

billon

n
/ 'bilən /
F
gold or silver alloyed with a considerable amount of some less valuable metal.
The numismatist showed the wide-eyed youngster several coins made of billon.

biloculine

bimестrial

bimillenary

n
/ bī'mil.ən.ərē /
L
a 2000th anniversary or its celebration.
In 1951 the city of Paris celebrated the bimillenary of its founding.

binary

adj
/ 'bī.nərē /
L
involving a choice or condition of two alternatives only (as on-off or yes-no).
The symbols conventionally used in a binary system of numeration are 0 and 1.

binoculars

n pl
/ bə'näkyələ(r)z /
L > E + L
a handheld optical instrument composed of two telescopes and a focusing device and usually having prisms to increase magnifying ability.
Binoculars have proved to be a great boon to bird-watching.

binomial

bioluminescent

adj
/ .bī(,)ō.lümə'nes'nt /
Gk + L
of, relating to, or characterized by the emission of light from living organisms as the result of internal oxidative changes.
Bioluminescent animals occur in at least 39 orders of the animal kingdom.

biopsy

bireme

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bisagre

n
/ bə'sa(ɪ)grē /
MexSp
a small spiny cactus of Mexico and the southwestern United States that is sometimes cut into slices and candied.
Elena often rewarded her children's good behavior with slices of bisagre.

biscuit

n
/ 'biskɒt /
(L + L) > F > E
a quick bread made in a small shape from dough that has been rolled and cut or dropped and that is raised in the baking by a leavening agent other than yeast.
A hot biscuit with butter and honey was the best part of the lunch.

bise

n
/ 'bēz /
Gmc > F > E
[has homonym: bees] a cold wind; especially : a cold dry north wind of southern France, Switzerland, and Italy.
Jake was told that he would need to pack warm clothes to withstand the bise while he toured Switzerland.

bisector

bittern

bivouac

n
/ 'biv.wak /
G > F
a camping out for a night.
Private Slater packed a peanut butter sandwich for his bivouac.

bizarre

adj
/ bə'zär /
It > F
[has near homonym: bazaar] being strikingly out of the ordinary or at variance with some standard, real or implied.
Todd's bizarre behavior prompted his parents to call a doctor.

blague

v
/ 'bläg /
F
talk pretentiously and usually inaccurately or boastfully.
Politicians who blague generally alienate their audiences.

blandishment

n
/ 'blandishmənt /
L > F > E + Ecf
speech, action, or device that flatters and tends to coax or cajole.
No blandishment can sway Gil from his steadfast sense of propriety.

blanquette

n
/ blä'ket /
Gmc > Prov > F
a light meat (as veal or breast of chicken) in a white sauce.
After the play, Grandmother took us to a French restaurant, where we sampled a blanquette of veal from the buffet.

blarney

n
/ 'blärnē /
Ir geog name
smooth wheedling talk.
Mrs. Lewis was not impressed by Al's blarney as he tried to talk her into raising his grade.

blasphemous

adj
/ 'blasfəməs /
Gk > L
speaking or writing irreverence toward God.
During the Middle Ages many books were condemned as blasphemous and burned.

blasphemously

adv
/ 'blasfəməslē /
Gk > L > + Ecf
in an impiously irreverent manner.
Dad blasphemously berated the driver who suddenly cut in front of him without warning.

blasphemy

blatant

adj
/ 'blāt'nt /
L
completely or crassly obvious : brazen.
Mr. Nall suspended Ed for blatant disobedience during the fire drill.

blather

n
/ 'blathə(r) /
ON
voluble, foolish, or nonsensical talk.
Matt's announcement consisted of 10 percent information and 90 percent blather.

blatherskite

n
/ 'blathə(r).skɪt /
ON + ON
a blustering, talkative, and often incompetent person.
With Jay's luck, the biggest blatherskite in the theater will sit directly behind him.

blazon

n
/ 'blāz'n /
F > E
coat of arms.
The duke's blazon was on everything from the tableware to the towels.

bleach

v
/ 'blēch /
E
remove the color or stains from.
Eliza decided not to bleach her stained socks for fear of ruining their elastic.

bleary

blemish

n
/ 'blemish /
Gmc > F > E
defect, flaw.
A skilled watercolorist can render a blemish invisible.

blenny

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blepharal

adj
/ 'blefərəl /
Gk

of or relating to the eyelids.
Leroy's blepharal inflammation was caused by allergies.

blessing

n
/ 'blesɪŋ /
E

the act or words of one who issues approval or praise.
Nate and Irene sought the blessing of their priest before they married.

blight

blissful

adj
/ 'blɪsfəl /
E

marked by a state of complete or ecstatic happiness.
The blissful bride and groom hurried off on their honeymoon.

blithe

blitz

v
/ 'blɪtʃ /
G

rush (a passer) in football from a position as a linebacker or defensive back.
In a desperate bid to stop the other team from scoring, the coach told all three linebackers to blitz the quarterback.

blitzkrieg

n
/ 'blɪts.krɛɡ /
G

war conducted with great speed and force; specifically : a violent surprise offensive by massed air forces and mechanized ground forces in close coordination.
The French forces were roundly defeated by the Germans' blitzkrieg.

blizzard

n
/ 'blɪzə(r)d /
unknown

a severe and prolonged snowstorm.
Last winter many cattle perished in a blizzard.

blossom

blossoming

adj
/ 'blɒsəmɪŋ /
E + EcF

flowering.
Between the blossoming branches of the canopy, bits of blue sky looked down like wonderful eyes.

blotch

n
/ 'blɒtʃ /
L? > F > E

imperfection, blemish.
The vendor referred to the ugly blotch on the leather as "natural discoloration."

blouse

bloviate

blucher

n
/ 'blükə(r) /
Prussian name

a shoe having the tongue and vamp cut in one piece and the quarters lapped over the vamp and laced together for closing.
The blucher was very popular with returning servicemen after World War I.

bludgeon

n
/ 'blʌʃən /
unknown

a short stick used as a weapon usually having one thick, heavy, or loaded end.
The shop teacher confiscated the crude bludgeon Harlan had fashioned from a baseball bat.

blueprint

blunderbuss

n
/ 'blʌndə(r).bəs /
D + L > D

an obsolete short gun or firearm that had a large bore and was intended for shooting at close quarters without exact aim.
The museum exhibit featured a blunderbuss along with other 18th-century weapons.

bobbin

bobolink

bocaccio

n
/ bō'kächō /
AmSp&It > E

a large olive to brown red-flushed rockfish of the Pacific coast from British Columbia to southern California.
The bocaccio feeds on a variety of fishes, crabs, and squids.

bocage

n
/ bō'kážh /
F

countryside or landscape marked by intermingled patches of woodland and heath, small fields, tall hedgerows, and orchards.
The charming bocage of rural France presents a variety that delights travelers.

bodega

n
/ bō'dāgə /
L > Sp

a combined wineshop and grocery store.
Miguel's mother sent him to the bodega for a loaf of bread.

boiserie

n
/ 'bɔwəzərɛ /
Gmc > F

carved wood paneling.
In Louis's living room painted boiserie provides a backdrop for a melange of upholstered armchairs.

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boisterous

adj

/ 'bɔɪst(ə)rəs /

F > E

full of exuberant uninhibited and often excessive spirits.

The locker room was boisterous after the championship.

bole

n

/ 'bɔl /

ON

the trunk of a tree.

Biff threw a knife into the old oak's bole.

bolero

n

/ bə'la(a)(ɪ)rɔ /

Sp

a Spanish dance to music in three-quarter time and characterized by sharp turns and revolutions of the body and stamping of the feet in syncopated rhythm.

Miguel and Ana danced the bolero as the rest of the partygoers watched and clapped.

bolide

n

/ 'bɔ.lɪd /

Gk

an exploding or exploded meteor or meteorite.

Some UFO reports turn out to result from the appearance of a bolide.

Bolshevik

n

/ 'bɒlshə'vɪk /

Russ

a member of the Russian Communist Party.

The Bolshevik kept repeating, "This could never happen in a communist country."

bombilation

bonanza

n

/ bə'nanzə /

L > Sp

something that yields an often unexpectedly large profit.

Millie struck a bonanza with her latest business venture.

bonhomous

adj

/ 'bänəməs /

L > F + EcF

warmly genial.

Will told us about the bonhomous master of ceremonies at the banquet.

boniface

n

/ 'bänəfəs /

name in an Irish play

the proprietor of a hotel, nightclub, or restaurant.

The boniface of the Red Horse Inn loves to have his picture taken with visiting celebrities.

bonnet

n

/ 'bänət /

L > F > E

a woman's head covering of cloth or straw usually tied under the chin.

Marie was tying her handkerchief over the kitten's head for a bonnet.

bonsai

n

/ 'bɒn.sɪ /

Jpn

[has near homonym: banzai] a potted plant (as a tree) dwarfed by special methods of culture.

Joanie spent the afternoon instructing a class on pruning a bonsai.

bookcase

bookkeeper

n

/ 'bʊk.kēpə(r) /

E

one who maintains accounts.

Dad has been a bookkeeper at the plant for 14 years.

boomerang

boondoggle

Bordelaise

n

/ ,bɔrd'laɪz /

F geog name

a brown sauce flavored with a table wine from the Gironde department

of France, the capital of which is Bordeaux.

Stuart thickened the Bordelaise over a low flame.

bordereaux

borderline

bore

n

/ 'bɔ(ə)r /

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonyms and near homonym: boar, Boer, and boor.] a tidal flood that regularly or occasionally rushes with a roaring noise into certain rivers.

Ships in the harbor when a bore occurred could suffer damage from its considerable height or force.

borealization

n

/ ,bɔrēələ'zāshən /

Gk > L + Ecff

adaptation (as of plants) to life in more northerly regions.

In the far North, borealization is a primary factor in the evolution of different plant species.

borzoi

n

/ 'bɔr.zɔɪ /

Russ

a Russian wolfhound.

The borzoi resembles a large greyhound with long wavy hair.

bosky

botanist

n

/ 'bät(ə)nəst /

Gk + EcF

a professional student of plants.

A botanist identified the mysterious plant growing behind Alysia's garage.

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botany

n
/ 'bät(ə)nē /
Gk > F

the branch of biology dealing with plant life.

Jan has no formal education in botany, but she does seem to have a green thumb.

botcher

botuliform

adj
/ 'bächələfōrm /
L + Ecf

shaped like a sausage.

Cattails have botuliform flower heads.

boudoir

n
/ 'bü.dwä(r) /
F

a woman's dressing room, bedroom, or private sitting room.

The boudoir adjacent to the master bedroom was, to Brooke, the most fascinating room on the tour.

bough

n
/ 'baü /
E

[has homonym: bow] a branch of a tree.

Grass would grow better beneath the tree if the lowest bough were removed.

bouillabaisse

bouillon

n
/ 'bü.yän /
F

[Note: Alternate pronunciation has homonym: bullion.] a broth made by slow boiling of meat and especially beef in water.

Benny learned how to make bouillon in his home economics class.

boulevard

n
/ 'bülə.värd /
D > F

a broad thoroughfare often having grassplots with trees along the center or between curbing and sidewalks.

On a warm sunny day many strollers can be found on the boulevard.

boulevardier

boundary

bounteous

bountiful

adj
/ 'baüntəfəl /
L > F > E + Ecf
abundant, plentiful.
The potato farmers rejoiced over their bountiful harvest.

bouquet

n
/ bō'kā /
F

the distinctive fragrance (as of a wine or brandy) derived from the processes of fermentation and aging.

Jim found the bouquet of the mystery wine much to his liking.

bouquiniste

n
/ бүкēnēst /
D > F

a dealer in secondhand books.

The bouquiniste encouraged us to browse as long as we wanted.

bourgeois

adj
/ 'bürzh.wä /
F

of, belonging to, or characteristic of the townsman or the social middle class.

The senator said that he espoused the bourgeois virtues of thriftiness, forethought, and a serious attitude toward life.

bourgeoisie

n
/ .bürzh.wä'zē /
F

the social and economic middle class.

Dillon went to college to, as he put it, "escape from the throes of the bourgeoisie."

boutonniere

n
/ .bütn'i(ə)r /
F

a flower or bouquet worn in a buttonhole.

The groom wore a sprig of orange blossom as a boutonniere.

bowdlerize

v
/ 'bōdlə.rīz /
E name + Ecf
remove matter considered indelicate or otherwise objectionable from.

When the publisher chose to bowdlerize the novel, the school librarian refused to order it.

bowery

bowline

n
/ 'bōlən /
E

a rope fastened near the middle of the perpendicular edge of a square sail and used to keep the weather edge of the sail taut forward when the ship is close-hauled.

Suzanne told Julio to cleat the bowline down tightly as she prepared to tack.

boycott

v
/ 'bōi.kät /
E name

combine against (a person, employer, a group of persons, or a nation) in a policy of suspension of dealings or relations for economic or political reasons.

The people of New Athens resolved to boycott the offending company.

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boysenberry

n
/ 'bóiz^ən.berē /
Amer name + E
a very large bramble fruit with a flavor like a raspberry especially valued for canning and preserving.
Mark enjoys the tart flavor of a freshly picked boysenberry.

bracelet

brachiate

v
/ 'brakē.āt /
Gk > L
progress by swinging from one hold to another by the arms.
The children enjoyed watching the chimpanzees playfully brachiate from tree to tree.

brachygraphy

n
/ bra'kigrəfē /
Gk + Gk
shorthand : a method of writing rapidly by substituting characters, abbreviations, or symbols for letters, words, or phrases.
Current job listings for administrative assistants rarely list brachygraphy as a mandatory skill.

brachylogy

n
/ bra'kiləjē /
Gk
conciseness of expression.
A successful poet is a master of imagery and brachylogy.

bradawl

n
/ 'brad.əl /
E + E
an awl with a chisel edge used to make holes for screws or thin, small nails.
Desmond found a bradawl in his grandfather's toolbox, but he couldn't figure out what it was used for.

bradycardia

bradyseism

n
/ 'brādē.sizəm /
Gk
a slow quiet upward or downward movement of Earth's crust.
The outskirts of Naples have been afflicted by bradyseism since a 1980 earthquake.

braggadocio

n
/ .bragə'dōshē.ō /
name in English poem
empty boasting or bragging.
Shelly was sure that Keith's claim to have received ten speeding tickets was mere braggadocio.

brankursine

n
/ braŋ'kərs^ən /
L > F
a prickly European herb having rough, fuzzy leaves.
The brankursine has ornamental value because of its claw-shaped leaves.

brannigan

n
/ 'branəgən /
name?
a difference of opinion : controversy, squabble.
A rousing brannigan erupted at the dinner table.

brasserie

bratwurst

n
/ 'brat.wərst /
G
fresh pork sausage.
Karen is grilling bratwurst for the pool party.

braunschweiger

n
/ 'braün.shwīgə(r) /
G name
smoked liver sausage.
Derek made a braunschweiger and pickle sandwich for his afternoon snack.

bravura

n
/ brə'v(y)ūrə /
It
a show of daring or brilliancy.
The crowd cheered the aerialist for his bravura.

brawniness

n
/ 'brònēnəs /
Gmc > F > E
the quality or state of having large strong muscles : muscular.
Chip's brawniness proved to be an asset in playing football.

brazen

adj
/ 'brāz^ən /
E
done in the open or in plain sight with or as if with complete scorn of public opinion, the common good, or ethical principle.
Kevin hopes that his brazen violation of the school's dress code will get him sent home for the day.

breach

breakfast

breath

n
/ 'breth /
E
air charged with a certain fragrance, odor, or other suggestion.
The breath of roses in the parlor came from the window open to the garden.

breccia

n
/ 'brech(ē)ə /
It
[has near homonym: Brescia] a rock consisting of sharp fragments embedded in a fine-grained matrix (as sand or clay).
A breccia was among the rock specimens that the scientist brought back from her trip to the desert.

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bretelle

n
/ brə'tel /
Gmc > F
one of a pair of ornamental straps that go from the belt on the front of a dress over the shoulders to the belt in back.
Candace asked for help in adjusting her bretelle.

brevet

n
/ brə'vet /
F > E
an official document from a government granting a privilege, title, or dignity.
Dominic found a brevet signed by President Fillmore among his grandfather's papers.

breviloquent

brevity

n
/ 'brevədē /
L
expression in few words : terseness, conciseness.
Polonius told Queen Gertrude that "brevity is the soul of wit."

bribery

n
/ 'brīb(ə)rē /
F > E
the act or practice of giving or taking a reward, gift, or favor with a view to corrupt the conduct especially of a person in a position of trust (as a public official).
When the gambler offered the athletes money to lose the game, he was arrested and charged with bribery.

bridle

briefcase

brigadier

n
/ 'brigəd'i(ə)r /
It > F > E
an army, marine, or air force officer ranking just below a major general and above a colonel.
After winning the decisive battle, Hiram was promoted to brigadier.

brigand

n
/ 'brigənd /
Celt > It > F > E
one who lives by plunder usually as a member of a band.
The captured brigand refused to say a word about his group's leader.

brigantine

n
/ 'brigəntēn /
Celt > It > F
a two-masted square-rigged sailing ship.
Sailing school will be held on a specially outfitted brigantine.

brightness

n
/ 'brɪtnəs /
E
the state of being radiant : lustrous.
Walter wore sunglasses while he was skiing to protect his eyes against the brightness of the snow.

brilliant

brimstone

n
/ 'brɪmz.tōn /
E
sulfur.
If the story were true, upon reaching the sacred spot the demon would vanish in a flash of fire and brimstone.

brine

brininess

n
/ 'brɪnēnəs /
E
the quality or state of being like salt water or the sea.
Nadine does not enjoy swimming in the ocean because its brininess irritates her skin.

brioche

n
/ brē'ōsh /
Gmc > F
a fancy roll of very light yeast dough rich with eggs and butter.
Amy wanted just a brioche and juice for breakfast.

broach

v
/ 'brōch /
F > E
[has homonym: brooch] open up (a subject) for discussion or debate.
No one dares broach the subject of politics in front of Monique.

broadcaster

n
/ 'brōd.kastə(r) /
E + ON > E
a person who disseminates news on radio or television.
Russell has the clear voice and precise diction of an experienced broadcaster.

brocade

n
/ brō'kād /
L > It > Catal > Sp
a rich oriental fabric with raised patterns embroidered in gold and silver threads.
Tina discovered a gorgeous brocade in the remnant bin at the fabric store.

brochette

n
/ brō'shet /
F
meat broiled on a skewer.
Marsha garnished her beef brochette with green peppers.

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brochure

n
/ brō'shū(ə)r /
F
pamphlet, booklet.
Juanita designed a brochure for the zoological society.

brockage

n
/ 'bräkij /
E
an imperfectly minted coin.
Allen found a brockage in his piggy bank.

bromeliad

n
/ brō'mēlē.ad /
Sw name + Lcf
a plant of a family of tropical American herbs or subshrubs.
The colorful leaves of the bromeliad make it a popular houseplant.

bronchial

bronchitis

n
/ brän'kīd-əs /
Gk
acute or chronic inflammation in the lungs.
Because of his bronchitis, Sam had given up jogging.

brontometer

n
/ brän'täməd-ə(r) /
Gk
an instrument for measuring the phenomena of thunderstorms.
In 1888 meteorologists began using a brontometer to record the details of thunderstorms.

bronze

v
/ 'bränz /
L > It > F
[has near homonym: brawns]
become like bronze, a moderate yellowish brown alloy of copper and tin, especially in color.
Ike's attempt to bronze on the beach took an unfortunate turn when he fell asleep.

brougham

n
/ 'brü(ə)m /
Scottish name
[has near homonyms: broom, brume] a light closed horse-drawn carriage with the driver outside in front.
The brougham was once a common sight on the streets of London.

brouhaha

n
/ 'brü'hä.hä /
Hebrew? > F
publicity, attention, or excitement far beyond the merits or importance of its cause.
Sean dropped his tray in the cafeteria, causing quite a brouhaha.

brucellosis

n
/ ,brüsə'lōsəs /
E name + Lcf
a human disease characterized by extreme exhaustion and generalized aches and pains and acquired through infected animal products.
An outbreak of brucellosis forced the sausage factory to shut down.

bruise

n
/ 'brüz /
F > E
[has homonym: brews] an injury, especially one produced by a blow or collision, that does not break the surface it injures.
Heather's fall from her bicycle left her with a bad bruise.

bruit

brujo

n
/ 'brü.hō /
Sp
sorcerer, witch doctor; especially : one that works black magic.
The character of the brujo in the ballet was played by a dancer who scowled through the entire first act.

brume

n
/ 'brüm /
L > OProv > F
[has homonym and near homonym: broom and brougham] mist, fog.
The ship's foghorn blared through the drifting brume.

brummagem

adj
/ 'bräməjəm /
E geog name
spurious especially in a cheap and showy way : phony, sham.
Irene usually wears brummagem jewelry when she dines at fancy restaurants.

brumous

brutal

adj
/ 'brüd-əl /
L > F > E
characterized by ruthlessness and insensitivity.
The judge gave Gary the maximum sentence, noting the brutal nature of the crime.

bruxism

n
/ 'brək.sizəm /
Gk > E
the habit of unconsciously gritting or grinding the teeth especially in situations of stress or during sleep.
Ellie's bruxism was so pronounced that her dentist made a bite guard for her to wear at night.

buccaneer

n
/ ,bəkə'ni(e)r /
Tupi > F
one of the pirates preying upon Spanish ships and settlements especially in the West Indies in the 17th century.
While on the "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride at Disneyland, Maria thought she saw the eyes of the nearest buccaneer move.

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buccolingual

adj
/ bə'kɒ'lɪŋ(yə)wəl /

L
relating to or affecting the cheek and the tongue.

Pipe smoking can harm the buccolingual tissue.

buckboard

n
/ 'bək.bɔ(ə)rɪd /
E + E

a four-wheeled horse-drawn vehicle without springs with the platform fastened directly to the front and rear axle, usually with a seat above it often mounted on springs.

The Wilson family used a buckboard for travel and to transport supplies from town.

buckram

bucolic

Buddhism

n
/ 'bʊ.dɪzəm /

Skt name
a religion of eastern and central Asia.

Buddhism has spread from its original home in Asia to all corners of the globe.

budgetary

buffalo

n
/ 'bæf.əl /
Gk > L > Sp > It

a large wild ox with a shaggy mane and short horns that was once abundant on the central and western plains of the United States.
Jamie was awed by the enormity of the buffalo she saw at the zoo.

buffoon

n
/ bə'fʊn /
L > It > F

a person professionally engaged in entertaining others by tricks, gestures, or comic pantomime.

Along the midway a buffoon entertained the children with a laughable pantomime.

buffoonery

n
/ (i)bə'fʊn(ə)rē /
F
the practices of a clown or clownish person; especially : coarse loutish behavior.

Mrs. Decker warned that she would tolerate no buffoonery in her classroom.

bugaboo

n
/ 'bægə.bü /
E

something that causes fear or distress often out of proportion to its actual importance in a situation.

Failing the geometry test was Kara's bugaboo.

bulbous

adj
/ 'bʌlbəs /
L

[has homonym: bulbus]
resembling or suggesting a bulb especially in roundness or in the gross enlargement of a part.

The cartoon character's heavy bulbous body lurched dangerously on his spindly legs, which barely supported him.

bulgur

n
/ 'bʊl.gü(ə)r /
Turk
parched crushed wheat as prepared and used as a dietary staple in Turkey and adjacent regions.
Omar's favorite dish is a salad made with bulgur, pine nuts, and raisins.

bulletin

bulletinize

bullion

bullionist

n
/ 'bʊl.jənəst /
F > E + Ecf
an advocate of a metallic medium of exchange.
The bullionist proposed a return to the gold standard.

bumptiously

bungalow

n
/ 'bʌŋgə.lə /
Hindi
a lightly built single-story house or cottage.
Wendy's dream vacation includes renting a bungalow on a South Pacific island.

buoyant

adj
/ 'bɔi.ənt /
Sp
able to regain high spirits after depression : lighthearted.
The buoyant author gladly autographed his book for buyers.

buoyantly

buran

n
/ bʊ'ræn /
Turk > Russ
a northeasterly wind of gale force in Russia and central Asia usually identified with sandstorms in summer and blizzards in winter.
The dreaded buran from northern Siberia swept across the tundra with extraordinary violence.

bureaucracy

n
/ byü'räkrəsē /
F
a system of administration marked by lack of initiative and flexibility, by indifference to human needs or public opinion, and by a tendency to defer decisions to superiors or to impede action with red tape.
Helga blamed the bureaucracy for the six-week delay in getting her passport.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

bureaucrat

n
/ 'byūrəkrat /
L > F + Gk > F
a member of the whole body of nonelected government officials.
Alexis spent 20 minutes trying to convince a bureaucrat that she really was seeking employment.

burgher

n
/ 'bərgər /
G&D
a resident of a town : townsman.
Every burgher showed up for Springfield's fireworks display.

burgherly

burgoo

n
/ (ɪ)bər'gü /
unknown
a savory highly seasoned stew or thick soup containing several kinds of meat and vegetables originally served at political rallies, barbecues, picnics, and community occasions.
Everyone looks forward to eating burgoo at Drew's Derby Day party.

burin

n
/ 'byūrən /
Celt? > Catal? > F
an engraver's tool having a steel blade ground obliquely to a sharp point.
The artist used a burin to engrave a design on a copper plate.

burly

adj
/ 'bərle /
E
[has homonym: burley] strongly built : stout, sturdy.
The director chose Harry for the part of the construction worker because of his burly appearance.

burrito

n
/ bə'rēd̩.ō /
Sp
a usually baked flour tortilla rolled or folded around a filling (as of meat, beans, or cheese).
For lunch Fred ordered a burrito, rice, and refried beans.

bursar

n
/ 'bərsər /
L
[Note: Could be confused with purser.] an administrative officer (as of a monastery or college) in charge of funds : treasurer.
The bill for the new gym floor was submitted to the school's bursar.

bursiculate

adj
/ .bə'sikyələt /
L > E
shaped like a small pouch or purse.
Some seaweed plants have bursiculate leaves.

bursitis

n
/ .bə'sid̩.əs /
L + Ecf
inflammation of a fluid-filled cavity in a joint of the body.
Pain during the tennis game was Brett's first symptom of bursitis.

busby

n
/ 'bəzbē /
E name?
a military full-dress hat made of fur with a bag usually of cloth of the color of the facings of the regiment hanging from the top on the right.
The drum major strutted proudly in his white uniform and black busby.

bushel

butte

n
/ 'byüt /
F
[has homonym: beaut] an isolated hill or small mountain with steep or precipitous sides that usually has a smaller summit area than does a mesa.
A butte erodes mostly from its sides because its uppermost layers consist of hard rock and resist weathering.

butterfly

v
/ 'bədə(r).fli /
E
split almost entirely and spread apart in such a way as to resemble the spread wings of a butterfly.
George tried to butterfly the chicken breast but ended up with two ragged chunks of meat.

butterscotch

n
/ 'bədə(r).skäch /
E
a hard candy made by boiling together brown sugar, corn syrup, and water.
Butterscotch has a deep golden color and a delicious rich taste.

buttress

butyraceous

adj
/ .byüdə'rāshəs /
Gk > L
resembling butter.
The mixed vegetables were flavored with a butyraceous sauce.

buzzard

n
/ 'bəzə(r)d /
L > F > E
any of various birds of prey, such as a turkey vulture or condor.
The buzzard is a common figure in cartoons, making its appearance when other characters are sick or dying.

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byssinosis

n
/ ˌbɪsəˈnɒsəs /
Gk > L

a chronic industrial disease associated with the inhalation of cotton dust over a long period of time.

Employees at the mill wore masks to protect themselves from byssinosis.

byte

Byzantine

adj
/ ˈbɪzən.tɪn /
Gk

of, relating to, or characteristic of the eastern Roman Empire.
Byzantine bureaucracy has become a byword for cumbersome, complicated, inefficient, and inflexible administration.

cabana

n
/ kəˈbɑn(y)ə /
L > Sp

a tentlike often portable shelter with a projecting canopy over an open side facing a beach or swimming pool.

Sam and Doug will move the cabana closer to the swimming pool.

cabaret

n
/ ˌkəbəˈrɑ /
L? > F

a restaurant that provides entertainment, usually singing and dancing.

Sheila's training in tap dancing helped her get a job at the local cabaret.

cabinet

cabochon

adv
/ ˈkəbəʃhən /
F

in convex form highly polished but not faceted.

The jeweler cut the stone cabochon and mounted it in a platinum setting.

cabriole

n
/ ˈkabrē.əl /
F

[Note: Could be confused with capriole.] a ballet leap in which one leg is extended in mid-air and the other struck against it.

The dancers dressed as wood sprites performed a cabriole in every measure of the music.

cache

v
/ ˈkash /
L > F

[has homonym: cash] place or store in safety or concealment.

Jim asked Zelda to cache his valuables while he was on sabbatical in Japan.

cachet

n
/ kaˈʃhā /
F

a characteristic feature or quality conferring prestige or distinction or inspiring respect.

Acting in a hit TV sitcom does not carry the same cachet as acting in a hit movie.

cachinnate

cachinnation

n
/ ˌkəkəˈnāʃhən /
L

the act or action of laughing loudly or convulsively.

The cachinnation of the comedy club's audience convinced the comedian that he was on his way to becoming a star.

cacography

n
/ kaˈkəgrəfē /
Gk

bad handwriting.

Martin's cacography made his work illegible.

cacophonous

cacophony

n
/ kaˈkəfənē /
Gk

harsh or discordant sound.

Spot's encounter with the skunk was accompanied by a burst of cacophony.

cacuminal

cadaver

n
/ kəˈdævə(r) /
L

a dead human or animal body usually intended for cutting so as to expose the several parts and their locations and connections.

Duncan dissected a cadaver in anatomy class.

cadaverous

cadence

cadre

n
/ ˈkɑ(ɹ)drā /
L > It > F

a nucleus or core group especially of trained personnel or active members of an organization who are capable of assuming leadership or of training and indoctrinating others.

Its highly skilled cadre of managers enabled the company to achieve great success in its first year.

caduceus

n
/ kəˈd(y)üs(h)ēəs /
Gk > L

a conventionalized representation of a staff with two snakes curled around it and with two wings at the top.

In Greek mythology the caduceus was the staff of Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

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cafeteria

n
/ ˌkafəˈtɪrēə /
Turk > Sp
a self-service restaurant or lunchroom.
On the last day of school the students had a food fight in the cafeteria.

caisson

n
/ ˈkɑːsən /
L > F
a two-wheeled vehicle for artillery ammunition attachable to a horse-drawn limber for marching.
A caisson is sometimes used to carry the coffin in a military funeral.

caitiff

n
/ ˈkɑːdəf /
L > F > E
a base despicable person.
The story centers on Batman's encounters with a psychotic caitiff, the Riddler.

cajole

cajolery

n
/ kəˈjɒl(ə)rē /
F
use of delusive enticements.
After much cajolery, the kitten finally came down from the tree.

calabash

n
/ ˈkaləˌbɑːʃ /
Ar? > Sp&F
the common bottle gourd.
A calabash with a hole cut in it makes a dandy birdhouse.

caladium

n
/ kəˈlɑːdiəm /
Malay > L
any of a small genus of tropical American plants with variously colored arrow-shaped leaves.
Julie delivered a potted caladium to her sick cousin.

calamine

calamity

calcium

n
/ ˈkalsēəm /
L
a soft, silver-white bivalent metallic element that occurs in combination with minerals and rocks.
Calcium is an essential element in bones.

calculate

v
/ ˈkalkyəˌlāt /
L
ascertain or determine by mathematical processes especially of some intricacy.
Toriko likes to calculate her car's gas mileage after every trip.

calculator

n
/ ˈkalkyəˌlādə(r) /
L > E + Ecf
a device used for computing amounts.
Mr. Jensen permitted each student to use a calculator during the exam.

calculiform

adj
/ ˈkalkyələˌfɔːrm /
L > ISV
shaped like a pebble.
In the Mayan writing system, the characters were rounded like pebbles and so were described as being calculiform.

calculus

calefacient

adj
/ ˌkaləˈfāʃənt /
L
making warm : heating.
A calefacient ointment relieved some of Dave's muscular pain.

calendar

calibrate

calico

n
/ ˈkaləkō /
Indian geog name
any of various cheap cotton fabrics with figured patterns.
Molly's dress was made of a bold orange and yellow checked calico.

caliginous

adj
/ kəˈlɪjənəs /
F or L
dark, obscure.
A caliginous sky foreshadowed the approaching storm.

calisthenics

n pl
/ ˌkaləsˈtheniks /
Gk + Ecf
systematic exercises performed usually in rhythm and often in a group to improve the strength, suppleness, balance, and health of the body.
Aunt Julia does calisthenics twice a week in a program called "Body Recall."

calisthenium

callidity

n
/ kəˈlɪdədē /
L
craftiness, cunning, shrewdness.
Br'er Rabbit was famous for his callidity.

calligrapher

n
/ kəˈlɪgrəfə(r) /
Gk
one that writes a beautiful, ornamental, or stylized hand.
Joni and William had their wedding invitations inscribed by a calligrapher.

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calliope

n
/ kə'līə(,)pē /
Gk > L

a musical instrument consisting of a series of crude steam or air whistles used on riverboats and in circuses and carnivals.

Passengers gathered on the upper deck of the Mississippi Queen to listen to the calliope.

callously

callow

caloric

adj
/ kə'lōrik /
L > F
of or relating to the heat-producing or energy-producing value of food.
Suzy became obsessed with caloric intake while on her crash diet.

calque

calumet

n
/ 'kalyə,met /
L > F
a highly ornamented ceremonial pipe of the North American Indians that was smoked at sacrifices and other magical or religious rites and on state occasions.
After the three chiefs reached agreement, they passed a feathered calumet.

calumny

n
/ 'kal(y)əmɲē /
L
a false charge or misrepresentation intended to harm one's reputation : slander.
According to Neal, the recent article about him was pure calumny.

calvities

n
/ kal'vishē.ēz /
L
baldness.
Larry's calvities is intentional: He shaves his head every morning.

calypso

n
/ kə'lip(,)sō /
Gk name
a balladlike improvisation in African rhythm usually satirizing current events first composed and sung in competition in the British West Indies.
Harry Belafonte gained fame as a singer of calypso.

camaraderie

cameline

n
/ 'kamə.lēn /
Sem > Gk > L
a twilled camel's-hair fabric.
Jordan bought a new overcoat made of cameline to wear with his dress suits.

cameo

n
/ 'kamē.ō /
L > F > It
a small theatrical or film role usually performed by a well-known actor and often limited to a single scene.
The producer was grateful that the star accepted a cameo in his new film.

camera

camionette

n
/ ,kamyə'net /
F
a small truck or bus.
The hotel provides a camionette to shuttle guests to and from the airport.

camisole

camouflage

n
/ 'kamə.flāzh /
It > F
a disguise, behavior, or expedient adopted or designed to deceive or hide.
Behind Jerry's camouflage of ignorance resides a wealth of knowledge.

camouflaged

camoufleur

campanile

n
/ ,kampə'nēlē /
L > It
[Note: Plural form can be pronounced identically.] a bell tower usually freestanding.
From the hilltop Obin could just spot the great campanile of Christ Church in Oxford.

camphor

n
/ 'kam(p)fə(r) /
Malay > Ar > L > AF > E
[has near homonym: chamfer] a tough gumlike substance obtained especially from the wood and bark of the camphor tree and used chiefly as a stimulant in medicine.
Whenever Johnny has a cold, his mother spreads on his chest an aromatic ointment containing camphor.

campodeiform

adj
/ kam'pōdēə.fōrm /
Gk + Gk + L
having an elongated and flattened shape—used especially of larvae of some beetles and other higher insects.
Cybelle identified one of the five campodeiform larvae.

campus

canaille

n
/ kə'nī /
L > It > F
mob, rabble, riffraff.
During the riot the canaille destroyed and looted many stores.

canard

n
/ kə'närd /
F
a false or unfounded report or story; especially : a fabricated report (as by a newspaper).
The report of the famous singer's death turned out to be a canard.

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canary

n
/ kə'nerē /
L geog name > Sp > F
a small greenish-yellow finch
extensively bred as a cage bird and
singer.
*When the canary escaped in her
living room, Susan put her cat
outside until she found the bird.*

canasta

n
/ kə'nastə /
L > Sp
a card game that is a form of
rummy played usually as a two-
hand or as a four-hand partnership
game using two full decks plus four
jokers.
*The two couples often played
canasta after having dinner
together.*

cancellous

adj
/ kan'seləs /
L
having a spongy or porous
structure.
*Cancellous tissue occurs at the
ends of some bones.*

cancrivoracious

candelabra

n
/ ,kandə'lābrə /
L
a usually ornate and often heavy
and large standard supporting a
candlestick or lamp.
*In December Stella put red and
green candles in her candelabra on
the mantle.*

candelabrum

n
/ ,kandə'lābrəm /
L
a large candlestick or a lamp
usually ornamented and having
several arms or branches.
*Germaine admired the ornate silver
candelabrum in the center of the
table.*

candent

adj
/ 'kandənt /
L
white or glowing usually from
great heat.
*The wire glowed candent like the
filament of a light bulb.*

candescent

adj
/ kan'desənt /
L
glowing or dazzling often from
great heat.
*A candescent meteorite streaked
across the southern sky.*

candidacy

n
/ 'kan(d)ədəsē /
L + Ecf
the quality or state of being one
that is likely or worthy to gain a
post, position, or distinction.
*Tony's candidacy for the student
council will be jeopardized if he
fails his algebra exam.*

candlewick

n
/ 'kandəl.wik /
L > E + E
the twisted threads of soft cotton
yarn contained in a candle.
*Victor groped to light the
candlewick in the dark.*

candor

n
/ 'kandə(r) /
L
[has near homonym: canter]
unreserved, honest, or sincere
expression.
*Russell's candor in dealing with
difficult issues won over the voters.*

canine

canitist

n
/ 'kanətəst /
L + Ecf
one who dyes or tints hair
especially in a beauty shop.
*Polly has been a canitist in a local
beauty shop for 25 years.*

cannelloni

cannibal

cannibalism

cannonade

canny

canoe

canoeist

n
/ kə'nüəst /
Arawak > Sp > L > F + Ecf
one that paddles a type of long
narrow boat.
*Evan became an expert canoeist at
summer camp.*

canopy

cantankerous

adj
/ kan'ta(i)ŋk(ə)rəs /
AF? > E? + Ecf
marked by ill humor, irritability,
and determination to disagree.
*The cantankerous old man yelled at
Grady as he attempted to retrieve
the football.*

cantata

cantatory

canteen

canter

v
/ 'kantə(r) /
E geog name
[has homonym: cantor] move at or
as if at a three-beat gait resembling
but smoother and slower than the
gallop.
*Cindy let the horse canter for a
while but soon spurred it on to a
gallop.*

cantilever

cantonment

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cantor

n
/ 'kantə(r) /
L
[has homonym: canter] a
synagogue official who sings or
chants liturgical music and leads
the congregation in prayer.
*Jacob's vocal talent led him to
consider becoming a cantor.*

canvasser

n
/ 'kanvəsə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E + Ecf
one that takes or counts votes.
*Helga volunteered as a canvasser
for the upcoming election.*

capable

capacious

adj
/ kə'pāshəs /
L
able to contain a great deal.
*Dodie went to the beach carrying a
capacious canvas bag.*

caparison

n
/ kə'parəsən /
Sp > F
an ornamental covering for a horse.
*The king's horse wore an
elaborately decorated caparison.*

capillary

adj
/ 'kapə.lerē /
L
resembling a hair : fine, minute,
slender.
*The capillary tubes in the tissue
puzzled Dr. Chang.*

capital

adj
/ 'kapədʒl /
L
[Note: The definition provided is
not the one most commonly
associated with this word. In
addition, word has homonym:
capitol.] highly meritorious : most
enjoyable.
*On his dad's birthday, Philip
served a capital feast, with every
dish cleverly wrapped up in
ribbons.*

capitativ

adj
/ .kapə'tādvəm /
L
levied or granted at so much per
head.
*Collecting an affordable capitativ
fee for civic pool use will not cover
operating costs.*

capitulate

cappelletti

n pl
/ .kapə'ledē /
L > It
[Note: Could be confused with
cavalletti.] small cases of dough
usually filled with meat or cheese.
*Bo and Annette dined on cappelletti
in marinara sauce.*

cappuccino

capriccioso

adv
/ kə'prēchē'ō(,)sō /
It + Itcf
free and impulsive—used chiefly as
a direction in music.
*The ending segment of the violin
concerto was played capriccioso.*

caprice

capricious

adj
/ kə'prishəs /
It
not guided by steady judgment,
intent, or purpose.
*Hazel's capricious behavior is a
source of constant annoyance for
her sister, Ruth.*

capsize

capstan

capsule

caracole

n
/ 'karəkōl /
L? > Sp > F
a half turn either to the right or the
left executed by a mounted horse.
*The front rank of galloping
cavalrymen fired their pistols and
then peeled off in a caracole to
regroup.*

carafe

n
/ kə'raf /
Ar > It > F
a bottle usually made of glass with
a narrow neck and spherical body
and used to hold water or
beverages.
*Shlomo ordered a carafe of the
house wine.*

caramel

n
/ 'karəməl /
L > Pg > Sp > F
a firm chewy candy often
containing fruits and nuts and
typically cut into small blocks.
*Ida's mother warned her not to eat
a caramel before she went to the
orthodontist.*

caramelize

v
/ 'karəmə.līz /
L > Pg > Sp > F + Ecf
change (sugar or the sugar content
of a food) into a brittle brown
substance by heating to about 170–
180 C.
*Kara is going to caramelize some
sugar to make peanut brittle.*

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carbohydrate

n
/ ˈkɑrbəˈhīdrāt /
L + Gk

any of a group of neutral compounds composed of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen including the sugars and starches.

The nutrition facts indicated that the candy bar would provide Sheila with over half her daily allowance of carbohydrate.

carbonaceous

carbonate

adj
/ ˈkɑrbənət /
L + ISVcf
of or relating to a salt or ester of carbonic acid.
After reading the paragraph six times, Hugo still could not understand the bonding in the carbonate ion.

carboy

carcass

n
/ ˈkɑrkəs /
Per > Ar > L > F
a dead body of a human being or an animal : corpse.
Kasey found the fresh carcass of one of his cows and knew that the wolves were back.

carcinogen

n
/ kɑrˈsɪnəjən /
Gk
a substance or agent producing or inciting cancerous growth.
Asbestos has been proven to be a powerful carcinogen.

cardiac

cardigan

n
/ ˈkɑrdəgən /
E name
a sweater or jacket that opens the full length of the center front and usually has a round or V-shaped collarless neck.
Samantha's aunt in Scotland sent her a colorful wool cardigan for her birthday.

cardinal

n
/ ˈkɑrd(ə)nəl /
L > F > E
an American songbird, the male being bright red with a black face and pointed crest and the female being much duller in color.
One of Stephanie's favorite winter scenes is that of a cardinal perched on a snow-covered branch.

cardinalate

cardiomegaly

n
/ kɑrdēˈmegəlē /
Gk
enlargement of the heart.
Severe anemia can result in cardiomegaly.

caribou

n
/ ˈkɑrə.bi /
Algonquian > F
any of several large deer of northern North America.
While in Montana, Jill photographed a caribou silhouetted on a high ridge.

caricaturable

caricature

carillon

n
/ ˈkɑrə.lən /
L > F
a set of fixed bells pitched in a chromatic series of at least two octaves and sounded by hammers controlled by a keyboard.
Latasha will play the carillon at Andy's wedding.

cark

carnage

n
/ ˈkɑrnij /
L > F
great destruction of life (as in battle) : great bloodshed.
Appeals to stop the carnage of war fell on deaf ears.

carnival

n
/ ˈkɑrnəvəl /
L > It
a traveling enterprise consisting of such amusements as sideshows, games of chance, rides, and shooting galleries.
The carnival was the only place Ralph had the opportunity to eat cotton candy.

carnivore

n
/ ˈkɑrnə.vō(ə)r /
L
a flesh-eating animal.
The hyena is a carnivore that usually eats animals found dead.

carnivorous

carotid

adj
/ kəˈrādəd /
Gk
belonging to or situated near either of the two main arteries that supply blood to the head.
Lara felt her pulse with a finger placed on her carotid artery.

carpaccio

n
/ kɑrˈpäch(ē)ō /
It
thinly sliced raw meat or fish served with a sauce.
When Linda ordered carpaccio, she didn't know that it is uncooked.

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carpenter

n
/ 'kärpəntə(r) /
L > E

a person who builds or repairs with wood.

Matthew hired a carpenter to construct four bookcases.

carpophagous

carriageable

carriion

n
/ 'kärēən /
L > AF > E

[has near homonym: carillon] the dead and putrefying flesh of an animal.

Vultures were picking over skunk and opossum carrion at the roadside.

carrot

cartel

n
/ kär'tel /
It > F

a voluntary often international combination of independent private enterprises supplying like commodities or services that agree to limit their competitive activities (as by regulating quantity or quality of output).

Started as a cartel, the oil-producing nations control the worldwide price of petroleum.

cartilage

n
/ 'kärð˙lij /
L

a translucent elastic tissue that composes most of the skeleton of the embryos and very young of vertebrates and is for the most part converted into bone in the higher forms.

Hans had a small piece of cartilage removed from his elbow.

carton

cartonnage

n
/ 'kärt˙n.äzh /
F

material consisting of linen or papyrus glued together in many thicknesses and usually coated with stucco.

The museum guide said that the elaborate mummy case made of cartonnage had been found in a hidden vault of a pyramid.

caryatid

n
/ .kärē'adäd /
Gk

a draped female figure supporting an entablature in the place of a column or pilaster.

The caryatid appeared to be grimacing from the strain of holding up the temple.

cascade

n
/ ka'skäd /
L > It > F

a fall of water over steeply slanting rocks (as in a river or brook).

The swiftly moving mountain stream became a cascade as it rushed toward the valley below.

cashew

n
/ 'ka(˙)shü /
Tupi > Pg

the kidney-shaped nut of a tropical American tree naturalized in all warm countries.

Jack dug through the can of mixed nuts, looking for the last cashew.

cashier

n
/ ka'shi(ə)r /
F > D

one that handles customer payments for goods or services rendered.

A cashier must keep a watchful eye for counterfeit currency.

cask

n
/ 'kask /
Sp

[has homonym: casque] any barrel-shaped vessel made of staves, headings, and hoops.

The salesman boasted that the Scotch had been aged in an old sherry cask for many years.

casserole

n
/ 'kasə.röl /
Gk > L > OProv > F

a vessel usually having a cover and a handle and in which food may be baked and served.

Laura baked the chicken and broccoli in a casserole.

cassoulet

n
/ 'kasə.lā /
F

a casserole of beans baked with herbs and pork sausage and sometimes other meats.

The cassoulet was originally a specialty of southwestern France.

cassowary

castanets

n pl
/ .kastə'nets /
L > Sp

a pair of rhythm instruments consisting of two shells made of ivory, wood, or plastic which are fastened together to hang from the thumb and are clicked by the other fingers.

The flamenco dancer's rapidly clicking castanets intrigued Diana.

castigate

Castilian

adj
/ ka'stilyən /
L

of, relating to, or characteristic of the standard Spanish language.

Juan incorporates so many English words in his conversation that his speech is far from Castilian.

casuistic

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casuistry

n
/ 'kazhəwəstrē /
L > Sp

the study of or the doctrine that deals with cases of conscience.

To complete her degree in philosophy, Tisha had to take a semester of casuistry.

catachresis

n
/ 'kadə'krēsəs /
Gk

the misuse of words.

When Monica used the word infer to mean "imply" in her essay, her English teacher wrote catachresis in the margin.

cataclysm

n
/ 'kadə'klizəm /
Gk

a violent geologic change involving sudden and extensive alterations of Earth's surface.

Scientists are standing by their prediction that a cataclysm will occur in California.

cataclysmic

catacomb

catadromous

adj
/ kə'tadrəməs /
Gk > L
living in fresh water and going to the sea to spawn.
Whereas the salmon migrates from the sea to fresh water to spawn, the catadromous American eel does just the reverse.

catalepsy

n
/ 'kadə'lepsē /
Gk
a condition of suspended animation and loss of voluntary motion associated with hysteria and schizophrenia.
Doctors were confounded by Juan's catalepsy.

catalina

catalytic

adj
/ 'kadəl'idik /
Gk
causing, involving, or relating to the change in the rate of a chemical reaction brought about by often small amounts of a substance that is unchanged chemically at the end of the reaction.
Iron plus small amounts of potassium and aluminum oxides has a catalytic effect on the synthesis of ammonia.

catamaran

cataphract

n
/ 'kadə'frakt /
Gk
a suit of armor for the whole body.
The knight in a cataphract was mounted on a charger and equipped with a lance.

catapult

v
/ 'kadə'pəlt /
Gk > L
move with a suddenness or force as if propelled by a device that hurls heavy stones.
The general's wartime success was enough to catapult him into political power.

cataract

n
/ 'kadərəkt /
Gk > L > E
a clouding of the lens of the eye obstructing the passage of light.
Grandpa's cataract necessitated surgical replacement of the lens in his eye.

catarrh

n
/ kə'tär /
Gk > L > F
[has homonym and near homonym: Qatar and guitar] inflammation of a mucous membrane in humans or animals characterized by congestion and secretion of mucus.
Catarrh can be brought on by infection, allergies, dry air, or chemical irritants.

catastasis

n
/ kə'tastəsəs /
Gk
the dramatic complication immediately preceding the climax of a play.
During the catastasis the audience wondered how the hero would resolve his predicament.

catastrophe

n
/ kə'tastrə(,)fē /
Gk
the final action that completes the unraveling of the plot in a tragedy : denouement.
In the drama's catastrophe the hero dies a valiant death to save his beloved.

catechism

catechumen

n
/ 'kadə'kyümən /
Gk > L > F
one receiving rudimentary instruction in the doctrines of Christianity.
A child who attends a Sunday School program could be considered a catechumen.

category

catenary

n
/ 'kadənərē /
L
the curve assumed by a perfectly flexible cord hanging freely from two fixed points.
Part of Dominick's math test was to figure out the equation for a catenary.

catenulate

adj
/ kə'tenyələt /
L
having a chain-like form.
The artist's paintings mimic the catenulate markings on butterflies' wings.

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caterer

n
/ 'kādərə(r) /
AF > E + EcF
one whose business is to arrange for and supervise all the details relating to food service for any social affair.
The caterer placed a parsley leaf on each deviled egg.

caterpillar

n
/ 'kadə(r)pilər /
L > F > E
the elongated wormlike larva of a butterfly or moth.
The body-surface hairs on the caterpillar in Jamie's hand contain a poisonous substance that causes intense itching.

caterwaul

cathartic

cathedral

adj
/ kə'thēdrəl /
L > E
of, relating to, or being a bishop's church.
Sister Agatha watered the tulips in the cathedral garden.

cathole

Catullian

adj
/ kə'təlēən /
L name
of, relating to, or like the Roman poet Catullus or his lyric poems.
The great felicity of language and intense personal feeling of Randolph's poem made it Catullian.

caucus

n
/ 'kəkəs /
Algonquian
a conference of party or organization leaders to decide on policies, plans, appointees, or candidates.
The caucus stayed in session until 3 a.m. finalizing its slate of nominees.

caudal

adj
/ 'kōd'l /
L
[has near homonym: coddle]
constituting, belonging to, or relating to a tail.
As a tadpole's legs grow, its caudal appendage gradually disappears.

caudillo

n
/ kaũ'thē(l)(.)yō /
L > Sp
a military leader (as in a Latin-American country) usually of guerrilla or irregular forces loyal to him or her personally.
The reporter found that most of the soldiers would willingly give their lives for their caudillo.

cauliflower

n
/ 'kōlə.flau(ə)r /
L > It
a garden plant that is closely related to the cabbage and is grown for food.
Sheldon won't eat cauliflower unless it is smothered in melted cheese.

causerie

n
/ kōz(ə)'rē /
L > F
an informal light conversation : chat.
Bridget tried unsuccessfully all evening to engage Mrs. Vickers in causerie.

causeway

caustic

adj
/ 'kōstik /
Gk
capable of destroying the texture of anything or eating away its substance by chemical action : corrosive.
Ned never suspected that perfume might have a caustic effect on plastic.

cauterize

v
/ 'kōdərīz /
Gk > L
burn or sear with a caustic brand.
Dr. Bennett used a laser to cauterize Tony's wound.

cavalcade

n
/ 'kavəl.kād /
L > It > F
a procession of riders or carriages.
The king headed up the cavalcade proceeding toward the Duke of Parma.

cavalier

adj
/ kavə'li(ə)r /
L > OProv > It > F
marked by lofty disregard of others' interests, rights, or feelings.
Eloise displayed a cavalier attitude toward the homecoming plans.

cavalletti

n
/ kavə'ledē /
L > It
[Note: Could be confused with cappelletti.] a series of timber jumps that are adjustable in height for schooling horses.
Black Beauty easily jumped over the cavalletti as Justin watched with pride.

cavalry

caveat

n
/ 'kävē.ät /
L
a warning enjoining one from certain acts or practices.
The oldest caveat of commerce is "Let the buyer beware."

cavernicolous

cavernous

adj
/ 'kavə(r)nəs /
L
constituting or suggesting a large underground chamber.
The thick grove of vine-covered trees threw a cavernous gloom over the area.

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cavil

v
/ 'kavəl /

L
object or criticize adversely for trivial reasons.
Even if Tracy's room is spotlessly clean, she knows that her mom will cavil at something about it.

cavort

v
/ kə'vò(ə)rt /
L? > F > It

bound, prance, or frisk about.
In Bosch's painting Garden of Earthly Delights, horses and giant birds cavort in a surreal landscape.

cedilla

n
/ sə'dilə /
L > Sp

a mark placed under a letter to indicate a sound different from that which the unmodified character bears in certain situations.
Martha did not earn a perfect score on her French paper because she forgot the cedilla in the word garçon.

ceiling

n
/ 'sēliŋ /
E

[has homonym: sealing] the overhead inside lining of a room.
There was a terrible crash from inside the wagon that sounded as if a whole set of dishes had been dropped from the ceiling onto a hard stone floor.

celebrant

celeriac

n
/ sə'lerē.ək /
Gk > L > It?

a plant of the parsley family grown for its turniplike edible root.
Rhoda added chopped celeriac to her soup.

celeritous

adj
/ sə'lerədəs /
L > F > E

swift-moving.
The celeritous bicyclist almost knocked Trudy down.

celery

n
/ 'sel(ə)rē /
Gk > L > It?

a vegetable with leafstalks that are eaten raw or cooked.
Terry's favorite snack is celery filled with pimento cheese.

celestial

adj
/ sə'les(h)chəl /
L

of or relating to the sky.
The awesome display of celestial light was later identified as a meteor shower.

celibacy

cellarage

cellist

cello

cellophane

n
/ 'selə.fān /
(L + Gk) > F
a transparent sheet or tube of regenerated cellulose used chiefly for packaging food and merchandise.
Nina refused to buy tomatoes packaged in cellophane.

cellulose

n
/ 'selyə.lōs /
L > F + EcF
any of several fibrous substances constituting the chief part of the cell walls of plants and of many fibrous products.
Most household sponges are made of cellulose.

cement

v
/ sə'ment /
L > F > E

join, unite, or cause to adhere by or as if by means of a binding element.
After Byron chose the tiles for his mosaic, he used a strong glue to cement them in place on the pattern.

cemetery

cenotaph

n
/ 'senə.taf /
Gk

a tomb or a monument erected in honor of a person whose body is elsewhere.
A magnificent cenotaph was erected outside the city of Troy.

ensorious

adj
/ sen'sōrēəs /
L

marked by or given to an inclination to discover and severely condemn especially social, moral, or artistic errors.
Helen was in one of her censorious moods at the reception this evening.

census

n
/ 'sen(t)səs /
L

an official enumeration of the population of a country, city, or other administrative district.
In the United States, a census is taken every ten years.

centaur

n
/ 'sen.tò(ə)r /
Gk > L

one of an ancient mythical Greek race imagined as men with the bodies of horses.
The estate garden included a marble statue of a centaur.

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centaury

n
/ 'sen.tōrē /
Gk
an Old World herb formerly used as a tonic.
Since ancient times centaury has had medicinal uses.

centennial

centimeter

n
/ 'sentə.mēdə(r) /
F
a unit of length equal to 1/100 meter.
Your little finger is about a centimeter wide at the top.

centipede

centrifugal

centrifuge

n
/ 'sentrə.fyūj /
L > F
a machine for whirling fluids rapidly to separate substances of different densities.
A centrifuge was used to separate the cream from the milk.

centripetal

adj
/ sen'tripəd'ɪl /
L + L + Ecf
moving, proceeding, or acting in a direction toward a center or axis.
Centripetal force serves to keep electrons moving around the nucleus of an atom.

century

n
/ 'sench(ə)rē /
L
a period of 100 years.
Mr. Davis asked each student to name what he or she thought was the most important invention of the past century.

cephalalgia

n
/ 'sefə'lalj(ē)ə /
Gk
pain inside the head : headache.
Mortimer's cephalalgia made him irritable and short-tempered.

cephalometry

cephalopod

n
/ 'sefələ.pəd /
Gk
any of a class of marine mollusks including the squids, cuttlefishes, and octopuses all having around the front of the head a group of elongated muscular arms usually furnished with prehensile suckers or hooks.
The squid is a ten-armed cephalopod.

Cepheid

n
/ 'sefēəd /
Gk name
one of a class of pulsating stars whose intrinsic light variations are very regular.
The apparent magnitude of a Cepheid can vary greatly in a month's time.

ceraceous

ceramic

adj
/ sə'ramik /
Gk
of or relating to the art of fashioning clay into useful or ornamental objects.
Luke's home is a showcase for ceramic objects he has created.

ceraunograph

n
/ sə'rōnə.graf /
Gk + Gk
an instrument for recording chronologically by pen the occurrence of thunder and lightning.
Marie set up a ceraunograph to monitor the late-summer storms.

cereal

n
/ 'sirēəl /
L
[has homonym: serial] a prepared foodstuff of grain (as oatmeal or cornflakes) used especially as a breakfast food.
David was eating his cereal when the school bus drove by his house.

cerecloth

cerise

cerium

cerography

n
/ sə'rägrəfē /
Gk
the art of making characters or designs in or with wax.
The maps in the old book were originally made by the process of cerography, in which beeswax was used.

certainty

n
/ 'sərt'ntē /
L > F > E
the quality or state of being objectively fixed, settled.
Science boasts the beauty of certainty.

cerumen

n
/ sə'rümən /
L
the yellow waxlike secretion from the glands of the external ear—called also “earwax.”
The doctor irrigated Ariel's ear to remove impacted cerumen.

cessation

n
/ se'sāshən /
L > F > E
a temporary or final ceasing or discontinuance (as of action).
The peal of the bell marked the cessation of the emergency preparedness drill.

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cetology

n
/ sĕ'täləjĕ /
L + Gk
[has near homonym: sitology] a branch of zoology dealing with the whales.
Many renowned scientists in the field of cetology assembled in Japan to discuss the recent beaching incidents.

chaffinch

n
/ 'cha(,)finch /
E
a common Old World bird often kept as a cage bird and having in the male a reddish breast plumage and a cheerful song.
Along the river path Janice spotted a chaffinch perched on the back of a bench.

chaffseed

chagrin

n
/ shə'grin /
F
vexation, disquietude, or distress of mind brought on by humiliation, hurt pride, disappointment, or consciousness of failure or error.
Pete tried to conceal his chagrin when his younger brother beat him at chess.

chalaza

chalice

chalicosis

n
/ .kalə'kōsəs /
Gk > L
a pulmonary disease occurring among stonecutters that is caused by inhalation of stone dust.
Chalicosis afflicted an alarming number of workers at the monument plant.

chamberlain

n
/ 'chāmbə(r)lān /
Gmc > F > E
a bedchamber attendant for royalty or nobility.
The grand council insisted that the chamberlain wake the king.

chamfer

v
/ 'cham(p)fə(r) /
L > F
cut off corners or edges (as of timber columns or beams).
Gordon decided to chamfer the ceiling beams of his cottage.

champagne

n
/ sham'pān /
L > F
[has homonym: champaign] a pale orange yellow to light grayish yellowish brown.
Of the colors of limousines available for hire, Ted and Kara preferred champagne.

champignon

n
/ sham'pinyən /
F
an edible fungus; especially : the common meadow mushroom.
At dinner, Denise had a stuffed champignon as an appetizer.

chancel

n
/ 'chan(t)səl /
L > F > E
the part of a church in which is located the altar or communion table, the pulpit, and the lectern and which is customarily on a higher level than the nave.
Fitting 75 choir members in the chancel will be an almost impossible task.

chancellor

n
/ 'chan(t)s(ə)lə(r) /
L > F > E
a university officer of high rank.
Professor Burns has all the requirements to be the next chancellor of Highland College.

chandelier

n
/ .shandə'li(ə)r /
L > F
a lighting fixture suspended from the ceiling and having two or more lights.
Dad finally got around to installing a dimmer switch for our chandelier.

chandelle

n
/ shan'del /
F
an abrupt climbing turn of an airplane.
Many of the passengers gasped when the pilot executed a chandelle.

changeable

chansonnette

chaos

chaotic

adj
/ kə'äd-ik /
Gk
being in a state of or marked by utter confusion completely wanting in order, sequence, organization, or predictable operation.
The course in time management did not help Brenda alter her chaotic lifestyle.

chapeau

n
/ sha'pō /
L > F
[Note: Plural form can be pronounced identically. In addition, word has near homonyms: chapon, shapo.] a hat.
Pierre doffed his chapeau when he entered the room.

chapel

n
/ 'chapəl /
L > F > E
a private place of worship.
The duke's funeral was held in the castle chapel.

chaplaincy

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chaplet

n
/ 'chaplət /
L > F > E
a garland or wreath to be worn on the head.
Rosalie gazed admiringly at the painting of the maiden in a scarlet gown with a chaplet of flowers on her head.

character

n
/ 'kærəktə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E
personality as represented or realized in fiction or drama.
The main character in the play is Joan of Arc.

characteristic

adj
/ 'kærəktə'ristik /
Gk
belonging to or especially typical of the essential nature of.
At last Meg looked at him, pushing her glasses in characteristic gesture.

charactonym

n
/ 'kærəktənim /
Gk > L > F > E
a name especially for a fictional character that suggests a distinctive trait of the character.
In his novel Breakfast at Tiffany's, Truman Capote gave his protagonist the charactonym "Holly Golightly."

charango

n
/ chə'raŋ(,)gō /
Sp
a small guitar of Spanish America with a body typically made of an animal shell.
Luisa plucked the melody of the song on the charango.

charcoal

n
/ 'chärkōl /
(F + E) > E
a dark-colored or black porous form of carbon used for fuel and various other mechanical, artistic, and chemical processes.
The only supplies Debbie needs for her drawing class are charcoal and a sketch pad.

chariot

charlatan

n
/ 'shärlätən /
It
a pretender to medical knowledge : quack.
A consumer group called the herbal potion vendor a "charlatan."

chartaceous

adj
/ kär'tāshəs /
Gk > L + Ecf
resembling paper : made of paper.
Andrew collected a handful of chartaceous dead leaves.

chartreuse

n
/ shär'trü:z /
L > F trademark
a variable color averaging a brilliant yellow green.
Elsie commented that the chartreuse vehicle looked like a huge dollop of wasabi.

chary

chasm

n
/ 'kazəm /
Gk > L
a deep opening : a narrow, deep steep-walled valley, gorge or canyon.
Earthquake tremors opened a great chasm in the valley.

chasmophyte

n
/ 'kazmə'fīt /
Gk
a plant that grows in the crevices of rocks.
There was just enough soil for the chasmophyte to grow in the chinks between rocks on the cliff.

chassepot

chassis

n
/ 'chasē /
L > F
the frame upon which is mounted the body (as of an automobile or airplane).
Gary popped his slot car's body back onto the chassis and set the vehicle back on the track.

chasuble

n
/ 'chazəbəl /
L > F
an outer ecclesiastical garment in the form of a sleeveless cloak or mantle that slips over the wearer's head but remains open at the sides.
The priest wore a white chasuble to celebrate Sunday mass.

chateaubriand

n
/ ,sha:tōbrē'än /
F name
a thick tenderloin steak.
The server commented that both the prime rib and the chateaubriand were excellent menu choices.

chatoyant

chattel

Chaucerian

adj
/ chō'sirēən /
E name
of, relating to, befitting, or resembling the English medieval writer Geoffrey Chaucer or his writings.
The old Chaucerian manuscript was unfortunately not on display when Hugh visited the museum.

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chauffeur

n
/ 'shōfə(r) /
F
[has homonyms: shofar, shophar]
one that is employed to operate a motor vehicle for the transportation of persons.
Henry hired a chauffeur to pick up his grandmother at the airport.

chaussure

n
/ shō'sù(ə)r /
L > F > E
footgear.
Before entering the mosque, all are required to remove their chaussure.

chautauqua

n
/ shə'tòkwə /
N Amer geog name
an institution of the late 19th and early 20th centuries that combined popular education with entertainment, often presented outdoors or in a tent.
Chautauqua declined with the advent of radio.

chauvinism

n
/ 'shōvə,nizəm /
F name
undue especially invidious partiality for a group or place to which one belongs or has belonged.
Chauvinism is alive and well in the school's alumni association.

chauvinistic

chayote

n
/ chä'yōdē /
Nahuatl > Sp
the rounded or pear-shaped fruit of a West Indian annual vine of the cucumber family that is widely cultivated as a vegetable.
Aaron went to three different grocery stores, but none carried the chayote that he needed for his recipe.

cheapskate

n
/ 'chēpskāt /
E + ON > E
a person unwilling to share expenses or give : miser.
Tom accused Cathy of being a cheapskate after learning that she recycled gifts.

cheilion

chemicalize

chemistry

chemotherapy

chenille

cheongsam

n
/ 'chòŋ.sām /
Chinese
a dress with a slit skirt and a mandarin collar.
Elizabeth's cheongsam had a teardrop-shaped opening below the collar closed by a single frog button.

chernozem

n
/ 'chernəz,yòm /
Russ
any of a group of dark-colored zonal soils with a deep rich humus horizon found in regions (as the grasslands of central North America) of temperate to cool climate.
The rich chernozem of Ukraine has helped it earn a reputation as "the breadbasket of Eastern Europe."

cheroot

n
/ shə'rüt /
Tamil
a cigar cut off square at both ends.
Josephine had to leave the room whenever her uncle lit up a cheroot.

chevelure

n
/ shevə'lù(ə)r /
L > F
a nebulous envelope (as around the nucleus of a comet).
The chevelure of Halley's comet was much dimmer than expected at its last appearance.

chianti

chicanery

n
/ shə'kān(ə)rē /
F
deception by artful subterfuge or misrepresentation : trickery.
The mayor was dogged by allegations of financial chicanery and links to organized crime.

chicle

chiclero

n
/ chi'kler(ə) /
Sp
a gatherer of latex from the sapodilla tree.
Toby interviewed a chiclero for the journal.

chieftain

chiffon

n
/ shi'fän /
F
a sheer plain-weave very lightweight clothing fabric usually given a dull soft finish.
The singer sauntered into the spotlight in a dress of white chiffon.

chiffonade

n
/ shifə'nād /
F
shredded or finely cut vegetables used in soup or salad dressing.
Lettuce and sorrel are often made into chiffonade to garnish soups.

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chignon

n
/ 'shēn.yän /
L > F

a smooth arrangement of hair worn at the back of the head especially at the nape of the neck.

To emphasize her long neck, Cecile combed her hair into a tight chignon.

Chihuahua

n
/ chə'wä(,)wä /

Mexican geog name

a very small round-headed large-eared short-coated dog reputed to antedate Aztec civilization.

A popular fast food restaurant chain has used a talking Chihuahua in its advertisements.

chilblains

n pl
/ 'chil.blānz /
E + E

instances of redness and swelling of toes, fingers, nose, or ears or sometimes cheeks in cold weather accompanied by itching and burning of skin.

The children stayed out in the snow too long and ended up suffering from chilblains.

chime

chimerical

adj
/ kī'merəkəl /
Gk + Ecff

[Note: Could be confused with chimeric and chimera.] unreal and existing only as the product of wild unrestrained imagination.

Many video games pit the player against chimerical monsters.

chimney

chimpanzee

n
/ chim.pan'zē /
Kongo

an anthropoid ape of equatorial Africa that is smaller and more arboreal than the gorilla.

The chimpanzee shows inventiveness in making and using tools.

chinchilla

n
/ chin'chilə /

Aimara or Quechua > Sp

a small rodent the size of a large squirrel having very soft fur of a pearly gray color and native to the mountains of Peru and Chile but now extensively bred in captivity.

The chinchilla was introduced into the United States in 1923.

chinook

n
/ shə'nūk /

Chehalis

a warm moist southwest wind of the Pacific coastal region from Oregon northward.

The mild temperatures are thanks to a chinook that rolls over the Canadian Rockies.

chiragra

n
/ kī'ragrə /

Gk

pain in the hand.

Aunt Molly's chiragra keeps her from writing many letters.

chiropodist

chisel

n
/ 'chizəl /
L? > F > E

a tool consisting of a metal bar with a sharpened edge at one end that is used for chipping, carving, or cutting into solid material and is often driven by a mallet.

With chisel and mallet, Fred started shaping the block of wood into a model.

chistera

chivalrous

adj
/ 'shivəlrəs /
F > E

marked by especial courtesy and high-minded disinterested consideration to women.

Chivalrous behaviors of previous generations are less common in today's atmosphere of equal rights for women.

chivalry

n
/ 'shivəlrē /

F > E

qualifications or character of the ideal knight of the age of chivalry according to the romantic tradition of courtesy, gallantry, and honor.

To the knights of the Round Table, chivalry was of primary importance.

chlorine

n
/ 'klōr.ēn /

Gk > L + Ecff

a common nonmetallic element that is used chiefly as a powerful bleaching, oxidizing, and disinfecting agent.

Samantha refused to swim on Thursday because someone put too much chlorine in the pool.

chocolate

adj
/ 'chäklət /

Nahuatl > Sp

of a warm light brown color approximating the color of fresh milk chocolate.

Eva plans to put her chocolate mink coat in storage until the animal rights activists are less vocal.

cholera

n
/ 'kälərə /

Gk > L

any of several diseases of man and domestic animals usually marked by severe gastrointestinal symptoms.

Cholera is a major public health concern in many tropical countries.

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choleric

adj
/ 'kälərik /
Gk > L > F > E
angry, irate, wrathful.
The vice-principal was ill suited to his job; he was impatient and choleric.

cholesterol

cholesterosis

n
/ kəˌlestə'rōsəs /
Gk > ISV
abnormal deposition of cholesterol in the blood.
Cholesterosis can often be moderated by changes in diet.

chonolith

n
/ 'kōnəˌlith /
Gk
an intrusive igneous rock mass of wholly irregular form.
Ages ago a huge chonolith formed at the base of the volcano as it erupted.

choose

choreographer

n
/ ˌkōrē'ägrəfə(r) /
Gk > F
one engaging in the composing and often the teaching of stage dancing.
Martha Graham was a celebrated choreographer of modern dance.

chortle

chortling

chorus

n
/ 'kōrəs /
Gk
[has homonym: koras] a group of dancers and usually singers supporting the featured players in a musical comedy or revue.
The chorus joined the principal singers in the musical's finale.

chough

chowder

n
/ 'chaüdə(r) /
L > F
a soup or stew of seafood (as clams or white-fleshed sea fishes) usually made with milk and containing salt pork or bacon, onions, and potatoes and sometimes other vegetables.
Dean and Susan went to the beach to collect clams for chowder.

chrematistic

adj
/ ˌkrēmə'tistik /
Gk
of, relating to, or occupied in the gaining of wealth.
Chrematistic industrialists cared little about the living conditions of their employees.

chrestomathy

n
/ kre'stäməthē /
Gk
a selection of passages from various authors compiled as an aid to learning a language.
At the end of each chapter of the textbook was a chrestomathy illustrating a particular rule of grammar.

chromatic

adj
/ krō'madik /
Gk
of or relating to color or color phenomena or sensations.
As Doris walked home during the shower, she admired the chromatic splendors of a huge rainbow.

chromium

n
/ 'krōmēəm /
Gk > F > L
a blue-white metallic element found naturally only in combination and used especially in alloys and in electroplating.
The car's bumpers were plated with chromium to make them shiny.

chromotrichial

chronic

adj
/ 'kränik /
Gk
marked by long duration and by frequent recurrence over a long time.
Clarence never looked forward to eating because he was troubled with chronic indigestion.

chronically

chronicle

chronological

chrysalis

n
/ 'krisəˌləs /
Sem > Gk > L
an insect (as a butterfly or moth) in the pupal stage of its development in which it is enclosed in a firm case.
Bob and Sam put the chrysalis in a dry container and kept it in the hope that a butterfly would later emerge.

chrysanthemum

n
/ krə'san(t)thəməm /
Gk > L
any plant or flower of a large genus of perennial herbs that are widely distributed in the Old World and that are cultivated for their showy often double and brightly colored flower heads.
Orlando's chrysanthemum won first prize at the flower show.

churlish

adj
/ 'chərlish /
E
difficult to work with or deal with.
Although he was a brilliant conductor, Toscanini could be churlish at times.

churn

v
/ 'chərn /
E
produce or be in violent agitation.
Landon's stomach will churn at the thought of public speaking.

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churrasco

n
/ chù'räskō /
Sp

beef broiled on a spit over an open fire or grilled under an oven flame.
At the barbecue the whole family feasted on the churrasco that Dad cooked.

chutney

n
/ 'chətnē /
Prakrit > Hindi

a condiment that has the consistency of jam and is made of acid fruits with added raisins, dates, and onions and seasoned to taste with spices and vinegar.
Spicy or sweet chutney is sometimes eaten with Indian meals containing curry.

chymous

adj
/ 'kīməs /
Gk + Ecf

of or relating to the semifluid mass of partly digested food resulting from the action of gastric juice.
One of the coroner's less pleasant tasks is testing chymous material.

ciborium

cicada

n
/ sô'kādä /
L

any insect of the family Cicadidae—called also “locust.”
The male cicada produces sound by vibrating miniature “drumheads” on the lower surface of its abdomen.

cicerone

n
/ .sisə'rōnē /
L > It

one who acts as a guide to or shows the sights to.
At the end of the tour, Maria praised her cicerone as being very knowledgeable and articulate.

Ciceronian

adj
/ .sisə'rōnēən /
L npe

resembling the Roman orator Cicero in oratorical or literary qualities.
Beulah's Ciceronian bombast about Destiny and Youth impressed the audience.

ciguatera

n
/ .sēgwə'terə /
Taino > Sp

poisoning caused by eating fish or mollusks with flesh toxic to man.
Although she contracted ciguatera in June, Constance could not return to work until November.

cilantro

n
/ sô'lantrō /
L > Sp

leaves of coriander used as a flavoring or garnish.
In Janet's opinion, the best part of the fresh salsa was the chopped cilantro.

cincture

v
/ 'sɪŋ(k)chə(r) /
L

girdle with or as if with a belt or band.
For the Halloween party, Evelina chose to cincture her gypsy costume with a spangled belt.

cinematographer

n
/ .sinəmə'tägrəfə(r) /
Gk
a motion-picture camera operator.
Darina won the award for outstanding cinematographer at last year's Montreal Film Festival.

cinereous

cinnabar

n
/ 'sinəbär /
Gk > L&F

artificial red mercuric sulfide used principally as a pigment.
The orange color of rubber gaskets is often created by the addition of cinnabar.

cinnamon

n
/ 'sinəmən /
? > Gk > L > F > E
a culinary spice prepared from the bark of certain tropical trees.
Akbar likes cinnamon in his hot chocolate.

cioppino

n
/ chə'pē.nō /
It
a dish of fish and shellfish cooked in tomato sauce and usually seasoned with wine, spices, and herbs.
After an afternoon at the beach, Beverly stopped at a local restaurant for cioppino and coffee.

circadian

circinate

adj
/ 'sərs'n.āt /
L
rounded in outline : characterized by or having the form of a flat coil of which the apex is the center.
The retracted tongue of a butterfly forms a circinate coil.

circuit

n
/ 'sərkət /
L > F
the complete path of an electric current.
The average electrical house circuit carries about 30 amperes.

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circuitous

adj
/ ˌsərˈkyüədəs /

L
being a circular or winding course :
indirect, roundabout.

*As we drove through the
mountains, the road took an
increasingly circuitous route.*

circular

circumambulate

v
/ ˌsərkəmˈambyələt /

L
wander about at leisure without
definite purpose or as a result of
indirection.

*Her first day in London, Connie
decided to circumambulate instead
of taking a guided tour.*

circumlocution

n
/ ˌsərkəmlōˈkyūshən /

L
the use of an unnecessarily large
number of words to express an
idea.

*The attorney's circumlocution
caused one of the jurors to doze off.*

circumstantial

adj
/ ˌsərkəmzˈtanchəl /

L + Ecf
belonging to, consisting of,
influenced by, or dependent on
conditions, facts, or events
accompanying others.

*The report contains strong
circumstantial evidence of
wrongdoing by the governor.*

cirrhosis

n
/ səˈrōsəs /

Gk + Lcf
[has homonym and near homonym:
soriasis and xerosis] a chronic
progressive disease of the liver.
*The damage caused by cirrhosis is
irreversible.*

cislunar

adj
/ sisˈlünə(r) /

L + L
of or relating to the space between
Earth and the Moon or the Moon's
orbit.

*The space enthusiast talked often
about the practicalities of setting
up a colony in the cislunar region.*

cistern

n
/ ˈsistə(r)n /

L > F > E
[has homonym: sistern] an
artificial reservoir or tank for
holding or storing water or other
liquids.

*Three weeks into the drought, the
farm's cistern ran dry.*

citadel

n
/ ˈsɪdədəl /

L > It > F
a fortress that commands a city
both for control and defense;
broadly : a strong fortress.

*The citadel had three separate
walls around it so that defenders
could retreat again and again to a
position of safety.*

citation

cite

citify

citizen

citronella
n
/ ˌsɪtrəˈnelə /

F > L
a yellowish essential oil with
lemonlike odor obtained from
either of two grasses and used
especially as an insect repellent.
*Candles containing citronella were
kept burning on the picnic table.*

civitas

n
/ ˈkēwē.tās /

L
a body of people constituting a
politically organized community.
*The concept of civitas remains
strong in many small towns.*

clairvoyant

clandestine

adj
/ klanˈdestən /

L
marked by, held in, or conducted
with secrecy and concealment.
*Mike and Sally made clandestine
preparations for their mom's
surprise birthday party.*

claque

n
/ ˈklak /

F
[has homonym: clack] an opera hat
with a collapsible crown.
*As the gentleman entered the opera
house, he doffed and flattened his
claque.*

claret

clarify

clarion

claustrophobe

claustrophobia

n
/ ˌklōstrəˈfōbiə /

Gk + Gk
abnormal dread of being in closed
or narrow spaces.

*Herman's claustrophobia keeps
him from flying on crowded
airplanes.*

clavichord

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clavicle

n
/ 'klavəkəl /
L

a bone in man situated just above the first rib on either side of the neck and having the form of a narrow elongated S.

Garth wore shoulder pads to football practice to protect his clavicle.

claviger

n
/ 'klavəjə(r) /
L

one that keeps the key or keys : custodian, warden.

Because she had forgotten her key, Marsha needed to locate the claviger, Mr. Carl, to open her classroom door.

clematis

n
/ 'klemədəs /
Gk

a plant of a genus of opposite-leaved slightly woody vines or erect herbs having elongate plumose styles.

The clematis is cultivated in North America for its attractive flowers.

clemency

n
/ 'klemənsē /
L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.]

tendency to be mild and compassionate.

Emma supposed she must say more before she would be entitled to Mr. Knightley's clemency.

clepsydra

n
/ 'klepsədrə /
Gk > L

an instrument designed to measure time by the flow of a quantity of water.

For his science project Kerry designed and built a clepsydra.

clerisy

n
/ 'klerəsē /
L > G

the well-educated or learned class : intelligentsia.

Many believe that laws should be readily understood by the general public, not solely by an elite clerisy.

clientele

n
/ .klīən'tel /
L > F

a body of patrons or customers.

Bill hopes to enlarge the clientele of the shoe store.

climatology

clinically

clinician

n
/ klə'nishən /
Gk > F

one who directs, is closely allied with, or works in or through a clinic or with clinical methods.

At the hospital a clinician drew a vial of Harry's blood to test for diabetes.

clinqant

adj
/ 'kliŋkənt /
F

glittering especially with gold decoration : showily ornate.

The theater lobby in its clinqant splendor cast dazzling reflections from every gleaming surface.

clique

n
/ 'klik /
F

[alternate pronunciation has homonym: cleek] a narrow exclusive circle or group of people.

Sofia didn't want to be part of the popular clique because she thought they were the most boring kids in school.

cloche

n
/ klōsh /
L > F

[alternate pronunciation has homonym: closh] a woman's small helmetlike hat usually with deep rounded crown and very narrow brim.

At the Thatchers' wedding Margaret looked smashing in her white ostrich-feather cloche.

clodhopper

n
/ 'kläd.häpə(r) /
E + E

a large heavy shoe.

The thump of Archie's clodhopper hitting the floor announced that he was going to bed.

cloistered

clothe

v
/ 'klōth /
E

put garments on.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton stressed that she did not propose petitioning the legislature to clothe every woman in male attire.

cloture

cloudy

adj
/ 'klaüdē /
E

made or consisting of fog, mist, or haze.

The mountain with its cloudy veil inspired Sven's painting.

clough

clowder

cluse

n
/ 'klüz /
L > F

[has homonym: clues] a narrow gorge cutting transversely through an otherwise continuous ridge.

Although Brian studied the trail map carefully, he found no mention of the cluse that barred his way.

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cnemial

adj

/ 'nēmēəl /

Gk + E

relating to the shin or shinbone.

Bud suffered a cnemial injury while quarterbacking in the game last night.

coacervate

n

/ ˌkōə'sərvət /

L

an aggregate of colloidal droplets held together by electrostatic attractive forces.

The chemist referred to the aggregation of liquid particles in an emulsion as a coacervate.

coadjutor

n

/ ˌkōə'jüdə(r) /

L > F > E

one who works together with another usually in a somewhat subordinate position : assistant.

Offended by being called a "lackey," Marcus prefers to be called a "coadjutor."

coagulate

v

/ kō'agyə.lāt /

L

curdle, clot.

Hemophiliacs lack a protein needed to help blood coagulate.

coalesce

v

/ ˌkōə'les /

L

unite by growth into one body.

The nervous host hoped that the tight little groups of guests would coalesce into a real party.

coalescence

n

/ ˌkōə'lesən(t)s /

L

a growing together or union in one body, form, or group.

Rain is the result of the coalescence of water droplets within a cloud.

coalification

coalition

n

/ ˌkōə'lishən /

L > F + Ecf

the temporary alliance of distinct parties, persons, or states to achieve a common purpose.

Representatives from a coalition of labor unions met with the multinational corporation's lawyers in an attempt to work out a new contract.

coaming

coaration

n

/ ˌkōə'rāshən /

L

cooperative tilling of soil as practiced by early village communities.

The villagers found that coaration was the most efficient system for cultivating the land.

coax

coccygeal

cochineal

n

/ ˌkächə.nēl /

Sp > F

a red dyestuff consisting of the dried bodies of the cochineal insect.

Before the introduction of synthetic dyes, cochineal was commonly used in textile production.

cochleariform

adj

/ ˌkōklē'a(a)rə.fōrm /

Gk > L + Ecf

shaped like a spoon.

Jacques theorized that the cochleariform bone was used in prehistoric times as a spoon.

cockatoo

cocoon

n

/ kə'kūn /

L > Prov > F

a silky or fibrous protective encasement created by a larval insect for shelter during the pupal stage.

Ricky found the cocoon of a moth clinging to a branch of an oak tree.

codeine

n

/ ˌkō(ɪ)dēn /

Gk + F

a crystalline alkaloid usually made from morphine but feebler in action.

The patient was given codeine to kill the pain.

codicil

n

/ ˌkädəsəl /

L > F

a legal instrument made subsequently to a will and modifying it in some respects.

Robert had his lawyer draw up a codicil to clarify a few ambiguities in his will.

codicology

coelostat

n

/ ˌsēləstat /

L > ISV + GK > ISV

a device consisting of a flat mirror that is turned slowly by a motor to reflect the Sun continuously into a fixed telescope.

Professor Merkle plans to use a coelostat to photograph the movements of planetary bodies.

coerce

coercion

coeval

adj

/ kō'ēvəl /

L + Ecf

of the same or equal age or antiquity.

Nearly the same in mass and brightness, the stars were thought to be coeval.

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coffee

cogent

cogitate

v
/ 'kägə'tāt /

L
ponder on or meditate upon.
Greta liked to cogitate on the tricks she could play on her big brother.

cogitating

cognizant

adj
/ 'käg'nəzənt /
L > F > E

aware : perceiving with a degree of controlled thought or observation.
Watching television commercials can make viewers more cognizant of fads and fashions.

cognomen

n
/ käg'nömən /
L

one's family name : surname.
The cognomen "Crane" fit the physical attributes of the tall, lank, long-armed, and shovel-footed Ichabod, whose whole frame most loosely hung together.

cognoscitive

adj
/ käg'näsədīv /
L + Ecf

having the power of knowing.
Lillian explained to her friends that her cognoscitive ability was innate, something like a sixth sense.

coherence

cohesion

coincidental

adj
/ kō'insə'dent'l /
L

characterized by the concurrence of events between which there is no causal connection.
It was purely coincidental that the electricity went off just as the guests began to arrive for the surprise party.

cointise

n
/ kwan'tēz /
F > E

a scarf worn on a lady's headdress or as a token of favor on a knight's helmet.
Sir Agravaine proudly displayed the bright red cointise.

colectomy

colic

n
/ 'kälík /
Gk > L > F > E

acute abdominal pain in man or animals.
Last spring Sam's horse had colic.

collabent

adj
/ kō'lābənt /
L

sunken or falling in : collapsing in the middle.
Orville poked the collabent anthill with a stick.

collaborator

n
/ kə'lābərədər(r) /
L
[has near homonym: collaborateur]
one that works jointly with others.
Sir William Gilbert was Arthur Sullivan's collaborator for many operettas.

collage

n
/ kə'lāzh /
Gk > LF + Fcf

an artistic composition of fragments of printed matter and other materials pasted on a picture surface.
Sabrina spent weeks finishing a large collage of a Paris street scene.

collate

v
/ kə'lāt /
L

arrange or assemble (paper, sheets, or forms) according to an orderly system.
Edith's favorite feature of the new copier was its ability to collate documents.

collateral

adj
/ kə'lādərəl /
L > F > E
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] placed or regarded as side by side : parallel, coordinate, or corresponding in position, order, time, or significance.
Mexico's Sierra Madre Oriental and Occidental mountain ranges are collateral.

college

n
/ 'kälīj /
L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an organized group of persons engaged in a common pursuit, having a common duty or role and sometimes a charter or special rights and privileges.
Pope John Paul II was 58 years old when the College of Cardinals elected him to lead the Roman Catholic Church.

collegial

colliery

n
/ 'käljərē /
E

[has near homonym: colory] a coal mine and the buildings connected with it.
The colliery around which the village was built closed when its reserves of coal were exhausted.

collocal

colloquial

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colloquy

n
/ 'käləkwe /
L

high-level serious discussion.
Listeners in the gallery must remain silent during the legislators' colloquy.

collusion

n
/ kə'lüzən /
L

secret agreement : secret cooperation for a fraudulent or deceitful purpose.
For acting in collusion with an enemy agent, the nuclear scientist was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

cologne

n
/ kə'lōn /
G name > F

a perfumed liquid composed of alcohol and certain aromatic oils.
The taxi driver sprayed expensive cologne in his cab every evening.

colonel

colonelcy

n
/ 'kərn'lsē /
L > It > F + Ecf

the office, rank, or commission of a colonel.
Nathan announced that he was being considered for a colonelcy in the infantry.

colonnade

colophon

n
/ 'käləfən /
Gk

an identifying mark, emblem, or device used by a printer or publisher sometimes on the title page, cover, shelfback, or jacket.
The publisher decided on the figure of a Russian wolfhound as its colophon.

coloratura

n
/ .kələ'rə'türə /
L > It

[Note: Could be confused with colorature.] the florid ornamentation in vocal music (as runs, trills, arpeggios).
Barry thinks that he would enjoy opera music more if it did not contain so much coloratura.

colossal

adj
/ kə'läsəl /
Gk > L > F
characterized by extremely great bulk, extent, force, strength, power, or effect.
The new stadium is a colossal building seating about a hundred thousand people.

column

comedienne

n
/ kə'mēdē'en /
Gk > F
[Note: Could be confused with comedian.] an actress who plays in dramas of light and amusing character and typically with a happy ending.
Lucille Ball was America's favorite comedienne during the 1950s.

comestible

comet

n
/ 'kämät /
Gk
a celestial body that consists of a fuzzy head usually surrounding a bright nucleus and that has an orbit varying in eccentricity.
The vaunted Kohoutek comet proved to be a great disappointment for stargazers.

comfort

commemorate

v
/ kə'memə'rāt /
L
call to remembrance as by speech, writing, or ceremony.
Every year on December seventh, ceremonies are held to commemorate those who died during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

commencement

commendable

adj
/ kə'mendəbəl /
L
worthy of praise.
Jim received several scholarships as a result of his commendable academic performance.

commensurable

commensurate

adj
/ kə'men(t)s(ə)rət /
L
corresponding in size, extent, amount, or degree : proportionate.
The want ad stated that salary would be commensurate with experience.

commentary

commercial

adj
/ kə'mərshəl /
L > F + Ecf
from the point of view of profit : having profit as the primary aim.
Leila was determined that her jewelry store would be a commercial success.

commercialize

v
/ kə'mərshə'līz /
L > F + Ecff
make use of for profit-seeking purposes.
The Hopi denounced those who would commercialize their religious dances and ceremonies.

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commination

n
/ ˌkämə'nāshən /
L

[Note: Could be confused with combination.] an instance or the action of announcing, warning of, or threatening punishment or vengeance.
The president ended his speech with a severe commination against the rebels.

comminute

commiseration

n
/ kə'mizə'rāshən /
L

the feeling or showing of sorrow or the expression of condolence for the wants or distresses of another.
Aunt Betsy sighed and moralized with true and steady commiseration.

commissary

commissional

commitment

n
/ kə'mitmənt /
L

the consignment or sentencing to confinement (as in a prison or mental hospital).
Tony's sentence included commitment to the state penitentiary for at least five years.

commodious

adj
/ kə'mōdēəs /
L > F > E + Lcf + Ecf
large or roomy and convenient.
Leo and his family rented a modest but commodious villa in Spain.

commorancy

communicate

commute

v
/ kə'myüt /
L

travel back and forth regularly or frequently.
For his work, Horst must commute daily between Philadelphia and New York.

comparatively

adv
/ kəm'parədīvlē /
L

nearly, approximately.
"Well, approximately yes," he replied; "that is, comparatively no."

compatible

compelled

v
/ kəm'peld /
L
forced by physical necessity.
Artie was compelled to hold his breath while swimming under water.

compendium

n
/ kəm'pendēəm /
L
a work treating in brief form the important features of a whole field of knowledge or subject matter category.
Eileen is writing a compendium of investment information for small company shareholders.

compensable

competency

n
/ 'kämpədənsē /
L
the quality or state of being functionally adequate.
The prospective student questioned the competency of the professor.

competently

compilation

complement

n
/ 'kämpləmənt /
L
a finishing or consummating part, integral, or component.
The earrings made the perfect complement to Anjali's ensemble.

comprehend

v
/ ˌkämp'rə'hend /
L > E
see the nature, significance, or meaning of.
Although he had read every word of Moby Dick, Stu failed to comprehend it.

compulsory

compunction

n
/ kəm'pəŋ(k)shən /
L
normal human regret, pity, or anxiety : remorse.
The children showed no compunction about having eaten the entire cake before dinner.

compunctionous

computernik

comradeliness

n
/ 'käm.radlēnəs /
L > Sp > F + Ecff
a spirit of friendly familiarity and goodwill.
The comradeliness of her shipmates put Mrs. Stein at ease.

comstockery

concatenate

v
/ kən'kadənāt /
L
link together : unite in a series or chain.
The professor told the class to write a program that would concatenate two or more files.

conceit

conceivable

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conceivably

concentrate

v
/ 'kän(t)sən.trät /
L + Ecf
bring all one's powers, faculties, or activities to bear : focus.
Anthony couldn't concentrate on the reading material because he was sick.

concentric

adj
/ kən'sentrik /
L
having a common center (as circles one within another).
Shane stared at the concentric circles of the dart board for so long that he seemed to be hypnotized.

concept

n
/ 'kän.sept /
L
thought, idea, notion.
Julie's concept of an entertaining movie was not the same as her younger brother's.

concertina

concerto

n
/ kən'cherd(,)ō /
L > It
a virtuoso piece for solo instrument or voice and orchestra that usually has three contrasting movements.
A violin concerto by Vivaldi concluded the orchestra's program.

concessible

concession

n
/ kən'seshən /
L
the admitting of a point claimed in argument; especially : the voluntary yielding of a disputable contention.
Concession was out of the question, but it was time to appear to forget that they had ever quarreled.

concessionary

conch

n
/ 'kängk /
Gk > L
[has homonym: conk] any of various large spiral-shelled marine gastropod mollusks.
Herbert recoiled when he saw conch on the menu of the Caribbean restaurant.

conchiform

adj
/ 'kängkə.förm /
Gk > L > ISV
shell-shaped.
Mom keeps her jewelry in a conchiform box.

conchitic

adj
/ käng'kidik /
Gk
composed of shells.
The professor brought in a piece of conchitic limestone so students could examine the mollusk shells in it.

concierge

n
/ kō'syerzh /
L > F
an attendant at the entrance of a building : doorkeeper.
The concierge took note of the mysterious man's comings and goings at the hotel.

conciergerie

conciliate

v
/ kən'silē.ät /
L
win over from a state of hostility or distrust : appease.
The new king hoped to conciliate his subjects by doing them all the good in his power.

concinuity

n
/ kən'sinədē /
L
harmony or fitness in the adaptation of parts to a whole or to each other.
After reading through the writer's first draft, the editor praised the writer for her consistency and concinuity of style.

conclamant

concoct

v
/ kən'käkt /
L
put together : devise, fabricate.
Mom overheard the boys concoct a story to explain the broken window.

concoction

concomitant

adj
/ kən'kämədənt /
L
occurring along with or at the same time as and with or without causal relationship.
Mr. Simmons noted that his son's poor grades in algebra were concomitant with the start of the basketball season.

concordat

n
/ kən'kōr.dat /
L > F
a compact between a national government and a religious group establishing terms of agreement concerning matters of mutual interest.
Bonaparte and Pope Pius VII signed a concordat that the state of France should protect and acknowledge the Roman Catholic Church.

concrecence

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

concurrency

n
/ kən'kərən(t)s /

L
[has homonym: concurrents]
agreement in opinion.
Frank agreed to it, but with so quiet a "Yes," as inclined Emma almost to doubt his real concurrence.

concussion

n
/ kən'kəshən /

L
a smart or hard knock, blow, or collision; also : the shock of such a blow.
When Amy slipped on the ice she nearly suffered a concussion.

condemn

v
/ kən'dem /

L
[has near homonym: contemn]
pronounce as ill-advised, reprehensible, wrong, or evil.
Often custom justifies an action that years later it will condemn.

condescended

v
/ ˌkændə'sendəd /

L > F > E + EcF
stooped or bent to action or speech less formal or dignified than is customary in one's social rank.
The rajah condescended to seat himself on a rug under the tree.

condign

condiment

n
/ ˌkændəmənt /

L > F > E
something usually pungent, acid, salty, or spicy added to or served with food to enhance its flavor or to give added flavor : seasoning.
Mustard is the condiment usually served on hot pastrami sandwiches.

condolence

condor

n
/ ˈkändó(ə)r /

Quechua > Sp
a very large American vulture having the head and neck bare and being one of the largest and most powerful of flying birds.
Of all the birds of prey at the zoo, the Andean condor is Alison's favorite.

conductor

conduit

n
/ ˈkän(ˌ)düət /
F > E

a natural or artificial channel through which water or other fluid passes or is conveyed.
Grandfather showed Logan the conduit that irrigated his large garden.

confidential

confetti

n pl
/ kən'fedē /
L > It

tiny colored paper disks or paper streamers so made as to scatter readily when thrown.
Ticker tape and confetti swirled like snow over the crowded street.

confiscate

v
/ ˈkänfə.skāt /

L
seize by or as if by public authority.
After a two-hour wait, the border guard decided not to confiscate Brenda's antique necklace.

conflagration

n
/ ˌkänflə'grāshən /

L
a large disastrous fire involving numerous buildings.
Sixty fire trucks were called in to battle the conflagration.

confluence

n
/ ˈkän.flüən(t)s /

L
the place of meeting of two streams.
Martina agreed to meet Lynn at the confluence of Rogers Creek and the Little Red River.

confusion

conga

n
/ ˈkängə /

African geog name
a Cuban dance of African origin involving three steps followed by a kick and performed by a group in single file.
When he was a child, Jimmy loved to dance the conga.

congeal

congenial

adj
/ kən'jēnyəl /

L
characterized by friendly sociability.
Paul and Linda appreciated the restaurant's congenial atmosphere.

congenital

conglob

v
/ kən'glōb /

L
form into a ball.
Time-lapse photos showed how clouds conglob.

conglomerate

n
/ kən'gläm(ə)rət /

L
a mixture gathered from various sources : a composite mass.
Father called his specialty "Irish stew," but it was really more like a conglomerate of indeterminate substances.

congruent

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coniferous

adj
/ kō'nif(ə)rəs /
(Gk + L) > L + Ecf
bearing cones.
A covering of coniferous trees keeps some mountains green all winter.

conjugal

conjunctiva

Connecticut

adj
/ kə'nedəkət /
Mohican? > American geog name
of or from the state of Connecticut.
Ichabod Crane is a famous character of Connecticut lore.

connived

connivery

n
/ kə'niv(ə)rē /
L + Ecf
the practice of cooperating secretly, especially in a wrongful act.
Allen suspects Brenda of connivery in the mysterious sale of the mansion.

connoisseur

n
/ .känə'sü(ə)r /
L > F
one who is an expert in a subject; especially : one who understands the details, technique, or principles of an art and is competent to act as a critical judge.
The connoisseur who judged the culinary creations is a chef at a five-star restaurant.

connote

v
/ kə'nōt /
L
arouse as an inseparably associated idea or feeling : imply, suggest.
Eli wonders if sending a dozen long-stemmed roses to Gretchen might connote what he finds difficult to say.

connubial

adj
/ kə'n(y)übēəl /
L
of or relating to marriage or the marriage state.
Susan and Stuart spent their honeymoon in a state of connubial contentment.

conqueror

conquian

conquistador

n
/ kón'k(w)ēstədó(ə)r /
L > Sp
conqueror; specifically : any one of the leaders in the Spanish conquest of America, especially of Mexico and Peru, in the 16th century.
Mr. Sanchez found the helmet of a conquistador deep in the canyon.

consanguinity

n
/ .känsaŋ'gwinədə /
L
the quality or state of being related by blood.
Consanguinity has historically been of great importance in determining who sits on the various thrones of Europe.

conscience

n
/ 'känchən(t)s /
L
the sense of right or wrong within the individual.
In this country everyone has a right to exercise individual conscience and judgment on all matters of public interest.

conscientious

adj
/ .känchē'enchəs /
L
governed by the dictates of the sense of right or wrong : honest, scrupulous.
Janice was very conscientious about telling the truth.

consciousness

n
/ 'känchəsənəs /
L + Ecf
intuitively perceived knowledge of something in one's inner self.
With a sort of sneering consciousness, Tyler admitted that he had nothing to say that would be entertaining to anyone.

consecrate

v
/ 'känsä.krāt /
L
make or declare sacred or holy.
The bishop will consecrate the new chapel next Sunday.

consecutive

consenescence

consensus

n
/ kən'sen(t)səs /
L
collective opinion : the judgment arrived at by most of those concerned.
The Booster Club's consensus was that popcorn would sell better than cotton candy.

consentaneous

conservatory

considerable

consignment

consistory

consomme

consortium

n
/ kən'sórsh(ə)əm /
L
[has near homonym: consortion]
an organization of persons having a common interest.
Several organizations joined the consortium that fosters inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of society.

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conspiracy

n
/ kənz'pirəsē /

L
an illegal, treasonable, or treacherous plan to harm or destroy another person, group, or entity.
The commissioner charged that the entire industry was in conspiracy to keep out competition.

constabulary

n
/ kənz'tabyə.lerē /

L
a body of policemen (as of a particular town, district, country).
The local constabulary was out in force at the Halloween celebration.

constellation

n
/ .kənz'tə'lāshən /

L
any one of 88 arbitrary configurations of stars or an area of the celestial sphere covering one of these configurations.
Rani found it difficult to see a scale in the constellation Libra.

constituent

constitution

constrain

construe

v
/ kənz'trü /

L > E
explain the sense or intention of often to one's own satisfaction or according to or in conformity with a given set of circumstances.
Paul tried to construe the situation in the best possible light.

consuetude

n
/ 'kän(t)swə.t(y)üd /

L
social usage : custom, habit.
The practice of men opening doors for women has fallen from consuetude.

consummate

adj
/ 'kän(t)səmôt /

L
of the very highest or finest : supremely excellent.
Marie was worried that her son would ruin the party, but he behaved like a consummate gentleman.

contagious

container

contemplate

v
/ 'kântəm.plāt /

L
carefully and intently think about something : ponder.
The board of directors will contemplate the proposal from the rival company.

contemporaneous

contemptible

adj
/ kən'tem(p)təbəl /

L
meriting scorn and condemnation as paltry, mean, base, or vile.
Though most people viewed the accused man as a contemptible being, Sister Agatha pitied him and tried to reach out to him.

contiguous

adj
/ kən'tigyəwəs /

L
touching or connected throughout.
Mr. Wallace understands but resents higher shipping costs for U.S. customers living in states outside the contiguous 48.

contingencies

n pl
/ kən'tinjənsēz /

L
possible future events or conditions or unforeseen occurrences that may necessitate special measures.
Setting the date of the family reunion involved considering the contingencies and conveniences of about 100 people.

continuum

contour

contraband

n
/ 'käntrə.band /

L > It
goods or merchandise the importation, exportation, or sometimes possession of which is forbidden.
On the teacher's desk sat the contraband taken from students during the day.

contrabass

contrapuntal

adj
/ .käntrə'pənt'l /

It
of, relating to, or according to the rules of melodic part writing.
J. S. Bach was a master of contrapuntal melody.

contrariety

n
/ .käntrə'riədē /

L
the quality or state of being in opposition or disagreement.
Amanda was becoming impatient with her two-year-old son's contrariety.

contretemps

n
/ kō'trətä /

F + L > F
an inopportune embarrassing occurrence : mishap, mischance.
Jeremy moved steadily from blunder to contretemps to embarrassment.

contrition

n
/ kən'trishən /

L
consciousness of guilt or sin giving rise to humility and sorrow.
In the warmth of true contrition she would call upon Miss Bates the very next morning, and it should be the beginning, on her side, of a regular, equal, kindly relationship.

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controversy

n
/ 'käntrəvərsē /
L

a difference marked especially by the expression of opposing views : dispute.

Most television talk shows seem more interested in creating controversy than in trying to resolve it.

contumacious

contumacy

n
/ kən't(y)üməsē /
L > E

stubborn resistance to authority; specifically : willful contempt of court.

In the Middle Ages contumacy could be punished by excommunication and the loss of civil rights.

contusion

n
/ kən't(y)üzhən /
L

a bruise caused by external violence.

The contusion on Wayne's shoulder began to fade nine days after his accident.

conundrums

n pl
/ kə'nəndrəmz /

unknown
riddles based on some fanciful or fantastic resemblance between things quite unlike and forming a puzzling question whose answer is or involves a pun.

Mr. Elton was invited to contribute any really good conundrums to Emma's collection of riddles of every sort.

convalescence

convection

n
/ kən'vekshən /
L

the circulatory motion that occurs in a fluid at a nonuniform temperature owing to the variation of its density and the action of gravity.

In the tropics, strong convection draws warm air high into the sky.

convene

convenience

convergent

adj
/ kən'vərjənt /
L

tending to move toward one point or each other.

The crowds leaving the stadium became convergent on their way to the subway entrance.

conversant

adj
/ kən'vərsənt /
L

familiar or acquainted by use or study : well-informed.

Sabendra is conversant in the latest movements in European art.

convertible

n
/ kən'vərdəbəl /
L

an automobile having a top that may be folded back, lowered, or removed.

Thelma and Louise enjoyed cruising the highway in Louise's convertible.

conveyance

convivial

adj
/ kən'vivēəl /
L

fond of good company and festivity.

The convivial lodge owners enjoyed socializing with their guests.

convivially

adv
/ kən'vivēəlē /
L + EcF

in a manner that is fond of good company and festivity.

Though the hostess felt ill and wanted to leave the party, she behaved convivially.

convolute

convoy

coordinate

adj
/ kō'örd(°)nət /
L

equal in rank, quality, or significance.

The United States attempts to keep the branches of government coordinate.

coossify

Copernican

adj
/ kō'pərnəkən /
Pol name

of, relating to, or being the astronomic system of Copernicus in which the Sun is taken as the center of the planets.

The Copernican view of the solar system was originally regarded as heretical.

copious

adj
/ 'kōpēəs /
L

present in large quantity : plentiful, abundant, lavish.

Patrick took copious notes during the lecture.

copyright

coquetry

n
/ 'kōkətrē /
F

effort or action intended to attract admiration, gallantry, or affection without responsive feeling.

The princess used coquetry as a tool as a carpenter uses a hammer.

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coquettishly

coracle

n
/ 'kɔrəkəl /
W
a small boat made by covering a wicker frame with hide or leather.
Ted rowed an old coracle to the small island in the lake.

cordially

cordillera

n
/ ,kɔ(r)dɪ'lerə /
L > Sp
a group of mountain ranges forming a mountain system of great linear extent.
The Andean cordillera extends along the west coast of South America.

corduroy

n
/ 'kɔ(r)də.rɔi /
F > E name
a cut-pile fabric with vertical ribs or wales, usually made of cotton.
His worn trousers of corduroy were three inches too short.

coriander

n
/ ,kɔrē'andə(r) /
L
an Old World herb whose ripened dried fruit is used for flavoring especially of pickles, curries, confectioneries, and liquor.
Jane almost always uses coriander to season her stew.

cormorant

n
/ 'kɔrm(ə)rənt /
L > F > E
any of various dark-colored web-footed seabirds.
In parts of eastern Asia the cormorant is domesticated by fishermen.

cornea

cornice

n
/ 'kɔrnəs /
Gk > L > It > F
the typically molded and projecting horizontal member that crowns an architectural composition.
Here and there among the ruins of the great palace, a cornice or part of a column remained intact.

corniculate

adj
/ kɔ(r)'nikyələt /
L
having horns or small horn-shaped processes.
In some species of animals, only the males are corniculate.

cornucopia

n
/ ,kɔ(r)n(y)ə'kɔpēə /
L
a curved goat's horn from the mouth of which fruit and ears of corn overflow, emblematic of abundance—called also “horn of plenty.”
Robert placed various kinds of rolls in the basket shaped like a cornucopia and set it in the center of the table.

corollary

n
/ 'kɔrə.lerē /
L
a proposition that follows upon one just demonstrated and that requires no additional proof.
After proving the theorem, Mr. Barnes showed how the corollary logically followed.

coronach

n
/ 'kɔrənək /
ScGael&IrGael
a lamentation for the dead as sung or played on the bagpipes in Scotland and Ireland : dirge.
The mournful coronach could be heard throughout the valley.

coronary

adj
/ 'kɔrənərē /
L
of or involving the blood vessels of the heart; broadly : of or relating to the heart.
A blockage in a coronary artery caused Tom's heart attack.

coroner

n
/ 'kɔrənə(r) /
L > F > AF > E
a public officer whose principal duty is to inquire into the cause of any death which there is reason to suppose is not due to natural causes.
The job of coroner combines elements of medicine and detective work.

coronet

n
/ ,kɔrə'net /
Gk > L > F
a small or lesser crown usually signifying a high rank below that of a sovereign.
The princess happily let her young cousin try on the coronet.

corporeal

adj
/ kɔ(r)'pɔrēəl /
L
having, consisting of, or relating to a physical material body : not spiritual.
It's very difficult for Mrs. O'Connor to think in a corporeal way.

corpulent

adj
/ 'kɔ(r)pyələnt /
L
having a large bulky body.
Mike and Edie laughed at the corpulent gorilla as it stuffed bananas into its mouth.

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corpuscle

n
/ 'kò(r).pəsəl /

L
a living cell that is somewhat isolated and not aggregated into continuous tissues.
In the science fiction movie, a white corpuscle attacked the tiny ship as it traveled through the bloodstream.

corral

v
/ kə'ral /

L > Sp
[has homonym: chorale] round up and drive (livestock) into a pen.
With the help of his dog, Jerry managed to corral the herd.

corralled

correspond

v
/ .kòrə'spænd /

L
communicate with a person by exchange of letters.
Mason and his friends correspond frequently by e-mail.

corridor

corroborate

v
/ kə'rəbərāt /

L
provide evidence of the truth of : confirm.
Without a witness to corroborate his alibi, Zorba remained the chief suspect in the robbery case.

corrugated

adj
/ 'kòrə.gātəd /

L
having a ridged or furrowed surface.
The corrugated sand dune looked like a work of art.

corruptible

corsage

corsair

cortisone

coruscate

v
/ 'kòrə.skāt /

L
gleam with intermittent flashes : glitter, sparkle.
The flickering light from Trudy's lantern made the cave walls coruscate.

corybantic

adj
/ .kòrə'bantik /

Gk
like or in the spirit of the attendants or priests of the nature goddess Cybele noted for wildly emotional processions and rites; specifically : wild, frenzied.
At the rock concert many fans engaged in corybantic dancing.

corymb

n
/ 'kò.rim(b) /

Gk > L > F
a flower cluster in which the flower stalks arise at different levels on the main axis and reach about the same height, forming a somewhat flat-topped cluster.
Each corymb of Queen Anne's lace by the porch has a bumblebee on it.

cosmogenesis

n
/ .kəzmō'jenəsəs /

Gk
a part of the science of astronomy that deals with the origin and development of the universe.
Contrary to his expectations, Lionel's study of cosmogenesis made him more religious.

cosmopolite

n
/ kəz'mäpə.līt /

Gk
one that is at home in every country.
Although she considered herself a cosmopolite, Sharon still couldn't get used to driving on the left side of the road.

coterie

n
/ 'kōdərə /

F
an intimate often exclusive group of persons having a binding common interest or purpose : clique.
Phyllis and her coterie arrived fashionably late for the gallery opening.

coterminous

cotyledon

n
/ .käd'lēdən /

Gk > L
the first leaf or one of the first pair or whorl of leaves developed by the embryo in seed plants and in ferns and related plants.
Mr. Pittman drew a fern cotyledon on the blackboard.

couchant

adj
/ 'kauchənt /

F
lying down with the head up.
The coat of arms depicted a couchant lion.

cough

coulisse

n
/ kü'lēs /

F
a side scene of the stage in a theater or the space between the side scenes.
The path depicted in the coulisse led the eyes to the center stage.

couloir

n
/ kül'wär /

L > F
a deep gorge.
Lance hiked along the stream at the bottom of the couloir.

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counsel

n
/ 'kaʊn(t)səl /
L > F > E

[has homonym: council] advice, direction.

Mr. Knightley shared unpleasant truths with Emma and proved himself her friend by very faithful counsel.

countenance

n
/ 'kaʊnt(ə)nən(t)s /
L > F > E

the expressive appearance of one's face : look, expression.

The department store Santa's countenance set Loretta at ease.

counterfeit

countermand

countervail

v
/ 'kaʊntər.vāl /
L > F > E

oppose or exert force against : counteract.

Miles built a low wall around his sloping garden to countervail erosion.

countian

coup

n
/ 'kü /
F

a sudden decisive exercise of localized or concentrated force unseating the personnel of a government.

The dictator was ousted by a military coup.

coupon

courier

n
/ 'kʊrɪə(r) /
L > It > F

[has homonym: currier] one who carries messages, news, or information either with urgent haste or in accordance with a regular schedule.

Jaime worked as a courier after school to earn money for a new car.

courlan

courteously

cousin

couture

n
/ kü'tü(ə)r /
L > F

the business of designing, making, and selling fashionable expensive custom-made women's clothing.

At the Paris fashion shows Carolyn talked to several young designers who were just starting out in couture.

covenant

n
/ 'kəvənənt /
L > F > E

an agreement that is usually formal, solemn, and intended as binding.

The book of Genesis describes Noah's covenant with God that saved his family from the Great Flood.

covey

n
/ 'kəvɛ /
L > F > E

a small flock or number of birds of the same kind—used typically of partridges and certain related birds.

The hunter aimed at the covey of quail flying over the pasture.

coyote

n
/ ki'tɒd(ɪ) /
Nahuatl > Sp

a small wolf native to the western part of North America and well established northward in Alaska and eastward at least as far as New York state.

The lone male coyote kept to the edges of the pack for many days before being accepted into the group.

cozened

v
/ 'kəzənd /
L > It

obtained by artful wheedling or tricky dishonesty.

The crooked lawyer cozened the life's savings of several of his clients.

craniectomy

craquelure

crassamentum

credential

credenza

n
/ krə'denzə /
L > It

a sideboard, buffet, or bookcase without legs whose base rests flat on the floor.

Robin's CDs are on the second shelf of the credenza.

credulity

n
/ crə'd(ɪ)ʊlədɛ /
L

belief or readiness of belief especially on slight or uncertain evidence.

Marco's personality was a strange mixture of shrewdness and credulity.

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creekology

n
/ krē'käləjē /
ON > E + Gk
any method of searching for oil based on a limited knowledge of geology and practiced especially by wildcat prospectors.
Doug, who was known for his nose for oil, attributed his success to creekology.

creel

crenate

adj
/ 'krē.nāt /
L
having the margin cut into rounded scallops.
The crenate leaves on Freda's specimen gave her a clue as to its classification.

creophagy

n
/ krē'äfəjē /
Gk
the use of flesh as food.
After visiting a slaughterhouse, Stephanie was repulsed by creophagy and became a vegetarian.

crepitant

adj
/ 'krepədənt /
L
having or making a crackling sound : crackling.
The boys rolled and tumbled in the pile of crepitant leaves.

crepuscular

adj
/ krə'pəsk(y)ələ(r) /
L + Ecf
active in the twilight.
Darnel blurted out "firefly" when the teacher asked for an example of a crepuscular insect.

crescendo

n
/ krə'shen(,)dō /
L > It
the peak of a gradual increase (as in physical or emotional force or intensity).
As soon as his boat sailed out of the harbor, Angus realized that the wind was nearing a crescendo.

crescent

n
/ 'kresənt /
L > F > E
the shape or figure defined by a convex and a concave edge.
The moon's silvery crescent disappeared as the eclipse reached totality.

crescive

adj
/ 'kresiv /
L
increasing, growing.
The crecive vines traveled up the trellis.

crescograph

n
/ 'kreskəgraf /
L + Ecf + Gk
an instrument for making perceptible the growth of plants.
The crescograph can magnify small plant movements as much as ten million times.

cretonne

crewelwork

cribbage

n
/ 'kribij /
E
a card game for two and sometimes three or four players each of whom is dealt six cards one or two of which are discarded before play to form an extra hand for the dealer.
Kathy and her cousins are ferociously competitive when they play cribbage.

cribral

adj
/ 'kribrəl /
L
of or relating to a sieve : perforated.
The mouths of certain whales contain a cribral structure for collecting food.

cricetid

n
/ krə'sēdəd /
Slav > L
any of a family of small rodents including lemmings, voles, and hamsters.
The hamster is an example of a cricetid that is kept as a pet.

crimson

n
/ 'krimzən /
Ar > Sp > E
any of several deep or vivid reds or purplish reds of rather indefinite range.
The sun was dropping slowly from sight, and stripes of purple and orange and crimson and gold reached upward from the distant hills.

crinoline

n
/ 'krin'lən /
L > It > F
a full stiff skirt or underskirt.
The crinoline that Andrea wore in the pageant made her knees itch.

criophore

crocheting

v
/ krō'shāɪŋ /
F + Ecf
working with needlework consisting of the interlocking of looped stitches formed with a single thread and a hooked needle.
Marie sat nearby crocheting and tried to take a friendly interest in the game.

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cromlech

n
/ 'kräm.lek /
W

a circle of monoliths usually enclosing a dolmen or mound.
Inspired by their study of Stonehenge, Mr. Akala's fifth-grade class built a cromlech on the playground.

cronyism

n
/ 'krōnē.izəm /
Gk + Ecf

partiality to familiar friends especially as evidenced in the appointing of political hangers-on to office without due regard for their qualifications.
When the mayor appointed his best friend head of the police department, he was accused of cronyism.

croquet

n
/ krō'kā /
F

a game in which players drive wooden balls with mallets through a series of wickets set out on a lawn in a particular order.
Erica and her friends played croquet in the churchyard.

crotchety

adj
/ 'krächədē /
F > E

subject to whims, crankiness, or ill temper.
Not getting enough sleep usually makes Trudy crotchety in the morning.

croup

n
/ 'krüp /
imit

a spasmodic laryngitis in infants and children characterized by episodes of difficult breathing and hoarse cough.
Mrs. Dowling hoped Everett's sore throat wouldn't develop into croup.

croupier

n
/ 'krüpē.ā /
F

an employee of a gambling casino who watches, collects, and pays bets and assists the dealer in charge of the table.
The croupier tossed two more \$100 chips onto Daphne's growing pile.

croustade

n
/ krü'stād /
Prov > F

a crisp shell (as of toasted or fried bread) in which to serve food.
Louise didn't know whether or not she was supposed to eat the croustade in which her salad was served.

crucial

crucible

n
/ 'krüsəbəl /
L

a vessel or melting pot that is used for melting and calcining a substance (as metal and ore) which requires a high degree of heat.
Clyde began the experiment by dumping the collected samples into a crucible.

cruciferous

adj
/ krü'sif(ə)rəs /
L + Ecff

belonging to or having the characteristics of the mustards or related plants.
Cruciferous vegetables are an excellent source of beta carotene.

cruller

n
/ 'krələ(r) /
D

a small sweet cake made of a rich egg batter formed into twisted strips and fried brown in deep fat.
Olive couldn't decide whether to order a cruller or an éclair with her coffee.

Crusade

n
/ krü'sād /
F

an expedition undertaken for a declared religious purpose.
The first Crusade to reclaim Jerusalem for Christians began in 1096.

crustacean

n
/ ,krə'stāshən /
L

an animal belonging to a large class of Arthropoda comprising the majority of the marine or freshwater arthropods (as lobsters, shrimps, crabs, and barnacles).
Our team's mascot is Crusty the Crustacean, a ten-pound Maine lobster.

cryology

n
/ kri'äləjē /
Gk

the study of snow and ice.
In cryology, students learn how glaciers grow, shrink, advance, and retreat.

cryophilic

cryophorus

n
/ ,kri'äfərəs /
Gk > L

an instrument that illustrates the freezing of water by its own evaporation.
The cryophorus was made of glass in the form of a tube connecting two globes partially filled with liquid.

cryptic

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cryptographer

n
/ krip'tägräfə(r) /
Gk
one that practices the art of preparing or reading messages in a form intended to prevent their being read by those not privy to secrets of the form.
An inveterate cryptographer, Rico enjoys searching ordinary writing samples for hidden messages.

cryptonym

n
/ 'kriptənim /
Gk
a secret name.
Each person in our club was given a cryptonym known only to the other members.

crystal

adj
/ 'kristəl /
Gk
consisting of or resembling quartz that is transparent or nearly so and that is either colorless or only slightly tinged.
Once inside, they hurried down a long hallway, which glittered with crystal chandeliers.

crystosphere

n
/ 'kristəsfein /
Gk
a buried sheet of ice under the tundra of North America formed by the freezing of spring water.
The geologist measured the thickness of the crystosphere.

cubic

adj
/ 'kyübik /
Gk > L > F
relating to a crystal form that consists of six similar, mutually perpendicular faces.
Gold crystallizes in a cubic structure with a density of 19.4 grams per cubic centimeter.

cucaracha

n
/ .kükä'rächə /
Mexican song
a Mexican ballroom and nightclub dance.
Determined to win the state ballroom dance title, Joan and Marlon practiced their cucaracha for weeks.

cuchifrito

n
/ .küchi'frədō /
Sp
a deep-fried cube of pork.
When Lane wasn't looking, Stephanie popped a cuchifrito into the dog's mouth.

cuckoo

n
/ 'kü(,)kü /
E imitative
[has homonym: kuku] a familiar European bird that is noted for its characteristic two-syllabled whistle and for its habit of laying its eggs in the nests of other birds for them to hatch.
The cuckoo in the aviary sounded just like Grandmother's clock.

cucurbit

n
/ kyü'kərbät /
L > F > E
(Note: Dictionary designates as attributive.) a many-seeded fleshy fruit plant with a hard rind (such as squashes, pumpkins, and certain gourds).
The cucurbit is probably put to a wider variety of uses than is any other fruit family.

cudgel

n
/ 'kəjəl /
E
a short heavy stick used as an instrument for punishment or a weapon.
A nightstick is one kind of cudgel.

cuirass

culgee

n
/ 'kəl.gē /
Per > Hindi
a jeweled plume worn in India on the turban.
Professor Singh happily loaned his grandfather's culgee to the museum.

culinary

adj
/ 'kələnərē /
L
of or relating to the kitchen or cookery.
The early colonists used herbs for both culinary and medicinal purposes.

culminant

adj
/ 'kəlmənənt /
L
being at greatest altitude or on the meridian.
The Sun casts the shortest shadows when it is culminant.

culotte

culpable

adj
/ 'kəlpəbəl /
L
meriting condemnation or censure especially as criminal or as conducive to accident, loss, or disaster.
The property owner was guilty of culpable negligence in the accident involving an uncovered manhole.

culprit

n
/ 'kəlpɾət /
L > AF
one who is guilty of a crime or other wrongdoing.
The detectives devised a plan to capture the culprit.

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cultivation

n
/ ˌkʌltəˈvāshən /
L

the art or process of farming.
Frigid weather conditions and barren soil make cultivation of tundra almost impossible.

culturati

n pl
/ ˌkʌlchəˈrād(ɪ) /
Gk + Lcf

people intensely interested in the artistic and intellectual aspects or content of human activity.
The scheduled performance by “The Three Tenors” generated excitement among the city’s culturati.

cumbersome

adj
/ ˈkʌmbə(r)səm /
F > E + Ecf

of an excessive size, shape, or length : unwieldy.
Emrick dragged his cumbersome duffel bag by its strap.

cumbrous

adj
/ ˈkʌmbɹəs /
E

giving trouble : vexatious.
A swarm of cumbrous gnats followed the hikers all day long.

cummerbund

n
/ ˈkʌmə(r).bʌnd /
Per > Hindi

a waistband worn in place of a vest with men’s dress clothes.
The bride wanted the groom’s cummerbund to match the pale pink of her flowers.

cumulative

cuneiform

adj
/ kyüˈnēə.fōrm /
L + L

written in characters composed of strokes having the form of a wedge or arrowhead.
The cuneiform Code of Hammurabi is the most complete record of ancient Babylonian law in existence.

cupboard

cupressineous

adj
/ ˌk(y)üprəˈsinēəs /
Gk > L + Ecf

relating to or resembling the cypress.
The wood of cupressineous trees is usually light, moderately hard, and very durable.

curator

n
/ kyəˈrādə(r) /
L

one in charge of the exhibits, research activities, and personnel of a museum, zoo, or other place of exhibit.
Eric interviewed the curator of marine mammals at the aquarium.

curiousness

n
/ ˈkyürēəsnəs /
L > F > E + Ecf

the quality of being inquisitive.
Dickon’s round eyes were full of eager curiousness but he said not a word.

curlew

curliewurly

curmudgeon

n
/ (ɪ)kərˈməjən /
unknown

a crusty, ill-tempered, or difficult and often elderly person.
Fiona’s dad called her grandfather a “cantankerous old curmudgeon.”

current

adj
/ ˈkərənt /
L

[has homonyms: courant, currant] presently elapsing.
In the current fiscal year Cornucopia College enjoys a slight budget surplus.

curriculum

n
/ kəˈrikyələm /
L

the whole body of courses offered by an educational institution or one of its branches.
The school is planning to add Latin to its curriculum next year.

cursory

curtain

n
/ ˈkərt̪n /
L > F > E

the screen separating the stage from the auditorium of a theater.
The law states that the theater curtain must be made of fireproof material.

curtilage

n
/ ˈkərd̪ˈlij /
F > E

a yard, courtyard, or other piece of ground included within a fence surrounding a dwelling house.
The police searched the house and the curtilage for any clues relating to the robbery.

curvature

n
/ ˈkərvə.chù(ə)r /
L

the act or state of deviating from a straight line or course typically with a rounded gradual effect.
The curvature of the brick path gave the garden a pleasing informality.

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custard

n
/ 'kəstə(r)d /
L > Prov > E
a sweetened mixture of milk and eggs that is baked, boiled, or frozen.
Lemon custard is Harold's favorite dessert.

custody

n
/ 'kəstədə /
L > E
charge or control (as of a suspect) exercised by a person or an authority.
The suspect was kept in police custody until she provided an incontrovertible alibi.

cutaneous

adj
/ kyü'tānēəs /
L
of or relating to the skin.
Cutaneous sensation includes feeling cold, heat, contact, and pain.

cuticle

n
/ 'kyüdəkəl /
L
an external membranous or hardened noncellular investment secreted by the outer surface of the body (as in arthropods).
Because expansion cannot occur in the chitinous cuticle, the growing insect must periodically shed its covering.

cyanosis

n
/ .sīə'nōsəs /
Gk
a bluish or purplish discoloration (as of skin) due to deficient oxygenation of the blood.
Cyanosis may result from pneumonia, asphyxiation, heart failure, or heart anomalies.

cybernetics

n pl
/ .sībə(r)'nediks /
Gk
the comparative study of the automatic control system formed by the nervous system and brain and by mechanical-electrical communication systems and devices (as computers or thermostats).
Bertha's new robotics software promised to revolutionize cybernetics.

cyclical

adj
/ 'sɪkləkəl /
Gk
of, relating to, or belonging to a regularly recurring succession of events or phenomena.
Mr. Ramirez explained the cyclical phases of the Moon to the science class today.

cyclogenesis

n
/ .sī(.)klō'jenəsəs /
Gk
the process of development or intensification of a rotating storm system.
Satellites have greatly improved the monitoring of cyclogenesis.

cyclonic

adj
/ sī'klänik /
Gk
of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a rotating storm.
Cyclonic disturbances known as hurricanes usually occur during the summer and fall.

cycloserine

cygnet

n
/ 'signət /
Gk > L > F > E
a young swan.
Six-year-old Abby, openly contemptuous of the fairy tale, patiently explained to her mother that there's no way an ugly duckling can turn into a swan—only a cygnet can.

cylinder

cymbals

cynegetics

n pl
/ .sɪnə'jedɪks /
Gk
the art of hunting.
Mrs. White began her talk about cynegetics with a recording of melodies played on hunting horns.

cynology

n
/ sə'näləjē /
Gk
[has homonym: sinology]
scientific study of the dog especially in respect to its natural history.
Having a coyote as a childhood pet gave Rick an early interest in cynology.

cynophilist

n
/ sə'näfələst /
Gk
[Note: Could be confused with form of sinophil/sinophile.] a dog fancier : one that is favorably disposed toward dogs.
Although Leon considered himself a cynophilist, he did not trust the pit bull terrier.

cynosure

n
/ 'sɪnə.shü(ə)r /
Gk
a center of attraction or interest.
The student union, with its billiard tables, bowling alley, and snack bar, is a cynosure for freshmen during orientation week.

Cytherean

adj
/ .sɪthə'reən /
Gk > L + Ec f
of or relating to the goddess Venus or to the planet Venus.
The Cytherean atmosphere has a high concentration of sulfuric acid.

cytotoxic

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cytology

n
/ sī'täləjē /
Gk + Gk
[has homonym: sitology] the branch of biology concerned with the study of cells as vital units with reference to their structure, function, multiplication, pathology, and life history.
For differentiating between benign and malignant lesions, cytology offers a more precise method of diagnosis than does the use of X rays.

dachshund

n
/ 'däks.hünt /
G + G
a small dog of a breed of German origin having long drooping ears, commonly a short sleek coat, and the legs short in comparison with the body length.
Chloe has a brown dachshund named "Oscar."

dacquoise

n
/ dāk.wāz /
F
a dessert made of baked layers of nut meringue with a filling usually of buttercream.
The hotel dessert buffet included a chocolate-pecan dacquoise.

dactylogram

n
/ dāk'tilə.gram /
Gk + Gk
an impression taken from a finger : fingerprint.
Calvin used a magnifying glass to examine the loops and whorls in a dactylogram of his index finger.

dactylology

dactyloscopy

n
/ daktə'läskəpē /
Gk
identification by comparison of fingerprints.
Dactyloscopy indicated that the suspect's fingerprints are indeed on the murder weapon.

daedal

adj
/ 'dēd'əl /
Gk
ingeniously formed or working : like a maze : intricate.
The children's quiz show led its contestants through a daedal journey of stunts and questions.

daffodil

daffodils

n pl
/ 'däfə.dilz /
D + L > F > D
plants having flowers that have a large corona elongated into a trumpet.
These flowers blooming in the snow are daffodils and snowdrops.

daguerreotype

dahlia

n
/ 'dalyə /
Sw name > L
a plant of a genus of tuberous-rooted herbs having rayed flower heads.
The brightly colored flowers of the dahlia can be six inches in diameter.

daiquiri

dais

n
/ 'dāəs /
L > F > E
a platform raised usually above the floor of a hall or large room to give distinction or prominence to those occupying it.
A round dais was exactly in the center of the room.

Daliesque

adj
/ dälē'esk /
Sp name
resembling or suggesting the paintings of the Spanish surrealist artist Dali.
The poster showed a Daliesque face with feathers poking out of each nostril.

dalliance

dallied

damask

Damoclean

adj
/ .damə'klēən /
Gk name + Ecf
involving imminent danger.
Retrieving the car keys from the piranha tank was a Damoclean task indeed.

dandelion

dangerous

dangle

danseuse

n
/ dän'sə(r)z /
F
a female ballet dancer.
Denise was advised that being a danseuse was as exhausting as it was rewarding.

Dantesque

adj
/ .dän'tesk /
It name
of, relating to, or resembling the Italian writer Dante or his writings.
The Dantesque image of a soul in torture repulsed Regina.

dashiki

dashing

adj
/ 'dashiŋ /
E imit + Ecf
vigorously active : spirited.
The dashing actor was the talk of the party.

dastardly

dasymeter

dauntless

dawdle

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dawdler

n
/ 'dɒd(ə)lə(r) /
unknown + Ecf
one who wastes time in idle
lingering.
*Lauren was such a dawdler that
she often missed the school bus.*

dazzling

v
/ 'daz(ə)liŋ /
ON > E + Ecf
overpowering with brightness :
shining.
*Morgan took great satisfaction in
dazzling his neighbors with his
Christmas light display.*

deacon

deactivate

deacerate

dearth

n
/ 'dɜrθ /
E
scarcity : lack of a present
necessity.
*The general realized that his army
was suffering from a dearth of self-
confidence.*

debacle

n
/ də'bækəl /
L > OProv > F
a sudden breakdown : collapse.
*Craig reads everything he can find
regarding the Wall Street debacle
of 1929.*

debarrass

debenture

n
/ də'benʃə(r) /
L
a writing or certificate signed by a
public officer as evidence of a debt
or of a right to demand or receive a
sum of money.
*Uncle John treasures the debenture
issued by the Confederate
government, even though it is
actually worthless.*

debility

debonairness

debouchment

n
/ də'bʊʃmənt /
F
a mouth or outlet especially of a
river.
*The river's debouchment had to be
dredged because the sediment was
a hazard to navigation.*

debridement

n
/ də'brɛd.mənt /
F
the surgical removal of lacerated,
devitalized, or contaminated tissue.
*The doctor explained to the
firefighter why debridement was
the best treatment for his second-
degree burns.*

debris

n
/ də'brɛ /
F
the remains of something broken
down or destroyed.
*Scattered debris lies where
majestic homes stood before last
week's tornado.*

debut

decadent

decaffeinate

decanter

decedent

n
/ də'sɛdʰnt /
L
a dead person; especially : a person
who has recently died.
*The relatives of the decedent
gathered for the reading of the will.*

deceitful

adj
/ də'sɛtʃəl /
E + Ecf
dishonest.
*The Better Business Bureau warned
Jasper of the awning company's
deceitful business practices.*

deceive

v
/ də'sɛv /
L > F > E
cause to believe the false : delude.
*Cara's forgery of her mother's
signature did not deceive the
principal.*

decelerate

v
/ dɛ'sɛlə.rɪt /
L
lessen the speed of : slow down.
*Reversing engine thrust is used to
decelerate jets upon landing.*

deceleron

decennial

decentralization

decibel

n
/ 'desə.bəl /
L + Scottish-American name
a unit for measuring the relative
loudness of sounds equal
approximately to the smallest
degree of difference of loudness
ordinarily detectable by the human
ear.
*Differences of one decibel can be
important to a recording engineer.*

deciduous

adj
/ də'sɪjəwəs /
L
falling off or shed at the end of the
growing period, at certain seasons,
or at certain stages of development.
*Deciduous trees drop their leaves
each fall.*

decimal

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decimate

v
/ 'desə.māt /
L

select by lot and kill every tenth person of.
The terrorist promised to decimate the group of hostages every half hour until his demands were met.

deciphered

v
/ də'sɪfə(r)d /
L + Ar > L > F > E
made out, read, or interpreted despite obscurity.
When one considers the variety of handwriting, and of bad handwriting, too, that must be deciphered, it increases the wonder that so seldom a letter is delivered to the wrong person.

decistere

n
/ 'desə.sti(ə)r /
F
a metric unit of capacity equal to 1/10 cubic meter.
Caleb bought a decistere of lime for his front lawn.

declamatory

adj
/ də'klamə.tōrē /
L
marked by rhetorical effect or display : stilted.
Minna's declamatory sermon alienated many of her listeners.

declension

decline

declivate

adj
/ də'klɪ.vāt /
L
inclining downward : sloping.
Mary Ann slid down the declivate roof of the playhouse.

declivous

decompose

v
/ dēkəm'pōz /
L > F
separate or resolve into constituent parts or elements or into simpler compounds.
Mr. Landry asked the students whether they knew any compounds other than methanol which decompose into carbon dioxide and water.

decorous

adj
/ 'dekərəs /
L
marked by propriety and good taste.
Lucia was surprised to find that the disc jockey was as decorous off the air as he was volcanic while on the air.

decorticate

v
/ dē'kò(r)də.kāt /
L
remove the bark, husk, or other outer covering from.
Sharp front teeth allow squirrels to decorticate hickory nuts.

decoupage

n
/ dākü'pāzh /
F
the art of decorating surfaces by applying cutouts and then coating them with several layers of a finish such as lacquer or varnish.
Aunt Hazel's interest in arts and crafts was kindled by a free class in decoupage.

decreolization

decrecendo

decuman

adj
/ 'dekyəmən /
L
(of a wave) : extremely large.
That decuman wave that took the ship fore and aft swept the life raft off the deck.

decumbiture

decussate

adj
/ 'dekəsət /
L
shaped like an X.
Each wing of the moth had a decussate marking.

deducibility

defamatory

defeasible

adj
/ də'fēzəbəl /
F + Ec f
capable of being or liable to being voided, annulled, or undone.
When a family adopts a baby, several requirements have to be met; otherwise the adoption is defeasible.

defendant

n
/ də'fendənt /
L > F
a person required to make answer in an action or suit in law or equity or in a criminal action.
When the foreman of the jury read the verdict of "not guilty," the defendant embraced his attorneys.

deferential

defervescence

n
/ dē(ɪ)fər'ves'ən(t)s /
L
the subsidence of a fever.
Antonio's mother was relieved to note the signs of defervescence in her son.

deficiency

n
/ də'fishənsē /
L
the quality or state of lacking some quality, faculty, or characteristic necessary for completeness.
Scurvy is caused by a deficiency of vitamin C in the diet.

defilade

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definite

adj

/ 'def(ə)nət /

L

free of all ambiguity, uncertainty, or obscurity.

Dad sounded quite definite when he told us to turn off the TV.

degauss

deglutition

dehisce

dehiscence

n

/ də'his'n(t)s /

L + Ecf

the bursting open of a capsule or pod at maturity.

In dry weather, dehiscence of some seed pods occurs prematurely.

deify

deign

deipnosophist

n

/ dip'nāsəfəst /

Gk

a person skilled in table talk.

Clint's reputation as a deipnosophist makes him an ideal dinner guest.

delectable

adj

/ də'lektəbəl /

L

deliciously flavored.

JoAnne selected Black Forest cake from the delectable dessert offerings.

delegate

deleterious

adj

/ delə'tirēəs /

Gk

hurtful, destructive.

The museum did not permit flash photography because of the possible deleterious effects on the paintings.

deleteriously

adv

/ delə'tirēəslē /

Gk + Ecf

in a hurtful or destructive manner.

It seems that every day we are reminded that smoking affects the body deleteriously.

delicacy

n

/ 'deləkəsē /

L

something pleasing to eat that is accounted rare or luxurious.

Caviar is considered a delicacy.

delicatessen

n

/ deləkə'tes'n /

F > G

a store where ready-to-eat food products (as cooked meats and prepared salads) are sold.

Marta stopped at the delicatessen to buy some cold cuts for our lunch.

delicious

adj

/ də'lishəs /

L

appealing to one of the bodily senses, especially that of taste.

Judith said the fudge was the most delicious she had ever tasted.

delineate

delinquency

delinquent

n

/ də'liŋkwənt /

L

a transgressor against duty or law.

The police referred to Harold as a "delinquent" when he was found on the street after curfew.

deliquesce

v

/ delək'wes /

L

become soft or liquid with age.

After a couple of weeks in the refrigerator, lettuce begins to deliquesce.

deliquescent

delirious

adj

/ də'lirēəs /

L

affected with frenzied excitement or wild enthusiasm.

The delirious fans rushed onto the field to congratulate the champions.

delitescent

adj

/ delə'tesənt /

L

lying hidden : obfuscated, latent.

The psychiatrist tried to discover the delitescent significance of his patient's dreams.

delphinium

deltiology

n

/ deltē'äləjē /

Gk

the hobby of collecting postcards.

Jodie got started in deltology just last year but already has postcards from over 100 countries.

deltoidal

delude

deluge

n

/ 'del(,)yüj /

L > F > E

a drenching rain : downpour.

The children were caught in a deluge as they waited for the school bus.

demagoguery

n

/ 'deməgäg(ə)rē /

Gk + Ecf

the principles or practices of rabble-rousers.

Economic hardship often gives rise to demagoguery.

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demarcate

v
/ də'märkāt /
Gmc > It > Sp
mark by bounds.
Sol used fishing line to demarcate his half of the room from his brother's.

demaree

demeanor

n
/ də'mēnə(r) /
L > F > E
behavior toward others : outward manner.
The vice-president's icily serious demeanor was fodder for the late-night talk shows.

demegoric

dementia

demersal

demesne

n
/ də'mān /
F
[has near homonym: domain] legal possession of land as one's own.
The earl vowed to defend his demesne at any cost.

demiglace

demijohn

n
/ 'demē.jän /
F + F name > E
a narrow-necked bottle of glass or stoneware that is enclosed in wickerwork and has one or two wicker handles.
Water glugged from the demijohn as Emily emptied it on the lawn.

demise

demitasse

n
/ 'demē.tas /
L > F > E + Per > Ar > F
a small cup of coffee usually taken black.
Nathan sipped nervously at a demitasse while he waited for his attorney.

demobilize

democracy

n
/ də'mäkrəsē /
Gk > L
a government by the people : rule of the majority.
Cara could not imagine what her life would be like if it were governed not by a democracy but instead by the whims of a few people.

demography

n
/ də'mägrəfē /
Gk
the statistical study of the characteristics of human populations especially with reference to size and density, growth, distribution, migration, and vital statistics.
Beth's interest in demography led her to a career in advertising.

demolition

demoniacal

demulcent

adj
/ də'məlsənt /
L
soothing, softening.
The pharmacist told Boris that a demulcent syrup would be best for his sore throat.

demurrage

demurs

n pl
/ də'mərz /
L
difficulties in making up one's mind : indecisions.
Harriet's message was unequivocal, containing no doubts or demurs.

dengue

n
/ 'deŋ(,)gē /
African? > Sp
[has homonym: dinghy] an acute infectious disease characterized by sudden onset, headache, racking joint pain, and a rash and caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitoes.
The African village was quarantined after an outbreak of dengue.

denizen

n
/ 'denəzən /
L > F > E
a dweller in a certain place or region.
Melvin asked a local denizen for directions.

denominator

denouement

n
/ ,dānü'mä /
L > F
the final outcome, result, or unraveling of the main dramatic complication in a play or other work of literature.
The loose ends of the plot were neatly tied up in the surprising denouement.

dentifrice

n
/ 'dentəfrəs /
L
a powder, paste, or liquid used in cleaning the teeth.
John decided to use a dentifrice containing baking soda.

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denunciation

n
/ dənənsē'āshən /

L
the act of pronouncing (as a person, idea, course of conduct, or political philosophy) as blameworthy or evil.

The senator's speech was a denunciation of many federal programs.

depilatory

n
/ dē'pilə.tōrē /

L > F
a cosmetic for the temporary removal of undesired hair.
Hank mixed a depilatory into his sister's shampoo.

deprecated

v
/ 'deprə.kādəd /

L
sought to avert.
When a very thick letter from Mr. Churchill was brought to Emma, she guessed what it must contain and deprecated the necessity of reading it.

deprecatory

depredatory

adj
/ 'deprədə.tōrē /

L
tending to lay waste or prey upon : plundering.
Following the earthquake, depredatory gangs looted many stores.

depurate

v
/ 'depyə.rāt /

L
free from impurities or heterogeneous matter : purify, cleanse.
The hiking book advised using iodine tablets and a filter to depurate groundwater before drinking it.

deracinated

adj
/ dē'ras'n.ātəd /

L > F + Ecf
physically, mentally, or emotionally separated from one's racial, social, or intellectual group.
Erica's father worries that she might become deracinated at such a large university.

derailleur

n
/ dē'rālə(r) /

F
[has homonym: derailer] a mechanism for shifting gears on a bicycle that operates by moving the chain from one set of exposed gears to another.
Laurent's derailleur jammed a few minutes into the race, and he was forced to the side of the road.

deranged

adj
/ dē'rānjd /

F
disordered, unbalanced.
Jane's health seemed completely deranged, though she had no absolutely alarming symptoms.

dereism

derelict

n
/ 'derə.lik /

L
a thing voluntarily abandoned by its owner with the intention of not retaking it and rightly claimed by the first person who takes possession of it; specifically : a boat abandoned on the high seas.
Tom sank his yacht when his rescuers arrived lest it become a derelict.

dereliction

n
/ derə'likshən /

L
intentional or conscious neglect (as of principles).
The security guard was summarily fired for dereliction of duty.

dermatitis

n
/ ,dərmə'tidəs /

Gk > L
inflammation of the skin typically marked by reddening, swelling, and scaling.
Bonnie treated her dermatitis with aloe juice.

dermonecrotic

adj
/ ,dər(,)mō.nə'krädik /

Gk
relating to or causing the death of skin tissue.
The powerful medication had a dermonecrotic effect on Uncle Arthur's legs.

derogatorily

derogatory

adj
/ dē'rägə.tōrē /

L
expressive of low estimation or reproach : disdainful.
Janet did not appreciate the derogatory remarks her brother made about her dress.

derrick

n
/ 'derik /

E name
the framework or tower over a deep drill hole (as that of an oil well) for supporting the tackle for boring or for hoisting and lowering.
The rocket was supported on the launch pad by a tower that was a converted oil derrick.

descendible

descent

v
/ dē'sent /

L + E
rid of odor or smell.
After their dog was sprayed by a skunk, the Andersons tried everything to descent him, but nothing worked.

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descried

v
/ dā'skrīd /
F > E

caught sight of especially by watchful attention and careful observation of the distant, uncertain, or obscure.

When the dog descried his master walking up the lane, he hurried out to greet him.

desecrate

desiccate

v
/ 'desə'kāt /
L

[has near homonym: desecrate] dry up or cause to dry up : deprive or exhaust of moisture.

The hot sunshine and the dry wind combined to desiccate Martha's tomato plants.

design

desirable

desman

n
/ 'dez' mən /
Sw

an aquatic insectivorous mammal of Russia that resembles a mole.
At one end the desman has a long, flared snout and at the other end a long, flattened tail.

desolate

adj
/ 'desələt /
L

characterized by abandonment, isolation, or barrenness.

The irrigation project revived the once desolate farming community.

despair

n
/ dā'spa(a)(ə)r /
L

utter loss of hope.

Despair overcame Gerald as he stared at his French exam.

desperado

n
/ ,despə'rā(,)dō /
L > Sp

a bandit of the western frontier.

Louis pretended to be a desperado holding up a stagecoach.

desperate

despicable

adj
/ dā'spikəbəl /
L

meriting hatred, scorn, or loathing.
Sylvester's stress level would be greatly reduced if he found fewer situations despicable.

despotism

n
/ 'despə'tizəm /
Gk > F

absolute government in which power is vested in a single ruler.
Those who believe in the progress of humanity have a hard time explaining 20th-century despotism.

desquamate

v
/ 'deskwə'māt /
L

peel off in the form of scales.

Ed came down with scarlet fever and was horrified when his skin began to desquamate.

destrier

n
/ 'destrēər /
L > F > E

a large powerful horse used as a war-horse by a medieval knight.

The knight rapidly saddled his destrier and galloped off to battle the invaders.

desuetude

n
/ 'deswē'tüd /
L

discontinuance from use, practice, exercise, or functioning : a state of protracted suspension or of apparent abandonment.

In some schools the practice of memorizing great poems has fallen into desuetude.

desultorily

adv
/ ,desəl'tōrəlē /
L

in an erratic, wavering manner.

Orna behaved desultorily at the dress rehearsal.

desultory

adj
/ 'desəl,tōrē /
L

not cogently relevant : digressive.

Nancy's comments in class are usually rather desultory, but today her remarks were very relevant.

detective

n
/ dā'tektiv /
L

a plainclothes police officer.

The detective asked the bystanders if any of them had actually seen the shooter.

deterge

detergent

deterrence

n
/ dā'tərən(t)s /
L + EcF

the act or process of turning aside, discouraging, or preventing from acting especially by fear.

The police hoped that Ted's severe jail sentence would promote the deterrence of criminal acts by the other gang members.

deterrent

n
/ dā'tərənt /
L

something that discourages or prevents from acting by fear or consideration of unpleasant attendant consequences.

The police hoped that Ted's severe jail sentence would serve as a deterrent to criminal activity by the other gang members.

detinue

detonator

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detour

detriment

detritus

n
/ də'tritəs /
L

a product of disintegration or wearing away : fragment or fragmentary material.

The aerial photo of Don's ranch shows a fan of detritus at the mouth of the gulch.

detrude

deuce

n
/ 'd(y)üs /
L > F

[has near homonyms: do's, dues] a tie in tennis in points toward a game or in games requiring scoring of two consecutive points by one side to win the game or set.

The first point won in tennis after deuce is called "advantage in" if won by the server, "advantage out" if won by the receiver.

deuteronist

n
/ .d(y)üdə'ragənəst /
Gk + Gk

a person who serves as a foil to another.

The movie's hero was thwarted by the villainous deuteronist.

deuteranopia

n
/ .d(y)üdərə'nōpēə /
Gk

red-green blindness believed due to a defect in the optic nerve.

Joel's deuteranopia disqualified him from the Air Force's pilot school.

devolution

dewclaw

dextrally

dhurrie

n
/ 'dərē /
Hindi
a thick cotton cloth or carpet made in India.
The dhurrie in Morgan's foyer is one she purchased during her trip to Delhi.

diabetes

n
/ .dīə'bēdēz /
Gk
any of certain abnormal conditions characterized by the secretion and excretion of excessive amounts of urine.
Drugs and diet changes can control diabetes in most patients.

diablerie

n
/ dē'äblə(,)rē /
L > F
dealings with the devil or devils : witchcraft, sorcery.
Each Halloween, stories of diablerie resurface in the media.

diacetate

diadem

n
/ 'dīə.dəm /
Gk > L > F > E
crown; specifically : an ornamental headband worn (as by Eastern monarchs) as a badge of royalty.
A brocade diadem would be a perfect finishing touch for Josh's King David costume.

diagnose

v
/ 'dīəg.nōs /
Gk > L
identify a condition by evaluating its signs and symptoms.
Dr. Morris was reluctant to diagnose Tina's condition until he had the test results.

diagonal

adj
/ dī'agən'l /
Gk > L
running across from corner to corner.
Chris preferred the tile floor with the diagonal pattern.

diagram

dialysis

n
/ dī'aləsəs /
Gk
the separation of substances in solution by means of their unequal diffusion through semipermeable membranes.
Blood was removed from the patient, purified by dialysis, and then returned to the patient's bloodstream.

diapason

n
/ .dīə'pāz'n /
Gk > L
a burst of harmonious sound : melody, strain.
The trumpeters filled the courtyard with thrilling diapason.

diapered

diaphanous

adj
/ dī'afənəs /
GK > L
characterized by such fineness and delicacy of texture as to permit seeing through.
The jellyfish were so diaphanous that you could be next to them in the water and never know they were there.

diaphragm

diary

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diaspora

n
/ dī'asp(ə)rə /
Gk

a dispersion (as of people of a common national origin or of common beliefs).

The guest lecturer at the Modern Language Association meeting jokingly referred to the diaspora of Esperanto speakers.

diaspore

diatribe

n
/ 'dīə.trīb /
Gk

a bitter, abusive, and usually lengthy speech or piece of writing.
After supper, Deirdre launched into her familiar diatribe against commercial television.

diazotype

dicerous

adj
/ 'disərəs /
Gk

having two antennae.
Because most insects have a pair of antennae, they are dicerous.

dichotomy

n
/ dī'kädəmə /
Gk

the phase of the Moon or an inferior planet in which just half its disk appears illuminated.
The Moon had just reached dichotomy when Amos began planting.

dickcissel

didactic

adj
/ dī'daktik /
Gk

fitted or intended to teach.
Guy's innovative and effective didactic style inspired his students to produce amazing work.

didacticism

didascaly

dietetic

dietetics

n pl
/ dīə'tediks /
Gk

the science or art of applying the principles of nutrition to the feeding of individuals or groups under different economic conditions or for hygienic or therapeutic purposes.
Pam concentrated on dietetics in her graduate studies with hopes of joining a world hunger organization after receiving her degree.

different

difficult

adj
/ 'difə(,)kəlt /
L

hard to understand : puzzling, obscure.
There were so many words that were difficult, and Milo knew hardly any of them.

diffident

adj
/ 'difədənt /
L

lacking confidence in oneself : distrustful of one's own powers.
Emma was always quick and assured; her sister was slow and diffident.

digitalis

n
/ dijə'taləs /
L

the dried leaf of the purple foxglove containing substances that are used to prepare a drug that is a heart stimulant.
Digitalis has proved to be the most effective treatment for Ginger's heart disorder.

dilapidated

adj
/ də'lapədədəd /
L

decayed, deteriorated, injured, or fallen into partial ruin.
Only birds and bats resided in the dilapidated old house.

dilatory

adj
/ 'dilə.tōrē /
L

characterized by procrastination or delay : slow.
Mr. Knightley always moved with the alertness of a mind which could be neither undecided nor dilatory.

dilemma

diligence

diligently

dillydally

v
/ 'dilē.dalē /
Gmc > F > E
waste time by loitering or delay.
"There's lots to do; we have a very busy schedule—from 6:00 to 7:00 we dillydally," he exclaimed.

diluent

n
/ 'dilyəwənt /
L

an inert substance added to a mixture especially for reducing the concentration of active ingredients.
Water added to the insecticide acts as a diluent and a carrier.

dilute

v
/ dī'lüt /
L

make less concentrated : diminish the strength, activity, or flavor of.
Because of the heat produced, caution is needed when using water to dilute concentrated sulfuric acid.

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dimension

n
/ dā'menchən /
L
a measurable aspect such as length or width.
Height is one dimension of a cube.

diminuendo

diminutive

adj
/ dā'minyədīv /
L
small especially in size : tiny.
Kerry was first to notice the diminutive hummingbird at the honeysuckle bush.

dimissory

adj
/ 'dimə.sōrē /
L
dismissing or granting leave to depart.
Upon hearing the principal's dimissory words, the students bolted out of the auditorium.

dinosauric

adj
/ .dīnə'sō(ə)rik /
Gk + Gk + Ecf
huge.
Angela was astounded by the dinosauric size of the statue of Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial.

diocese

n
/ 'dīəsəs /
Gk > L > F
the district in which a bishop has churchly authority.
The local bishop's diocese covers five counties.

diphtheria

n
/ dif'thirēə /
Gk
an acute highly contagious bacterial disease chiefly of young children that is marked by swelling and obstruction of the throat.
During the Depression, diphtheria claimed the lives of many children.

diphthong

n
/ 'dif.thŋ /
Gk
a gliding monosyllabic sound that starts at or near the articulatory position for one vowel and moves to or toward the position for another.
Many people do not pronounce the diphthong in the word realtor correctly.

diphyodont

adj
/ dī'fiədänt /
Gk
having deciduous and permanent sets of teeth successively.
The teeth of most reptiles are naturally replaced throughout life, but most mammals are diphyodont.

diploma

diplopia

n
/ dā'plōpēə /
Gk
a disorder of vision in which two images of a single object are seen, owing to unequal action of the eye muscles.
Shirley noticed that her medicine produced the side effects of dizziness and diplopia.

dipnoous

dipody

n
/ 'dipədē /
Gk > L
a prosodic unit or measure of two feet.
The teacher commented on the poet's use of dipody for dramatic effect.

diptych

n
/ 'dip(,)tik /
Gk
a picture or series of pictures painted on two tablets connected by hinges.
The church's altarpiece is a Byzantine diptych.

diremption

dirigibility

dirigible

n
/ 'dirəjəbəl /
L + Ecf
airship.
The explosion of the dirigible Hindenburg is famous for its dramatic radio coverage.

dirigisme

n
/ dērēzhēs(ə)m /
L > F
economic planning and control by the state.
Dirigisme is a characteristic of socialist law.

dirndl

disaffiliate

disappointed

adj
/ .disə'póintəd /
L > F
defeated in expectation or hope.
Ken's parents were disappointed that he earned only a D in math.

discalced

adj
/ di'skalst /
L
unshod, barefooted.
The discalced runner became a celebrity at the Olympics.

discern

discerp

discerptible

adj
/ dā'sərp(ə)təbəl /
L + Ecf
capable of being torn to pieces or pulled apart.
Al's pet dog made short work of his discerptible stuffed animals.

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disciples

n pl
/ dā'sīpəlz /
L

those who receive instruction from another : followers.

Katrina was among Mr. Crane's musical disciples who assembled for instruction one evening a week.

disclaimant

n
/ dā'sklāmənt /
L > F

one who makes a denial or disavowal of legal claim.

The disclaimant did not want any part of his grandfather's estate.

discoloration

discomfiture

n
/ dā'skəmfə.chù(ə)r /
L > F > E

the state of being disconcerted or abashed : confusion, embarrassment.

The bright lights added to Verne's discomfiture as he stood behind the lectern.

discotheque

n
/ 'diskə.tek /
Gk > L > F

a nightclub for dancing to recorded music.

Allen is a disk jockey at a popular discotheque in Chicago.

discredit

discrepancy

n
/ dā'skre.pənsē /
L

difference, variation, inconsistency.

The accountant found a mysterious discrepancy between the two payroll records.

discretion

n
/ dā'skreshən /
L

power of decision : individual judgment.

The Constitution was framed and adopted to establish a government that should not depend on state opinion and state discretion.

discursive

disdain

n
/ dās'dān /
L > F > E

a feeling of contempt and aversion for something regarded as unworthy of or beneath one : scorn, contempt.

"This," said Clara with complete disdain, "is my little brother."

disembogue

v
/ .disəm'bōg /
L > Sp

discharge water from an outlet or mouth.

Many streams disembogue into the river along its course.

disentangle

v
/ .disən'taŋgəl /
L > Ecf + E

straighten out : unravel.

Mrs. Luce helped David disentangle the strands of the plot in Hamlet.

disguise

v
/ dās'gīz /
E, F

change the customary dress or appearance of.

Ben tried to disguise his voice when he telephoned Jill.

disingenuousness

n
/ .disən'jenyəwəsnəs /
L

state of being unworthily or meanly artful.

Disingenuousness and double dealing seemed to meet Mr. Churchill at every turn.

disintegration

n
/ dās.intə'grāshən /
L

the act or process of shattering suddenly : flying to bits.

Mark caused the disintegration of the mirror when he slammed the door.

disinter

dismal

adj
/ 'dizməl /
L > F > E

marked by gloom, dejection, somberness, or depression of spirits.

The children who forgot their gloves spent a dismal recess looking out the window at the snow.

disobey

v
/ .disō'bā /
F

refuse or fail to abide by orders, rules, or laws.

A well-trained dog would not disobey a familiar command.

disparage

v
/ dā'sparij /
F > E

speak slightly of.

Arthur did not want to disparage his mother's cooking, so he complimented her on her pot roast and secretly fed it to the dog.

disparate

disparity

n
/ dā'sparədē /
L

marked difference (as in age, rank, grade, condition, quantity, quality, or kind).

The evil of the actual disparity between Mr. Woodhouse's and his daughter's ages was increased by his constitution and habits.

disponible

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disputatious

adj

/ ˌdɪspyəˈtāshəs /

L

inclined to argue for or against something asserted or maintained.
Helen did not enjoy going to family reunions because of her disputatious relatives.

disquisition

n

/ ˌdɪskwəˈzɪʃən /

L

an elaborate analytical or explanatory discussion : discourse.
Rhetta's first book was a lengthy disquisition on the Irish potato famine.

disseminate

dissentient

adj

/ dəˈsɛnch(ē)ənt /

L

not concurring : disagreeing.
There was not a dissentient voice on the subject.

dissertation

dissident

dissilient

dissimilitude

n

/ ˌdɪ(s)səˈmɪləˌtʊd /

L

lack of resemblance.
Although the plots of Gary's two stories resemble each other, there are several points of dissimilitude.

dissipated

v

/ ˈdɪsəˌpādəd /

L

dispelled, dissolved.
Mr. Knightley walked in soon after tea and dissipated every melancholy fancy.

dissonant

dissuade

v

/ dəˈswād /

L

divert by advice or persuasion : turn from something by reasoning.
Penny tried to dissuade her friend from making a choice she might later regret.

dissymmetry

n

/ ˌdɪ(s)ˈsɪmətrē /

Gk + Gk + Gk

the absence of or the lack of balanced proportions.
The quilt designer was inspired by dissymmetry in crystal formations.

distillate

dithyramb

n

/ ˈdɪθəˌrɑm /

Gk

a statement or piece of writing in an exalted impassioned style usually in praise of something.
Dennis launched into a dithyramb on Moira's beauty and manifold virtues.

ditokous

adj

/ ˈdɪdəkəs /

Gk

producing two eggs or young at a time.
Most common songbirds are ditokous.

dittology

n

/ ˌdɪˈtələjē /

Gk

a double reading or twofold interpretation (as of a biblical text).
Millicent's first lecture of the semester was a dittology of the story of Genesis entitled "Serpent or Savior?"

diuretic

diurnal

adj

/ dɪˈɝnəl /

L

active chiefly during the daytime.
Few cats are naturally diurnal, which can be a problem for light-sleeping owners.

divagate

v

/ ˈdɪvəˌɡāt /

L

move or extend in different directions from a common point.
Several ancient caravan routes divagate from the extinct oasis.

divergent

divestiture

n

/ dɪˈvestəˌtʃù(ə)r /

L + Ecf

the compulsory transfer of title or disposal of interests (as stock in a corporation) upon government order.
The Interstate Commerce Commission ordered the divestiture of the company to be carried out no later than September 30.

division

divorce

divulge

v

/ dəˈvəlʃ /

L

tell or make known.
Ken was reluctant to divulge the details of the merger.

docent

n

/ ˈdɒsˌnt /

L

a person who guides groups through a museum or art gallery and discusses and comments on the exhibits.
Judd's interest in ancient history was sparked by a knowledgeable docent during a field trip to a museum.

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docilely

adv
/ 'däsəl(l)ē /
L

in an obedient or submissive manner.

Greg's pet dog docilely follows his every command.

docility

n
/ də'silədē /
L

the quality or state of being easily taught, led, or managed.

Docility and intelligence are important qualities that breeders look for in the horses they buy.

dockhand

doctrinaire

n
/ .däkrə'nə(a)(ə)r /
L > F

one who attempts to put into effect some especially political theory with little or no regard for practical difficulties.

Benito described his opponent as an ivory-tower doctrinaire.

documentary

n
/ .däkyə'mentərə /
L

a presentation (as a film or novel) that has the objective quality, authority, or force of documentation in the representation of a scene, place, condition of life or of a social or political problem or cause.

The documentary is being produced by environmentalists who protest the destruction of forests.

dolcissimo

adv
/ döl'chēsə.mō /
L > It

very sweet or soft—used as a direction in music.

The composer and the conductor argued over whether the passage should be played dolcissimo.

doleful

adj
/ 'dōlfəl /
L > E + Ecf

attended with or indicating grief or a morose or despairing attitude.

Martha had a doleful look on her face as she gazed out the window at the rain.

dolioform

adj
/ 'dōlēə.fōrm /
L

shaped like a barrel.

The barrel cactus is a common dolioform plant of the deserts of North and South America.

dolorifuge

n
/ də'lörə.fyüj /
L > F > E

something that banishes or mitigates grief.

Martina was so heartbroken when her dog died that her dad brought home a new puppy as a dolorifuge.

dolorimetry

dolorous

adj
/ 'dōlərəs /
L

expressive of sorrow or affliction.

In a dolorous voice the reporter described the scene of the disaster.

dolphin

n
/ 'dälfən /
Gk > L > Prov > F > E

any of various small toothed whales with the snout more or less elongated into a beak and the neck vertebrae partially fused.

The trained dolphin performed its feats with great agility and grace.

domain

domestic

adj
/ də'mestik /
L

relating to the household or the family.

Selma's domestic situation changed drastically after she married a pack rat.

domiciliated

v
/ .dämə'silē.ädəd /
L
had established residence : resided.
The schoolmaster was domiciliated in a different village house each week.

domineering

domino

n
/ 'dämənō /
L > F
a flat rectangular block of bone, ivory, wood, or plastic the face of which is divided into two equal parts called “ends” which are blank or bear from one to six dots, used in a set of 28 to play a game in which the ends are matched.
As a joke, Grandpa hid a domino before asking Billy if he'd like to play.

donnism

doraphobia

dorcastry

n
/ 'dörkəs.trē /
Biblical name + Ecf
a church auxiliary organized to plan and execute benevolent work.
The dorcastry served free Thanksgiving dinners for the homeless.

dormancy

n
/ 'dō(r)mənsē /
L > F > E + Ecf
the quality or state of being inactive.
Certain Australian frogs undergo long periods of dormancy during drought.

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dormitories

dorsicollar

dosage

dosseret

dossier

n
/ 'dòs.yā /
F
an accumulation of records, reports, miscellaneous pertinent data, and documents bearing on a single subject of study or investigation : file.
The physician kept a careful dossier on each of her patients.

Dostoevskian

adj
/ .dästä'yefskēən /
Russ name
of, relating to, or typical of the Russian novelist Fedor Dostoevski or his writings.
The Dostoevskian character's tortured psychic state gripped and twisted Randy's mind as he read page after page.

dotard

douanier

n
/ dwányā /
F
a customs officer.
At the international airport the douanier insisted on searching the luggage of everyone proceeding through customs.

doublure

n
/ .də'blü(ə)r /
L > F
the lining of a book cover; especially : an ornamental lining.
The doublure is an important clue in identifying pirated editions of early novels.

douceur

doughiness

n
/ 'dōēnəs /
E
the quality or state of being not thoroughly baked.
The doughiness of the cake mortified Mrs. Cavendish.

doughty

adj
/ 'daüdē /
E
[has homonym: dowdy] marked by fearless resolution and by stoutness in contest or struggle : valiant.
Daniel was a soldier's soldier—rough, tough, and doughty.

dowager

n
/ 'daüəjə(r) /
F
one of the elder women of assured position who tend to set the tone of an assembly, social group, or community.
Great Aunt Georgine is the dowager of the Arts Council.

dowitcher

doxology

n
/ däk'säləjē /
Gk
a commonly short hymn or formula expressing praise to God.
One common doxology in Protestant churches is set to a tune called "Old Hundred."

doyen

n
/ 'dōiən /
L > F
[Note: Could be confused with feminine doyenne.] the senior male member of a body or group (as of a diplomatic corps).
George Burns was the doyen of American stand-up comedians.

draconian

adj
/ drā'kōnēən /
Gk name
marked by extreme severity or cruelty : harsh, rigorous.
The pop star's main residence was on an island where the tax laws were less draconian than in her native England.

drainage

drama

dramaturgy

n
/ 'dramətərjē /
Gk > L > F > E
the technical devices that are used in writing plays and that tend to distinguish the play from other literary forms.
Shakespeare was skilled at both poetry and dramaturgy.

dreadful

adj
/ 'dredfəl /
E
arousing feelings of disapproval or dissatisfaction.
"Turn off that dreadful song," Cynthia's mom calmly demanded.

dreary

adj
/ 'drirē /
E
being without liveliness, cheer, joy, or hope.
The dreary accountant decided that it was time to take an extended vacation.

dreidel

n
/ 'drād'l /
G > Yiddish
a four-sided die that revolves like a spinning top, that is marked on each side with a different Hebrew letter, and that is used as a toy especially during the Hanukkah festival.
Evan gave each of his classmates a dreidel after presenting his report on traditions associated with Hanukkah.

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drepaniform

adj

/ drə'panəfōrm /

Gk + Ecf

hooked or curved like a sickle.

As Cliff walked home, the drepaniform Moon did little to light his way.

dressage

n

/ drə'säzh /

F

the execution by a horse of maneuvers involving changes of gait, pace, and airs in response to barely perceptible movements of a rider's hands, legs, and weight.

While in Austria, Derrick attended an exhibition of dressage at a famous equestrian school.

drisheen

n

/ drə'shēn /

IrGael

a sausage prepared with sheep's blood, milk, and seasonings.

While in County Cork, Mr. O'Donnell ordered drisheen and eggs for breakfast.

drivel

v

/ 'drivəl /

E

talk stupidly and carelessly without due thought, knowledge, or consideration.

Bart's opinion is highly valued, for he is not one to drivel.

drogue

n

/ 'drōg /

E

[has homonym: drog] a sea anchor (as a canvas bag with a hooped mouth) used to reduce the speed of a boat and keep her head into the wind.

The captain yelled at the crew to lower the drogue while he signaled the other boat.

dromedary

n

/ 'drāmədərē /

Gk > L > F > E

a camel of unusual speed, bred and trained especially for riding, and having a single large hump on the back.

Camel rides at the zoo featured a dromedary.

dromomania

n

/ ,drāmə'mānēə /

Gk > L

an exaggerated desire to wander.

Yielding to his dromomania, Jack bought a recreational vehicle and spent the summer touring the country.

drone

n

/ 'drōn /

E

one that lives on the labors of others.

In Sleepy Hollow there were some rustic patrons who considered a schoolmaster a mere drone.

drosophilist

n

/ drō'säfələst /

G + L + Ecf

one who uses the vinegar fly in the study of genetics.

The drosophilist has helped to advance our knowledge of genes and the role they play in heredity.

drudgery

n

/ 'drəj(ə)rē /

E

dull, fatiguing, or unrelieved work or expenditure of effort.

Machines now take much of the drudgery out of housework.

druggist

n

/ 'drəgəst /

F

one who sells medicine : pharmacist.

Jean asked her druggist to recommend a cough syrup.

drupaceous

adj

/ drü'pāshəs /

Gk > L

of or relating to a one-seeded indehiscent fruit having a hard bony endocarp, a usually fleshy mesocarp, and a thin exocarp that is either like a skin or dry and almost leathery.

Cherries, plums, and almonds are drupaceous fruits.

duarchy

n

/ 'd(y)ü.ärkē /

Gk

a government by two rulers having equal power.

Critics accused the governor of establishing a duarchy with her husband.

dubiety

n

/ d(y)ü'biədē /

L

the quality or state of being doubtful or skeptical : uncertainty.

There was dubiety in his voice and a hint of uncertainty in his eye.

duchy

ductile

dudgeon

n

/ 'dəjən /

unknown

aggrieved or angered feeling : ill humor.

Fuming at the insult, Carl stalked off in high dudgeon.

duet

n

/ d(y)ü'et /

It

performance of a musical composition or movement for two singers or two instrumentalists.

Stephan and Christiana's duet featured Bach's concerto for two violins in D Minor.

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dulcamara

n
/ ˌdʊlkə'märə /
L

a sprawling Old World poisonous plant that is common as a weed in America and has purple flowers and oval coral-red berries and that has a taste at first sweetish and then bitter.

The dried stems of the dulcamara were once used in pharmaceutical preparations as a sedative.

dulcet

adj
/ 'dʊlsət /
L > F > E

pleasing to the ear.

Hiroshi marveled at the dulcet tones of the quartet.

dulcitude

dullard

n
/ 'dʊlə(r)d /
F

a stupid person.

Barry apologized for rashly calling James a dullard.

dumbbell

n
/ 'dʊm.bəl /
E

an exercise device that consists of round weights joined by a bar.

With great effort, Tony hoisted the dumbbell above his shoulder.

dune

dungarees

n pl
/ ˌdʌŋgə'res /

Hindi

heavy cotton work clothes made usually of heavy, coarse, durable, blue cotton twill.

Greg preferred his faded dungarees to any other pants in his wardrobe.

dungeon

dunnage

n
/ 'dʊnɪj /
unknown

[Note: Could be confused with tonnage, tunnage.] cushioning or padding used in a shipping container to protect fragile articles against shock and breakage.

Mother used popcorn as dunnage in her gift boxes to her family in Germany.

duodenitis

n
/ d(y)üə.dē'nīdəs /
L

inflammation of the first part of the small intestine.

George's cramps were diagnosed as duodenitis.

duplicitous

duplicity

n
/ d(y)ü'plisədē /
L

deception by pretending to entertain one set of feelings and acting under the influence of another.

When the candidate's duplicity was exposed, his supporters felt embarrassed and betrayed.

durable

adj
/ 'd(y)ürəbəl /
L > F > E

able to exist for a long time : lasting.

Jimmy brought along a pair of durable hiking boots for his trek through the mountainous terrain.

duress

n
/ d(y)ə'res /
L > F > E

[has near homonym: dress]
stringent compulsion by threat of danger, hardship, or retribution.
Contracts signed under duress are not valid.

duressa

duvet

n
/ d(y)ü'vā /
ON > F

a warm bedcover : quilt, comforter.
Sally stored her duvet in the linen closet and used a light bedspread during the summer months.

dvandva

n
/ 'dvän(,)dvä /
Skt

a class of compound words having two constituents that are equal in rank and related to each other as if joined by and.

The word secretary-treasurer is an example of a dvandva.

dwarf

n
/ 'dwò(ə)rf /
E

an abnormally small person.

The adult dwarf was offended when people treated him as a child.

dwindling

dynamitard

n
/ 'dīnəmə.tärd /
Gk > Sw + Ecf

one that uses explosives for anarchistic or other political acts of violence.

Police agents seized the dynamitard in an old warehouse.

dynamite

dynasty

dysbarism

dyscalculia

n
/ ˌdɪskəl'kyülēə /
Gk + L

impairment of mathematical ability due to an organic condition of the brain.

Because she disliked math class so much, Kathy was convinced that she suffered from dyscalculia.

dysentery

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dyskinesia

n
/ ˌdɪskəˈnēzh(ē)ə /
Gk

impaired or abnormal motion of voluntary or involuntary muscle.
Some drugs that are used to treat psychiatric disorders can have dyskinesia as a side effect.

dyslexia

n
/ dəˈsleksēə /
Gk

a disturbance of the ability to read.
In Maria's school, students with dyslexia are given special training to improve their reading, spelling, and writing.

dyspepsia

dyspeptic

adj
/ dəˈspeptɪk /
Gk

gloomy or negative.
The editor's dyspeptic views on the election irritated many readers.

dysphemia

dysphemism

n
/ ˈdɪsfəˌmɪzəm /
L
substitution of a disagreeable, offensive, or disparaging word or expression for an agreeable or inoffensive one; also, a word or expression so substituted.
Rachel, whose father is an auto mechanic, cringes every time she hears the dysphemism grease monkey.

dysphoria

n
/ dəˈsfɔːrēə /
Gk

a generalized state of feeling unwell or unhappy.
Edith has had frequent crying spells and periods of dysphoria since early childhood.

dysrhythmia

n
/ dəsˈrɪθməə /
Gk

a condition characterized by various psychological and physiological effects and which occurs following long flight through several time zones and probably results from disruption of human body rhythms that occur in 24-hour cycles : jet lag.
The travel agent gave the tour group several tips on how to avoid dysrhythmia.

dystopia

n
/ dɪˈstōpēə /
Gk

an imaginary place which is distressingly wretched and whose people lead a fearful existence.
The science-fiction tale was set in a 23rd-century dystopia.

eagle

eaglet

earlobe

earnest

n
/ ˈɛrnəst /
E
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.]
something of value given by a buyer to a seller to bind a bargain.
Ms. Giblin gave the sellers \$3,000 as earnest so that they would not entertain other offers.

eavesdrop

ebony

ebriosity

ebullience

ebullient

adj
/ əˈbʊljənt /
L

characterized by enthusiasm or exuberance.
Angela tried to be as ebullient as possible during the cheerleading tryouts.

ebullition

eburnated

eccentric

ecchymosis

n
/ ˌekəˈmōsəs /
Gk > L
the escape of blood into the tissues from ruptured blood vessels marked by a livid black-and-blue or purple spot or area.
A black eye results from ecchymosis.

ecclesiastic

n
/ əˈklēzēˈastɪk /
Gk
a person in holy orders or consecrated to the service of the church.
The new bishop was an ecclesiastic of high learning and virtue.

ecclesiastical

adj
/ əˈklēzēˈastəkəl /
Gk > L
belonging to, suggestive of, or suitable for use in a church building or service of worship.
Ramona designed and sewed all the ecclesiastical garments worn in the church's services.

ecclesiology

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ecesis

n
/ ɛ'sēsəs /
Gk
the successful establishment of a plant or animal in a new environment or habitat.
Ecesis by an introduced species often threatens native flora or fauna.

echelon

n
/ 'eshələn /
L > F
one of a series of levels or grades (as of leadership or responsibility) in an organization or field of activity.
Employees at every echelon of the company were encouraged to make suggestions.

echelonment

echinoderm

n
/ ɛ'kɪnədərm /
Gk
any of a phylum of radially symmetrical marine animals that have a true body cavity, a calcareous exoskeleton, a blood-vascular system, a nervous system, and a water-vascular system that provides tentacles and organs of locomotion.
The starfish is a familiar echinoderm.

echoed

v
/ 'e(,)kɒd /
Gk
resounded with sounds caused by reflections of sound waves.
Reanna's words echoed back to her from across the canyon.

echolalia

n
/ ɛkɒ'lālɪə /
Gk + Gk
the often pathological repetition of what is said by other people as if imitating them.
The speech of autistic persons is sometimes characterized by echolalia.

echt

adj
/ 'ekt /
G
genuine, authentic.
All the lamps were very attractive, but only one was echt Tiffany.

eclectic

adj
/ e'klektik /
Gk + Gk
composed of elements drawn from various sources.
Gaynor's eclectic taste in music makes selecting CDs for her a cinch.

eclipse

n
/ ɛ'klɪps /
L > F > E
the obscuration of one celestial body by another.
Susan and Stuart flew to Mexico to view a total eclipse of the Sun.

eclogue

n
/ 'e.klɒg /
Gk > L
a poem in which shepherds are introduced conversing.
The bucolic view of meadows and hills inspired Shelley to compose an eclogue.

ecocatastrophe

n
/ ɛ(,)kɒkə'tastrə(,)fɛ /
Gk
a major destructive upset in the balance of nature especially when caused by the intervention of humans.
Sam considers the destruction of the rain forests an ecocatastrophe.

ecologist

n
/ ɛ'käləjəst /
Gk > G
a specialist in the branch of science concerned with the interrelationship of organisms and their environment.
Kimberly will work as a summer intern for an ecologist in the Everglades.

economist

n
/ ɛ'känəməst /
Gk
a specialist in or student of the social science that studies the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities.
Adam Smith was the most influential economist of the 18th century.

ecru

n
/ ɛ'krü /
L > F
[has near homonym: accrue] of a textile : a light grayish yellowish brown that is yellower and lighter than gravel.
The bridal gown is available in both ecru and white.

ecstasy

ecstatic

adj
/ ɛk'stadɪk /
Gk
caused by, expressing, or causing a state of exaltation or rapturous delight.
Maria was ecstatic when her boyfriend proposed to her.

ectocanthion

n
/ ɛktɒ'kan(t)hɪən /
Gk + Gk
the point at which the outer ends of the upper and lower eyelids meet.
Plastic surgery was needed to repair an injury to the patient's face at the ectocanthion.

ectoplasm

n
/ 'ektəplazəm /
Gk
the emanation from a spiritualistic medium that is believed to effect telekinesis and similar phenomena.
In the movies people are always getting slimed by what they call "ectoplasm," but if it exists, it would more likely look like mist.

ecuelle

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ecumenism

n
/ 'ekyəmənizəm /
Gk + Ecf
principles and practices relating to or promoting worldwide Christian unity.
The World Council of Churches is a major force in the religious movement known as "ecumenism."

ecumenopolis

n
/ 'ekyəmənäpələs /
Gk
a single city encompassing the whole world that is held to be a possibility of the future.
Many science fiction stories are based on the premise of Earth's future ecumenopolis.

eczematous

adj
/ ig'zēmədəs /
Gk
relating to or having the characteristics of an inflammatory skin condition characterized by redness, itching, and lesions.
Eczematous skin eruptions may be due to allergies to certain foods, drugs, or cosmetics.

edacious

adj
/ ə'dāshəs /
L + Ecf
[has near homonym: audacious]
voracious, devouring.
Mary Ellen's edacious appetite for gossip is offensive to all.

edaphon

n
/ 'edəfän /
Gk > ISV
the animal and plant life present in soils.
Stephanie is studying the edaphon of the river delta.

edelweiss

n
/ 'äd'l.wīs /
G
a small perennial herb growing high in the Alps.
Eva recognized the edelweiss by its distinctive white petals.

edentulate

edentulous

adj
/ 'edenchələs /
L
lacking teeth; especially : having lost teeth previously present.
When Susie skipped into the second grade classroom, she gave Miss O'Connell an edentulous grin.

edible

edification

n
/ 'edəfə'kāshən /
L
a building up of the mind, character, or faith : intellectual, moral, or spiritual improvement.
Though she knew that the word origins wouldn't be on the test, Tara studied them for her own edification.

edifice

n
/ 'edəfəs /
L
building; especially : a large or massive structure (as a church or government building).
To Amy, the most beautiful edifice in our nation's capital is the National Cathedral.

editorial

edulcorate

v
/ ə'dəlkə'rāt /
L
free from harshness (as of attitude) : make pleasant.
Ben is under the mistaken impression that his flattery will edulcorate the stern judge.

eerily

efface

effectually

adv
/ ə'fekch(əw)əlē /
L&F > E
in a manner producing the desired results.
A warm drink is said to fortify one effectually against the cold.

effervesce

effervescent

adj
/ 'efə(r)'ves'nt /
L
impossible or difficult to restrain or suppress : bubbling, exuberant.
Sean's effervescent personality caught the attention of the job recruiter.

effete

efficacious

efficacy

n
/ 'efəkəsē /
L
the power to produce an effect : effectiveness.
For Harriet, the idea of being preferred by Mr. Elton had all the usual weight and efficacy.

efficiency

effigy

n
/ 'efəjē /
L > F
a full or partial representation especially of a person.
Andy felt a chill when he spotted the effigy of his ancestor in the cathedral crypt.

effleurage

n
/ 'eflə'rāzh /
L > F
a light stroking movement used in massage.
Abdominal effleurage is a technique used in prepared childbirth.

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efflorescence

n
/ ˌɛfləˈresˈn(t)s /

L
the result or culminating feature of a developmental process : outgrowth, flower.

The museum guide commented that change in art is merely the efflorescence of certain long prepared and anticipated effects.

effluent

n
/ ˈɛ.flü.ənt /

L
[Note: Could be confused with affluent.] something that flows out, as liquid discharged as waste (as water used in an industrial process).
The effluent from the cooling tower is pure water.

effluvium

n
/ ɛˈflüvĕəm /

L
an exhalation or smell especially when unpleasant.

The effluvium from the backed-up drain nauseated Mr. Locke.

effrontery

n
/ ɛˈfrɒntərĕ /

L > F
flagrant boldness that is offensive or insolent : gall.

Chuck had the effrontery to interrupt the senator during his speech.

effulgence

effulgent

adj
/ ɛˈfŭljənt /

L
marked by or as if by brightly shining light.
An effulgent flash of intuition enabled Tony to solve the geometry exam's final problem.

effusive

adj
/ ɛˈfyüsiv /

L
expressing or marked by unrestrained emotion : unduly demonstrative.
Troy was bowled over by the effusive greeting of his Labrador retriever.

egalitarian

adj
/ (i)ˌɛ.gələˈtɛrĕən /

L > F
marked by or adhering to a belief that all persons are equal in intrinsic worth and are entitled to equal access to the rights and privileges of their society.
The senator promised to help create and expand opportunities and distribute them in an egalitarian fashion.

egocentric

adj
/ ˌɛgōˈsɛntrɪk /

L + Gk > E
self-centered, selfish.
Dillard's friends claimed there was not an egocentric bone in his body.

egocentricity

n
/ ˌɛgō(ɪ)sɛnˈtrɪsədĕ /

L + Gk > L
the quality or state of being concerned with oneself rather than with others.
The conductor's egocentricity made his interaction with the musicians less than harmonious.

egregious

adj
/ ɛˈgrĕjəs /

L
flagrant : glaringly evident.
As a medical researcher, Laura knew that many of the reports of medical breakthroughs on television contained egregious errors.

egregiously

egress

n
/ ˈɛɡres /

L
the act or right of going or coming out.
Every hotel should provide accessible ways of egress.

eider

eiderdown

n
/ ˈɪdə(r).daʊn /
ON > Icel > G

the small fluffy under feathers of any of several large northern sea ducks.
The price tag on the sleeping bag stuffed with eiderdown shocked Kevin's parents.

eidetic

adj
/ ɪˈdɛdɪk /

Gk
[has near homonym: identic] of or relating to voluntarily producible visual images having almost photographic accuracy : vivid, lifelike.
Sometimes Grandma would fall into eidetic reveries and talk to her long-deceased brother.

eigne

einkorn

n
/ ˈɪn.körn /

G
a one-grained wheat that is regarded by some as the most primitive wheat and is grown especially in poor soils in central Europe.
Einkorn grown in southeastern Turkey is believed to be closely related to a grain first domesticated as early as 9000 B.C.

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Einsteinian

adj

/ 'ɪnz.tɪn.i.ən /

G name

of or relating to American physicist and mathematician Albert Einstein or his theories.

The Einsteinian theory of special relativity revolutionized the field of physics.

einsteinium

ejector

ekistics

n pl

/ ə'kɪstɪks /

Gk

a science dealing with human settlements and drawing on the research and experience of professionals in various fields (as architecture, engineering, city planning, and sociology).

Dora's degree in sociology aided her in her study of ekistics.

elasticity

electrolysis

n

/ ə.lek'træləsəs /

Gk

the destruction of hair roots with an electric current.

Electrolysis was one of the means of hair removal demonstrated in Roweena's cosmetology class.

electuary

n

/ ə'lekchə.werē /

Gk > L > E

a medicated paste prepared with honey or other sweet substance, used in veterinary practice, and administered by smearing on the teeth, gums, or tongue.

The veterinarian patiently smeared an electuary on the horse's gums.

eleemosynary

adj

/ ələ'mäs'nerē /

L

of or relating to charity : charitable, philanthropic.

Participation in eleemosynary activities is a graduation requirement at Janie's school.

elegiacal

elementary

elephant

n

/ 'eləfənt /

Hamitic? > Gk > L > F

any of a family of thickset extremely large nearly hairless herbivorous mammals that have a snout elongated into a muscular trunk and two incisors in the upper jaw developed especially in the male into large ivory tusks.

Zack and Debbie enjoyed watching the elephant use its trunk to spray water on its back.

elephantine

adj

/ ələ'fan.tēn /

Gk > L

of enormous size or weight : uncommonly large : immense, massive.

Troy was served an elephantine ice cream sundae.

eligible

adj

/ 'eləjəbəl /

L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] preferable, desirable.

The quietness of the game made it particularly eligible for Mr. Woodhouse, who had often been distressed by the more animated sort.

elision

n

/ ə'lɪzhən /

L

the use of a speech form that lacks a final or initial sound that a variant speech form has.

Today's French class concentrated on when to use elision.

elitist

adj

/ ə'lɛdʒəst /

L > F

of or relating to a consciousness of being one of a segment or group regarded as socially superior.

The private school offers many need-based scholarships to combat the impression that its student body is elitist.

elixir

n

/ ə'liksə(r) /

Gk? > Ar > L > E

a substance or concoction held to be capable of prolonging life indefinitely.

Explorers through the ages have sought the elixir of life, better known as the "fountain of youth."

ellipse

n

/ ə'lips /

Gk

an elongated circle.

The walking path behind the school forms an ellipse around the tennis courts.

ellipses

n pl

/ ɛ'lip.sēz /

Gk

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.]

omissions of one or more words that are obviously understood but must be supplied to make a construction grammatically complete.

Pat's use of suspension periods to punctuate her main character's ellipses visually portrays the character's disjointed thought.

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ellipticity

elocution

n
/ ˌelə'kyūshən /

L
the art of oratorical or expressive public speaking.
Senator Okada is a master of elocution.

eloquence

n
/ 'eləkwən(t)s /

L
discourse marked by apt and fluent diction and imaginative fervor.
The defense lawyer addressed the courtroom audience with eloquence.

elucidate

v
/ ə'lūsə.dāt /

L
make intelligible by clear explanation or careful analysis.
Belinda asked Mrs. Dent to elucidate the complicated essay question.

elutrition

emaciated

adj
/ ə'māshē.ādəd /

L
made lean by impairment (as from hunger).
The emaciated cat stared at Tina with hollow eyes.

emanation

n
/ ˌemə'nāshən /

L
a flowing forth.
The air was tainted with the musky emanation from the alligator pen.

emancipation

n
/ ə.man(t)sə'pāshən /

L
the act or process of setting or making free; broadly : deliverance from any onerous and controlling power.
Abraham Lincoln's decree proclaiming emancipation for slaves came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.

emanometer

n
/ ˌemə'nämədə(r) /

L + Gk
any of various devices designed to measure quantities or intensity of a heavy gaseous element produced by radioactive disintegration.
The emanometer detected dangerous amounts of radon in Theo's basement.

embarcadero

n
/ ˌem.bärkə'de(ɪ)rō /

L > Sp
a landing place; especially : a landing place on an inland waterway.
An organ grinder and his monkey entertained visitors at the embarcadero of the restored village.

embargo

n
/ əm'bär(ɪ)gō /

L > Sp
an edict or order of the government prohibiting the departure or entry of ships of commerce at ports within its dominions.
In defiance of the embargo, the boat slipped out of the harbor at night.

embarrass

embarrassment

n
/ əm'barəsmənt /

Pg > Sp > F
confusion or discomposure of mind.
Locking his car keys in his car trunk caused Andy much embarrassment.

embassy

embellish

v
/ əm'belish /

F > E
enhance, amplify, or garnish (an account) by elaboration with inessential but decorative or fanciful details.
Ivan likes to embellish his stories a little differently each time he tells them.

embezzlement

n
/ əm'bezəlmənt /
F > AF > E
fraudulent appropriation of money by a person to whom it has been entrusted.
The FBI investigation led to the union leader's indictment for embezzlement.

emblazon

v
/ əm'blāz'n /
Lcf > Ecf + F > E
set off conspicuously (as by rich or brilliant decorations).
Andrea asked the seamstress to emblazon the sweater with embroidered flowers.

emblem

embolism

n
/ 'embəlizəm /
Gk
the sudden obstruction of a blood vessel by a foreign or abnormal particle (as a bubble of air or a blood clot).
Careless administration of an injection can cause an embolism.

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embouchure

n
/ 'ämbü.shü(ə)r /
L > F
the position and use of the lips in producing a musical tone on a wind instrument.
After six weeks of criticism about her poor embouchure, Kirsten switched from the clarinet to the piano.

embracery

n
/ əm'brās(ə)rē /
F > E
the act of one who attempts to or acts so as to influence a court, jury, or other office or officer corruptly (as by promises, money, or threats).
After trying to bribe a juror, the mobster was arrested and charged with embracery.

embrasure

n
/ əm'brāzhə(r) /
F
an opening with sides flaring outward in a wall or parapet of a fortification usually for allowing the firing of cannon.
Bobby and Jackie amused themselves during the castle tour by climbing into every embrasure to look out the windows.

embrocate

embrocation

n
/ .embrə'kāshən /
Gk > L
liniment.
The fact that Della's throat is so much better can be attributed to the excellent embrocation her mother applied regularly.

embroidery

embryo

embryonic

adj
/ .embrē'ānik /
Gk > L + Ecf
being in an early and undeveloped stage.
Delia disclosed embryonic plans for the new theater.

emerald

n
/ 'em(ə)rəld /
Gk > L > F > E
a highly prized gemstone of rich green color.
Beth's grandfather has a lovely unmounted emerald that he plans to give to her for a graduation present.

emeritus

adj
/ ə'merədəs /
L
retired from an office after gaining recognition.
Our summer school teacher, Dr. Benteen, is Professor Emeritus of history from Dartmouth University.

emigrant

n
/ 'eməgrənt /
L
[has near homonym: immigrant] a person who leaves a country or region to establish permanent residence elsewhere.
Sidney's great-great-grandfather was an Irish emigrant during the potato famine.

eminent

adj
/ 'emənənt /
L
[has homonym and near homonyms: emanent and immanent, imminent] standing out so as to be readily perceived.
The National Cathedral is a building of eminent beauty.

eminently

emissaries

emissary

n
/ 'emə.serē /
L
an agent or representative usually empowered to act more or less independently.
Each government sent an emissary to the trade talks.

emolliate

emollient

adj
/ ə'mälyənt /
L
[Note: Could be confused with emolument.] soothing especially to the skin or mucous membrane.
Erna usually applies an emollient cream to her hands after washing dishes.

emolument

n
/ ə'mälyəmənt /
L
[Note: Could be confused with emollient.] profit or perquisites from office, employment, or labor.
The waitress who did not report the tips portion of her emolument faced incarceration for tax evasion.

empanada

n
/ .empə'nädə /
L > Sp
a turnover filled with meat.
For the hike Luke packed an empanada and an apple in his knapsack.

empathy

empennage

n
/ .ämpə'näzh /
Fcf + L + Fcf
the tail assembly of an aircraft.
After the accident the FAA ordered the airline to inspect the empennage of every plane in its fleet.

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emphatically

adv

/ ɛm'fədʰəkəlē /

Gk

in a markedly forceful manner.

At the school board meeting Jonah spoke emphatically in favor of requiring students to wear uniforms.

emphysema

n

/ .em(p)fə'zēmə /

Gk

a condition characterized by air-filled, blisterlike expansions in the tissues of the lungs.

Most cases of emphysema are caused by smoking.

empirical

adj

/ ɛm'pɪrəkəl /

Gk > L

originating in or relying or based on factual information, observation, or direct sense experience usually as opposed to theoretical knowledge.

Epidemiologists rely heavily on empirical data in predicting the spread of a contagious disease.

empleomania

n

/ .emplēō'mānēə /

F > Sp + Gk > L

an excessive desire for holding public office.

Otis's empleomania drove him to squander his fortune on political campaigns.

emporium

empyrean

n

/ .em.pɪ'rēən /

Gk > L

the highest heaven or heavenly sphere in ancient and medieval cosmology usually described as a sphere of fire or light.

According to Ptolemy, there are five heavens, the last of which is called the "empyrean," from the Greek word meaning "fiery."

emu

emulate

enamel

encephalitis

n

/ ɛn.sefə'lɪdəs /

Gk

inflammation of the brain, especially when due to infectious agents or their toxins.

The symptoms of encephalitis usually include fever, headache, and tremors.

enchilada

n

/ enchə'lādə /

Sp

a tortilla topped or rolled up with a highly seasoned meat or other filling and served with tomato sauce seasoned with chili.

The sampler platter included a taco, an enchilada, and a burrito.

enclave

n

/ 'en.klāv /

L > F

a district or region (as in a city) inhabited by a particular race or set apart for a special purpose.

The Warsaw Ghetto was an infamous enclave during World War II.

enclitic

encomium

n

/ ɛn'kōmēəm /

Gk

an often formal expression of warm or high praise : eulogy.

At the dedication of the war memorial, the president offered an encomium for the fallen heroes.

encore

n

/ 'än.kō(ə)r /

L > F

the further appearance of a performer or an additional performance requested by an audience.

The audience was so thrilled by the singer's rendition of the aria that it cheered for an encore.

encroachment

n

/ ɛn'krōch.mənt /

Scand > F > E

advancement beyond set limits.

When a football player enters the neutral zone and makes contact with an opponent before the ball is snapped, the head linesman will penalize the team for encroachment.

encumbrance

encyclical

endemic

adj

/ en'demik /

Gk

peculiar to a locality or region.

Despite its name, Rocky Mountain spotted fever is not endemic to the western United States.

endocrinology

endophytous

adj

/ en'däfədəs /

Gk

living within the tissues of plants.

Most vascular plants could not grow without the endophytous fungi that inhabit their roots and supply essential nutrients.

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endorphin

n
/ en'dɔrfən /
Gk > ISV
any of a group of proteins with potent pain-killing properties that occur naturally in the brain.
In long-distance runners, elevated blood levels of endorphin can prevent the pain of sustained exertion.

endorsement

endow

endurable

energetic

adj
/ .enə(r)'jed:ik /
Gk
marked by energy.
The energetic captain kept the police force ready for any emergency.

enervate

v
/ 'enə(r).vāt /
L
[has near homonym with opposite meaning: innervate] lessen the nerve, vitality, or strength of.
Being outside in the heat of the day would enervate Grandma, so she weeds her garden in the cool hours of early morning.

enervated

adj
/ 'enə(r).vādəd /
L
lacking physical, mental, or moral vigor.
After the 15-mile mountain hike, Marsha found herself completely enervated.

enfilade

n
/ 'enfə.lād /
F
arrangement (as of rooms, doorways, trees) in opposite and parallel rows.
The hallway of the huge hotel was seemingly endless, with an enfilade of doors appearing to grow ever tinier in the distance.

enfranchisement

n
/ ən'fran.chīzmənt /
F > E
the act of endowing with a constitutional or statutory right or privilege; especially : the act of endowing with the right to vote.
It is hard to believe today that segments of American society were once denied enfranchisement.

engineer

n
/ .enjə'ni(ə)r /
F > E
a person trained to plan and supervise projects in a technical field.
The chief engineer and his team designed a flood control plan for the city.

engrossed

adj
/ ən'grōst /
L > AF > E
completely occupied or absorbed.
Engrossed in her book, Mary did not hear her mother's repeated calls for her to come downstairs.

enhance

enigmatic

adj
/ .e(ɹ).nig'mad:ik /
Gk > L
inexplicable, puzzling.
Marla scribbled an enigmatic message on Lance's arm cast.

enlightenment

n
/ ən'līt'nmənt /
Ecf + E + Ecf
the act or means of furnishing with useful information.
The rules of the debate will be posted on the bulletin board for the enlightenment of all participants.

enmity

n
/ 'enmədē /
L > F
hostility, animosity.
The enmity which Mr. and Mrs. Elton dared not show in open disrespect to Miss Woodhouse found a broader vent in contemptuous treatment of her best friend.

ennead

enneastyle

adj
/ 'enēə.stil /
Gk + Gk
marked with columniation with nine columns across the front.
The new monument has an enneastyle arrangement with Corinthian columns.

ennui

n
/ än'wē /
F
languor or emptiness of spirit : boredom.
Though she claimed to dislike school, Tara felt a certain ennui when not doing something academic.

ensconce

v
/ ənz'kän(t)s /
L > F > E
place or hide (as oneself) securely : conceal.
Jared was able to ensconce himself behind the sofa before his brother came looking for him.

ensconced

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ensemble

n
/ ăn'sămbəl /
L > F
a group of supporting players, singers, or dancers.
The principals in the play were ably supported by the ensemble.

ensilage

entablature

entangled

adj
/ ăn'tangəld /
E
involved in a perplexing or troublesome situation from which escape is difficult.
Several birds got entangled in the net Mr. Cantrell placed over his cherry tree.

entente

n
/ ăn'tănt /
L > F
a written or unwritten international understanding usually less formally binding than an alliance.
The president decided that her government's policy of isolationism would not be broken by an entente.

entertain

enthymeme

n
/ 'en(t)thə.mēm /
Gk
an argument or truncated syllogism in which one of the propositions is understood but not stated.
A good example of an enthymeme is the statement "We are dependent; therefore, we should be humble."

entitle

entomogenous

adj
/ ăntə'măjənəs /
Gk
growing on or in the bodies of insects.
Some scale insects that feed on trees have entomogenous fungi.

entomologist

n
/ ăntə'mäləjəst /
Gk
one specializing in the study of insects.
Dirk has wanted to be an entomologist since he was in the third grade.

entourage

n
/ ăntə'răzh /
L > F
one's attendants or subordinates.
The rock star and his entourage occupied an entire floor of the hotel.

entrance

entrecote

n
/ ă'trəkōōt /
L > F
a steak cut from between the ribs; sometimes : sirloin.
Martha's health-conscious brother turned down an entrecote in favor of a flank steak.

entremets

n pl
/ ăntrə'mā(z) /
L > F
dishes (as vegetables or savories) served in addition to the main course of a meal.
At some restaurants, entremets must be ordered separately from the main course.

entrepreneur

n
/ ăntrəp(r)ə'nər /
L > F
the organizer of an economic venture; especially : one who organizes, owns, manages, and assumes the risks of a business.
The local college gives accounting classes for the first-time entrepreneur.

enumerate

enunciate

v
/ ă'nən(t)sē.ăt /
L
utter articulate sounds.
Mr. Dubek reminded Val to stand straight and enunciate clearly.

enunciator

environs

n pl
/ ăn'vīrənz /
L > F > E
vicinity, neighborhood.
Residents of the subdivision and its immediate environs are eligible to join the neighborhood pool association.

envisage

v
/ ăn'vizij /
F
have a mental picture of in advance of realization.
Benjamin could scarcely envisage the scale of the project, so he broke it down into smaller, more manageable units.

envisagement

enzyme

n
/ 'en.zīm /
Gk
any of a very large class of complex proteinaceous substances that are produced by living cells and that are essential to life by acting as catalysts.
Emil Fischer theorized in 1894 that an enzyme acts like a lock to which a certain reactant is the key.

ephapse

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ephedrine

n
/ ə'fedrən /
Gk

a white crystalline alkaloid used often in the form of a salt (as the sulfate) chiefly in relieving hay fever, asthma, and nasal congestion.
Ephedrine has been used to treat the bronchoconstriction associated with asthma.

ephemeral

ephemeris

n
/ ə'fem(ə)rəs /
Gk

a publication giving the computed places of the celestial bodies for each day of the year.
Tracy's attorney consulted an ephemeris to verify her story about having seen Venus on the morning of the crime.

epicede

n
/ 'epəsəd /
Gk

a funeral song or ode.
The poet laureate composed an epicede for the queen's funeral.

epicure

epicurean

adj
/ epə'kyərəən /
Gk name > L + Ecf
stimulating and satisfying to the senses.
The presentation of the epicurean dishes was as delightful as their taste and aroma.

epicycle

n
/ 'epəsīkəl /
Gk
a circle in which a planet moves and which has a center that is itself carried around at the same time on the circumference of a larger circle.
Ancient astronomers used the epicycle to explain their theory that Earth is at the center of the solar system.

epidemic

epidermis

n
/ ,epə'dərməs /
Gk
the outer layer of the skin of a vertebrate.
The paper cut, though painful, barely broke Kayla's epidermis.

epigram

n
/ 'epə,gram /
Gk
a short poem with a witty or satirical point.
Kelly kept a calendar on her desk that gave a humorous epigram for each day of the year.

epilepsy

n
/ 'epəlepsē /
Gk
a chronic nervous disorder of humans and other animals that involves changes in the state of consciousness and of motion.
Epilepsy is sometimes caused by glandular disturbances.

epiphany

n
/ ə'pifənē /
Gk
an appearance or revelatory manifestation of a divine being or a god.
Apuleius's Metamorphoses includes a description of an epiphany of the goddess Isis.

episcopacy

episode

n
/ 'epəsəd /
Gk
the part of a radio, television, or motion-picture serial presented at one performance.
The ending of each episode of the soap opera left one wanting to see the next episode.

epistemology

n
/ ə'pistə'mäləjē /
Gk
the study of the method and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity; broadly : the theory of knowledge.
The middle books of Plato's Republic are the key to his epistemology.

epistle

epistolary

adj
/ ə'pistə,lerē /
L
written in the form of a series of letters.
Evan read four epistolary novels last summer.

epistrophe

epitaph

epitaphs

n pl
/ 'epətafs /
Gk
inscriptions on or at tombs or graves in memory of those buried there.
For amusement the children like to read the epitaphs in the old church cemetery.

epitasis

n
/ ə'pidəsəs /
Gk
the part of a play developing the main action and leading to the catastrophe.
During the epitasis the characters developed relationships that would complicate their lives.

epithet

n
/ 'epə,thet /
Gk
a disparaging or abusive word or phrase.
Donnie apologized for shouting an epithet at Mr. Garibaldi.

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epitome

epitomize

v
/ əˈpɪdəˌmīz /

Gk
serve as the typical representation of.
Sharon's choice of clothing must surely be an attempt to epitomize bad taste.

epizootic

adj
/ ˌepəzəˈwādik /
Gk
of or relating to a disease affecting many animals of one kind at the same time.
Great measures are being taken to ensure that the epizootic foot-and-mouth disease does not enter the United States.

epoch

epoche

eponymous

adj
/ əˈpänəməs /
Gk + Ecf
bearing the name of, being, or relating to one for whom or which something is named.
Jason will play the role of Julius Caesar in the drama club's presentation of the eponymous play.

epopee

epyllion

n
/ eˈpɪlɪən /
Gk
a relatively short narrative poem resembling an epic in theme, tone, or style.
Is "Hiawatha" short enough to be considered an epyllion?

equanimity

n
/ ˌɛkwəˈnɪmədē /
L
evenness of mental disposition : emotional balance especially under stress.
The writer learned to accept with equanimity the rejections from publishers.

equation

equator

n
/ ˌɛˈkwādə(r) /
L
the great circle of the celestial sphere whose plane is perpendicular to the axis of Earth.
Spring begins when the Sun moves north across the equator.

equatorial

adj
/ ˌɛkwəˈtɔrēəl /
L
of, at, or relating to the equator.
The length of the days and nights doesn't vary much in equatorial regions.

equestrienne

equilateral

equilibrist

n
/ ˌɛkwəˈlɪbrəst /
L > F
one who balances himself in unnatural positions and performs hazardous movements.
Of all the acts in the circus, Yancy liked the equilibrist best.

equilibrium

n
/ ˌɛkwəˈlɪbrēəm /
L
a state of dynamic balance attained in a reversible chemical reaction when the velocities in both directions are equal.
Marge injected a flask of colorless nitrogen dioxide with dinitrogen tetroxide, a brown gas, to illustrate chemical equilibrium: When equilibrium occurred, the gas in the flask stopped becoming browner.

equine

equinoctial

adj
/ ˌɛkwəˈnäkshəl /
L > F > E
relating to either of the two times each year when the Sun crosses the equator and day and night are everywhere of equal length.
Marge began making preparations for her annual spring equinoctial festival.

equinox

n
/ ˈɛkwənäks /
L > E
either of the two times each year when the Sun crosses the equator and day and night are everywhere of equal length, being about March 21st and September 23rd.
Legend has it that you can balance an egg on its end only during the equinox.

equipage

equipment

equipoise

v
/ ˈɛkwəˌpɔɪz /
L + L > F
put or hold in a state of equilibrium or balance.
Tod's efforts to equipoise the opposing interests of the two groups enabled them to coexist civilly.

equipped

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equitable

equity

n
/ 'ekwədə /
L

the money value of a property or of an interest in a property in excess of claims or liens (as mortgaged indebtedness) against it.
During the three-year real estate boom, Jan's home equity went up 300%.

equivalent

adj
/ ə'kwiv(ə)lənt /
L
corresponding or virtually identical especially in effect or function.
Butter and margarine are equivalent in most recipes.

equivocate

v
/ ə'kwivəkāt /
L
avoid committing oneself in what one says : speak evasively.
When confronted with the facts, Bernie realized it would do no good to equivocate.

eradicable

eradicate

v
/ ə'radəkāt /
L
[has homonym with opposite meaning: irradiate] do away with : destroy completely.
Many wheat farmers use aerial sprays to eradicate weeds, diseases, and insect pests from their fields.

erasable

adj
/ ə'rāsəbəl /
L
capable of being rubbed or scraped out or removed from existence or memory.
Penelope signed the contract with erasable ink.

erasure

eremology

n
/ ɛrə'mäləjē /
Gk + Gk
a science concerned with the desert and its phenomena.
Professor Heath's research on desert flora was hailed as a significant contribution to eremology.

ergot

n
/ 'ərgət /
F
a fungal disease of rye and other cereals.
An outbreak of ergot destroyed Mr. Kern's crop.

ermine

n
/ 'ərmən /
Gmc > F > E
any of several weasels that assume white winter fur usually with more or less black on the tail.
Despite the outcry of animal activists, the fine fur of the ermine is still used for ornamentation of some designer clothing.

errancy

errand

erroneous

ersatz

adj
/ 'er.zäts /
G
substitute, synthetic : simulated.
Because copper was needed for armaments, pennies were made with an ersatz material during World War II.

erubescence

adj
/ ɛr(y)ə'bes'nt /
L
becoming red : reddening.
Eufemia's erubescence complexion made her embarrassment obvious.

erudite

adj
/ 'eryədīt /
L > E
characterized by a love of knowledge for its own sake : devoted to the pursuit of learning.
The speaker's presentation was a compilation of research that would interest only the most erudite scholars in his field.

erudition

n
/ ɛryə'dishən /
L
an extensive knowledge acquired chiefly from books.
The schoolmaster was esteemed as a man of great erudition.

erumpent

escalator

escamotage

n
/ eskāmōtāzh /
F
juggling, hand trickery.
The street magician accompanied his deft escamotage with jokes and a distracting patter.

escargot

n
/ eskārgō /
OProv > F
a snail prepared for use as food.
Saul fished the escargot out of its shell with a tiny fork and popped it into his mouth.

escarpment

n
/ ə'skärpmənt /
F
a long cliff or steep slope separating two comparatively level or more gently sloping surfaces.
From the top of the escarpment, Peter had a commanding view of both baseball fields.

eschew

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eschewal

n
/ əs(h)'chüəl /
Gmc > F > E
shunning, avoidance.
Peter's eschewal of anything containing peanuts or peanut oil is a matter of life and death.

esonson

escritoire

n
/ 'eskrə.twär /
L > F
a piece of furniture resembling a bureau and providing a writing surface or desk area behind a hinged front that drops down.
Jennifer bought a valuable 18th-century escritoire at Sotheby's.

escrow

esoteric

adj
/ .esə'terik /
Gk
difficult to understand.
Phil found the article on metaphysics too esoteric.

espadrille

n
/ 'espə.dril /
L > Prov > F
a flat sandal having a fabric upper and a flexible often rope sole.
Marsha put on her other espadrille and headed for the beach.

espalier

espaliers

n pl
/ ə'spalyərz /
L > It > F
fruit trees or other plants trained to grow flat against a building, wall, railing, trellis, or other support.
Harriet walked up the broad and neat gravel walk, which led between rows of espaliers to the front door.

especially

espionage

n
/ 'espē.nāzh /
F
the practice of spying or using spies to obtain information about the plans and activities especially of a foreign government or a competing company.
After discovering that Mr. Carmichael had sold company trade secrets to a competitor, his employer charged him with industrial espionage.

esplanade

n
/ 'esplə.nād /
L > It > F
a level open stretch of paved or grassy ground; especially : one designed for walking or driving and often providing a vista (as over water).
Carole decided to go for a stroll on the esplanade before dinner.

espresso

essence

n
/ 'es'ɒn(t)s /
L
an extract (as from fruit) used as flavoring in cooking.
Tatiana could taste the pomegranate essence in the cake's frosting.

estaminet

n
/ estāmēnā /
Gmc > F
a small café : bistro.
While driving through Belgium, Jeff and Linda stopped at a charming estaminet for lunch.

esteem

estimable

adj
/ 'estəməbəl /
L
worthy of esteem or respect.
The statesman had a tarnished youth but is now, in many ways, an estimable figure.

estoppel

n
/ ə'stəpəl /
F
a legal preclusion by which one is prevented from alleging something previously denied or denying something previously alleged.
Because his previous statement was on record, an estoppel prevented Tom from changing his position.

estrepement

n
/ ə'strēpmənt /
F > AF
waste or needless destruction of lands; especially : damage wrought by a tenant for life.
The tenant's estrepement of the farm had made the land almost useless.

estuarine

estuary

n
/ 'es(h)chə.werē /
L
a water passage where the tide meets the current of a stream.
Small boats were warned not to travel the estuary without aid.

esurient

adj
/ ə'sürēənt /
L
having a huge appetite : greedy.
Which one of you esurient fellows ordered the extra-large pizza?

ethnic

ethos

etiolation

n
/ .ēdēə'lāshən /
F
the yellowing or whitening of a green plant through lack of sunlight.
Rhonda uses a special lamp on her houseplants to prevent etiolation.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

etiquette

n
/ 'edəkət /
F

the forms required by good breeding or prescribed by authority to be observed in social or official life.

The defendant's attorney advised him on the observance of courtroom etiquette.

etymology

n
/ ˌedə'mäləjē /
Gk > L > E

a branch of linguistics concerned with the complete history of a linguistic form (as a word or morpheme).

Students have rated Dr. Bailly's class in etymology the best course in the English department.

etymon

n
/ 'edə.män /
Gk

the word in a foreign language that is the source of a particular loanword.

The etymon of the English word cantata is the same word in Italian.

eucalyptus

n
/ ,yükä'liptəs /
Gk

a tree or shrub native to western Australia.

Brad planted a eucalyptus in the vain hope of attracting koalas.

eudaemonic

adj
/ ,yüde'mänik /
Gk

producing happiness : based on the idea of happiness as the proper end of conduct.

The company's decision to eliminate production quotas had a eudaemonic effect on all the workers.

Euhemerism

n
/ yü'hēmərɪzəm /
Gk name

a theory held by the Greek mythographer Euhemerus that the gods of mythology were but deified mortals.

While studying Euhemerism, Sergei learned that the god Vulcan was the first to discover how to make bronze and iron.

eulogy

n
/ 'yüləjē /
Gk

a composition (as a set oration) in commendation of someone or something (as of the character and accomplishments of a deceased person).

The university president delivered a moving eulogy at the funeral of the dean.

eupeptic

adj
/ yü'peptik /
Gk

cheerful, optimistic.

The eupeptic president put the people at ease about the nation's economy.

euphemism

n
/ 'yüfə.mizəm /
Gk

a polite term used to avoid the direct naming of an unpleasant reality.

Marjorie referred to her illness with a vague euphemism.

euphoric

adj
/ yü'förik /
Gk

characterized by a feeling of well-being or elation.

The golfer was absolutely euphoric after making a hole in one.

eureka

interj
/ yə'rekə /
Gk

used to express triumph concerning a discovery.

A loud "Eureka!" emanated from the chemistry laboratory.

eurytherm

n
/ 'yürəthərm /
Gk + Gk

an organism that tolerates a wide range of temperature.

Whereas some animals hibernate during the winter, a eurytherm is active throughout the cold months.

eustacy

eutaxy

n
/ 'yü.taksē /
Gk

good order or management.

Rose's Christmas decoration routine was an example of the eutaxy she practiced constantly.

euthanasia

euthenics

n pl
/ yü'theniks /
Gk

a science that deals with developing human well-being and efficient functioning through the improvement of environmental conditions.

As the world becomes more populated, people pay more attention to the relevance of euthenics.

eutrophic

adj
/ yü'träfik /
Gk + Gk

of a lake : rich in dissolved nutrients but frequently shallow and with seasonal oxygen deficiency.

Since the 1970s the use of phosphates in detergents has been banned in some states because they make lakes eutrophic.

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evaluate

v

/ əˈvæljuə.wāt /

L > F > E

examine and judge concerning the worth, quality, significance, amount, degree, or condition of.
The company sent Chris to evaluate the project's potential for profit.

evanescent

adj

/ .evəˈnesˈn(t) /

L

of short life or duration : fleeting.
The joy and moral stimulation of work is often forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits.

evaporable

evidentiary

adj

/ .evəˈdench(ə)rē /

L + Ecf

being, relating to, or affording evidence.

Because he is not an expert in forensics, Harvey's opinion has no evidentiary value.

evildoer

n

/ ˈēvəl.düə(r) /

E

one who does wicked deeds.
The prosecutor portrayed the defendant as a friendly face with the heart of an evildoer.

evincible

eviscerate

v

/ əˈvisə.rāt /

L

take out the entrails of : disembowel, gut.
The chef showed his apprentice how to eviscerate a fish.

eviternity

evocative

adj

/ əˈvəkədɪv /

L

tending to call forth an emotional response.
Kathy sang an evocative ballad about her emigrant grandparents.

evoke

v

/ əˈvōk /

L

call forth or up : summon.
For Eva, the first crisp days of autumn always evoke memories of her semester in England.

exacerbate

v

/ ɪgˈzasə(r)bāt /

L

make more violent or bitter : intensify the bad qualities of.
Cindy learned how name-calling could exacerbate an already violent argument.

exaggerate

v

/ ɪgˈzəjə.rāt /

L

misrepresent on the side of largeness (as of size, extent, or value) : overstate the truth.
Like any fisherman, Tio tends to exaggerate the size of his catches.

example

exanimate

exaration

excelsior

excerpta

exchequer

excise

n

/ ˈek.sɪz /

D

any of various taxes on privileges (as of engaging in a particular trade or sport) that are often assessed in the form of a license or other fee.
An excise is included in the cost of a fishing license.

exclamation

n

/ .ekskləˈmāshən /

L

vehement expression (as of protest, reproach, or complaint).
Trudy gave a loud exclamation as the plane took off without her.

exclamatorily

excoriate

v

/ ekˈskōrē.āt /

L

censure scathingly.
Mr. Dent proceeded to excoriate Ellen in front of the entire pep squad.

exculpate

v

/ ˈek(,)skəl.pāt /

L

clear from alleged fault or guilt.
Greg is positive that the honor council will exculpate him after a thorough investigation.

excursion

exedent

exemplary

adj

/ ɪgˈzemplərē /

L

deserving imitation : commendable.
Hubert was praised for his exemplary conduct.

exercise

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exhaustion

n
/ ɪg'zɒschən /

L
weariness following overstrain or overexertion.

Vance collapsed from exhaustion after running the marathon.

exhibit

exhilarate

exhortation

exigency

exiguous

adj
/ eg'zɪgəwəs /

L
scanty in amount : meager, narrow.
Fran's father disapproves of her plan to use her exiguous savings for the down payment on a motorcycle.

existential

exonerate

v
/ ɪg'zænə.rāt /

L
clear from accusation or blame.
DNA analysis has the potential either to exonerate suspects or to place them at the scene of the crime.

exonerated

exoneration

exorbitant

adj
/ ɪg'zɒ(r)bədənt /

L > F > E
excessive.
The ferryman charged an exorbitant rate to carry people across the strait.

exoskeleton

n
/ ɛksə'skelətən /

Gk + Gk > L
an external supportive or protective structure or framework of an insect.
An exoskeleton provides protection for an insect, much like a suit of armor.

exotic

adj
/ ɪg'zädɪk /

Gk
from another country : not native to the place where found.
Little did Polly know that the exotic bird she bought had been illegally smuggled into the country.

expatiate

v
/ ek'spāshē.āt /

L
speak or write at length or in considerable detail.
The mighty bulk of the whale affords a congenial theme whereon to enlarge, amplify, and expatiate.

expatriate

expectorant

expeditious

adj
/ ɛkspədɪshəs /

L
acting with promptness or efficiency : speedy.
Mrs. Elton boasted that her horses were extremely expeditious and that her carriage probably drove faster than anyone else's.

expensive

adj
/ ɪk'spen(t)sɪv /

L
characterized by high price or cost.
The concert tickets were expensive, but the event sold out a month before the performance date.

expiate

v
/ ɛkspē.āt /

L
extinguish the guilt incurred by : make conciliation for.
Buddhist doctrine holds that one must expiate the sins committed in past lives.

exploit

n
/ ɛk.splɔɪt /

L > F > E
deed, act.
Sarah's first exploit in baking resulted in a burned pie and charred juice in the oven.

explosive

adj
/ ɪk'splɔɪ.sɪv /

L + Ecf
of or relating to the act of violently expanding and bursting.
Witnesses told the arson investigator that two men ran from the side door of the warehouse moments before the explosive fire.

expostulate

v
/ ɪk'späschəl.āt /

L
reason earnestly with a person for purposes of dissuasion or remonstrance.
Nelson takes every opportunity to expostulate about politics with strangers on the subway.

expunge

v
/ ɪk'spənɟ /

L + L
strike out, obliterate, or mark for deletion (as a word, line, or sentence).
Jeff agreed to expunge the word stupid from his book report.

exquisite

exsculptate

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exsiccate

v
/ 'eksəˌkāt /
L + L

drive moisture from (as by the action of heat).

Sara wants to exsiccate the plums she picked to see if they will really turn into prunes.

exsuccous

adj
/ ek(s)'səkəs /
L + L

devoid of all juices or sap : dried up.

The exsuccous orange in Tamra's locker must have been left there months ago.

exsufflation

extemporaneous

adj
/ .ek.stempə'rānēəs /
L

composed, performed, or uttered on or as if on the spur of the moment.

Suzi gave an extemporaneous talk about bonsai at the craft club meeting.

extempore

extensive

extinct

adj
/ ik'stiŋ(k)t /
L > E

no longer living : deceased, dead.
Latin is an extinct language.

extinguish

v
/ ik'stiŋwɪʃ /
L + Ecf
cause (as a fire or light) to cease burning.
Procedure dictated that Lenny extinguish his car's headlights before approaching the guardhouse.

extirpate

v
/ 'ekstə(r)pāt /
L

pull up or out by or as if by the roots or stem.

Fay made it her mission to extirpate every weed in the lawn.

extract

extraneous

adj
/ ek'strānēəs /
L

existing or originating outside or beyond.

Leona didn't let extraneous noises bother her while she was studying.

extraordinarily

adv
/ ik.strò(r)d'n'erəlē /
L

in a manner beyond what is usual, regular, common, or customary.

Dr. Miller told us that Brutus was extraordinarily frisky this morning.

extraordinary

extrapolate

v
/ ik'strapə.lāt /
L + L > E
infer from a trend within an already observed interval.
From the data she had collected so far, Mirna tried to extrapolate a preliminary conclusion about the insect population of the state.

extraterrestrial

adj
/ ekstrə.tə'restrēəl /
L
originating or existing outside Earth or its atmosphere.
The shiny rock appeared to Zelda to be extraterrestrial.

extravaganza

n
/ ik.stravə'ganzə /
L > It
a lavish or spectacular show or event.
The Mardi Gras extravaganza in New Orleans has several carnival-like parades.

extravasate

v
/ ik'stravə'sāt /
L
pour out or erupt.
When extreme heat and pressure build within a volcano, molten lava may extravasate into the air.

extricate

v
/ 'ekstrə.kāt /
L
pull out.
When the whistle blew, Jason tried to extricate himself from the bottom of the pile of players.

exuberance

exuberant

adj
/ ig'züb(ə)rənt /
L
joyously unrestrained and enthusiastic.
The students at Payton Middle School gave the visiting astronaut an exuberant welcome.

fabiform

adj
/ 'fäbə.förm /
L + Ecf
[has near homonym: faviform]
shaped like a bean.
Jodie is having a fabiform swimming pool installed in her backyard.

fabled

fabricate

facade

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facetiousness

n
/ fəˈseshēˈāsədə /
L + Ecf
the quality or state of being jocular in an often clumsy or inappropriate way.
Mrs. Foster did not appreciate Barney's facetiousness during her history class.

facetious

facial

facile

adj
/ ˈfasəl /
L
easily accomplished or attained.
Sarpedon's facile backgammon victory over his sister made him suspicious of her intent.

facilely

adv
/ ˈfasəl(l)ē /
L + Ecf
in an easy manner : with ease or assurance.
Andy sat down at the piano and played facilely through a book of show tunes.

facilitate

facilitator

n
/ fəˈsɪlətəd(ə)r /
L + Ecff
one that makes something easier or less difficult.
As a teacher, Mr. Logan considers himself a facilitator of learning rather than a dispenser of information.

faconne

facsimile

n
/ fakˈsɪməlē /
L
an exact and detailed copy.
Jared bought a facsimile of Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary.

factitious

factotum

n
/ fakˈtɒdəm /
L
a person having many diverse activities or responsibilities : a general servant.
Mrs. Alexander has so many responsibilities not related to instruction that she feels more like a factotum than a teacher.

facula

n
/ ˈfakyələ /
L
any of the bright regions of the Sun's photosphere seen most easily near the Sun's edge and occurring most frequently in proximity to sunspots.
Seymour tracked the Sun's rotation by charting the position of a facula.

facultative

faculties

n pl
/ ˈfakəltēz /
L > F > E
inherent capabilities, powers, or functions.
While Barbara was recovering from eye surgery she had to rely more on her faculties of hearing and smelling.

faddist

Fahrenheit

adj
/ ˈfarənˌhīt /
G name
relating or conforming to a thermometric scale on which under standard atmospheric pressure the boiling point of water is at 212 degrees and the freezing point at 32 degrees.
Nathan knew it was hot outside, but he was astonished to learn that the temperature was 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

faillie

faineant

adj
/ ˈfānēənt /
F
idle and ineffectual.
Lack of purpose can contribute to a faineant life.

faint

faithful

n pl
/ ˈfāthfəl /
E
adherents of a system of religious belief.
The pope spoke to the faithful from his balcony, asking them to pray for the future of the world.

falbala

falcate

adj
/ ˈfal.kāt /
L
hooked or curved like a sickle—used also of the Moon or an inferior planet when less than half its disk is illuminated.
The Moon's falcate form loomed above the horizon.

falcon

faldstool

fallacious

fallacy

n
/ ˈfaləsē /
L
a false or erroneous idea.
Though Ben's argument may seem plausible, it is pure fallacy.

fallibility

n
/ ˌfaləˈbɪlədə /
L
liability or proneness to err.
The executive pardon can be seen as a recognition of the fallibility of our system of justice.

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fallow

adj
/ 'fa(,)lɒ /
E

left untilled or unsown after plowing.

Miriam has big plans for the patch of fallow ground in her backyard.

falsetto

n
/ fəl'sed(,)ɒ /
L > It

an artificially high voice.

Dad draped a mop over his head and sang "Mary Had a Little Lamb" in falsetto.

falsify

familiar

adj
/ fə'milyə(r) /
L > F > E

frequently seen or experienced.

Sandy was chosen for the job because she was familiar with computers.

famish

v
/ 'famish /
E

deprive of food : starve.

The war will famish many people trapped in the besieged city.

fanaticism

n
/ fə'nadə.sizəm /
L + Ecf
excessive enthusiasm and intense uncritical devotion usually toward some controversial matter (as religion, politics, or philosophy).
Throughout history, political fanaticism has led to many violent wars.

fanchonette

n
/ .fanchə'net /
F

an open tart covered with meringue or sometimes whipped cream.

Randy ordered a lemon fanchonette for dessert.

fandango

n
/ fan'daŋ(,)gɒ /
Pg? > Sp

a lively Spanish dance usually performed by a man and woman with castanets and in triple time.

Craig and Ursula danced a fandango in the high school talent competition.

fanfaronade

fantasize

v
/ 'fantə.sīz /
Gk > L > F > E + Ecf
create or develop imaginative and often fantastic views, ideas, or explanations.

After Calvin was elected to the student council, all he ever did was fantasize about becoming president of the United States.

fantoccini

n pl
/ .fäntə'chēnē /
L > It

puppets moved by strings or mechanical devices.

So many spectators stopped to watch the fantoccini that the puppet shows had to be moved to one of the park's larger amphitheaters.

farad

n
/ 'farad /
E name
the practical meter-kilogram-second unit of capacitance equal to the capacitance of a capacitor between whose plates there appears a potential of 1 volt when it is charged by 1 coulomb.
Todd calculated the necessary capacitance of the insulation to be exactly 1 farad.

farcical

adj
/ 'färsəkəl /
L

receiving or meriting laughter or amused scorn as utterly without claim to serious consideration or as laughably inept.

Shakespeare employs farcical characters in many of his plays to provide comic relief.

farcically

farewell

farinaceous

adj
/ .farə'nāshəs /
L

containing or rich in starch.

Common farinaceous foods include bread and pasta.

faro

farouche

adj
/ fə'rüsh /
L > F

lacking social graces and experience : marked by shyness and lack of polish.

As a teenager, Inez was rather farouche, hesitant to make eye contact with strangers.

farraginous

farrago

n
/ fə'rä(,)gɒ /
L

a confused, disordered, or irrational assemblage (as of words or ideas).

The candidate's concession speech was a rambling farrago that underscored his instability.

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farthingale

n
/ 'färthən.gāl /
L > Sp > F

a support worn especially in the 16th century beneath a skirt to swell out and extend it at the hip line.

No lady-in-waiting at the court of Queen Elizabeth I would have been seen in public without a farthingale.

fascinate

fascine

fascism

n
/ 'fa.shizəm /
L

any program for setting up a centralized autocratic national regime with severely nationalistic policies exercising rigid censorship and forcible suppression of opposition.

Given the current regime's fascism, a coup was inevitable.

fashion

fastidious

fastish

adj
/ 'fastish /
E

rather speedy.

Jane's mutt was a fastish runner despite its injured leg.

fatal

adj
/ 'fād·l /
L&F > E
causing death.
The cholera had broken out in its most fatal form.

fathom

n
/ 'fathəm /
E

a unit of length equal to 6 feet based on the distance between fingertips of a man's outstretched arms and used especially for measuring the depth of water.

The fathom, once standard on British admiralty charts, has been replaced by the meter.

fatigue

n
/ fə'tēg /
F

weariness from work or exertion.

Fatigue results from doing too much too fast.

fatuous

adj
/ 'fachəwəs /
L
marked by want of intelligence and rational consideration.
Lenny characterized Nestor's attempts to build a perpetual motion machine as fatuous.

faucet

fauna

n
/ 'fōnə /
L

animals in general or animal life especially as distinguished from flora.

The customs agent asked Bart if he was bringing any flora or fauna into the country.

Fauntleroy

adj
/ 'fōntlə.ròi /
E literary name
characterized by a short tailored jacket, knee-length trousers, rather frilly shirt, wide collar with rounded corners, or large loose bow.
Lulu's masterpiece was a painting of her little brother dressed in a Fauntleroy costume, holding their basset hound by its collar.

faveolate

adj
/ fə'veələt /
L

honeycombed.

The tiny chapel had a faveolate ceiling.

fealty

n
/ 'fē(ə)ltē /
L > F > E
faithfulness, allegiance.
One by one, the nobles knelt before the queen and swore fealty to the crown.

feasibility

n
/ ,fēzə'bilədē /
L > F > E
the capability of being done, executed, or effected.
Engineers are studying the feasibility of constructing a tunnel under the river.

feasible

adj
/ 'fēzəbəl /
L > F > E
capable of being done, executed, or effected.
Because our Constitution is simple and practical, it is feasible to meet extraordinary needs by making changes without loss of essential form.

feature

febrifugal

adj
/ fə'brif(y)əgəl /
L
mitigating or removing fever.
Aspirin is well known for its analgesic and febrifugal properties.

febrility

n
/ fə'brilədē /
L
feverishness.
As her febrility increased, the patient became delirious.

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feckless

adj
/ 'fek.ləs /
E

impractical and shiftless.

Mort was worried that his long periods of unemployment would make him look feckless when he applied for a job.

fecund

adj
/ 'fek.ənd /
L

marked by noteworthy intellectual productivity and inventiveness.

The Renaissance was a fecund era for the arts.

federal

fedora

n
/ fə'dɔrə /

F name

a soft felt hat with a low crown creased lengthwise and with or without a high roll on the side brim.
Brent stepped into the spotlight and pulled his fedora low over one eye.

feign

feigned

feigning

v
/ fāniŋ /
L > F > E

simulating falsely.

Darla wondered if her mother was feigning good feelings about her decision to marry Edgar.

feint

v
/ 'fānt /

F

make a pretense of.

George broke his hand when he attempted to feint a punch at the wall but overshot his target.

felicific

felicitous

adj
/ fə'lisədəs /
L

marked by general happiness or good fortune.

All of Rob's college roommates showed up for the felicitous occasion of his wedding.

felicity

n
/ fə'lisədē /
L

the quality or state of being happy.

Liberty from British rule became more and more necessary for the felicity of the American colonists.

feliform

adj
/ 'fēlə.fōrm /

L + Lcf > Ecf

resembling a cat.

Eric found a feliform stone in a cave.

felonious

felsenmeer

n
/ 'felzən.me(ə)r /

G

an assemblage of rock fragments completely mantling the surface and commonly present in mountainous regions.

Our guide showed us a field of felsenmeer formed from underlying bedrock by the action produced by frost.

feminine

adj
/ 'femənən /

L

female.

The feminine characters were played by men and the masculine characters were played by women in Cornell Theatre's production of King Lear.

femoral

adj
/ 'femərəl /
L

[has homonym: femerell] of, relating to, or located near the thigh.

The femoral artery supplies blood to the abdomen and lower extremities.

fenestrated

adj
/ 'fenə.strədəd /

L

provided with or characterized by windows.

Symmetrically fenestrated buildings characterize Georgian architecture.

fenestration

fennel

n
/ 'fenəl /

L > E

a perennial European herb introduced to North America and cultivated for the aromatic flavor of its seeds.

Celene often flavors her vegetables with curry powder and fennel.

feracious

adj
/ fə'rāshəs /

L

producing abundantly : prolific.

Sylvia decided to can some of the tomatoes from her extraordinarily feracious plants.

feral

adj
/ 'ferəl /

L

lacking a human personality due to being reared in isolation from all or nearly all human contacts.

The television executive rejected the idea of another series about a feral child trying to adjust to modern culture.

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feretory

n
/ 'ferətɔrē /
Gk > L
a place for keeping an ornate coffin for the relics of a saint.
Every two hours the monks at the shrine of St. Dionysios in Greece perform a prayer service and open the feretory for viewing.

fermata

n
/ fer'mädə /
L > It
a prolongation at the discretion of the performer of a musical note, chord, or rest beyond its given time value.
To the conductor's consternation, Dean exaggerated each fermata.

fermeture

ferocious

ferraiolone

ferret

n
/ 'ferət /
L > F > E
a semidomesticated variety of the European polecat.
Carl's ferret comes to him for a reward every time he squeezes a squeaky toy.

ferrous

ferrule

n
/ 'ferəl /
L > F > E
[has homonym: feral] a band or cap usually of metal enclosing the end of a cane, tool handle, table leg, or similar object to strengthen it or prevent splitting and wearing.
Both the knob and the ferrule of Mr. Benson's walking stick were made of finely engraved silver.

ferruminate

v
/ fə'rümənāt /
L
join together (as metals) : solder.
Fortunately, Tom's dad was able to ferruminate the broken parts of the metal toy.

fervent

adj
/ 'fərvənt /
L
of great intensity; specifically : characterized by often deep intensity of feeling or expression.
Natalia's remorseful look and fervent plea for leniency did not sway the vice-principal.

fervorous

adj
/ 'fərv(ə)rəs /
L
full of intensity of feeling or expression.
The crowd couldn't help but be swayed by Greg's fervorous speech.

fescue

festoon

festucine

adj
/ 'fest(y)əsīn /
L
of the color straw yellow.
Dorothy's blue eyes suited her festucine hair.

feud

n
/ 'fyüd /
Gmc > F > E
a relationship of aggressive hostility : quarrel.
A feud over the property boundaries developed between the two families.

fianchetto

v
/ ,fēən'ched(,)ō /
F + It
move (a bishop) in a chess game to the position Knight 2.
The analysts correctly predicted that Evangeline would fianchetto her bishop.

fiasco

n
/ fē'a(,)skō /
Gmc > It
an utter and often ridiculous failure especially of an ambitious or pretentious undertaking.
The attempt to distribute campaign leaflets by air turned into a fiasco when the wind changed direction.

fibrillar

fibrillation

n
/ ,fibrə'lāshən /
L
very rapid irregular contractions of the muscle fibers of the heart resulting in a lack of synchronism between heartbeat and pulse beat.
Ventricular fibrillation is a condition in which the heart twitches haphazardly instead of propelling blood forward in an organized way.

fibrositis

fibrous

adj
/ 'fibrəs /
L
containing, consisting of, or like fibers.
The fibrous content of fruits and vegetables is beneficial to the digestive system.

fichu

fictile

fiction

fictitious

fideism

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

fidelity

n
/ fə'delədē /
L

the quality or state of being faithful or loyal (as to a person, cause, party, or nation).

When taking the oath of office, the president pledged fidelity to the Constitution.

fiduciary

adj
/ fə'd(y)üşhē.ērē /
L

of, having to do with, or involving a confidence or trust.

Zoe acted in a fiduciary capacity during the lease negotiations.

fiefdom

n
/ 'fēfdəm /
F + E

an area over which one exercises control.

The manager's fiefdom consisted of two departments and the company newsletter.

fiendish

fierce

fiery

adj
/ 'fi(ə)rē /
E

of the color of fire : red.

Kevin knew that a photograph would not portray the fiery sunset in its full splendor.

filament

n
/ 'filəmənt /
L > F

a fine conductor that is rendered incandescent by the passage of an electric current.

Beulah could see that the filament was broken, so she replaced the bulb.

filasse

n
/ fə'las /
L > F

a vegetable fiber prepared for manufacture.

At the mill, sisal plants are processed into filasse.

filial

adj
/ 'filēəl /
L

befitting a child in relation to his or her parents.

During adolescence, many children feel uncomfortable demonstrating filial love in public.

filibuster

n
/ 'filəbəstə(r) /
F > Sp

the use of extreme delaying tactics (as speaking merely to consume time) in an attempt to prevent action by the majority in a deliberative assembly.

The Senate effectively killed the bill with a filibuster.

filoselle

finance

financier

n
/ .finən'si(ə)r /
F

a large-scale investor.

Marv's uncle, a Boston financier, works one day a week in a soup kitchen.

finesse

finessing

v
/ fə'nesɪŋ /
L > F

bringing about or managing by adroit manipulation.

Vigor and resolution, not maneuvering and finessing, were needed to get the St. Bernard into the car.

fingent

finger

finialed

adj
/ 'finēəld /
L > F > E

provided with a capping ornament.

The lampposts and street signs were elaborately finialed with iron pineapples.

finite

adj
/ 'fi.nīt /
L > E

having clear limits.

Phoebe's creativity was bound by a finite set of resources.

firkin

n
/ 'fərkən /
D > E

a British unit of weight for butter equal to 56 pounds.

Lord Nelson wrote, "I beg that you will send us the following articles: 50 pounds loaf sugar, 1 firkin of good butter, and 2 pounds of black pepper."

firmament

n
/ 'fərməmənt /
L > E

the vault or arch of the sky : heavens.

Carmen looked to the firmament for a sign, but none was forthcoming.

firnification

n
/ .fɪrnəfə'kāshən /
G + L > E

the process whereby snow becomes partially compacted and forms the surface part of the upper end of a glacier.

Solid ice is the end product of firnification.

fiscal

adj
/ 'fiskəl /
F > Sp

of or relating to financial matters.

Several of the president's advisors on fiscal policy are participating in the symposium.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

fissile

adj
/ 'fisəl /
L

capable of being split, cleft, or divided in the direction of the grain or along natural planes of cleavage.
The fissile quality of cedar makes it an excellent material for boxmaking.

fission

fissiparous

adj
/ fi'sipərəs /
L + L

tending to break up into parts or to disintegrate : divisive, factional.
Strong leadership is needed to keep the fissiparous tendencies of the political party in check.

fissure

n
/ 'fिशə(r) /
L

[has homonym: fisher] a narrow opening, chasm, or crack of some length and considerable depth usually occurring from some breaking, rending, or parting.
A fissure ran through Irene's backyard after the earthquake.

fisticuffs

n pl
/ 'fistəkəfs /
E + E

a fight with the fists : boxing.
The two campers' friendly rivalry ended in a round of mock fisticuffs.

fixture

n
/ 'fiksčə(r) /
L

something that is attached as a permanent appendage or structural part; specifically : an electric lighting device usually ornamental and permanently mounted in place.
Mel attached a light fixture to the side of his house for protection against burglars.

flagellum

n
/ flə'jeləm /
L

a long tapering projection that is the primary organ of motion of many algae and bacteria.
The bacterium whipped its flagellum furiously.

flageolet

flagitious

flagitiously

adv
/ flə'jishəsle /
L > E

in a grossly wicked manner.
The criminal was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for his flagitiously cruel assault.

flagon

n
/ 'flagən /
Gmc? > L > F > E
[has near homonym: flacon] a large usually metal or pottery vessel with handle and spout and often a lid used to hold liquid.
The knights passed around a flagon of ale before riding off to battle.

flail

flambeau

n
/ 'flam.bō /
F
a flaming torch usually made by combining thick wicks saturated with a quick-burning substance (as pitch).
A procession of skiers zigzagged down the slope, each of them bearing a flambeau.

flamboyantly

adv
/ flam'bōi(y)əntlē /
F

in a showy and unrestrained manner.
At the pep rally the students flamboyantly demonstrated their support for the football team.

flamenco

n
/ flə'men(ə)kō /
D > Sp

[has near homonym: flamingo] a vigorous rhythmic dance of the Andalusian Gypsies.
The dancer entertained the patrons at the Spanish restaurant with a rousing flamenco.

flamingo

n
/ flə'miŋ(ə)gō /
L > OProv > Sp > Pg
[has near homonym: flamenco] any of several aquatic birds that have remarkably long legs and neck, webbed feet, and usually rosy-white plumage.
Tom and his buddies placed a giant plastic pink flamingo on the roof of the school.

flammable

adj
/ 'flaməbəl /
L
capable of being easily ignited and of burning with extreme rapidity.
Both gasoline and kerosene are flammable, but gasoline is more explosive.

flammeous

adj
/ 'flamēəs /
L
consisting of or resembling the color of flame.
Flammeous maple leaves carpeted the lawn of the inn.

flammiiferous

adj
/ fla'mif(ə)rəs /
L + EcF
producing flame or bright with flame.
The flammiiferous volcano was an awesome spectacle to behold.

flaneur

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

flange

n
/ 'flanj /
F? > E
a rim or edge projecting at right angles to provide a means of attachment to another part.
The plumber pointed out a chipped flange that had caused the leak.

flannel

adj
/ 'flanl /
W > E
a napped cotton fabric of soft yarns.
The sleeves of his plaid flannel shirt were rolled back to the elbow.

flannelette

flaunting

v
/ 'flntɪŋ /
Scand?
seeking to attract attention especially by appearing or acting brash and brazen.
During the party Terry seemed to be flaunting his ability to play piano.

flautino

n
/ flau'tē(,)nō /
It
a small flute : piccolo.
Harriet plays many wind instruments, but she especially enjoys playing flautino in a baroque music group.

flaxen

fleabane

n
/ 'flē.bān /
E + E
any of various plants of the family Compositae that are supposed to drive away fleas.
A young rabbit was hidden under a clump of fleabane.

fleeciness

fleet

n
/ 'flēt /
E
a number of warships under a single command : a naval force.
Naval Intelligence learned that terrorists were noting information about the movement of the fleet.

flexibility

flexuosity

flexure

n
/ 'flekshə(r) /
L
the slight bending of an astronomical observing instrument caused by the weight of its parts.
Emily reinforced her telescope with strips of titanium to minimize flexure.

flibbertigibbet

n
/ 'flibə(r)dē.jibət /
E
a light-minded or silly restless person.
Mrs. French proved far less of a flibbertigibbet than the world took her to be.

flimflammer

flippant

adj
/ 'flipənt /
imit? + Ecf
treating or tending to treat with unsuitable levity that which is serious or to which respect is due.
The principal chastised Clyde and his friends for their flippant behavior during the memorial service.

flocculent

flokati

n
/ flō'kātē /
Gk
a hand-woven Greek wool rug with a thick shaggy pile.
Katina loves to hear the story of how her grandparents came to the United States with all their possessions wrapped in one flokati.

floppy

adj
/ 'fläpədə /
E imit
soft and flexible.
Moirra purchased her floppy straw hat during a visit to Key West.

florid

adj
/ 'flōrəd /
L
[has near homonym: fluoride]
flushed or tinged with red : ruddy.
Marsha's face was florid when she finished her five-mile run.

floriferous

adj
/ flō'rif(ə)rəs /
L + Ecf
bearing flowers; especially : blooming freely.
Begonias are floriferous even in the shade.

florilegium

n
/ flōrə'lējēəm /
L
a volume or collection of brief extracts or writings : anthology.
Frank pulled a tattered florilegium from the shelf.

florisugent

adj
/ flōrə'süjənt /
L + L
sucking nectar from flowers.
The honeysuckle attracted the florisugent hummingbird.

floruit

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floscular

adj
/ 'fläskyələ(r) /

L
composed of florets.
A daisy bears floscular flower heads.

flotilla

n
/ flō'tilə /
ON > F > Sp

a small fleet or a fleet of small watercraft.
The Boy Scouts launched a flotilla of toy sailboats across the lake.

flotsam

n
/ 'flätsəm /
F > AF
wreckage of a ship or its cargo found floating on the sea.
Flotsam is part of wreckage, whereas jetsam has been deliberately cast overboard.

flourish

fluctuant

adj
/ 'fläkchəwənt /
L
moving like a wave : varying and unstable.
The fluctuant beam from Amy's flashlight resulted from weak batteries.

flue

flummery

n
/ 'fləm(ə)rē /
W
porridge made of flour or meal.
Hulbert made flummery for dessert.

fluorescent

adj
/ flū(ə)'res'nt /
L > F + L > Ecf
[has homonym: florescent]
emitting electromagnetic radiation especially in the form of visible light.
The fluorescent bulb above Gary's cubicle thrummed noisily.

fluoridation

n
/ flūrə'dāshən /
L + Ecff
the adding of a binary compound of fluorine to drinking water.
Fluoridation has been proven to deter tooth decay.

fluorocarbon

n
/ 'flū(ə)rō.kärbən /
L + L
any of a class of chemically inert compounds (as tetrafluoroethylene) composed entirely of carbon and fluorine and used chiefly as lubricants and in making resins and plastics.
Fluorocarbon is used to make the nonstick coatings for pots and pans.

fluvial

adj
/ 'flüvēəl /
L
of or relating to rivers.
A lawyer specializing in fluvial law told Emmett that he could claim possession of the newly formed island in the Rum River.

fluxion

n
/ 'fläkshən /
L
the action of flowing.
The fluxion of many liquids slows in cold weather.

fodder

n
/ 'fädə(r) /
E
something (as hay, vegetables, corn) fed to domestic animals.
Field corn makes good fodder.

fogginess

n
/ 'fögēnəs /
Scand? + Ecff
the quality or state of being covered or enveloped with vapor condensed to fine particles of water suspended in the lower atmosphere.
Severe fogginess was blamed for the ten-car pileup on the expressway.

foible

n
/ 'föibəl /
F
a minor flaw or shortcoming in personal character or behavior : failing, weakness.
Kevin's tendency to procrastinate is a foible he claims he will one day correct.

foist

v
/ 'föist /
D
force another to accept especially by stealth or deceit.
Brent knew that Karen would foist another kitten upon him if he wasn't careful.

foliaceous

foliage

n
/ 'fōl(ē)ij /
F&L
the mass of leaves of a plant as produced in nature : leafage.
Tourists who come to see fall foliage at its peak are sometimes referred to as "leaf peepers."

foliiform

adj
/ 'fōlēə.fōrm /
F
having the shape of a leaf.
In October, Rhoda and Lamar decorated the classroom windows with foliiform cutouts.

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folliculitis

n
/ fəˌlikyəˈlɪdəs /

L
inflammation of one or more small cavities in the skin.
An ingrown hair on Bo's cheek resulted in folliculitis.

folliculose

fomentation

fontinal

adj
/ ˈfəntˈnəl /

L
growing in or near springs.
Cottonwoods are well-known fontinal trees throughout the American Southwest.

forage

v
/ ˈfɔːrɪj /
Gmc > F > E
wander or rove in search of food.
The survivors of the airplane crash on the remote mountainside decided to forage in groups of three.

foraminate

adj
/ fəˈraməˌnāt /

L
perforated.
Sid examined the foraminate leaf under a microscope.

foray

n
/ ˈfɔːrā /
F > E
a raid or brief invasion.
Captain McMaster led his troops on a foray into the village.

forbearance

forceps

forecaster

n
/ ˈfɔːrkastə(r) /

E
one who predicts weather conditions on the basis of correlated meteorological observations.
When the forecaster predicted freezing rain, the highway department loaded up its trucks with sand and salt.

foreclosable

foreignness

forensic

forensics

n pl
/ fəˈren(t)sɪks /

L
the art or study of argumentative discourse.
Tara's performance in her class in forensics practically guaranteed her a spot on the debate club team.

foreordain

forestallment

forfeit

v
/ ˈfɔːrfət /

L > F > E
lose or lose the right to by some error, fault, offense, or crime.
Individuals who are convicted of a felony forfeit their right to vote.

forfeiture

forgeable

forgery

n
/ ˈfɔːrj(ə)rē /

L > F > E
an act of falsely or fraudulently making or altering a document.
Lorna is charged with two counts of check forgery.

forgotten

forlorn

adj
/ fə(r)ˈlɒ(ə)rən /

E
sad and lonely especially by reason of emptiness or abandonment.
The forlorn widow was most appreciative of the party her neighbors held to honor her birthday.

formaldehyde

n
/ fɔːrmˈaldəˌhɪd /

L + Ar > Sp > L + L + Gk
an aqueous solution that is used chiefly as a disinfectant and preservative.
The medical laboratory contained specimens preserved in formaldehyde.

formicary

n
/ ˈfɔːrməˌkerē /

L
an ant hill or ant nest.
Junior made the mistake of sitting on a formicary of red ants.

formicivorous

adj
/ ˌfɔːrməˈsɪv(ə)rəs /

L + Ecf + L + Ecf
feeding on ants.
Formicivorous woodpeckers spend much of their time on the ground looking for ants.

formidable

adj
/ ˈfɔː(r)mədəbəl /

L > E
tending to inspire awe or wonder usually by reason of notable size, quantity, superiority, or excellence.
Though the competition was formidable, Bernie was confident he would emerge victorious.

forsooth

adv
/ fə(r)ˈsʊθ /

E
in truth : certainly.
Forsooth, the queen was the most beautiful woman in the world.

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forsythia

n
/ fə(r)'sithēə /
Brit name
any plant of a small genus of ornamental shrubs that have bright yellow flowers which appear before the leaves in early spring.
The gardener planted forsythia along the entire outer edge of the yard.

fortemente

fortieth

fortissimo

adj
/ fò(r)'tisə.mo /
L > It
very loud—used as a direction in music.
When playing the fortissimo passage of her lesson, Suzanne banged so loudly on the piano that the neighbor's dog began to bark.

fortitude

n
/ 'fò(r)də.tüd /
L > E
the strength or firmness of mind that enables a person to encounter danger with coolness and courage.
John Kennedy displayed exceptional fortitude after his patrol boat was attacked during World War II.

fortuitous

adj
/ fò(r)'tüədəs /
L
occurring by chance without evident causal need or relation or without deliberate intention.
Their meeting was fortuitous, but Dan and Mattie believed that they had been destined to be together.

fortunate

fossil

fossilize

v
/ 'fäsə.līz /
L > ISV
turn (as remains of organisms from past geologic eras) into a mineralized form in Earth's crust.
Since not all plant materials fossilize equally well, some plants will be preserved and others will vanish in the course of time.

fossorial

adj
/ fä'sōrēəl /
L
adapted to digging.
Gophers are fossorial rodents having strong claws on their forelimbs.

foudroyant

fougasse

foul

adj
/ 'faül /
E
offensive to the senses : rotten.
The spoiled contents of the refrigerator created an extremely foul odor.

foulard

foundation

foundry

n
/ 'faüdrē /
F
a building or establishment where metal or glass casting is carried on.
The students saw molten metal being poured into engine block molds at the foundry.

fracas

fraction

fragile

fragrant

frailty

franchise

franchisee

n
/ .franchī'zē /
L > F + Ecf
one who is granted a right to operate a unit in a chain of business establishments.
The franchisee agreed to pay the franchisor an initial fee and a percentage of gross sales.

frangible

adj
/ 'franjabəl /
L
capable of being broken : breakable, brittle, fragile.
Road signs are designed to be frangible so that they won't severely damage cars that hit them.

frankincense

n
/ 'frāŋkən.sen(t)s /
E
a gum resin containing volatile oil.
Aunt Ruby likes to burn frankincense at Christmastime.

fraternal

fraud

n
/ 'fröd /
L > F > E
deceit, trickery; especially : misrepresentation intended to induce another to part with something of value or to surrender a legal right.
Joel is suing his former manager for fraud and breach of contract.

fraudulent

adj
/ 'fröjələnt /
L
characterized by or based on trickery or deceit especially when involving misrepresentation.
The manufacturer was charged with fraudulent advertising.

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fraught

adj
/ 'frɒt /
OFris? > G > D > E
burdened or menaced with.
The work of the firefighter is fraught with danger.

freckles

freight

fremitus

frenetically

adv
/ frə'nedək(ə)lē /
Gk > L > F > E
in a frenzied, hectic manner.
Four dancers moved frenetically around the stage.

frescade

n
/ fres'kād /
Gmc > OProv > F
a cool walk : shady place.
The landscape architect's suggestion of a long frescade under a grape arbor thrilled her client.

fresco

n
/ 'fres.kō /
Gmc > It
the art of painting on freshly spread moist lime plaster with pigments suspended in a water vehicle.
Fresco is a demanding technique because the image cannot be changed after the plaster dries.

fresnel

n
/ frā'nel /
F name
a unit of frequency equal to 1 trillion cycles per second.
A rarely used multiple of the hertz is the fresnel, which was named for the French scientist Augustin Jean Fresnel.

Freudian

adj
/ 'frɔɪdēən /
Austrian name + Ecf
of, relating to, or according with the theories of Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud and his system of psychoanalysis.
A Freudian slip of the tongue may reveal the speaker's deep-seated concerns and reasons for action.

friable

adj
/ 'frɪəbəl /
L > F
easily crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder.
The sand sculpture was so friable that it crumbled in Carl's hands when he tried to pick it up.

fricassee

n
/ 'frikə.sē /
F
a stew of meat or other foods in light or brown gravy.
Mrs. Delaney prefers to make her fricassee with chicken.

fried

adj
/ 'frɪd /
L > F > E
cooked in hot fat.
Milton's favorite meal is fried catfish and cornbread.

friend

friendliness

frieze

frigorific

adj
/ .frɪgə'rɪfɪk /
L
causing cold.
Michael was curious about how the frigorific device for wine bottles could possibly work.

frisson

n
/ frē'sɒn /
L > F
shudder, quiver, chill; especially : a pleasurable sensation of fright or gloom : thrill.
Amy suddenly awakened from a nightmare and felt a frisson of terror.

fritillary

n
/ 'frɪd'lerē /
L
any of numerous butterflies that usually are orange with black spots on the upper side of both wings and have silvery spots on the underside of the hind wings.
As Cora was tending her garden, she observed a crab spider capturing a fritillary on a flower.

frittata

n
/ frē'tādə /
L > It
an unfolded omelet often containing chopped vegetables or meats.
Tony's frittata was filled with seasoned asparagus tips.

frivolity

n
/ frə'välədē /
L > F
the quality or state of being not serious : playfulness.
The Mardi Gras celebration was marked by boisterousness and frivolity.

frivolous

adj
/ 'frɪv(ə)ləs /
L > E
of little weight or importance.
Mr. Peterson offered only frivolous remarks at the hearing.

frolic

frolicking

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frolicsome

adj

/ 'frälík.səm /

L + Ecf

full of gaiety and mirth : playful.

Each year the Kentucky Derby attracts horse lovers who enjoy the frolicsome festivities associated with the race.

frondeur

n

/ frɔ̃'dœœr /

L? > F

rebel, malcontent, dissident.

The mayor's denouncement referred to Jules as a "frondeur."

frontiersman

n

/ frən'ti(ə)rmən /

F > E

a man living at the edge of known civilization.

Daniel Boone was a famous Kentucky frontiersman of the 18th century.

frontispiece

n

/ frəntə.spēs /

L > F

an illustration preceding and usually facing the title page of a book or magazine.

Morgan was hired to draw the school yearbook's frontispiece.

fronton

n

/ 'frän.tän /

L > It > F

a court or building for the game of jai alai.

The fronton looked bigger on television than in actuality.

froufrou

n

/ 'frü.frü /

F imit

abundant or excessive

ornamentation (as ruffles, beading, flowers) in women's clothing.

The slippers covered with froufrou had to be "for looks" only.

frugal

adj

/ 'frügəl /

L

economical in the use or expenditure of resources.

The "Golden Fleece Award" was started by Senator William Proxmire, who advocated a more frugal government.

fruition

n

/ frü'ishən /

L > F > E

the state of being real, accomplished, or complete.

The new civic center came to fruition after many years' planning and labor.

fruticetum

n

/ früdə'sēdəm /

L

a collection of shrubs grown for ornament or study.

At the botanical garden, the arboretum and fruticetum were combined under one roof.

fruticose

fuchsia

fudge

fughetta

n

/ f(y)ü'gedə /

It

a short or condensed musical piece in which one or two melodic themes are repeated by successively entering voices.

The Vienna Boys' Choir performed a fughetta in their concert at St. Paul's Cathedral.

fugitive

fugue

fuguist

n

/ 'fyügəst /

L > It

one who composes or performs fugues.

As a fuguist, Johann Sebastian Bach has never been excelled.

fulcrum

n

/ 'fülkrəm /

L

prop, support; specifically : the support about which a lever turns.

Using the edge of his plate for a fulcrum, Danny put peas on his fork and catapulted them across the cafeteria.

fulgorant

adj

/ 'fülg(y)ərənt /

L

flashing like lightning : dazzling.

Emily's fulgorant diamond brooch attracted many eyes at the dinner party.

fuliginous

adj

/ fyü'lijənəs /

L

having the color of soot : dark, dusky.

Smoke-belching factories cast a fuliginous cloud over the entire city.

fulminate

v

/ 'fülmänāt /

L

issue or send forth censures or invectives menacingly or authoritatively.

The neighbor's habit of mowing the lawn early every Sunday morning caused Dad to fulminate under his breath.

fulsome

adj

/ 'fүlsəm /

E

offensive to the senses : disgusting.

The fulsome odor of a skunk drove the campers out of their tent.

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fulvous

adj
/ 'fʊlvəs /
L

dull brownish yellow.

When Mr. Brown's soybean field turned fulvous, he knew it was time to harvest.

fumigate

funambulist

n
/ fyü'nambyələst /
L

an acrobat who performs feats on a rope extended through the air at some height.

A hush came over the crowd as the funambulist balanced himself on one foot.

funeral

n
/ 'fyün(ə)rəl /
L > E

the observances held in honor of or on behalf of one who has died.

Bonnie wanted dancing at her funeral, so she arranged for a band before she died.

fungicide

n
/ 'fənjə.sɪd /
L

an agent that destroys a group of lower plants including molds, rusts, mildews, mushrooms, and yeasts.

A fungicide was sprayed on the apple trees to protect the fruit.

funicular

adj
/ fyü'nikyələ(r) /
L

dependent on the tension of a cord or cable.

Too nervous to take the funicular tramway, Selena chose to drive to the top of the mountain.

furfuraceous

adj
/ ˌfɜrf(y)ə'rāshəs /
L

consisting of or covered with flaky particles : scaly, scurfy.

The dermatologist recommended a dandruff-removing shampoo to treat Linda's furfuraceous scalp.

furibund

furlough

n
/ 'fɜr(ɪ)lō /
D

a leave of absence granted to a governmental or institutional employee (as a soldier, civil servant, or missionary).

While on furlough last year, the Lees raised \$10,000 for the dental clinic.

furniture

furtive

adj
/ 'fɜrdɪv /
L

done by stealth : secret.

Wendy's furtive attempt to sneak a cookie was interrupted by the appearance of her little brother.

fuselage

n
/ 'fyüsələzh /
F

the central body portion of an airplane designed to accommodate the crew and the passengers or cargo.

Leslie pointed out the bulbous fuselage of a Boeing 747 on the tarmac.

fusillade

n
/ 'fyüsəlād /
F

a number of shots fired simultaneously or in rapid succession especially with small arms : volley.

The first rank of infantrymen fired a fusillade, sank to their knees, and waited for the second rank to fire over their heads.

fusion

n
/ 'fyūzhən /
L

a merging of diverse elements into a unified whole.

The spicy pasta dish Fran ordered was a fusion of Italian and Thai cuisine.

fustian

n
/ 'fəschən /
L > F > E

pretentious writing or speech : an inflated style : bombast.

The literary journal refused to print Herman's overwrought fustian.

futilitarian

adj
/ (ɪ)fyü.tilə'terēən /
L

exhibiting or based on an attitude of uselessness.

The futilitarian worker doesn't try to improve his status because he can't see any chance of success.

gabbro

n
/ 'ga(ɪ)brō /
L? > It

a rock of a family of granular igneous rocks.

An outcropping of gabbro showed through the soil.

gabion

n
/ 'gābēən /
L > It > F

a hollow cylinder of wickerwork or strap iron like a basket without a bottom that is filled with stones and is sunk in water to form the foundation of a dam or similar structure.

With the availability of poured cement, the gabion became outmoded.

gadabout

gadgeteer

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gaggle

n
/ 'gagəl /
E
a flock of geese especially when on the water.

The largest goose in the gaggle was soon to play an important role in the holiday dinner.

gainsay

v
/ 'gān.sā /
E
speak against : contradict.
The ruling of the umpire allowed no one to gainsay his decision.

gait

gaiter

galactic

adj
/ gə'laktik /
Gk > L
extremely great : huge.
Ralph was overwhelmed by the store's galactic profusion of merchandise.

galaxy

Galbraithian

adj
/ gal'brāthēən /
American name
of or relating to the economic theories of John Kenneth Galbraith.
The speaker at the symposium claimed that Galbraithian theories on limited growth were not sound.

galette

gallantry

galleon

n
/ 'galēən /
F > Sp
[has homonyms and near homonym: gallein, Gallian and Galium] a heavily built chiefly square-rigged sailing ship of the 15th to early 18th centuries.
Traci built a model of a Spanish galleon out of matchsticks for her history project.

gallery

n
/ 'gal(ə)rē /
geog name > L > F
a platform projecting from one or more interior walls (as of a theater) for additional accommodation (as of a part of an audience); especially : the highest of such platforms in a theater commonly having the cheapest seats.
For the opera's opening performance there wasn't a vacant seat in the entire gallery.

gallimaufry

n
/ ,galə'mōfrē /
F
medley, mixture, hodgepodge, jumble.
Ever since her around-the-world trip, Lindsey uses a gallimaufry of foreign phrases when she speaks.

galling

gallinule

n
/ 'galə.n(y)ül /
L
any of several aquatic birds that resemble a small domestic hen in general proportions and carriage.
Mitch found an injured gallinule in the rushes near Pearson's dock.

gallipot

gallon

n
/ 'galən /
F > E
a unit of liquid capacity equal to 231 cubic inches.
Long-term blood donors tally their donations by the gallon.

galloon

n
/ gə'lün /
F
a narrow ornamental fabric used especially for trimming clothes or upholstery.
Instead of the more common lace, Ling chose a white galloon for the trim on her wedding dress.

gallop

galloping

adj
/ 'galəpiŋ /
F
marked by a bounding and fast natural three-beat gait of a horse.
A galloping horse splashed through the waves on Sunset Beach.

gallyware

galore

adj
/ gə'lō(ə)r /
IrGael
abundant, plentiful, profuse.
Edie found bargains galore at the flea market.

galosh

n
/ gə'lāsh /
F > E
a high overshoe designed to protect the shoe in wet weather or in wet areas and usually made with a rubber or water-repellent fabric.
The galosh was the first type of footwear to employ a zipper fastener.

galvanize

v
/ 'galvənīz /
It name > F
stimulate as if by the application of an electric current.
The enemy attack served to galvanize the government into immediate action.

gambado

n
/ gam'bā(,)dō /
It
a long boot or legging attached to each side of a saddle to protect the rider's feet and legs from the wet or cold.
Preparing for a ride in the rain, the horseman attached a gambado to each stirrup strap.

gambit

gamble

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gambol

v
/ ˈɡæmbəl /
GK > L > OProv > F
[has homonym: gamble] bound or spring as in dancing or play.
Susan watched the fawns gambol in the field.

gamopetalous

adj
/ ˌɡæməˈpetəˈləs /
Gk
having the corolla composed of united petals.
The flowers of the huckleberry, bluebell, and foxglove are gamopetalous.

gamut

n
/ ˈɡæmət /
Gk > L
an entire range from one extreme to another.
The gamut of fall fashions included micro-miniskirts as well as ankle-length dresses.

ganglion

n
/ ˈɡæŋɡlɪən /
Gk > L
a mass of nerve tissue containing nerve cells.
Each insect ganglion controls certain activities and is more or less independent of the others.

gangrene

n
/ ˈɡæŋɡrɪn /
Gk > L
local death of soft tissues (as from disease, injury, or infection) resulting from loss of blood supply.
The soldier knew that if gangrene set in, his wounded leg would need to be amputated.

garage

gardenesque

adj
/ ˌɡärdənˈesk /
Gmc > F > E + Ecf
resembling or relating to a plot of land devoted to the growing of herbs, fruits, flowers, or vegetables.
Rosita turned her balcony into a gardenesque area with vines and potted plants.

garderobe

n
/ ˈɡärdrɔb /
F > E
a wardrobe or its contents.
The seamstress hung the completed gown in the garderobe.

gargantuan

adj
/ ɡärˈɡanch(əw)ən /
F name
of tremendous size or volume.
The seemingly gargantuan gorilla in the movie was really a four-foot-high computerized model.

garish

garlion

n
/ ˈɡärlyən /
E + L > F > E
a hybrid vegetable resulting from a cross between garlic and onion.
Shannon uses garlion in her spaghetti sauce.

garnishee

v
/ ˌɡärnäˈshē /
Gmc > F > E + Ecf
take by legal writ the wages or other property of a debtor.
Norton was afraid the court would garnishee his entire salary to pay his back taxes.

garrison

garrulity

n
/ ɡəˈrülədē /
L
the quality or state of being talkative or long-winded.
Paul talks so much that his teacher calls him a “geyser of garrulity.”

garrulous

adj
/ ˈgarələs /
L
given to conversation : loquacious, talkative.
The old colonel turned quite garrulous when talking of war.

gasconade

v
/ ˌɡaskəˈnād /
F name
boast or bluster especially to excess.
Mr. Clay could gasconade at such length that his listeners became bored.

gaseous

adj
/ ˈɡasēəs /
L
having the form of or being a fluid (as air) that has neither independent shape nor volume but tends to expand indefinitely.
The energy required to completely separate one mole of a solid ionic compound into gaseous ions is called “lattice energy.”

gasification

gastric

gastriloquist

n
/ ɡəˈstriləkwəst /
Gk + L
ventriloquist.
Lanny hired a gastriloquist to entertain at Betsy’s birthday party.

gastronomical

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gastronomy

n
/ gə'stränəmē /
Gk > F

the art or science of good eating :
epicurism.

*Chef Bernie specializes in French
gastronomy.*

gauche

adj
/ 'gōsh /
Gmc > F

lacking in social graces or ease,
tact, and familiarity with polite
usage.

*Gertrude was embarrassed by her
cousin's gauche behavior at the
christening.*

gaucherie

n
/ 'gōshə.rē /
Gmc > F

a tactless or awkward action; often
: a bit of social or literary crudity.

*Daphne's mom told her that using
one's dinner napkin as a
handkerchief is an unforgivable
gaucherie.*

gaufrette

n
/ gò'fret /
F

a wafer of crisply fried potato cut
to resemble a small waffle.

*At the summer festival the French
restaurant featured gaufrette.*

gauleiter

n
/ 'gau.līdə(r) /
G

a political functionary occupying a
subordinate but important position
in a totalitarian regime.

*The memoirs of the gauleiter
contained little of historical
importance.*

gauze

gazelle

n
/ gə'zel /
Ar > F

any of numerous small graceful and
swift African and Asian antelopes
noted for the luster and soft
expression of their eyes.

*The fawn and white coloration of
the gazelle serves to minimize
detection by predators.*

gazetteer

n
/ ˌgəzə'ti(ə)r /
Venetian dialect > It > F

a geographical dictionary in which
names and descriptions of places
are usually given in alphabetical
order.

*Chandra consulted her gazetteer to
find the capital of Sri Lanka.*

gazpacho

n
/ gá'spá(ː)chō /
Sp

a soup made of uncooked chopped
tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers,
onion, garlic with vinegar, oil, and
condiments, and served cold.

*The restaurant was famous for its
gazpacho.*

gegenschein

n
/ 'gāgən.shīn /
G

a faint elliptical nebulous light
about 20 degrees across on the
ecliptic and opposite the Sun.

*The gegenschein is lost in the light
of the Milky Way in the summer
and winter.*

gelatigenous

gelatinous

adj
/ jə'lat'nəs /
L > It > F + Ecf

resembling gelatin or jelly
especially in appearance and
consistency.

*Troy stepped on a gelatinous mass
of frog eggs.*

gendarme

n

/ 'zhän.därm /
F

a continental European police
officer; especially : a French police
officer.

*The gendarme asked the victim for
a description of the mugger.*

genealogy

n
/ ˌjēnē'äləjē /
Gk

a study of family ancestral lines
and the methods of investigation of
them.

*Many Americans interested in
genealogy eventually come to the
National Archives in Washington,
D.C., to do research.*

general

adj
/ 'jen(ə)rəl /
L

applicable or relevant to the whole
rather than to a limited part, group,
or section.

*The spring thaw began in one or
two areas, but soon there was a
general change in temperature
throughout the country.*

generalissimo

generosity

genesis

genethliacal

genial

adj
/ 'jēnyəl /
L

marked by sympathetic
cheerfulness, warmth, and
friendliness.

*Kim's goal was to make the club
members more genial and less
cliquish.*

geniohyoid

genitive

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geniture

n
/ 'jenə.chü(ə)r /
L

nativity, birth.

The geniture of the prince was an event of national importance.

genocide

n
/ 'jenə.sīd /
Gk + L

the use of deliberate systematic measures calculated to bring about the extermination of a racial, political, or cultural group.

What stands between civilization and genocide is the respect for the rights and lives of all human beings.

genre

n
/ 'zhä(ə)nrə /
L > F

a category of artistic composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content.

Most of the director's work has been in the genre of science fiction.

genteel

adj
/ jen'tēl /
L > F

free from vulgarity or rudeness : marked by delicacy of manner.

Despite his genteel manner, Senator Smith could be a ruthless opponent.

gentian

gentilitial

adj
/ ,jentə'lishəl /
L + Ecf

relating or peculiar to a people or a family.

In 1917 the gentilitial name of Britain's royal family was changed to Windsor.

gentility

genuflect

v
/ 'jenyə.flekt /
L

touch the knee to the floor or ground especially in worship.

Amy asked the tour guide if everyone had to genuflect upon entering the cathedral.

geochrony

n
/ jē'äkrənē /
Gk

a system of time divisions used in geology.

In geochrony, time is divided into eras, periods, and epochs.

geodesy

n
/ jē'ädəsē /
Gk

a branch of applied mathematics used to determine the exact positions and areas of large portions of Earth's surface and also the gravitational field of Earth.

An expert in geodesy, Dr. Buck determined the variation in gravity between the highest and lowest points of Earth's exposed surface.

geognosy

n
/ jē'ägnəsē /
Gk + Gk

a branch of geology that deals with the materials of Earth and its general exterior and interior constitution.

Hilda's research in geognosy involved classifying several kinds of minerals and recording their distribution throughout the world.

geography

n
/ jē'ägrəfē /
Gk

the descriptive science that deals with the surface of Earth and its features.

Chelsea was surprised by how much she learned about geography in her history class.

geometric

geosyncline

n
/ jē(,)ō'sin.klīn /
Gk

a great downward flexure of Earth's crust.

A deep layer of sediment has accumulated in the geosyncline.

geranium

n
/ jə'rānēəm /
Gk > L

any of a widely distributed genus of plants having regular usually white, pink, or purple flowers.

For decoration, Anita placed a potted geranium at the side of the front door.

geriatrics

n pl
/ ,jerē'atriks /
Gk + E

a branch of medicine that deals with the problems and diseases of old age and aging people.

Marie's expertise in geriatrics made her well qualified to work in the city's Department of Aging.

germane

adj
/ jə(r)'mān /
L > F > E

having a close relationship : appropriate, pertinent.

Judge Beacon ruled that the plaintiff's past record was not germane to the current case.

germicide

n
/ 'jərmə.sīd /
L > F

an agent that destroys germs (as disease germs).

Mouthwash is a common germicide.

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germinal

adj
/ 'jərmənəl /
L > F

being in the earliest stage of development.

Jonathan's social studies class is studying the germinal political ideas underlying our democratic government.

gerontocracy

gerrymander

v
/ 'jerē.mandə(r) /
American name + Gk > L
divide (an area) into political units so as to give special advantages to one group.

The governor vetoed the bill that would gerrymander a county in favor of his opponent.

gerund

n
/ 'jerənd /
L
the English verbal noun ending in -ing.

In the sentence "Swimming is Claudia's favorite activity," the word swimming is a gerund.

gestapo

n
/ gə'stä(,)pō /
G acronym
a secret-police organization that operates especially against persons suspected of treason or sedition and employs means held to be underhanded and terrorist.

In the novel, morality became nothing more than subservience to the dictates of the ruthless gestapo.

gesticulate

v
/ je'stikyə.lāt /
L
make gestures or motions of the body or limbs especially when speaking.
The way public figures gesticulate while talking is often fodder for comedians.

gesture

n
/ 'jes(h)chə(r) /
L
a movement usually of the body or limbs that symbolizes or emphasizes an idea, sentiment, or attitude.
When Alex made the winning touchdown, Coach Miller swung his hands up in the air as a gesture of victory.

gesundheit

interj
/ gə'zünt.hīt /
G
—used to wish good health especially to one who has just sneezed.
"Gesundheit" echoed throughout the school when Mr. Brown sneezed during an intercom announcement.

ghastliness

ghastly

adj
/ 'gastlē /
E
giving rise to terror : frightening.
The gnarled trees appeared ghastly in the moonlight.

ghetto

ghoul

ghoulish

adj
/ 'gūlish /
Ar
of, resembling, or suggestive of an evil being held to rob graves and feed on corpses.
Tricia favors rather ghoulish nail colors like green and black.

giallolino

giantesque

adj
/ ˌjɪənt'esk /
Gk > L > F > E + Fcf
having the characteristics of a giant : immense.
A giantesque Snoopy balloon was the highlight of the parade.

gibberish

gibbous

adj
/ 'jɪbəʃ /
L > F > E
seen with more than half but not all of the apparent disk of a moon or a planet illuminated.
Vladimir and Sonya took a long romantic walk under the gibbous Moon.

gibleh

n
/ 'gɪblə /
Ar
a hot desert wind of northern Africa.
The gibleh brought huge clouds of powdery sand that covered the roads.

gigantesque

gigantic

adj
/ ˌɪˈɡəntɪk /
Gk
greater in size than the usual or expected.
The American flag flying over the service station is so gigantic that it can be seen from a mile away.

gigot

n
/ 'ɪɡət /
F
[has homonym: jigget] a leg (as of lamb or mutton) especially when cooked.
Marie praised the chef for cooking the gigot with exactly the right touch of garlic.

gimmick

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gimmicky

adj

/ 'giməkē /

unknown + Ecf

having or being like a new and ingenious device, scheme, or idea with a novel or unconventional twist.

The advertisement displayed gimmicky gizmos, such as a wristwatch that played Notre Dame's fight song.

gingerbread

n

/ 'jinjə(r).bred /

F > E

a cake made with molasses, flavored with ginger, and often cut in shapes and frosted.

Pam entertained the children by helping them bake and decorate gingerbread.

gingham

n

/ 'ginəm /

Malay

a fabric in plain weave made in solid colors, checks, plaids, and stripes.

Betsy made curtains of blue gingham for her kitchen.

gingivitis

n

/ ˌjinjə'vīdəs /

L

inflammation of the gums.

To prevent gingivitis Beth has her teeth cleaned regularly.

ginglymus

n

/ 'jinɡlɪməs /

Gk

a hinge joint admitting of motion in one plane only.

In health class Jerry learned that the humerus and the ulna are connected by a ginglymus.

giraffe

n

/ jə'raf /

Ar > It

a large fleet African ruminant mammal that is the tallest of living quadrupeds and has a very long neck and a short coat with dark blotches separated by pale lines.
Each giraffe has a unique pattern of coat markings that distinguishes it from all other giraffes.

girandole

n

/ 'jirəndɔl /

L > It > F

a mirror having attached candle holders.

The girandole over Pete's mantel is a replica of one in a Loire Valley chateau.

girth

gizzard

n

/ 'gizə(r)d /

Iranian? > L > F > E

the muscular enlargement of the alimentary canal of birds that serves to grind the food, its muscular action being commonly assisted by gravel swallowed by the bird.

Aunt Lena's favorite part of the chicken is the gizzard.

glabrescent

glabrous

adj

/ 'glābrəs /

L

having an epidermal covering that is totally or relatively devoid of hairs or down.

Mr. Franklin showed the first graders that reptiles, unlike mammals, are completely glabrous.

glacial

adj

/ 'glāshəl /

L

extremely cold, frigid, freezing.

A glacial wind withered the roses overnight.

glacier

n

/ 'glāshə(r) /

L > F

[has near homonym: glazier] a large body of ice moving slowly down a slope or valley or spreading outward on a land surface.

The iceberg that sank Titanic had probably broken off from a glacier on Greenland.

glaciology

glacon

n

/ gla'sō /

F

a piece of sea ice ranging in size from a small fragment to a floe of medium dimensions.

At least one seagull was perched on every glacon in the bay.

gladiator

n

/ 'gladə.ədə(r) /

Celt > L

a person engaged in a fight to the death as public entertainment for ancient Romans.

The victorious gladiator was cheered by the excited crowd in the Coliseum.

glasnost

n

/ 'gläs.nōst /

Russ

a policy permitting public discourse and expression of opinion on domestic issues formerly forbidden to discussion especially in the former Soviet Union.

Glasnost spawned a profusion of new political and literary journals in Moscow.

glasphalt

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glaucoma

n
/ glō'kōmā /
Gk > L

a disease of the eye marked by increased pressure within the eyeball that damages the optic disk and results in gradual loss of vision and ultimate blindness.
Ophthalmologists routinely test for glaucoma as part of their eye examinations.

glaucous

adj
/ 'glōkəs /
Gk
[has homonym: Glaucus] of a pale yellow green color.
The antique glass beads had a glaucous color that matched Pamela's dress exactly.

glazier

n
/ 'glāzhə(r) /
E
[has near homonyms: glacier, glazer] one whose work is cutting and setting glass.
Mom called a glazier who agreed to repair our broken window on Thursday.

glimmer

v
/ 'glimə(r) /
E
emit feeble or intermittent rays of light.
From Table Top Mountain, the couple watched the city lights glimmer in the cool clear evening air.

glimpse

n
/ 'glim(p)s /
E
a brief fleeting look : a momentary or incomplete view.
From the taxi the passengers caught a glimpse of the Jefferson Memorial.

glioma

n
/ glī'ōmā /
Gk
a tumor arising from the tissue which supports the essential elements of nervous tissue.
An examination by our veterinarian revealed that the problems our dog was having were caused by a glioma.

glissade

v
/ glə'sād /
F
move along smoothly and effortlessly : glide.
Kris watched the skaters glissade over the frozen pond.

glissando

n
/ glə'sän(,)dō /
F + It
a rapid series of consecutive notes played on a piano, harp, or other similar instrument by sliding one or more fingers across adjacent keys or strings.
Joachim diligently practiced the glissando at the end of the first movement.

glistening

v
/ 'glis'niŋ /
E
shining brightly usually by reflection with a sparkling radiance.
Clarabelle watched the raindrops glistening in the moonlight.

globular

adj
/ 'gläbyələ(r) /
L
round like a ball : spherical.
A globular lamp hung from the center of the ceiling in Gretchen's dining room.

globule

glockenspiel

n
/ 'gläkən.s(h)pəl /
Celt > G
a percussion musical instrument consisting of a series of graduated metal bars tuned to the chromatic scale and played with two hammers.
The glockenspiel tinkled to life as its player joined in a rendition of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."

glogg

n
/ 'glüg /
Sw
a Swedish hot punch made from a sweetened highly spiced mixture of wines, almonds, raisins, and usually orange peel.
Each evening a bowl of hot glogg awaited the returning skiers.

glomerulus

glossary

glottogonic

adj
/ ,glōdō'gānik /
Gk
of or relating to the origin of language.
Three Russian linguists lectured on their glottogonic research.

glowworm

n
/ 'glō.wərm /
E + E
any of various luminous insects with wings rudimentary or lacking.
Kyle scooped up the glowworm and put it in his collection jar.

gloxinia

n
/ gläk'sinēə /
G name
a greenhouse herb having large flowers with a turbinate calyx and irregular bell-shaped corolla; especially : a Brazilian herb that is the source of many horticultural varieties.
Charlena's gloxinia bears bright pink, trumpetlike flowers in early summer.

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glucose

n
/ 'glükōs /
Gk > F

the sweet colorless sugar that occurs especially in plant saps and fruits and normally in blood.

Glucose is formed from water and carbon dioxide by photosynthesis.

gluttonously

adv
/ 'glət(ə)nəsle /
L > F > E

in a manner marked by excess in eating and drinking especially when habitual.

After eating gluttonously, Jack took a short nap on the couch.

glycogen

gnocchi

n pl
/ 'näke /
Gmc? > It

dumplings of a pasta often made with cheese or riced potato and served with a sauce.

Celeste ladled a cream sauce over the gnocchi before serving them.

gnome

gnomic

adj
/ 'nōmik /
Gk

[has homonym: nomic]
characterized by or expressive of moralistic wisdom especially concerning human condition or conduct.

The calendar contained 12 Norman Rockwell illustrations, each accompanied by a gnostic sentiment.

gnomon

gnotobiotic

adj
/ .nōdə(,)bi'ädik /
Gk

of, relating to, living in, or being a controlled environment containing one or a few kinds of organisms.

A good example of a planned gnotobiotic environment is the international space station.

goalie

n
/ 'gōle /
E

a player who defends the goal in various games.

Jake rifled off shot after shot on goal, but the goalie was too good.

goatee

n
/ (,)gō'tē /
E

a small trim pointed or tufted beard on a man's chin.

Sally wanted to know why she couldn't have a goatee when she grew up.

gobemouche

n
/ (,)gōb'müş /
F + L > F

a credulous person; especially : one who believes everything heard.

Jack's brothers are always making up fantastic stories to tell him because he is such a gobemouche.

goldenrod

n
/ 'gōldən.räd /
E + E

a yellow flower with long stalks with small clusters of petals.

Many people are allergic to the goldenrod.

golem

n
/ 'gōləm /
Heb > Yiddish

an artificial figure constructed to represent a human being and endowed with life.

Some people believe that Mary Shelley based her story of Frankenstein on the ancient Jewish tradition of the golem.

gondola

gondolier

gonfalon

n
/ 'gänfəlän /
F > It

[Note: Could be confused with synonym gonfanon.] a flag that hangs from a crosspiece or frame.

As a distinguished alumnus, Walter was asked to carry the gonfalon of the College of Arts and Sciences at the graduation ceremony.

gongorism

n
/ 'gängə.rizəm /
Sp name

an excessively involved, ornate, and artificial style of writing.

In his later years, the poet lapsed into gongorism.

goosander

gorgeous

adj
/ 'gōrjəs /
F > E

characterized by brilliance or magnificence of any kind.

The parade floats were gorgeous with their array of flowers.

gorget

n
/ 'gōrjät /
F

a specially colored patch on the throat.

The woodpecker sported a broad black gorget and beautiful red and white plumage.

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gorgonize

v
/ 'gò(r)gə.nīz /

Gk name

stupefy, petrify.

The glare of Mrs. McGillicutty has the potential to gorgonize even the most arrogant student.

Gorgonzola

n
/ ,gò(r)gən'zōlə /

It geog name

a blue cheese usually made of cow's milk.

Kendra crumbled some Gorgonzola on a piece of bread and toasted it.

gorilla

n
/ gə'rīlə /

Gk > L

[has homonym: guerrilla] an anthropoid ape of the forest region of equatorial West Africa.

The behavior of the gorilla has been extensively studied by anthropologists and zoologists.

gorse

n
/ 'gò(ə)rs /

E

a spiny evergreen shrub : juniper.

Taryn went hiking in an area of England that is just miles and miles of wild land covered with heather and gorse.

gory

gosling

n
/ 'gäzliŋ /

E

a young goose.

Judy rescued a stray gosling from Mrs. Porter's cat.

gossamer

n
/ 'gäsəmə(r) /

E

a fine filmy substance consisting of fragments or strands of cobweb often seen floating in air in calm clear weather or caught on grass or bushes.

The dew and gossamer had dried from the grass by midmorning.

gossip

n
/ 'gäsəp /

E

rumor, report, tattle, or behind-the-scenes information especially of an intimate or personal nature.

"Turn a deaf ear to gossip," advised Mrs. Dunbar.

gouge

n
/ 'gäuĵ /

Celt > L > F > E

a chisel for scooping or cutting holes, channels, or grooves (as in wood or stone).

Adrian used a gouge to incise a leaf pattern on the bench.

gourami

n
/ gü'rämē /

Malay

any of several small brightly colored Asian fishes often kept in the tropical aquarium.

Jonathan bought a colorful gourami for his new aquarium.

gourd

gourmet

n
/ ,gü(ə)r'mā /

F

a connoisseur in eating and drinking.

At the market the gourmet chose his ingredients with the greatest of care.

gout

n
/ 'gaüt /

L > F > E

a metabolic disease marked by a painful inflammation of the fibrous and ligamentous parts of the joints.

Poor old John is bedridden with the rheumatic gout in his joints.

governess

n
/ 'gəvə(r)nəs /

Gk > L > F > E

a woman entrusted with the care and supervision of a child or young person; especially : a female teacher employed in a private household.

Alice plans to enroll in a course that will enable her to be a certified governess.

gracile

gracility

n
/ gra'silədē /

L

the quality of being pleasing in movement.

David's youthful gracility was one of his chief assets as a dancer.

grackle

gradient

graffiti

grallatorial

adj
/ ,gralə'tōrēəl /

L

of or belonging to the wading birds.

The horned screamer is a South American grallatorial bird with a long projection on its forehead and a shrill cry.

gramineous

adj
/ grə'minēəs /

L

[has near homonym: graminous] resembling or relating to a grass.

The vast plain is an excellent habitat for gramineous plants.

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grammar

n
/ 'gramə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E
a branch of linguistic study that deals with the classes of words, their means of indicating relation to each other, and their functions in the sentence as employed according to established usage.
Mrs. Cates makes sure that her students can define the eight parts of speech before she progresses to other aspects of grammar.

grammarian

n
/ grə'merēən /
Gk > L > F > E
a specialist in the study of what is to be preferred and what avoided in the inflections and syntax of language.
The grammarian in Johnny cringes every time he hears someone ask, "Where at?"

grammatically

gramophile

n
/ 'gramə.fil /
Gk
a lover and protector of old phonograph records.
Earl became a real gramophile after inheriting his uncle's record collection.

grandeur

n
/ 'granjə(r) /
L > F
personal greatness characterized chiefly by dignity of character, largeness of spirit, or significant scope of accomplishment.
After Katherine Graham's death, many magazines ran feature articles describing her grandeur in the world of newspapers.

grandiloquence

n
/ gran'diləkwən(t)s /
L
the use of lofty words or phrases : bombast.
Professor Simon's grandiloquence failed to impress Robbie.

grandiose

adj
/ 'grandē.ōs /
L > It > F
impressive because of uncommon largeness, scope, effect, grandeur, or majesty.
Cleo didn't want to listen to all of Nicolette's grandiose ideas for the party.

grangerize

v
/ 'grānjə.rīz /
E name + Ecf
illustrate (as a book) by inserting material (as photographs or engravings) collected from other sources.
To complete her family memoirs, Miriam will have to grangerize the book using her great-aunt's scrapbooks and artwork.

granophyre

granule

graphospasm

grapnel

graticule

n
/ 'gradə.kyül /
L
the network of lines of latitude and longitude upon which a map is drawn.
Jeff plotted a graticule before he began to draw his map of the islands.

gratinate

v
/ 'grat'n.āt /
F > Ecf
cook with a covering of buttered crumbs or grated cheese until a crust or crisp surface forms.
Mom decided to gratinate the macaroni for lunch.

gratuitous

graupe

n
/ 'gräupəl /
Slav? > G
granular snow pellets.
Peter calls graupe "tapioca snow" because of its shape and color.

gravel

graveolent

adj
/ grə'veələnt /
L
having a rank smell.
Elaine quickly disposed of the rotten, graveolent egg.

gravitate

v
/ 'gravə.tāt /
L
move casually but inexorably as though under an external force.
Ellen tends to gravitate toward the shoe store in any mall.

grazioso

adv
/ ,grätsē'ō(,)sō /
L > It
graceful, smooth, or elegant in style—used as a direction in music.
Several of Mozart's piano sonatas include pieces that are played grazioso.

greffier

n
/ 'grefē.ā /
L > F
registrar, recorder.
The office of the greffier is lined with ledgers.

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gregarious

adj
/ grə'ga(a)rēəs /
L

marked by an instinctive or temperamental preference for a social rather than a solitary existence.

Because of their gregarious nature, dogs make good house pets.

grenadier

n
/ ˌgrenə'di(ə)r /
F

a soldier who carries and throws missiles consisting of a container fitted with a priming charge and a bursting charge and filled with a destructive agent (as gas, high explosive, incendiary chemicals).
The grenadier started the assault, followed immediately by the riflemen.

gressorial

adj
/ gre'sōrēəl /
L

adapted for walking.
Some birds, such as the turkey, have gressorial feet.

grievance

grievous

adj
/ 'grēvəs /
F > E

causing, characterized by, or indicative of severe physical pain or suffering.
Jason screamed as if the scratch on his leg were a grievous wound.

grimace

n
/ 'griməs /
Gmc > F

a deliberate or involuntary distortion of the face expressive of some feeling (as contempt, disapprobation, complacency).
The camera caught Allie's grimace during the pep rally.

grimoire

n
/ grəm'wār /
F

a magician's manual for invoking demons and the spirits of the dead.
The witch looked in her grimoire to find a spell to change the child into a rat.

grimthorpe

v
/ 'grim(p).thò(ə)rp /
E name

remodel (an ancient building) without proper knowledge or care to retain its original quality and character.
Darryl is afraid the developers will grimthorpe the old mill.

griot

n
/ 'grē(.)ō /
F

any of a class of musician-entertainers of West Africa whose performances include tribal histories and genealogies.
While doing research for his book Roots, Alex Haley was stunned to meet a griot who was able to tell the story of how Haley's ancestors were captured by slavers and sent to America.

grisaille

n
/ grə'zī /
F

painting in monochrome usually in shades of gray often as decoration to simulate sculptured relief.
The old manuscript contained a grisaille of a skeleton personifying death.

grissini

gristliness
n
/ 'gris(ə)lēnəs /
E

the quality or state of containing tough fiber or cartilage especially in table meats.
When Ruth noticed the gristliness of the beef, she decided to cut it up and cook it in a stew.

gristmill

grizzled

grobian

n
/ 'grōbēən /
G name
a slovenly crude often buffoonish individual : boor, lout.
Vicki knew better than to expect Prince Charming on her blind date, but she never envisioned a grobian.

groceries

grocery

groceteria

n
/ ˌgrōsə'tirēə /
F > E + Ec
a self-service food store.
Patrice bought four lemons at the groceteria.

groggy

grosgrain

n
/ 'grō.grān /
F
a firm fabric in plain weave.
The ribbon in Alta's hair was made of grosgrain.

grotesque

grovel

v
/ 'grävəl /
ON > E
creep on the earth or with the face to the ground as one's natural gait or manner of locomotion.
Jacques let his pig grovel through the forest to find truffles.

gruel

n
/ 'grüəl /
Gmc > F > E
a liquid food made by boiling a cereal (as cornmeal, oatmeal, flour) in water or milk.
Isabella and her father had a nice basin of gruel together.

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grunion

n
/ 'grʏnyən /
L > Sp

a small silver-striped fish of the California coast notable for the regularity with which it comes inshore to spawn at the time of a nearly full moon.
Jose caught a grunion with his bare hands when it came to spawn on the beach.

gruyere

guardian

n
/ 'gärdēən /
F > AF > E
one to whom a person or thing is committed for protection, security, or preservation.
Alcibiades' guardian was the famous statesman Pericles.

Guatemalan

n
/ ,gwädə'mälən /
Central American name
a native or inhabitant of Guatemala, a country in Central America.
Maria was a Guatemalan by birth, but had become a naturalized Brazilian.

guava

n
/ 'gwävə /
Arawak > Sp
the globular yellow fruit of a small shrubby tropical American tree.
A slice of guava topped off Rawonda's fruit salad.

gubernatorial

adj
/ ,gübə(r)nə'törēəl /
L + Ecf
of or relating to a governor or government.
The gubernatorial signature was required for the law to become effective.

guerdon

guernsey

n
/ 'gərnzē /
E geog name
an animal of the breed of fawn and white dairy cattle producing rich yellowish milk.
A lone guernsey grazed in the middle of the herd of black and white holsteins in Mr. Henley's pasture.

guess

v
/ 'ges /
Scand? > E
form an opinion or judgment of without knowledge.
Harvey decided to guess how much sugar to put in the pie.

guffaw

v
/ (,)gə'fò /
imit
laugh noisily or coarsely.
The comic hoped that the audience members would guffaw at his jokes, but they merely snickered.

guidon

n
/ 'gīdän /
OProv > F
a usually swallow-tailed flag borne by a military unit usually as a unit marker.
Leah was selected to carry the guidon in the ROTC parade.

guignolet

guile

guileful

adj
/ 'gīlfəl /
Gmc > F > E
characterized by cunning, deceit, or treachery.
His classmates thought Jack was guileful in paying \$12 for a \$1200 baseball card.

guillemot

guilloche

n
/ gə'lōsh /
F name?
a pattern (as on metalwork) made by interlacing curved lines.
The dense guilloche on the iron gate prevented people from reaching through to turn the inside knob.

guillotine

n
/ 'gilə.tēn /
F name
a machine for beheading by means of a heavy ax or blade that slides down in vertical guides.
The guillotine was considered a merciful means of capital punishment when it was invented.

guipure

guitar

n
/ gə'tär /
Gk > Ar > Sp > F
[Note: Could be confused with catarrh.] a flat-bodied stringed instrument with a long fretted neck and usually six strings plucked with a pick or with the fingers.
Brett's parents bought him an acoustic guitar for his 15th birthday.

gullibility

n
/ ,gələ'bilədē /
E + Ecff
the quality or state of being easily deceived.
Gertrude's gullibility made her the object of many practical jokes.

gullible

gulosity

n
/ gyü'läsədē /
L
excessive appetite : greediness.
It would be much easier for Roslyn to lose weight if she could curb her gulosity.

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gummiferous

adj
/ ˌɡəˈmɪf(ə)rəs /
Egypt > Gk > L + L
producing or bearing a colloidal substance that is gelatinous when moist but hardens on drying.
A sapodilla is a gummiferous tree.

gummosis

n
/ ˌɡəˈmɒsəs /
L
the pathological production of sticky exudates in plants as a result of cell degeneration.
Plants afflicted with gummosis are often beset with ants.

gumption

n
/ ˈɡəm(p)ʃən /
unknown
blended initiative, resolution, and effort.
Of all his brothers, only Grandpa had the gumption to leave the old country and come to America.

gurney

n
/ ˈɡɜrnē /
American name
a wheeled cot or stretcher.
The gurney squeaked ominously as Heywood was wheeled into the operating room.

guru

n
/ ˈɡü.rü /
Skt > Hindi
a personal religious teacher and spiritual guide in Hinduism.
Shri asked his guru whether he should undertake a pilgrimage.

gustatory

adj
/ ˈɡəstə.tôrē /
L + Ecf
of, relating to, affecting, or associated with the sense of taste.
Gaylord was hired as a food taster because of his highly refined gustatory skills.

guttural

adj
/ ˈɡədərəl /
L > F
being or belonging to a speech sound that is articulated in the throat.
Guttural consonants posed a problem for Emily in German class.

gutturalize

v
/ ˈɡədərəlɪz /
L + Ecf
pronounce or utter with sounds articulated in the throat.
Because of her German background, Ursula has a tendency to gutturalize certain words.

gymkhana

n
/ ˌjimˈkänə /
Per&Gk > Hindi
a horseback-riding meet featuring games and novelty contests.
Clem practiced daily with his horse so that he could enter several events in the upcoming gymkhana.

gymnasium

gynarchy

n
/ ˌji.närkē /
Gk
government by women.
Although it has had a few male officers, Reta's investment club has always been a gynarchy.

gypsum

n
/ ˈjɪpsəm /
Sem > Gk > L
plasterboard.
Kiki nailed a sheet of gypsum to the garage wall.

gyrate

v
/ ˈjɪ.rāt /
Gk > L
turn or swing back and forth often rapidly with or as if with a circular or spiral motion.
Couples on the dance floor started to gyrate as a new song began.

gyrations

gyroscope

gyroscopic

haberdasher

n
/ ˈhabə(r).dashə(r) /
AF > E
a dealer in men's furnishings (as shirts, ties, hats).
Another upscale haberdasher has opened a shop on Brighton Street.

habiliment

habiliments

n pl
/ həˈbɪləmən(t)s /
F
clothing suited to or characteristic of a calling, occupation, or profession : garb, costume.
Burt dressed for the rodeo in the habiliments of a cowboy.

habilitate

habitat

n
/ ˈhabə.tat /
L
the place where a plant or animal species naturally lives and grows.
The government appropriated money to preserve the natural habitat of the endangered species.

habitual

adj
/ həˈbɪch(ə)wəl /
L
established by or repeated by force of a developed mode of behavior that has become nearly or completely involuntary.
Brian had to explain his habitual tardiness to the assistant principal.

hacienda

n
/ ˌ(h)äsēˈendə /
L > Sp
the main building of a farm or ranch.
A winding, tree-lined driveway led to the hacienda.

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hackamore

n
/ 'hakə.mō(ə)r /
Ar > Sp
a bridle that consists of a halter often of soft rope or braided horsehair and is used especially in breaking and training horses.
Charlene pulled back on the hackamore and cried "Whoa!"

hacked

hackneyed

adj
/ 'haknēd /
E geog name
commonplace : trite.
The marketing adjective extreme will soon be as hackneyed as super and ultra.

haggard

adj
/ 'hagə(r)d /
F
having a worn or emaciated appearance caused by suffering, anxiety, or age.
Ever since she last saw him in the courtroom, Frank's haggard face and wild eyes had haunted her.

haggis

n
/ 'hagəs /
E
a pudding especially popular in Scotland made of the heart, liver, and lungs of a sheep or a calf minced with suet, onions, oatmeal, and seasonings and boiled in the stomach of the animal.
Haggis is often served on January 25, the birthday of the Scottish poet Robert Burns.

hagiocracy

hagiography

haiku

n
/ 'hī.kū /
Jpn
an unrhymed verse form of Japanese origin having three lines containing usually five, seven, and five syllables, respectively.
Compressing an image or idea into only 17 syllables is what makes a haiku most challenging to compose.

halberdier

halcyon

adj
/ 'halsēən /
Gk > L > E
pleasingly or idyllically calm or peaceful : serene.
Aaron spent the halcyon afternoon in his hammock.

halibut

n
/ 'haləbət /
E
the largest of the flatfishes, being an inhabitant of all northern seas.
At the aquarium, Ernie saw a halibut the size of a sleeping bag.

halieutics

n pl
/ .halē'(y)üdiks /
Gk
the art or practice of fishing.
Izaak Walton's The Compleat Angler is the most famous book on halieutics.

halitosis

n
/ .halə'tōsəs /
L
a condition of having bad breath.
The new mouthwash is advertised to cure halitosis.

hallucination

n
/ hə'lūs'n'āshən /
L
perception of objects with no reality.
Maynard swears that the ghost he saw was no hallucination.

hallucinogen

n
/ hə'lūs'n'jen /
L + Gk
a substance that induces perceptions of objects with no reality; especially : one taken orally.
The medicine that the doctors prescribed was an effective pain killer, but in larger doses it sometimes became a frightening hallucinogen.

halophyte

n
/ 'halə.fīt /
Gk + Gk
a plant that grows naturally in soils having a high content of various salts.
Australian aborigines grind into flour the seeds of a halophyte that grows in the coastal mud flats.

hamadryad

n
/ .hamə'drī.ad /
Gk > L
a nymph of trees and woods; especially : a nymph whose life begins and ends with that of a particular tree.
Darcy sat on a bench in the arboretum and imagined she was a hamadryad.

hamartia

n
/ .hä.mär'tēə /
Gk
a defect of character : error, guilt, or sin especially of the tragic hero in a literary work.
Overweening ambition proved to be Macbeth's hamartia.

hamate

adj
/ 'hā.māt /
L
hooked.
Elliott examined the hamate hairs on the insect's forelegs.

hammering

hammock

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hamulus

handleable

handwrought

adj

/ 'hand:rɒt /

E

fashioned by hand or chiefly by hand processes.

Barbie found a handwrought trivet at the garage sale.

hansom

n

/ 'han(t)səm /

E name

[has homonym: handsome] a light two-wheeled covered carriage with the driver's seat elevated behind and with the reins passed over the top.

Holmes and Watson jumped into a hansom and ordered the driver to follow discreetly the cab ahead.

haphazard

adj

/ hap'hazə(r)d /

ON > E + Ar > F > E

aimless, random.

The apartment's haphazard furniture arrangement made it look untidy.

hapless

adj

/ 'hapləs /

ON > E + Ecf

marked by the absence of good luck : unfortunate.

The hapless students were caught between the school district and the striking teachers.

haplology

n

/ ha'plələjē /

Gk

contraction of a word by the omission of one or more similar sounds or syllables in pronunciation.

The use of "proibly" instead of probably in hasty speech is an example of haplology.

happiness

harangue

n

/ hə'raŋ /

Gmc? > It > F > E

a bombastic, ranting speech.

Amasa's harangue at the sophomore assembly offended nearly everyone.

harass

harassed

adj

/ hə'rast /

Gmc > F

sorely troubled, vexed, or burdened : badgered.

The harassed waitress decided she had tolerated inconsiderate customers long enough and found a different line of work.

harbinger

n

/ 'hərbənjər /

Gmc > F > E

something that presages or foreshadows what is to come.

The howling wind was the harbinger of a storm.

hardiness

n

/ 'hərdēnəs /

E

the capability of endurance or resistance.

The rose's hardiness was severely tested by a cold snap.

hare

n

/ 'ha(a)(ə)r /

E

[has homonym: hair] any of various timid long-eared gnawing mammals with a divided upper lip, long strong hind legs adapted to leaping, and a short tail.

Most schoolchildren have heard the story of the tortoise and the hare.

haricot

n

/ 'harəkō /

F

the ripe seed or the unripe pod of any of several beans used as a vegetable.

The baby nibbled on a haricot and wrinkled her nose.

Harlequin

adj

/ 'härlək(w)ən /

E > F > It > F

a stock character in comedy and pantomime who appears variously as a clown and a magician and usually wears a mask and variegated tights and carries a wooden sword.

The children especially enjoyed the buffoonish antics of the Harlequin.

harmonica

harmoniously

adv

/ .här'mōnēəslē /

Gk

in a manner marked by accord in sentiment or action : compatibly.

For a large family to live harmoniously, rules and chores are a must.

harness

n

/ 'härnəs /

ON > F > E

the gear or tackle other than a yoke of a draft animal such as a horse.

The horse pulling the carriage through Central Park had silver bells on its harness that jingled whenever the driver shook the reins.

harpoon

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harpsichord

n
/ 'härpsəkörd /
L > It
a keyboard instrument resembling the grand piano in shape and producing tones by the plucking of wire strings with quills or leather points.
Kristin heard the jangling tones of the harpsichord through the practice room door.

harridan

n
/ 'harədən /
F?
a haggard old woman.
Ruth asked a woman in the town square if she could take her picture, but the harridan just shook her fist at her and walked away.

harrier

harrumph

v
/ 'hərəm(p)f /
imit
make a pompous throat-clearing sound.
Monique wished that Mr. Nickels wouldn't harrumph directly into the microphone.

hartal

n
/ här'täl /
Hindi
concerted cessation of work and business especially as a protest against a political situation.
The Goa liberation committee called a hartal on Friday in memory of Indians killed by Portuguese fire on Monday.

hartebeest

n
/ 'härdə.bēst /
D > Afrikaans
a large African antelope with short ringed divergent horns.
The hartebeest grazes mainly on the open plains and scrublands of sub-Saharan Africa.

hassock

n
/ 'hasək /
E
a bulky upholstered footstool.
Phyllis decided to purchase the wing chair with the matching hassock.

hatchet

hauberk

n
/ 'hò(ɪ)bærk /
Gmc > F > E
a long tunic of ring or chain mail that with a close-fitting helmet and a shield constituted the main defensive armor of the 12th to 14th centuries.
Most of the Norman soldiers wore a hauberk, which was put on over the head.

haughtily

adv
/ 'hòd'lē /
L > F > E
in a disdainfully proud or overbearing manner.
Gertrude haughtily replied that she receives an allowance of 20 dollars per week.

haulage

n
/ 'hòlij /
Gmc > F > E
a charge made for transporting something.
Paul's final bill for his new car included haulage for transportation from the factory to the dealer.

haunted

adj
/ 'hòntəd /
Gmc > F > E
inhabited by or as if by apparitions : frequented by ghosts.
The deserted Victorian house outside town is said to be haunted.

hauteur

n
/ hó'tər /
F
[has near homonyms: auteur and hotter] an assumption of superiority : arrogant or condescending manner.
The young couple was put off by the waiter's hauteur.

haversack

havoc

n
/ 'havək /
Gmc > F > AF > E
wide and general damage or destruction.
The havoc created by the hurricane made the area look like a war zone.

hazardous

adj
/ 'hazə(r)dəs /
Ar > F > E
exposed or exposing one to danger or peril.
The mountain road has many hazardous curves.

headache

healthy

adj
/ 'helthē /
E
free from disease : functioning properly and normally in its vital functions.
A perfectly healthy tree in Tammy's backyard was twisted and torn out of the ground by the tornado.

hearsay

n
/ 'hi(ə)r.sā /
E
something heard from another : report, rumor.
Jody's elaborate account of the argument was based purely on hearsay.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

hearth

n
/ 'härth /
E

a brick, stone, or cement area of floor in front of a fireplace.
Toby placed a plate of cookies and a glass of milk on the hearth for Santa.

heathen

n
/ 'hēthən /
E

a person whose culture or enlightenment is of an inferior grade.
Embarrassed by her brother's behavior in front of her friends, Simone asked her mother to send the little heathen outside.

heather

n
/ 'hethə(r) /
E

a common evergreen low-growing shrubby plant that has racemes of tiny usually purplish pink flowers.
The true heather of Scotland is also called "ling" or "common heath."

heaume

n
/ 'hōm /
F

[has homonym: home] a large helmet chiefly of the 13th century worn over a hood of mail or close-fitting steel cap and supported by the shoulders rather than the head.
Each knight wore a heaume and carried a lance in the tournament.

hebdomad

n
/ 'hebdə.məd /
Gk

a group of seven.
Though some people think there is just a hebdomad of stars in the Pleiades, there are actually many more.

hebetate

v
/ 'hebətāt /
L

blunt the sensitivity or keenness of : make dull or obtuse.
Some parents fear that video games hebetate young minds.

hebetude

heckelphone

hectare

n
/ 'hek.ta(a)(ə)r /
Gk > F + L > F
a metric unit of area equal to 10,000 square meters.
The firefighters reported that more than a hectare of land was on fire.

hedgehog

n
/ 'hej.hòg /
E
any of several Old World nocturnal spine-bearing mammals.
Prudence spotted a hedgehog in the strawberry patch.

hedgingly

hedonism

n
/ 'hēd'n.izəm /
Gk
a way of life based on or suggesting the principle that pleasure or happiness is the sole or chief good in life.
When André turned 30, he renounced his youthful hedonism.

hegemony

n
/ hə'jemənē /
Gk
preponderant influence or authority (as of a government or state) : leadership, dominance.
Nazi Germany attempted world hegemony and failed.

heifer

n
/ 'hefə(r) /
E

a young cow.
This year's blue-ribbon heifer belongs to Mrs. Cates.

heinous

heinousness

n
/ 'hānəs'nəs /
Gmc > F > E + Ecf
the quality or state of being hatefully or shockingly evil.
Even the police were appalled by the heinousness of the crime.

heiress

n
/ 'erəs /
L > F > E
[has near homonym: eros] a female who inherits or is entitled to inherit great wealth.
Antoine dreamed that he married an heiress and moved to an island.

heirloom

heldentenor

heleoplankton

n
/ .helē(ɪ)ō'planktən /
Gk
plankton typical of small bodies of still fresh water.
Dozens of species gathered at the south end of the lake to feed on heleoplankton.

helicon

helicopter

heliography

heliolatry

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heliophobic

adj

/ ˌhɛlɪˈɒfəbəs /

Gk + Gk + Ecf

avoiding the sun : shade-loving.

Jackie planted ferns, hostas, and other heliophobic plants in her shady garden.

heliotrope

helium

helmeted

helotry

n

/ ˈhɛlətrɪ /

Gk > L + Ecf

the slaves or serfs of a country or an estate.

In ancient Sparta the helotry was required to serve in the army.

hematogenous

adj

/ ˌhɛməˈtəʃənəs /

Gk

spread by way of the blood stream.

Andrea was treated with antibiotics to prevent any hematogenous infection.

hematoma

n

/ ˌhɛməˈtōmə /

Gk > L

a tumor or swelling containing blood.

A hematoma can result from various types of blunt trauma to the head.

hemeralopia

n

/ ˌhɛməˈɒpɪə /

Gk

a defect of vision characterized by reduced visual capacity in bright lights.

A deficiency of vitamin A can lead to hemeralopia.

hemisphere

n

/ ˈhɛməˌsfɪ(ə)r /

Gk

a half of the celestial sphere.

Vince's star chart depicts all visible heavenly objects in the hemisphere.

hemophiliac

n

/ ˌhɛməˈfɪliːək /

Gk

one affected with a tendency to uncontrolled bleeding.

A hemophiliac must take care to avoid even minor cuts and bruises.

hemorrhage

hemorrhagic

hendiadys

n

/ ˌhɛnˈdɪədəs /

Gk

the expression of an idea by two nouns connected by and instead of by a noun and an adjective.

Thierry used the hendiadys iron and bit to denote an iron bit.

henna

n

/ ˈhɛnə /

Ar

a reddish brown dye used in tinting the hair, skin, or nails red.

The ancient use of henna is confirmed by the presence of the dye in Egyptian mummies.

hennin

n

/ ˈhɛnən /

F

a high cone-shaped headdress usually with a thin veil pendent from the top worn by European women in the 15th century.

Lady Agnes appeared at the king's ball wearing an elegant hennin.

hepatitis

n

/ ˌhepəˈtɪdɪs /

Gk > L

inflammation of the liver.

Serum hepatitis can be transmitted through blood transfusions and unsterilized hypodermic needles.

heptarchy

herbaceous

adj

/ (h)ərˈbāshəs /

L

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a nonwoody plant.

Monique surrounded her patio with herbaceous perennials.

herbalist

n

/ ˈ(h)ərbəlɪst /

L + Ecff

one that collects, grows, or deals in medicinal plants.

Lisa consulted an herbalist regarding her wart.

herbarium

n

/ ˌ(h)ərˈba(a)rɪəm /

L

a room, building, or institution housing a collection of dried plant specimens.

Jackson was looking forward to visiting the herbarium while on vacation.

hercogamy

Herculean

adj

/ ˌhɜrkyəˈliːən /

Gk name > L

of heroic proportions.

Jim's competitor was known for his Herculean frame and great strength.

hereditary

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

heresy

n
/ 'herəsē /
Gk
dissent from a dominant theory or opinion in any field.
Much of what used to be considered scientific heresy is now regarded as truth.

heretical

adj
/ hə'redəkəl /
L
of, relating to, or characterized by departure from accepted beliefs or standards : unorthodox.
A free society allows the expression of all opinions, however heretical they may seem.

heritage

hermeneutics

n pl
/ .hərmə'n(y)üdiks /
Gk
the study of the general principles of biblical interpretation.
Experts in hermeneutics met to discuss the Dead Sea scrolls.

hermetically

adv
/ hə(r)'medək(ə)lē /
Gk + Ecff
in a manner that prevents entry or change.
With its flowered wallpaper and quaint furniture, the old house looked as though it had been hermetically sealed sometime in the 1880s.

hermit

hermitage

n
/ 'hərmədij /
Gk + L > F
a secluded residence or private retreat.
Dave's father has always dreamed of living in the city during the week and escaping to some country hermitage on the weekends.

heroic

adj
/ hə'rōik /
Gk > L
arising from, exhibiting, or suggestive of boldness, spirit, or daring.
The mountain climbers made a heroic effort to reach the peak.

heroine

n
/ 'herəwən /
Gk > L
[has homonym: heroin] the principal female character in a drama, novel, story, or narrative poem.
In the melodrama the spunky heroine took the law into her own hands and brought down the villain.

herpetology

n
/ .hərpə'täləjē /
Gk > L
a branch of the science of animal life that treats of reptiles and amphibians.
Jason studied herpetology to learn about the habits of cold-blooded creatures.

herring

herringbone

n
/ 'herɪŋbōn /
E
a pattern (as on a fabric) made up of adjacent rows of parallel lines where any two adjacent rows slope slightly in reverse directions.
Dina wove herself a new wool scarf in herringbone.

hesitancy

hesitant

adj
/ 'hezədənt /
L
tending to hold back, pause, or falter.
The toddler took hesitant steps toward the large dog.

hesthogenous

heteroclite

heterodox

adj
/ 'hedərə.däks /
Gk
differing from an established religious point of view.
Father O'Driscoll holds a few heterodox opinions that astonish his parish.

heterogeneous

heterophemy

n
/ 'hedərə.fēmē /
Gk + Gk
unconscious use of words other than those intended.
When his client used the term debtor to mean "creditor," the accountant corrected the heterophemy.

heuristic

adj
/ '(h)yü.ristik /
Gk
of or relating to exploratory problem-solving techniques that utilize self-educating strategies to improve performance.
The computer that beat Gary Kasparov in the chess tournament was programmed to use heuristic methods.

hexamethyl

hibachi

n
/ hē'bächē /
Jpn
a charcoal brazier.
Antoni's hot dog fell through the grill of the hibachi onto the glowing coals below.

hibernal

adj
/ hī'bərnəl /
L
of or relating to winter : wintry.
Horace admired the hibernal scene depicted in the painting.

hibernate

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hibiscus

n
/ hɪˈbɪskəs /
L

any plant or flower of a large widely distributed genus of herbs, shrubs, or small trees with dentate or lobed leaves and large showy flowers.
Darla planted a hibiscus outside her bedroom window.

hickory

n
/ ˈhɪk(ə)rē /
Virginia word
any of a genus of North American trees of the walnut family that produce a hard nut.
Sophie napped in the shade of the tall hickory.

hideous

adj
/ ˈhɪdēəs /
F > E
offensive to the sight : gruesome, ugly.
During the thunderstorm, Ernie saw a hideous face at the window.

hiemal

adj
/ ˈhiəməl /
L
of or relating to winter : wintry.
Inger's favorite hiemal activity is skiing.

hierarchy

n
/ ˈhiərəkē /
Gk > L > F > E
a form of government administered by an authoritarian group.
Michelle's study of hierarchy made her appreciate living in the United States.

hieroglyph

n
/ ˈhi(ə)rəɡlɪf /
Gk
a character used in a system of writing mainly in pictorial characters.
The Egyptian hieroglyph for the word king was a royal head complete with beard.

hieroglyphics

n pl
/ ˌhi(ə)rəˈɡlɪfɪks /
Gk
characters in the ancient Egyptian writing system which are for the most part recognizable pictures of objects.
Egyptian hieroglyphics remained a mystery until the Rosetta Stone provided the key to deciphering them.

hierophant

n
/ ˈhi(ə)rəˈfənt /
Gk
a priest in ancient Greece.
The hierophant portrayed in Tim's history book was dressed in an animal skin and wore a crown of leaves.

hilarious

Himalayan

n
/ ˌhɪməˈliən /
Asian geog name
any of a breed of domestic cats developed by crossing the Persian and Siamese.
A Himalayan won "Best of Show" in the local cat competition this winter.

hinge

n
/ ˈhɪnj /
E
a jointed or flexible device on which a door, lid, or other swinging part turns.
The hinge stopped creaking after Tony oiled it.

hippocampus

n
/ ˌhɪpəˈkæmpəs /
Gk
a curved enlongated ridge extending over the lateral ventricles of the brain.
Injury to the hippocampus often results in emotional impairment.

hippodrome

n
/ ˈhɪpəˌdrɒm /
Gk > L > F
an arena for equestrian performances.
The circus horses performed for the spectators in the hippodrome.

hippogriff

n
/ ˈhɪpəˌɡrɪf /
Gk > L > It > F
[Note: Could be confused with hippogriffin.] a legendary animal having the foreparts of a winged griffin and the body and hindquarters of a horse.
The Gothic cathedral contained many strange carvings, including a hippogriff and several gargoyles.

hippopotamian

adj
/ ˌhi(,)pɒpəˈtɑːmēən /
Gk > L + Ecf
unwieldy because of massive size.
Uncle Lon's hippopotamian armchair takes up half the living room.

hippopotamus

n
/ ˌhɪpəˈpɑːdəməs /
Gk
any of various large herbivorous four-toed chiefly aquatic mammals with an extremely large head and mouth, bare and very thick skin, and short legs.
The hippopotamus spends most of the day in water because in the warm, dry air it loses water through its skin.

hippotigrine

adj
/ ˌhɪpəˈtɪɡrən /
Gk + Gk
of or relating to the zebra.
The city zoo has a special exhibit on the hippotigrine environment.

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hircine

adj

/ 'hɜr.sɪn /

L

of, relating to, or resembling a goat; especially : resembling a goat in smell.

After the week-long camping trip, the Flidre family was relieved to get out of their hircine clothes and into the shower.

hirsute

hirundine

adj

/ hɜ'rændən /

L

of, relating to, or resembling the swallow.

The hirundine population in near-equatorial countries rises sharply when autumn returns to the northern hemisphere.

histrionic

histrionics

n pl

/ .hɪstrɛ'ænɪks /

L

theatrical performances.

Teresa loved the theater from an early age and excelled in histrionics while in school.

hitchhike

hoarseness

n

/ 'hɔ(ə)rsnəs /

E

the quality or state of having a rough-sounding voice.

Paul's remedy for hoarseness is hot water with lemon.

hoax

n

/ 'hɔks /

unknown

[has homonym: hokes] an act intended to trick or dupe : a piece of trickery.

Sarah forwarded the e-mail message, unaware she was participating in a hoax.

hoboism

hoeing

hoist

v

/ 'hɔɪst /

imit D or G

raise, lift, elevate.

Manuel decided to use a crane to hoist the stone into place.

hokku

n

/ 'hò(ɪ)kü /

Jpn

a fixed lyric form of Japanese origin having three short unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables and being typically epigrammatic or suggestive.

Haiku, the most familiar form of hokku, pertains to the seasons.

holard

holiness

hollandaise

hollyhock

holocaust

n

/ 'hæləkɒst /

Gk

a complete or thorough sacrifice or destruction especially by fire.

Many lives were lost in the hotel holocaust.

holograph

n

/ 'hæləɡraf /

Gk

a document (as a letter, deed, or will) wholly in the handwriting of the person from whom it proceeds and whose act it purports to be.

Amongst the early wills of Middlesex County, Roberta found many a fascinating holograph.

homburg

n

/ 'häm.bɜrg /

G

a man's hat of smooth-finished felt with a stiff curled brim and a high tapered crown creased lengthwise.

The villain in the movie wore a dark suit and a black homburg.

homely

adj

/ 'hōmlē /

E

commonplace, familiar.

Mr. Mann can translate the most complex issue into homely terms.

homeostasis

n

/ .hōmēō'stāsəs /

Gk

a tendency toward maintenance of a relatively stable internal environment in the bodies of higher animals through a series of interacting physiological processes.

Panting is the primary means of achieving homeostasis for dogs.

homespun

homestead

n

/ 'hōmz.təd /

E + E

the home and land of a family; especially : ancestral home.

The city offered reduced property taxes on any homestead occupied by the legal owner.

homily

n

/ 'hämələ /

Gk

a lecture or discussion on a moral theme : admonition.

At the baccalaureate service, Mr. Lopez gave a brief homily on the theme "To thine own self be true."

hominy

homogenized

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homologate

v
/ hō'mäləgāt /
Gk
approve, allow, confirm.
The fact that the Joneses do not appeal the court's decision does not mean they homologate it.

homologous

homonym

homophonous

honorific

n
/ äänə'rifik /
L
conferring or conveying public esteem.
Dr. Ellerman received an honorific wreath at the banquet.

hoochinoo

hoodwink

hooligan

n
/ 'hüləgən /
Ir name?
thug, hoodlum.
After an intense interrogation by detectives, the hooligan finally broke down and confessed.

horde

n
/ 'hō(ə)rd /
Mongolic > Pol > G&F
[has homonym: hoard] a vast number : crowd, swarm.
To prepare for the horde of tourists, the police department is using computer modeling to aid in logistics.

horizon

n
/ hō'rīz'n /
Gk > L > E
the point where the earth appears to meet the sky.
Stan thought he saw an airplane on the horizon.

horizontal

adj
/ hōrə'zānt'l /
L + Ecff
placed or operating in a plane parallel to the horizon.
Lori wore a sweater with red and blue horizontal stripes.

hormone

horologium

n
/ hōrə'lōj(ē)əm /
L
an instrument (as a clock) for measuring time.
A sundial was the ancient Egyptians' horologium.

horrendous

horripilation

n
/ hō'ripə'lāshən /
L
a bristling of the hair of the head or body (as from disease, terror, or chilliness) : gooseflesh.
Jennifer reacted to the movie's scary scenes with noticeable horripilation.

hortative

adj
/ 'hō(r)dədīv /
L
giving persuasive counsel : advisory, urging strongly.
Joe's hortative letter to the editor of the newspaper persuaded many citizens to contact their representatives regarding the proposed budget.

horticulture

n
/ 'hō(r)dəkəlchə(r) /
L
the science and art of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, or ornamental plants.
Mr. Sakai's skill in horticulture has won him many blue ribbons at garden shows.

hosanna

n
/ hō'zanə /
Heb > Gk > L > E
an expression of enthusiastic praise : acclamation.
Mr. Wong greeted Katya with a loud hosanna.

hosiery

n
/ 'hōzh(ə)rē /
E + Ecff
stockings, socks.
Mrs. Desmond prefers silk hosiery to that made of nylon.

hospice

n
/ 'hāspəs /
L
a facility or program designed to provide a caring environment for supplying the physical and emotional needs of the terminally ill.
Rebekah works as a counselor at a hospice for the elderly.

hospitable

hospitality

hostage

hostelry

n
/ 'häst'lrē /
L > F > E
a place where food and lodging are available to the traveler : inn, hotel.
To celebrate their tenth anniversary, the Mortons returned to the French hostelry where they spent their honeymoon.

hotelless

howel

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howitzer

n
/ 'haüətsə(r) /
Czech > G > D
a cannon employed to fire
projectiles at a target (as enemy
artillery behind a ridge) which
cannot be reached by flat-trajectory
weapons.
*Corporal Slater towed the howitzer
to the base of the ridge.*

hoyden

n
/ 'hoidən /
D?
a girl or woman of loud, boisterous,
or carefree behavior : tomboy.
*Sierra knew that her skateboard
expertise and casual clothing made
her look like a hoyden to the
neighbors, but she didn't care.*

hoyle

n
/ 'hōil /
unknown
a natural object used as an archery
mark at short range.
*Martha used a large mushroom in
her backyard as a hoyle.*

hubbub

n
/ 'həbəb /
Celt?
a noisy confusion of sound.
*In the hubbub after the concert,
Bronwen did not notice the
pickpocket who took her wallet.*

hubristically

adv
/ hyü'bristək(ə)lē /
Gk
insolently, vainly, arrogantly.
*Lance's opinions, though brilliant
and sound, are unwelcome because
he conveys them so hubristically.*

huisache

humane

adj
/ hyü'mān /
L > F > E
marked by compassion, sympathy,
or consideration for other human
beings or animals.
*Sharon received an award for her
humane treatment of stray pets.*

humectant

n
/ hyü'mektənt /
L
a substance that promotes retention
of moisture.
*Toothpastes contain a humectant to
carry the abrasive and other
agents.*

humerus

humidistat

n
/ (h)yü'midəstat /
L > F > E
an instrument for regulating or
maintaining the degree of moisture.
*Since he bought the humidistat,
Rudy has gotten fewer colds.*

humidor

n
/ 'hyümədò(ə)r /
L or F + Ecf
a case or enclosure (as for storing
cigars) in which the air is kept
properly humidified.
*Art always kept his expensive
cigars in a humidor.*

humiliation

n
/ (,)hyü.milē'āshən /
L > F > E
the state of being reduced to a
lower position in one's own eyes or
the eyes of another : an instance of
being humbled.
*Mary did not even try to control
her rage and humiliation.*

humoresque

n
/ ,(h)yümə'resk /
(E + Fcf) > G
a musical composition typically
whimsical or fanciful in character.
*Schumann's opus 88 is a
humoresque for violin, cello, and
piano.*

Hunanese

adj
/ ,hünə'nēz /
Chin geog name
of or relating to the province of
Hunan, China.
*The waiter indignantly replied that
hamburger was not a feature of
Hunanese cuisine.*

hundredth

adj
/ 'həndrədθ /
E
being number 100 in a countable
series.
*Residents lined the streets to watch
the parade on Danville's hundredth
anniversary.*

hurl

hurricane

n
/ 'hərəkān /
Taino > Sp
a tropical cyclone with winds of 73
miles per hour or greater.
*When the townspeople realized that
the hurricane was heading their
way, they boarded up their
windows and evacuated.*

hurtle

hussar

n
/ hə'zär /
L > Serb > Hung
[Note: Could be confused with
huzza, huzzah.] a member of the
light cavalry of various European
armies usually distinguished by a
brilliant much-decorated uniform.
*In a short story by Thomas Hardy,
a young Englishwoman has an ill-
fated romance with a homesick
German hussar.*

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hutch

hyacinth

n
/ 'hīə.sɪn(t)θ /
Gk > L
a common garden flower widely grown for its beauty and fragrance.
Mimi planted a hyacinth right next to her screened porch.

hyalithe

hybrid

n
/ 'hībrəd /
L
an offspring of two animals or plants of different races, breeds, varieties, species, or genera.
A hybrid often has increased vigor and strength.

hybridize

v
/ 'hībrəd.ɪz /
L
cause to produce offspring that are a cross between breeds : interbreed.
Horace is attempting to hybridize a large, showy, red rose and a smaller, more fragrant variety.

hydrangea

n
/ hī'drānjə /
Gk > L
any of a genus of shrubs of the family Saxifragaceae having showy clusters of usually sterile white or tinted flowers.
Although the flowers of the hydrangea are spectacular, the leaves are poisonous.

hydrant

n
/ 'hīdrənt /
Gk
a discharge pipe with a valve and spout at which water may be drawn from the mains of waterworks.
The city workers affixed a metal rod with a red diamond on the top of the hydrant in Mishi's yard so they would be able to find it if it snowed.

hydraulic

adj
/ hī'drɒlɪk /
Gk > L
operated, moved, or effected by means of water.
The stream and the waterwheel were sure signs that the grain mill was operated by hydraulic power.

hydrofoil

hydrogen

n
/ 'hīdrəjən /
Gk > F
a nonmetallic element that is the simplest and lightest of the elements and which is normally a colorless, odorless, and highly flammable diatomic gas.
Hydrogen and oxygen are the components of water.

hydrography

n
/ hī'drəgrəfē /
Gk
description and study of seas, lakes, rivers, and other waters.
A knowledge of hydrography is helpful in navigation.

hydrolysis

n
/ hī'drāləsəs /
Gk + Gk
a chemical process of decomposition involving the splitting of a bond and the addition of the hydrogen cation and the hydroxide anion of water.
Digestive enzymes promote the hydrolysis of nutrients into simpler compounds.

hydrophilous

adj
/ hī'drəfələs /
Gk
pollinated by the agency of water.
The ultimate adaptation to aquatic life is the formation of completely submerged hydrophilous flowers.

hydroplane

v
/ 'hīdrəplān /
Gk + L
skim over the water with the hull either clear of the surface or barely immersed.
Lex loves to make his speedboat hydroplane across a glassy lake.

hyetology

n
/ .hīə'täləjē /
Gk
a branch of meteorology that deals with precipitation (as of rain or snow).
Even a period of extended drought can be of interest to a student of hyetology.

hygiene

hygienist

hymn

n
/ 'him /
Gk
a song of praise to God.
Wesley remembered every hymn from his days at the Episcopal school.

hymnody

n
/ 'hɪmnədə /
Gk
a body of hymns of a specified kind or period.
Gospel songs enjoy wide popularity in American hymnody.

hypaethral

hyperbaton

n
/ hī'pərbətən /
Gk
a transposition or inversion of idiomatic word order.
Joey decided the hyperbaton echoed the hills fit his poem better than the hills echoed.

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hyperbole

n
/ hī'pərbə(,)lē /
Gk

extravagant exaggeration that represents something as much greater or less, better or worse, or more intense than it really is or that depicts the impossible as actual.
To say that life as we know it will never be the same after the next election is hyperbole.

hypercritical

adj
/ .hīpə(r)'kridəkəl /
Gk

meticulously or excessively inclined to notice faults and imperfections.
Ellen's skating coach was hypercritical of her technique the day before a competition.

hyperglycemia

n
/ .hīpə(r)glī'sēmēə /
Gk

excess of sugar in the blood.
Since diabetes runs in her family, Carla is regularly tested for hyperglycemia.

hypertension

n
/ .hīpə(r)'tENCHən /
Gk + L

abnormally high arterial blood pressure.
Doctors recommend reducing salt intake for patients with hypertension.

hypertrophic

adj
/ .hīpər'trāfik /
Gk + Gk + Ecf
affected with or tending toward overgrowth or excessive development of an organ or part.
After Blake lost one kidney, the other became hypertrophic.

hyphen

hypnology

hypobulia

n
/ .hīpō'byūlēə /
Gk > L
lowered ability to make decisions or to act.
The climbers began to suffer from hypobulia as they moved higher and higher on the mountain.

hypochondria

n
/ .hīpə'kändrēə /
Gk
extreme depression of mind or spirits often centered on imaginary physical ailments.
Having found nothing physically wrong with her, Sylvia's doctor noted that her persistent complaints about her health are probably due to hypochondria.

hypochondriac

n
/ .hīpə'kändrē.ək /
Gk
one whose depression is centered on imaginary physical ailments.
Colin was an hysterical half-crazy little hypochondriac.

hypocorism

n
/ hī'pəkə.rizəm /
Gk
a pet name or term of endearment.
Susan's parents bestowed the hypocorism "Bubbles" on her when she was a toddler.

hypocrisy

n
/ hə'pəkrəsē /
Gk > L > F > E
the act or practice of pretending to be what one is not or to have principles or beliefs that one does not have.
The abominable proceeding was nothing but a system of hypocrisy and deceit, espionage and treachery.

hypodermic

hypothalamus

n
/ .hī(,)pō'thaləməs /
Gk
a part of the brain that is usually considered to include vital autonomic regulatory centers.
The hypothalamus exercises control over involuntary actions such as temperature regulation, emotional responses, and the rhythm of sleep.

hypothesis

hypothetical

hypotrophy

n
/ hī'pätṛəfē /
Gk
subnormal growth.
Nutritional deficiency resulted in hypotrophy among the aborigines.

hypotyposis

n
/ .hīpō.tī'pōsəs /
Gk
[Note: Could be confused with plural hypotypes.] vivid picturesque description.
Mark Twain employed hypotyposis in his writing.

hypsography

hyssop

n
/ 'hisəp /
Sem > Gk > L > F > E
a European mint that has highly aromatic and pungent leaves and is often cultivated in gardens as a remedy for bruises.
Aunt Cara made a paste of hyssop and oil and applied it to Darien's bruised shoulder.

hysteria

n
/ hə'sterēə /
Gk > L
conduct or an outbreak of conduct exhibiting unmanageable fear or emotional excess.
Hysteria overcame the defendant when the guilty verdict was announced.

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hysterical

adj
/ hi'sterəkəl /

Gk
exhibiting unrestrained emotionalism.

When their team won the world championship, the fans became hysterical with joy.

iatrogenic

adj
/ i'atrō'jenik /
Gk > L

induced by a physician—used chiefly of ailments induced in a patient by autosuggestion based on a physician's words or actions during examination.

Belinda had iatrogenic pains after her annual checkup.

icequake

ichneumon

n
/ ik'n(y)ümən /
Gk

any member of the insect family Ichneumonidae.

The ichneumon burrowed into the caterpillar larva, providing a natural check on the destructive insect.

ichnolite

n
/ 'iknə.lit /
Gk

a fossil footprint.

The museum guide showed us an ichnolite of a plesiosaur.

ichnology

n
/ ik'näləjē /

Gk
the study of fossil footprints.
Several students interested in ichnology took a field trip to Dinosaur State Park in Connecticut.

ichthyology

n
/ ɪkthē'äləjē /

Gk
a branch of zoology that deals with fishes.

Mr. Pout didn't need a degree in ichthyology to see that he had caught a dead branch.

icicle

n
/ 'ɪsɪkəl /
E

a pendent usually conical mass of ice formed by the freezing of dripping water.

By evening, the longest icicle hanging from the eaves had grown to about two feet.

iconoclast

n
/ ɪ'känəklast /
Gk > L

one who attacks established beliefs, ideals, customs, or institutions.

Malcolm has always considered himself the iconoclast of the family.

icosahedron

n
/ ɪ.kōsə'hēdrən /
Gk

a figure or solid formed by 20 plane faces.

The icosahedron occurs frequently in nature in molecular and viral structures.

identical

identify

v
/ ɪ'dentə.fɪ /
F

show or prove the sameness of (as with something known, stated, or possessed).

The victim was asked to identify the attacker from a lineup.

ideogram

n
/ ɪ'dēə.gram /
Gk + Gk

a character in Chinese writing made by combining two or more other characters for words of related meaning.

In Chinese, the ideogram for to love depicts a woman and her child.

idiosyncratic

adj
/ ɪ'dēə.sɪn'kradɪk /

Gk
marked by a peculiarity of physical or mental constitution or temperament.

In his autobiography Andrew described the idiosyncratic behavior of his zany upper-class family.

idiosyncratically

adv
/ ɪ'dēə.sɪn'kradɪk(ə)lē /
G > E

in a manner peculiar to the individual.

Because Emily Dickinson wrote so idiosyncratically, her poems are immediately recognizable.

idly

idolater

idolatry

idyllic

adj
/ ɪ'dɪlɪk /
Gk

pleasing or picturesque in its natural simplicity.

The Elsons spent a week in an idyllic little town in the Pyrenees.

igneous

adj
/ ɪ'gnēəs /
L

of, relating to, or suggestive of fire.
The igneous desert air shimmered on the horizon.

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ignite

v
/ ɪg'nīt /
L

set aflame : kindle.

The arson squad spent hours trying to discover what could ignite such a variety of apparently safe materials.

ignominious

ignominy

n
/ 'ɪgnə.mɪnē /
L > F

disgraceful or dishonorable conduct, quality, or action.

Although the coward was glad to be alive, he felt the ignominy of abandoning his comrades.

ignoramus

n
/ ɪgnə'rāməs /
L

an utterly uninformed person : dunce.

Schuyler is so afraid of his own intelligence that he refuses to speak in class and refers to himself as a "happy ignoramus."

ignorance

ikebana

n
/ ɪkə'bänə /
Jpn

the Japanese art of flower arranging that emphasizes form and balance.

Hana is trained in ikebana, and her arrangements are displayed in many restaurants throughout the city.

ileitis

n
/ ɪlē'īdēs /
L

inflammation of the lower small intestine.

Stella mistook her ileitis for indigestion.

iliacus

illegible

adj
/ ɪ(l)'lejəbəl /
L

not capable of being read or deciphered.

Although the physician's prescription appeared illegible, the pharmacist seemed to have no trouble deciphering it.

illegitimate

illeism

illicit

illiterate

n
/ 'ɪlth /
ON > E

the condition of being economically unprosperous or miserable.

Sharon didn't mind her family's illth as much as she minded the fact that they had all simply given up on any possibility of prosperity.

illuminati

n pl
/ ɪ.lümə'nād(.)ē /
L > It

persons who are or who claim to be unusually enlightened.

The mayoral candidate worked hard to win the support of the city's illuminati.

illumination

n
/ ɪ.lümə'nāshən /
L > F > E

a giving of physical light or the state of being lighted up.

Because of its many windows, Sarah's office always has ample illumination.

illusion

illusory

adj
/ ɪ'lüs(ə)rē /
L

of, relating to, or marked by illusion : deceptive.

Citizens of both countries hope that the apparent peace between the two nations is not illusory.

illustrate

v
/ 'ɪlə.strāt /
L

make clear by giving or by serving as an example or instance.

The stained-glass windows illustrate the Nativity scene.

illustration

image

imagery

imaginary

adj
/ ɪ'majə.nerē /
L

having no real existence : existing only in imagination or fancy : fictitious, hypothetical.

Not all of the characters in the novelist's best seller were imaginary.

imbecile

n
/ 'ɪmbəsəl /
L > F

one marked by mental deficiency.

The professor told his students that they should not be writing as if their reader were an imbecile.

imbecilic

adj
/ ɪmbə'silik /
L > F + EcF

characteristic or suggestive of one that acts stupidly or recklessly.

Iris effectively tuned out her brother-in-law as he described another of his imbecilic money-making schemes.

imitative

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immaculate

adj

/ ă'makyələt /

L > E

having no spot, soil, or smirch :
spotlessly clean.

*Told that her room must be
immaculate before she could go to
the mall with friends, Tollie started
cleaning feverishly.*

immalleable

adj

/ i(m)'malēəbəl /

L > F > E

not open to outside forces or
influences : unyielding, rigid.

*Dean remained immalleable in his
refusal to resign.*

immature

adj

/ im.mə'tù(ə)r /

L

lacking complete growth or
development.

*The immature insect resembles the
adult in form and eating habits but
differs in size, body proportions,
and color pattern.*

immense

adj

/ ă'men(t)s /

L > F

characterized by greatness in size
or degree.

*Wilbur's portliness is a reflection
of his immense appetite.*

immersion

imminent

adj

/ 'imənənt /

L

ready to take place : near at hand.

*Although Ellen's departure date
was imminent, she was not ready to
go.*

immiscible

adj

/ i(m)'misəbəl /

L

not capable of mixing or being
mixed.

Oil and water are immiscible.

immiserization

immolate

v

/ 'imələt /

L

[has near homonym: emulate]
sacrifice or abnegate (as oneself)
usually in the interests of some
cause or objective.

*Sheri persuaded the monk not to
immolate himself in protest.*

immortal

adj

/ i(m)'mörd·l /

L

connected with or possessing
everlasting life.

*The priest warned his flock of the
many dangers to their immortal
souls, such as envy, greed, and
sloth.*

immunocyte

n

/ 'imyənə.sīt /

L

a cell that functions in the
prevention of a disease.

*The immunocyte is the body's
primary defense against germs.*

immured

v

/ ă'myù(ə)rd /

L

[has near homonyms: enured,
inured] enclosed within or as if
within walls.

*While Sir Walter Raleigh was
immured in the Tower of London,
he used his time to write his
Historie of the World.*

immutable

adj

/ i(m)'myüdəbəl /

L

not capable of or susceptible to
change.

*The immutable laws of
thermodynamics preclude the
invention of a perpetual motion
machine.*

impair

impalpable

adj

/ im'palpəbəl /

L + L + L

incapable of being felt by the
touch.

*The puppy began chasing his
impalpable shadow.*

imparisyllabic

impasse

n

/ 'im.pas /

F

barrier, deadlock.

*A rockslide created an impasse on
the mountain road.*

impeccable

adj

/ im'pekəbəl /

L

free from fault or blame : flawless.

*A background investigation
affirmed the candidate's
impeccable character.*

impeccancy

impecunious

impecuniously

adv

/ impə'kyünyəsle /

L

in an indigent, penniless manner.

*George squandered his inheritance
and plodded through the remainder
of his life impecuniously.*

impedance

n

/ ăm'pēd·n(t)s /

L

the apparent opposition in an
electrical circuit to the flow of an
alternating current that is analagous
to the actual electrical resistance to
a direct current.

*A high-fidelity amplifier must have
a low output impedance to make
loudspeakers produce natural
sound.*

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impediment

n
/ ɒm'pedəmənt /
L
hindrance, block.
Clementine's lack of a degree was an impediment to her getting a good job.

impedimenta

n pl
/ ɒm.pədə'mentə /
L
things that hinder progress or movement; especially : baggage, equipment, or supplies.
Regina always travels with one small carry-on bag and considers anything more to be impedimenta.

impenetrable

adj
/ im'penətrəbəl /
L > F > E
incapable of being comprehended.
Sarah found Einstein's theories impenetrable.

imperatively

imperative

imperceptible

adj
/ impə(r)'septəbəl /
L
extremely slight, gradual, or subtle.
The air was filled with a delicate, springlike fragrance, almost imperceptible.

imperial

adj
/ im'pirēəl /
L
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] being the British legal standard : belonging to the official British series of weights and measures.
Several measurement terms are used both in the U.S. customary and British imperial systems.

impertinence

n
/ im'pərt(ə)nən(t)s /
L
lack of due respect for others in conduct.
For his impertinence Mrs. Brennan sent Kyle to the principal's office.

imperturbable

adj
/ ɪmpər'tərbəbəl /
L > E
unlikely to be disconcerted, agitated, or alarmed.
Hitherto imperturbable, Stacy suddenly showed signs of alarm.

impervious

adj
/ im'pərvēəs /
L
not allowing entrance or passage through : impenetrable.
Ted covered the woodpile with a tarp impervious to water.

impetigo

n
/ ɪmpə'ti(ɡ)ō /
L
an acute contagious skin disease transmitted by contact between persons or between healthy and infected skin.
Impetigo can quickly make the rounds in a kindergarten class.

impetuousness

n
/ im'pechəwəsnəs /
L > F > E
the quality or state of being impulsively vehement in feeling.
Theo's youthful frankness and impetuousness were excused by his boss.

impetus

n
/ ɪmpədəs /
L
a driving or impelling force.
Ralph's new girlfriend was the impetus behind his new exercise program.

impinge

implacable

adj
/ im'plakəbəl /
L > F
not capable of being appeased or pacified.
The defeated candidate harbored implacable resentment toward his opponent.

implausible

implement

n
/ ɪmpləmənt /
L + L
a tool or utensil forming part of equipment for work.
Dawson discovered a paleolithic stone implement near the entrance to a cave.

implicit

adj
/ im'plisət /
L
capable of being inferred : implied.
Implicit in Amy's reaction was a message for Carole to mind her own business.

imponderabilia

importance

n
/ ɒm'pɔrt'n(t)s /
L
the quality or state of being marked by or possessing consequence : weight, significance.
Mrs. Lynch cannot understand why some students do not see the importance of good manners.

impossible

adj
/ im'päsəbəl /
L > It > F
incapable of being or occurring.
So many things are possible just as long as you don't know they're impossible.

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impoverish

v
/ ɒm'päv(ə)rɪʃ /
F > E
make poor : reduce to indigence.
Medical bills will impoverish the Williams family if outside aid is not available.

imprecation

n
/ ɪmprə'kæʃən /
L
[Note: Could be confused with imbrication.] curse : malediction.
Jerod did not realize that the microphone was on when he uttered an imprecation under his breath.

impresario

n
/ ɪmprə'särē.ō /
It
[has homonym: empresario] the projector, manager, or conductor of an opera or concert company.
The impresario arranged for the opera company to perform in several cities.

imprescriptible

adj
/ ɪmprə'skriptəbəl /
L > F
inalienable, absolute.
A dictator considers few human rights imprescriptible.

impressionable

adj
/ ɒm'preʃ(ə)nəbəl /
L + L > E + Ecf
easily influenced or affected.
Dan's grandmother considered him very young and very impressionable.

imprimatur

n
/ ɪmprə'mädə(r) /
L
a sign or mark of approval.
The dean put her imprimatur on the smoking ban.

imprimis

impromptu

adv
/ ɒm'präm(p)ɪt(y)ü /
L > F
without previous study, preparation, or consideration : on the spur of the moment.
Leah is able to speak impromptu and at length on countless subjects.

improprieties

n pl
/ ɪmprə'prɪədēz /
L
unsuitable or improper acts or remarks.
Emma was willing to forget Mr. Elton's late improprieties and be as well satisfied with him as before.

impropriety

impugn

v
/ ɒm'pyün /
L
assail by words or arguments : make insinuations against.
Josie's comment was a feeble attempt to impugn Sara's honesty.

impuissance

impunity

n
/ ɒm'pyünədə /
L
exemption or freedom from punishment, harm, or loss.
Mr. Starks allowed anglers to trespass on his land with impunity.

imputable

imputrescible

adj
/ ɪmpyü'tresəbəl /
L
not capable of rotting.
Imputrescible trash is filling up dump sites throughout the state.

inaccurate

inadvertence

inagglutinable

inanimate

adj
/ ɪn'anəmət /
L
not endowed with consciousness or animal life.
Vera talked to her plants as if they were not inanimate objects.

inanition

n
/ ɪnə'nɪʃən /
L
the exhausted condition which results from a complete lack of food and water.
The injured hiker, finally found after a three-day search, had to be treated for inanition.

inanity

n
/ ɒ'nanədə /
L
meaningless quality : shallowness.
The inanity of conversation at the party made Karen think up an excuse to leave early.

inapplicable

adj
/ ɪn'apləkəbəl /
L
not adapted : not suitable.
The name Brutus was inapplicable to the small dog.

inaugural

adj
/ ɒ'nogyərəl /
L + Ecf
relating to or performed or pronounced at a formal induction or investiture.
In his inaugural address, the president promised to get the country on the road to economic recovery.

inauguration

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incandescence

n
/ ɪn(,)kən'des'ɪn(t)s /
L > F
the glowing of a body due to its high temperature.
The first light bulbs were illuminated via the phenomenon of incandescence.

incandescent

incarcerate

v
/ ɪn'kɑrsəˌrɑt /
L
put in prison.
Because the crime was his first offense, Lonnie was hopeful that the judge would not incarcerate him.

incarceration

n
/ (,)ɪn.kɑrsə'rɑʃən /
L
a confining or state of being confined : imprisonment.
The terrorist was sentenced to incarceration for the rest of his life.

incendiary

n
/ ɪn'sendēˌerē /
L
[Note: Could be confused with incendiary.] a person who deliberately sets fire to a building or other property.
The state fire inspectors determined that the fire was the work of an incendiary.

incense

incessancy

incessant

adj
/ ɪn'ses'nt /
L
continuing or following without interruption.
Incessant changes in other parts of this restless country bypass the inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow.

inchoate

adj
/ ɪn'kōət /
L
imperfectly formed or formulated : unorganized.
The songwriter explained that his melodies usually begin as inchoate humming.

incienso

n
/ ɪn(t)sē'en(t)(,)sō /
L > Sp
a desert shrub producing a resin that when burned emits a fragrant odor.
Early missionaries in the Southwest used to burn incienso in their churches.

incinerate

v
/ ɪn'sɪnəˌrɑt /
L
cause to burn to ashes.
In her fury, Elise decided to incinerate all of Jerry's letters.

incipiency

n
/ ɪn'sɪpē'nsē /
L
[Note: Could be confused with incipience.] beginning, commencement.
Stan was quick to extinguish the fire in its incipiency.

incipient

inclement

adj
/ ɪn'klemənt /
L
unmerciful, rigorous.
The harsh sentence of an inclement judge took 30 years of Sam's life.

incognito

incoherence

incompetent

incomprehensible

adj
/ ɪn.kəmprə'hen(t)səbəl /
L > E
lying above or beyond the reach of the human mind.
Every civilization tries to penetrate the incomprehensible mysteries of creation.

inconclusive

incondite

incongruous

inconnu

inconscient

adj
/ ɪn'känchənt /
L > F
lacking consciousness or full awareness.
The inconscient pedestrian was an easy victim for the mugger.

incontrovertible

incorrigible

adj
/ ɪn'kōrəjəbəl /
L
bad beyond the possibility of correction or rehabilitation : utterly bad or depraved.
They sentenced the incorrigible offender to life imprisonment.

increment

incubator

n
/ ɪŋkyaˌbədə(r) /
L
an apparatus for housing premature or sick babies in an environment of controlled humidity, oxygen supply, and temperature.
Who would have thought that the star linebacker spent the first three months of his life in an incubator?

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inculcate

v
/ ɪn'kʌl.kəˈt /
L

teach and impress by frequent repetitions or admonitions.
Religion is professed and practiced in various forms, yet most of them inculcate honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of humanity.

incumbency

n
/ ɪn'kʌmbənsē /
L

the sphere of action or period of office of one who holds a public or academic office.
Political analysts now say that a candidate's incumbency is not an asset but a liability.

incumbent

incunabulum

n
/ ɪnkyə'nabyələm /
L

a book printed before 1501.
Alfred was looking at an incunabulum in the British Library when he met his future wife.

incurvariid

adj
/ ɪn.kər'va(a)rēəd /
L

of or relating to a member of the Incurvariidae family of minute moths.
Many brilliantly colored incurvariid moths are found worldwide.

indebted

adj
/ ɪn'dedəd /
L > F > E

owing gratitude (as for a favor received or a kind act done).
Carmen was indebted to her piano teacher for helping her perfect her technique.

indefatigable

adj
/ ɪndə'fadəgəbəl /
L

incapable of being tired out : untiring.
The mayor thanked his indefatigable campaign workers for their invaluable help in getting him reelected.

indefeasible

adj
/ ɪndə'fēzəbəl /
L > F > AF
not capable of being or liable to being voided, annulled, or undone.
The Constitution vests the populace with indefeasible rights.

indelible

adj
/ ɪn'deləbəl /
L
that cannot be removed, washed away, or erased : permanent.
Lily's narrow escape from drowning left an indelible mark on her personality.

indemnify

indemnity

independence

indescribable

adj
/ ɪndə'skrībəbəl /
L
that cannot be described with precision.
The aromatic herb has a peppery odor and an indescribable but delicious flavor.

indicate

indicia

n pl
/ ɪn'dish(ē)ə /
L
indications, signs, tokens, criteria.
The reporter used many different indicia of public sentiment to obtain a reliable rating of the leader's popularity.

indicable

indictment

n
/ ɪn'ditmənt /
L > AF
an official written statement charging a person with an offense.
The grand jury's indictment of the seven men charges that they conspired to smuggle guns into the country.

indigenous

adj
/ ɪn'dijənəs /
L
originating or produced naturally in a particular land or region or environment.
Tomatoes are not indigenous to Europe.

indigent

adj
/ ɪndəjənt /
L
being poor usually without being destitute : impoverished, needy.
The basketball star donated money to build a community center for the indigent residents of his old neighborhood.

indigo

n
/ ɪndəgō /
Gk > L > It
a blue vat dye that was obtained originally from plants (as indigo plants or woad).
The production of indigo was the major factor in South Carolina's early development.

indiscretion

n
/ ɪndə'skreshən /
L
an act at variance with the accepted morality of a society.
Biographers of presidents often comb their subjects' lives in search of every indiscretion.

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indissoluble

adj

/ ɪndə'säljəbəl /

L

incapable of being annulled or undone or broken.

The friendship of Holmes and Watson proved indissoluble even by Watson's marriage and Holmes's supposed death.

indoctrinate

v

/ ɪn'däkrə.nāt /

L

give instructions especially in fundamentals or rudiments : teach.
Special classes were designed to indoctrinate the new employees.

indolence

indolent

adj

/ 'ɪndələnt /

L

constantly indulging in ease :
chronically averse to labor and exertion.

Doctors warn that an indolent lifestyle can contribute to heart disease.

indomitable

adj

/ ɪn'dämədəbəl /

L

incapable of being subdued.

The pens, the tongues, the fortunes, and the indomitable wills of many women were pledged to secure the right of the elective franchise.

indubitable

adj

/ (ɪ)ɪn'd(y)übədəbəl /

L

not open to question or doubt.

Shakespeare is considered by many to be the indubitable master of English literature.

inducement

n

/ ɪn'd(y)üsmənt /

L + Ecf

a motive or consideration that leads one to action.

Emma's desire to see Harriet better informed was an inducement to read more herself.

indulge

v

/ ɪn'dəlʃ /

L

give free rein to.

It is natural for humans to indulge in the illusions of hope.

indulgent

indurate

adj

/ 'ɪnd(y)ərət /

L > E

physically or morally hardened.

The war contributed greatly to Herbert's seemingly indurate manner, but he was always tender with his pigeons.

industrious

ineducable

ineffable

adj

/ ɪn'efəbəl /

L

incapable of being expressed in words.

Sarena's joy at being chosen for the play was ineffable.

ineluctable

adj

/ ɪnəl'əktəbəl /

L

not to be avoided, changed, or resisted : inevitable.

Mrs. Badger joked that death and taxes are the only two ineluctable aspects of life.

ineludible

adj

/ ɪnəl'üdəbəl /

L + Ecf

inescapable.

Detective Marchand's bloodhounds were considered by many to be ineludible.

inenarrable

adj

/ ɪnē'narəbəl /

L

incapable of being narrated :
indescribable, ineffable.

The sight of his newborn son brought Elijah inenarrable pleasure.

ineptitude

ineradicable

adj

/ ɪnə'radəkəbəl /

L

incapable of being rooted out or destroyed completely.

In the 1920s Britain had to yield to Ireland's ineradicable will for independence.

inertia

n

/ ɪ'nərshə /

L

indisposition to motion, exertion, or action.

The senator railed against the inertia of the citizenry.

inexorable

adj

/ ɪ'neks(ə)rəbəl /

L

unyielding, inflexible, relentless.

The inexorable force of the hurricane changed the shape of Bell Island.

inexplicable

inextinguishable

inextirpable

inextricable

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

infallible

adj
/ in'faləbəl /
L

incapable of error.
Dr. Cameron's colleagues on the faculty regard him as virtually infallible.

infatuation

infaust

infectious

adj
/ ən'fekshəs /
L

producing the establishment of a pathogen in its host after invasion.
Katie's sore throat is not infectious, so she will not have to miss any school.

inferentially

adv
/ infə'renchəl /
L

in a manner that involves a conclusion reached by reasoning or implication.
The report concludes that our social stresses are based almost wholly on misunderstanding, and thus, inferentially, can be eliminated by good communication.

inferior

adj
/ ən'firē(r) /
L

of poor quality : second-rate.
An inferior violinist has no chance of becoming an orchestra's concertmaster.

inficete

infinitesimal

adj
/ in.fīnə'tes(ə)məl /
L + Ecf

immeasurably or incalculably small : very minute.
Infinitesimal yellow flecks on the leaf made it appear metallic.

inflammatory

adj
/ ən'flamətōrē /
L

tending to excite anger, animosity, disorder, or tumult.
Rachel received a two-day suspension after she delivered an inflammatory speech at the assembly.

influenza

n
/ in.flū'enzə /
L > It

an acute highly contagious infectious virus disease.
Influenza kept Russell out of school for a week.

infractible

infrangible

adj
/ in'franjəbəl /
L

not capable of being broken or separated into parts.
Though it looks like the finest china, Jennifer's teapot is made of an infrangible polymer.

infructuous

adj
/ in'frəkchəwəs /
L

fruitless, unprofitable.
Efforts to discourage the bear from returning to Cynthia's backyard proved infructuous, and so it was tranquilized and taken to a more suitable area.

infusible

ingenious

ingenue

n
/ 'änjə.nü /
L > F

a stage part representing a character that is youthful, innocent, appealing, sweet, and sympathetic.
Stephanie was one of three students called back in the tryouts for the ingenue in the school's spring musical.

ingenuous

ingestible

adj
/ ən'jestəbəl /
L

capable of being taken in for digestion.
An increasing number of Americans are using food, dietary supplements, and other ingestible products to cure what ails them.

inglenook

ingratiating

adj
/ ən'grāshē.ādij /
L

intended or adopted in order to win favor : flattering.
During his campaign, the politician's manner became ingratiating.

inhale

v
/ ən'hāl /
Ecf + L > E
draw in by breathing.
Natasha stopped to inhale the wonderful aroma emanating from the bakery.

inimical

inimically

adv
/ ə'nimək(ə)lē /
L

in a hostile or unfriendly manner.
The majority of citizens reacted inimically to the proposed increase in city taxes.

inimitable

adj
/ i'nimədəbəl /
L

not capable of being copied : matchless.
Charmed by Miss Woodhouse, Mr. Elton considered all of her drawings inimitable.

iniquitous

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

iniquity

n
/ ɔˈnikwədə /
L > F > E

absence of or deviation from just dealing : wrongful conduct : wickedness.

The judge referred to the defendant's house as a "den of iniquity."

initial

initials

initiative

initiator

adj
/ ɔˈnish(ə)tōr /
L

constituting an introduction or beginning.

On page three of the book is an initiatory paragraph that gives personal information about the author.

injurious

inmate

innermost

adj
/ ˈinə(r)mōst /
E

farthest inward.

Starletta reached the cave's innermost chambers by crawling on her hands and knees and sometimes on her stomach.

innkeeper

innocent

adj
/ ˈinəsənt /
L

free of wrongdoing or corruption : guiltless.

Julian's offer to help stems from innocent motives.

innocuity

n
/ ɪnəˈkyüədē /
L

the quality or state of being harmless.

Thelma was wary of the seeming innocuity of her sister's remarks.

innocuous

adj
/ ɪˈnäk्यəwəs /
L

not likely to arouse ill will or give offense : inoffensive.

Betty was dismayed when Henry interpreted her innocuous remark as an insult.

innovation

n
/ ɪnəˈvāshən /
L

the introduction of something new.

The people of the small village were suspicious of all innovation.

innumerable

adj
/ ɔˈn(y)üm(ə)rəbəl /
L

too many to be numbered or counted.

Katie's seemingly innumerable chicken pox blisters slowly faded away.

inoculate

v
/ ɔˈnäkyəlāt /
L > E

introduce microorganisms, vaccines, or sera into a living body to establish immunity to a disease.

Dr. Cooper had to bribe Frank with a lollipop before he would let her inoculate him.

inoculator

inquiline

n
/ ˈɪkwəlɪn /
L

an animal that lives habitually in the nest or abode of some other species.

The burrowing owl is an inquiline who lives in prairie dog colonies.

inquisitor

n
/ ɔnˈkwɪzədə(r) /
L

a person whose official duty is to examine and inquire.

When the inquisitor asked a very personal question, the witness glared at him and remained silent.

insalubrious

adj
/ ɪnsəˈlūbrēəs /
L + Ecf

tending to impair health :

unwholesome, noxious.

Andrew has vowed to give up all his insalubrious habits.

insatiable

inscribe

inscrutable

adj
/ ɪnzˈkrüdəbəl /
L

not readily comprehensible : mysterious.

Kayla's grin was so inscrutable that no one could tell if she were happy or up to something mischievous.

insecticide

n
/ ɔnˈsektəsɪd /
L

an agent that destroys insects.

Malathion is an insecticide with low toxicity to mammals.

insentient

inseparable

insessorial

insidious

adj
/ ɔnˈsɪdēəs /
L

having a gradual, cumulative, and usually hidden effect : subtle.

Loretta's suspicion led her to pose a question with the insidious design of further discovery.

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insinuate

v
/ ɒn'sɪnyə.wāt /
L

impart or communicate with artful indirect wording or oblique reference : hint, imply.

Did April insinuate that she won't be inviting Dante to the party?

insipid

adj
/ ɒn'sɪpəd /
L

dull, uninteresting, commonplace.
Jed could hardly bear listening to the sportscaster's insipid comments.

insititious

adj
/ ɪn(t)sə'tɪʃəs /
L

constituting an insertion.
Research that Jennifer failed to include in her bound report was included as insititious pages.

insolence

n
/ ɪn(t)s(ə)lən(t)s /
L

[has homonyms and near homonym: insolents, insulants and insulins] the quality or state of being haughty and contemptuous or brutal in behavior or language.
In Greek mythology Athena transformed Arachne into a spider for her insolence.

insolent

insomnia

n
/ ɒn'sæmnēə /
L

prolonged inability to obtain adequate sleep : sleeplessness.
Cora's doctor suggests that her insomnia may be caused by the emotional stress of her new job.

insomniac

insouciance

insouciant

adj
/ ɒn'süsēənt /
F

exhibiting or characterized by freedom from concern or care.
The pompous, insouciant aristocrat never had to work a day in his life.

inspirometer

n
/ ɪnzpə'rämədə(r) /
L > F > E + Gk > L > F > E
an apparatus for measuring air inhaled in breathing.
The nurse used an inspirometer on Mr.Davis during his checkup.

instantaneous

adj
/ ɪnzstən'tānēəs /
L
done or occurring without any perceptible duration of time.
Harold's slow, nervous marriage proposal was balanced by Emily's instantaneous reply.

instauration

n
/ ɪnz.tə'rāshən /
L
restoration after decay, lapse, or dilapidation.
The instauration of the Statue of Liberty was a long and complicated project.

insulin

n
/ ɪn(t)sələn /
L + Ecf
a protein pancreatic hormone that is essential especially for the metabolism of carbohydrates and which is used in the treatment and control of diabetes mellitus.
Marty gives himself an injection of insulin every morning to control his diabetes.

insurrection

n
/ ɪn(t)sə'rekshən /
L > F > E
an act or instance of revolting against civil or political authority or against an established government.
The dictator quickly suppressed the peasants' insurrection.

insusceptibility

n
/ ɪnsəseptə'bɪlədē /
L
the quality or state of being incapable of being moved, affected, or impressed.
Sylvia prides herself on her insusceptibility to flattery.

intaglio

n
/ ɒn'tal(,)yō /
It
an engraving or incised figure in stone or other hard material.
Judd was pleased with the intaglio on his signet ring.

intangible

integument

n
/ ɒn'tegyəmənt /
L
an enveloping layer, membrane, or structure (as the skin of a fish or the exoskeleton of an insect).
The dried cicada integument attached to the brick wall fascinated the children.

intensity

n
/ ɒn'ten(t)sədē /
L + Ecf
extreme or very high degree : extreme strength, force, or energy.
Gino was astonished at the little flashlight's intensity.

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intercalate

v
/ ɪn'tɜrkəl.ə.t̩ /
L

insert between or among existing elements.

It was the editor's job to intercalate the new manuscript pages into the narrative.

intercede

intercept

v
/ ɪntə(r)'sept /
L

stop or interrupt the progress or course of.

Rick will intercept the office mail, as requested by Dr. Taylor.

intercessory

adj
/ ɪntə(r)'ses(ə)rē /
L

relating to or marked by the act of pleading in behalf of another.

The congregation joined in intercessory prayers for the sick parishioners.

interfered

interior

interlocutor

n
/ ɪntə(r)'ləkyədə(r) /
L

one who takes part in a dialogue or conversation.

The seminar leader instructed everyone to choose an interlocutor and discuss the video one-on-one.

interlucent

interment

n
/ ɪn'tɜrmənt /
L > F > E

the act or ceremony of placing a dead body in a grave or tomb.

Uncle Oliver's desire was that only family members be present at his interment.

intermezzo

n
/ ɪntə(r)'met(ɪ)sō /
L > It

a movement coming between the major sections of a symphony or other extended work.

The singers were able to take a break while the orchestra played the intermezzo.

interminable

adj
/ ɪn'tɜrmənəbəl /
L

having no end : wearisomely protracted.

Dad complained about the interminable lines at the theme park.

intermittence

n
/ ɪntə(r)'mit'n(t)s /
L

periodic cessation or interruption.

The intermittence of the moving windshield wipers supposedly allows better visibility during a light rain.

intermittent

adj
/ ɪntə(r)'mit'nt /
L

coming and going at intervals : not continuous.

The weather forecast warned of intermittent showers for the afternoon.

internal

international

internecine

adj
/ ɪntər'ne.sēn /
L

marked by great slaughter : deadly.

Many areas of the former Soviet Union have been plagued with internecine struggles.

interpellation

interplanetary

adj
/ ɪntə(r)'planə.tərē /
L + Gk + Lcf > E

existing, carried on, or operating between planets.

Interplanetary travel may someday be a reality, but for now it must remain the stuff of science fiction.

interpolate

interpret

v
/ ɪn'tɜprət /
L > F > E

explain or tell the meaning of :

translate into intelligible or familiar language or terms.

Shareen asked the psychiatrist to interpret her dream.

interregnum

n
/ ɪntə(r)'regnəm /
L

the time during which a throne is vacant between the death, abdication, or expulsion of a sovereign and the coronation of his or her successor.

The prime minister urged citizens to band together during the interregnum.

interrogatory

n
/ ɪntə'rägətōrē /
L

a formal question or inquiry.

The principal instructed Betty to prepare within two days a written response to the interrogatory regarding her honor offense.

interrupt

v
/ ɪntə'rəpt /
L

prevent (one) from proceeding by intrusive or interpolated comment or action.

"Must you always interrupt like that?" asked Mr. Kelley.

intersperse

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

interstice

n
/ ɔn'tərstəs /
L

a space that intervenes between one thing and another : a space between things closely set.

The tightly-woven cloth looked solid, but a sharp needle easily found an interstice to slip through.

intertriginous

interviewee

n
/ ɪntə(r).vyü'ē /
F

one that is questioned or conversed with especially in order to obtain information or ascertain personal qualities.

The receptionist administered a spelling test to each interviewee.

intestacy

intolerable

adj
/ ɪn'täl(ə)rəbəl /
L

not capable of being endured : unbearable.

The intolerable cold made Janice's eyes water.

intractable

adj
/ ɪn'trəktəbəl /
L

not easily governed, managed, or directed.

The intractable child was amusing for a while.

intrait

intramural

intrepid

adj
/ ɪn'trepəd /
L

characterized by resolute fearlessness in meeting dangers or hardships and enduring them with fortitude.

Bob's military honors attest to his intrepid character.

intricate

adj
/ 'ɪntrəkət /
L > E

having many complexly interrelating parts or elements : complicated.

Jason described the intricate mechanism of the clock as "awesome."

intrigue

v
/ ɔn'trēg /
L > It > F

arouse the interest, desire, or curiosity of.

The designer wanted the picture on the dust jacket to intrigue potential readers.

intrinsic

introduction

introit

intuitable

adj
/ ɔn't(y)üädəbəl /
L

knowable by insight or without rational thought.

Ashley believes that the concepts of good and evil are intuitable.

inumbrate

v
/ 'ɪnəm.brāt /
L

put in shadow : shade.

Carl watched the cloud temporarily inumbrate the soccer field.

inundate

inundation

n
/ ɪ(ɪ)nən'dāshən /
L

a rising and spreading of water over land not usually submerged : a flood.

As the river swelled with snowmelt, the levees protected the fields from inundation.

inurement

investive

inveigh

v
/ ɔn'vā /
L

protest bitterly or violently.

When the suspect was arraigned, he began to inveigh against what he claimed was police brutality.

inveigle

inveterate

adj
/ ɔn'vedərət /
L

continuous, recurrent, chronic.

The inveterate lateness of Linda's mail delivery caused her concern.

invidious

adj
/ ɔn'vidēəs /
L

of an unpleasant or objectionable nature : hateful.

It is not uncommon for Sean to respond with invidious remarks that may or may not be true.

invincible

inviolable

adj
/ ɪn'vīələbəl /
L

secure from assault or trespass.

An electrified security fence, ten feet high, did not make the film star's estate inviolable.

invitation

ionosphere

n
/ ɪ'änəsfi(ə)r /
Gk

the part of Earth's atmosphere containing free electrically charged particles.

Ham radio operators transmit their signals great distances by bouncing them off the ionosphere.

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iota

n
/ ɪˈoʊdə /
Gk
an infinitesimal amount : a very small degree.
The analgesic worked so well that Jeremy felt not even an iota of pain.

ipsedixitism

n
/ ɪpsēˈdiksəd.izəm /
L
dogmatic assertion or assertiveness.
Martine's ipsedixitism tired her friends and put off strangers.

ipseity

irascibility

n
/ ɪˈrasəˈbɪlədē /
L
the quality or state of being marked by a hot temper and resentful anger.
The artist's stubborn irascibility led to many family squabbles.

irascible

adj
/ ɪˈrasəbəl /
L
marked by hot temper and resentful anger.
After breaking his leg, Lennie became so irascible that his friends stopped visiting him.

irate

adj
/ ɪˈrāt /
L
feeling and showing a high degree of anger.
When Calvin returned home late, his father was irate.

irenicism

n
/ ɪˈrenəsɪzəm /
Gk + Ecf
a social temper or condition or a state of public opinion making for peace.
Ella detected a growing irenicism among her constituents, though many still advocated cold war.

iridescent

adj
/ ɪˈrɪdəsənt /
L
showing colors like those of the rainbow especially in shifting patterns of hues and shades that vary with a change of light or point of view.
Louis C. Tiffany developed a famous type of iridescent glass.

irradiate

v
/ ɪˈrædē.āt /
L
throw rays of light upon : shine upon.
Cynthia's beauty seemed to irradiate the room with a mystical glow.

irreconcilable

adj
/ ɪˈrɛkənˈsɪləbəl /
L
not capable of being brought into friendly accord or understanding.
Bill finally realized that his differences with Sheila were irreconcilable.

irrecusable

adj
/ ɪˈrɛˈkyüzəbəl /
L
not subject to exception or rejection.
The company's most recent offer to the strikers was presented as irrecusable.

irredeemable

irrefragable

adj
/ ɪ(r)ˈrefrəɡəbəl /
L
impossible to gainsay, deny, or refute.
The prosecutor maintained that the evidence against the defendant was irrefragable.

irregular

irrelevant

adj
/ ɪˈrɛləvənt /
L
not applicable or pertinent : foreign, extraneous.
Patrick introduced irrelevant arguments to cloud the central issue.

irreparable

irrepressible

adj
/ ɪrəˈpresəbəl /
L
impossible to repress, restrain, or control.
Sondra's irrepressible urge to drive fast earned her a speeding ticket.

irresistible

irretrievably

adv
/ ɪrəˈtrɛvəblē /
L > F > E
so as to be impossible to recoup, repair, or overcome.
Environmentalists bemoan the irretrievably lost sections of the rain forest.

irrevocability

n
/ ɪˈrevəkəˈbɪlədē /
L > F > E + E cff
the quality or state of being unalterable.
The chairman insisted upon the irrevocability of the rules of order.

irrevocable

irrevocably

adv
/ (ɪ)ˈrevəkəblē /
L
beyond any possibility of change.
The coach announced that the intramural team rosters had been irrevocably determined.

irrigation

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

irritability

n
/ ɪrədəˈbɪlədē /

L
quick excitability to annoyance, impatience, or anger.
On the second day of Josh's diet, his irritability was apparent to everyone around him.

irritate

isagoge

n
/ ɪsəˈɡɔːj /
Gk
a scholarly introduction to a branch of study or research.
The eminent economist wrote an isagoge for the new economics text.

isinglass

n
/ ɪzˈnˌɡlɑːs /
D
mica especially when in thin transparent sheets.
Isinglass is economically important because its low iron content makes it a good electrical and thermal insulator.

Islamic

adj
/ ɪˈslæmɪk /
Ar
of, relating to, or characterized by the religious faith of Muslims.
The central tenets of Islamic doctrine are that there is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet.

isle

n
/ ɪl /
L > F > E
[has homonyms: aisle, I'll] a small piece of land surrounded by water on all sides.
Kent dreamed of vacationing on a tropical isle.

isocryme

isogram

n
/ ɪ(ˌ)səˈɡrɑːm /
Gk + Gk
a line on a map or chart along which there is a constant value (as of temperature, pressure, or rainfall).
The meteorologist drew an isogram on the map to show places having the same barometric pressure.

isohyetal

adj
/ ɪ(ˌ)səˈhɪədəl /
Gk > ISV
relating to or indicating equal rainfall.
The weather forecaster's map shows isohyetal areas of the Great Plains.

isolability

n
/ ɪsələˈbɪlədē /
L > F > E
the capability of being placed alone or apart.
According to the philosophical principle of isolability, every isolated event must have an isolated cause.

isomorphic

adj
/ ɪsəˈmɔːrfɪk /
Gk
being of identical or similar form or shape or structure.
English spelling is difficult because of the frequent lack of isomorphic correspondence between the spoken word and the written word.

isosceles

adj
/ ɪˈsæsələz /
Gk > L
having two equal sides—used of a triangle.
Zola counted 16 isosceles triangles on the playground equipment.

isotope

issuable

Isthmian

adj
/ ɪsmiən /
Gk
of or relating to the Isthmus of Corinth or the games anciently held there.
Pindar's victory odes celebrate the victors in Olympic, Nemean, Pythian, and Isthmian games.

isthmus

n
/ ɪsməs /
Gk > L
a narrow strip of land running through a body of water and connecting two larger land areas.
The country of Panama is an isthmus connecting North and South America.

italicization

itemize

iterance

n
/ ɪdərən(t)s /
L > E
[Note: Could be confused with iterancy.] repetition, repetitiousness, recurrence.
Carol noticed an iterance of the name Elizabeth in her genealogical chart.

iterative

adj
/ ɪdərətɪv /
L
marked by or involving repetition or recurrence.
The name Elizabeth formed an iterative pattern in Maggie's genealogical chart.

itinerant

adj
/ ɪˈtɪn(ə)rənt /
L
traveling about from place to place.
The large farm employed many itinerant workers during the harvest season.

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itinerary

n
/ ɪˈtɪn.ə.rerē /
L

a sketch of the prospective course of a journey or trip.
The senator's itinerary called for ten stops in two days.

ivory

adj
/ ˈɪv(ə)rē /
Hamitic > L > F > E

of a creamy white color.
The ivory sweater that Karen purchased qualifies as "winter white."

izzat

jabberwocky

n
/ ˈjabə(r).wäkē /
E nonsense name
meaningless speech, writing, or patter : gibberish.
Dina listened as the two babies carried on a lengthy conversation in jabberwocky.

jabot

n
/ zhaˈbō /
F
a ruffle or pleated frill of cloth, lace, or both attached down the center front of a shirt, blouse, or dress bodice.
Tom insisted that the shirt of his Captain Hook costume have a jabot.

jacal

jacamar

n
/ ˈjakə.mär /
Tupi > F
any of many brightly colored birds inhabiting tropical forests from Mexico to Argentina.
Tio recognized the cry of the jacamar but couldn't see the bird through the thick foliage.

jackal

n
/ ˈjakəl /
Skt > Per > Turkish
any of several small wild dogs of Africa and Asia having large ears and a bushy tail and feeding on small animals, fruits, and carrion.
The zoologist explained that the popular image of a jackal as a cowardly scavenger is not justified by the facts.

jackanapes

n
/ ˈjakə.nāps /
E nickname
an impertinent or conceited fellow.
Billy was thrown out of English class for being an insolent jackanapes.

jackknife

jaconet

jacquard

n
/ jaˈkɑrd /
F name
a fabric of an intricate variegated weave.
In the antique store's front window was a fabulous jacquard that portrayed the Last Supper.

jadeite

n
/ ˈjɑ.dīt /
Sp > F
a monoclinic mineral found chiefly in Myanmar that when cut constitutes a valuable variety of jade.
Alexis bought a necklace made of jadeite and black onyx at the craft bazaar.

jaguar

n
/ ˈjag.wär /
Tupi&Guarani > Pg&Sp
a large cat chiefly of Central and South America that is larger and stockier than the leopard and is brownish yellow or buff with black spots.
Although the jaguar is a good climber, it usually stalks its prey on the ground.

jaleo

jalousie

n
/ ˈjaləsē /
F
[has near homonym: jealousy] a blind or shutter having horizontal slats that are adjustable or fixed at an angle to admit light and air and to permit looking out without being seen from the outside.
Helen hung a jalousie in each downstairs window of her new house.

jambalaya

n
/ ˌjəmbəˈliə /
Prov > F
rice cooked with ham, sausage, chicken, shrimp, or oysters and usually tomato and seasoned with herbs.
No trip to New Orleans would be complete without sampling a bowl of spicy jambalaya.

jambeau

n
/ ˌjamˈbō /
F > E
[has homonym: jambo] a piece of medieval plate armor for the lower leg.
The knight staggered under a blow that left a groove across his jambeau.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

jamboree

n
/ ˌjambə're /
unknown
a long mixed program of entertainment.
The finale at the jamboree was a brilliant display of fireworks.

jangle

janiform

adj
/ ˌjanəˈfɔrm /
L + L
having a face on each of two sides.
While in Rome, Stacey bought a replica of an ancient coin depicting a janiform figure.

janitor

n
/ ˌjanədə(r) /
L
one that keeps the premises of an apartment, office, or other building clean and free of refuse, tends the heating system, and makes minor repairs.
Morris took a part-time job as a janitor at an apartment complex in exchange for free rent.

japery

n
/ ˌjəp(ə)rē /
E
jesting talk : jokes.
Tired of the disk jockey's japery, Terry turned the radio off.

jarabe

n
/ hə'rä(,)bā /
Ar > Sp
any of several provincial Mexican couple dances that have the zapateado as their basic step.
The jarabe is sometimes performed at Mexican weddings.

jardiniere

jargon

n
/ ˈjərgən /
imit > F > E
the technical terminology or characteristic idiom of specialists or workers in a particular activity or area of knowledge.
Anna was sure the computer programmers were speaking English, but their jargon made it impossible for her to understand what they were saying.

jarl

jasper

jaundice

n
/ ˈjɒndəs /
L > F > E
yellowish pigmentation of the skin, tissues, and body fluids caused by the deposition of bile pigments.
David's jaundice was brought on by a liver problem.

jaundiced

adj
/ ˈjɒndəst /
L > F > E + Ecff
exhibiting or affected by distaste, or hostility.
Dr. Willis was jaundiced and querulous after being bedridden for so long.

jauntily

adv
/ ˈjɒntɪl̩ /
F > E + Ecff
in a light or carefree manner.
Steve's hat was perched jauntily on the side of his head.

jaunty

adj
/ ˈjɒnt̩ /
L > F
nonchalant or sprightly in manner or appearance.
The music teacher is far more jaunty at the keys of a piano than in the classroom.

javelin

n
/ ˈjav(ə)lɪn /
Celt > F
a slender shaft of wood not less than 260 centimeters long, tipped with iron or steel, and intended to be thrown for distance as an athletic feat or exercise.
Lucas threw the javelin only 20 feet on his first attempt.

javellization

jealousy

n
/ ˈjeləs̩ /
F
[has near homonym: jalousie] a disposition or state of mind that is intolerant of rivalry or unfaithfulness.
Tormented by jealousy, Shakespeare's Othello is driven to murder his wife.

jecorize

jeer

v
/ ˈji(ə)r /
unknown
speak or cry out with derision or mockery.
No one dared jeer when the venerable actor forgot his lines.

jeune

adj
/ ˈjəˈjuːn /
L
immature, juvenile.
Dennis rejected the jeune poems for publication.

jellyfish

jeopardize

v
/ ˌjɛpə(r)dɪz /
L > F > E + Ecff
expose to danger : imperil.
Mr. Turner refuses to jeopardize his family by driving at high speed.

jeopardy

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jerboa

n
/ jər'boə /
Ar
any of several social nocturnal Old World jumping rodents with long hind legs and a long tail.
The well-developed jumping ability of the jerboa enables it to escape from many predators.

jeremiad

n
/ jərə'miəd /
Heb name > Gk > L > F
a protracted speech marked by deep misery.
The old philosopher gave a moving jeremiad against a culture that values knowledge above wisdom.

jerkin

n
/ 'jərkən /
unknown
a close-fitting hip-length jacket.
As his quest led him northward, the knight began wearing a jerkin for additional warmth.

jeroboam

jettison

v
/ 'jedəsən /
L > F > E
drop (as auxiliary equipment, bombs, cargo, or fuel) from an airplane in flight (as for lightening the load or providing greater safety).
The airplane's malfunctioning engine prompted the crew to jettison all unnecessary cargo.

jettisoned

jibboom

jicama

n
/ 'hɛkəmə /
Nahuatl > Sp
a tall-climbing Mexican vine with showy flowers and a sweet watery root that is sometimes eaten raw or cooked.
Suleika made a coleslaw of jicama and shredded carrot.

jillion

jinete

jingoism

jittery

jocose

jocosity

n
/ ʃō'käsədə /
L
the quality or state of being given to jokes and jesting.
Lennie's jocosity endeared him to no one.

jocular

adj
/ 'jäkyələ(r) /
L
given or disposed to jesting.
The jocular keynote speaker peppered his remarks with humorous anecdotes.

jocund

adj
/ 'jäkənd /
L
feeling or exhibiting mirth or good cheer : cheerful.
The jocund host made everyone feel completely at ease.

jodhpur

n
/ 'jädpə(r) /
Indian geog name
a short riding boot; especially : an ankle-length boot fastened with a strap that is buckled at the side.
Among young or short equestrians, the jodhpur is a popular choice of boot.

joist

jongleur

n
/ zhōⁿglər /
F
an itinerant medieval minstrel reciting and singing for hire.
Timothy went to the Renaissance Fair dressed as a jongleur, with a handmade lute and a velvet cap.

jonquil

n
/ 'jäнкwəl /
L > Sp > F
a perennial bulbous herb native to southern Europe and northern Africa that has long slender leaves and is widely cultivated for its flowers.
A single jonquil in a bud vase adorned each table in the restaurant.

jostlement

joule

n
/ 'jül /
E name
[has near homonym: jewel] the absolute meter-kilogram-second unit of work or energy equal to 10 million ergs or approximately 0.7375 foot-pound or 0.2390 gram calorie.
In electrical terms, a joule represents the energy released in 1 second by a current of 1 ampere through a resistance of 1 ohm.

journal

journalism

n
/ 'jərnəlɪzəm /
F
an academic study concerned with the collection and editing of news or the editorial or business management of a news medium.
Students of journalism at Northwestern University often list the class taught by Oprah Winfrey as one of their favorites.

journey

jovial

adj
/ 'jōvēəl /
L > F
characterized by or showing marked good humor especially as exhibited in mirth, hilarity, or conviviality.
The jovial chef made cooking look easy and enjoyable.

joviality

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jubilant

adj
/ 'jübələnt /
L

manifesting or expressing
exultation or gladness.

*Fans were jubilant when the batter
hit the winning home run in the
bottom of the ninth inning.*

jubilant

jubilant

judicial

judiciary

judicious

adj
/ jü'dishəs /
L

directed or governed by sound
usually dispassionate judgment :
characterized by discretion.

*Jane's mom saw to it that her
summer activities were a judicious
mixture of chores and amusement.*

juggernaut

n
/ 'jəgə(r).nət /
Skt > Hindi

a massive force or object that
advances irresistibly and crushes
whatever is in its path.

*Sherman's armies moved like a
juggernaut through the South.*

juggler

n
/ 'jəg(ə)lə(r) /
L > F > E

[has near homonym: jugular] one
skilled in keeping several objects in
motion in the air at the same time
by alternately tossing and catching
them.

*The crowd was most impressed
when the juggler started juggling
flaming torches.*

jugular

adj
/ 'jəgyələ(r) /
L

of or relating to the throat or neck.

*It is easy to find one's own pulse in
the jugular region.*

juiciness

juicy

julienne

adj
/ 'jülē.en /
F (name?)

[has homonym: Julian] cut in long
thin strips—used especially of
vegetables and fruits.

*Bruce added julienne cucumber to
the salad.*

jumart

jumelle

junction

juncture

n
/ 'jən(k)chə(r) /
L

joint, seam.

*Lulu found a note wedged in the
juncture between the two seats.*

jungle

juniper

n
/ 'jünəpə(r) /
L > E

an evergreen shrub or tree
characterized by low, lateral
spreading.

*Grandma gathers berries from her
juniper to use in cooking.*

junket

n
/ 'jəŋkət /
L > It > E

a pleasure trip or tour made by an
official at public expense ostensibly
for purposes of inspection,
investigation, or other public
business.

*Many citizens complained that the
mayor's business trip to Japan was
merely a junket.*

junta

n
/ 'hüntə /
L > Sp

[has somewhat near homonyms:
hunter, junto] a closely knit group
of persons composing or
dominating a government
especially after a revolutionary
seizure of power.

*The military junta set up its
headquarters in the former
presidential palace.*

jurimetrician

n
/ ,jürəmə'trishən /
L + Gk > E

a specialist in the application of
scientific methods to legal
problems.

*The judge heard testimony from a
jurimetrician and a forensic
pathologist.*

jurisdiction

n
/ ,jürəs'dikshən /
L

the limits or territory within which
any particular power may be
exercised.

*Sgt. Voss couldn't issue the
reckless driver a ticket because the
highway was outside his
jurisdiction.*

jurisprudence

n
/ ,jürə'sprüd'n(t)s /
L

[has homonym: jurisprudents] the
science or philosophy of law.

*Tom is a professor of jurisprudence
at Yale Law School.*

jussive

adj
/ 'jəsiv /
L + Ecfr

expressing or having the effect of a
command.

*There was a jussive tone to Mr.
Contreras's request, and the boys
obeyed him immediately.*

justice

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

justiciable

adj

/ ˌjəˈstɪʃ(ə)əbəl /

L > F

capable of being decided by legal principles or by a court of justice : liable to trial in a court of justice.

The judge decided that Al's dispute with his employer was justiciable under the new law.

justifiable

juvenescence

n

/ ˌjʊvəˈnes˞n(t)s /

L

the state of being youthful or of growing young.

The director helped the aging actress produce the illusion of juvenescence through careful makeup and lighting.

juvenile

n

/ ˌjʊvəˈnɪl /

F or L

of or relating to childhood.

Many breakfast-cereal advertisements are geared to a juvenile audience.

juvenilia

n pl

/ ˌjʊvəˈnɪliə /

L

artistic or literary compositions produced in the author's youth and typically marked by immaturity of style, treatment, or thought.

The artist's juvenilia showed that he had been developing the same themes throughout his career.

juxtapose

v

/ ˌjəkstəˈpōz /

L

place side by side.

Picasso often used collage to juxtapose coarse and refined elements in his art.

juxtaposition

n

/ ˌjəkstəˈpəˈzɪʃən /

L

the act or an instance of placing two or more objects in a close spatial or ideal relationship.

The juxtaposition of the different styles within the same painting won the praise of the art critic.

Kabuki

n

/ kəˈbʊkē /

Jpn

traditional Japanese popular drama with singing and dancing performed in a stylized manner.

Performers of Kabuki must learn to move with great control.

kairos

n

/ ˈkɪrəs /

Gk

a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action.

Feeling that the kairos would never be better, Barbara approached her boss and demanded a raise.

kaiser

kaiserdом

n

/ ˈkɪzə(r)dəm /

G

the territory ruled by the German emperors from 1871 to 1918.

Otto was the best clockmaker in the kaiserdом.

kakemono

n

/ ˌkākəˈmō(,)nō /

Jpn

a picture or writing on silk or paper that usually has a roller at its lower edge.

Yasuki hung a kakemono in the living room.

kakistocracy

n

/ ˌkəkəˈstākɹəsē /

Gk

government by the worst individuals.

Denny thought the current student council was a kakistocracy.

kaleidoscope

n

/ kəˈlɪdəˌskōp /

Gk + E

an instrument that contains loose fragments of colored glass confined between two flat plates and two plane mirrors placed so that changes of position exhibit its contents in an endless variety of forms.

Raj received a fancy brass kaleidoscope for a birthday present.

kamikaze

kangaroo

kanone

karate

karst

karting

katabatic

adj

/ ˌkadəˈbədɪk /

Gk

of or relating to the downward motion of air (as in air drainage induced by surface cooling).

The ventilation system relied on katabatic action for optimal efficiency.

katana

n

/ kəˈtänə /

Jpn

a single-edged sword that is the longer of a pair worn by the Japanese samurai.

Hiroko proudly showed the guests her great-grandfather's katana hanging on the wall.

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katharometer

n
/ ˌkathəˈrämədə(r) /
Gk

an apparatus for determining the composition of a gas mixture.
With the help of a katharometer, the chemist was able to analyze the engine's exhaust.

katzenjammer

kaumographer

n
/ kó'mägrəfə(r) /
Gk
a worker who transfers designs, trademarks, or other printed material to cloth articles with a hot iron.
The sweatshirt store employs a kaumographer to decorate shirts with designs chosen by the customer.

keepsake

keeshond

kempt

kennel

n
/ 'kenˈl /
L > F > E
[has near homonym: quenelle] a house for a dog or pack of hounds.
Jack plans to help his father build a kennel for their beagles.

keno

n
/ 'kē(ˌ)nō /
F
[has homonym: kino] a game resembling lotto or bingo in which numbers printed on pellets are taken from a sack and announced to the players who cover the numbers on cards and in which five numbers covered in the same horizontal row win for the player.
The casino coffee shop had runners to sell the diners cards for keno.

kepi

n
/ 'kāpē /
L > G > F
a military cap having a close-fitting band, a round flat top sloping toward the front, and a visor.
In the foyer of the French embassy there is a statue of a general with a kepi atop his head.

keratitis

n
/ ˌkerə'tidəs /
Gk
inflammation of the cornea of the eye.
After being struck in the eye, the boxer had to be treated for keratitis.

keratoderma

n
/ ˌkerədō'dərmə /
Gk
a hard, callous condition of the skin.
The patient's keratoderma caused him pain and loss of movement.

keratoplasty

n
/ 'kerədōˌplastē /
Gk
plastic surgery on the cornea.
Keratoplasty, especially corneal grafting, has improved the vision of many people.

kerchief

n
/ 'kərchəf /
F > E
a square of cloth usually folded worn by women as a head covering.
Before Eileen went out to tend to her garden, she put on a blue and white kerchief.

kerf

n
/ 'kərf /
E
a slit or notch made in cutting usually by a saw or cutting torch.
Roger's toy racetrack is made from a piece of wood with a wide kerf along which the little cars move.

kerflop

kernel

kerplunk

adv
/ kə(r)'pləŋk /
imit
with a thud.
Mimi dropped the apple kerplunk onto Mrs. Vega's desk.

kerseymere

kestrel

n
/ 'kestrəl /
L > F > E
a common small European falcon.
Sean found an injured kestrel on the roof of the library.

ketch

khaki

kibitz

kibitzer

n
/ 'kibətsə(r) /
Yiddish
an outsider or nonparticipant who looks on and may offer unwanted advice or comment.
Officer Morrow ordered the kibitzer to stand back and get out of the way of the rescue squad.

kidnap

kielbasa

n
/ kil'bäsə /
Pol
[Note: A differently pronounced variant of the word is kielbasy.] a smoked sausage.
Adria ordered a half-pound of potato salad and a kielbasa from the deli.

kilim

kiln

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kiloton

n
/ 'kilə.tən /
Gk + E

an explosive force equivalent to that of 1,000 tons of TNT—used especially in reference to an atom or hydrogen bomb.

Given the strength of nuclear bombs, 1 kiloton is a small amount of explosive force.

kilowatt

kimono

kindergarten

adj
/ 'kində(r).gärt'n /
G

of or relating to an elementary level or initial phase.

After her request to skip from the sixth to the eighth grade was denied, Kathleen was openly scornful of the kindergarten math problems the teacher kept assigning.

kindling

kindness

kinesiology

n
/ kə.nēsē'äləjē /
Gk

the study of the principles of mechanics and anatomy in relation to human movement.

All physical therapy students are required to take a course in kinesiology.

kinesitherapy

n
/ kə.nēsē'therəpē /
Gk

the therapeutic and corrective application of active and passive movements (as by massage) and of exercise.

The stroke victim's muscular problems were almost totally corrected through intensive kinesitherapy.

kinetic

adj
/ kə'ned.ik /
Gk

relating to the motion of matter and the forces and energy associated therewith.

The kinetic theory of gases treats each molecule in a gas as a point, which has mass but negligible volume.

kinetosis

n
/ kinə'tōsəs /
Gk > L

sickness induced by motion and characterized by nausea.

Before boarding the ship, Claire made sure she had brought along medication for kinetosis.

kingdom

kinkajou

n
/ 'kiŋkə.jü /
Algonquian > F
a slender long-tailed mammal of Central and South America related to the raccoon.
The kinkajou is sometimes called the honey bear.

kishke

n
/ 'kishkə /
Slav > Yiddish
beef or fowl casing stuffed with a savory filling (as of matzoth flour, chicken fat, and onion) and roasted.
Steve ate four helpings of his grandmother's kishke.

kitchen

n
/ 'kichən /
E
a room or some other space (as a wall area or separate building) with facilities for cooking : a place for preparing meals.
Joey spent several hours in the kitchen on Thanksgiving Day.

kitsch

n
/ 'kich /
G

artistic or literary material held to be of low quality, often produced to appeal to popular taste, and marked especially by sentimentalism, sensationalism, and slickness.
Souvenir shops are filled with kitsch for the indiscriminating tourists.

kiwi

klendusity

n
/ klen'd(y)üsədē /
Gk
the tendency of a plant or variety to escape infection as a result of having some property that prevents or hinders inoculation : disease-escaping ability.
The plant's thick cuticle is largely responsible for its klendusity.

klinotaxis

n
/ klinə'taksəs /
Gk
directional orientation involving turning toward a stimulus.
The klinotaxis of honeybees is dependent on the angle of the sun.

klomp

n
/ 'klämp /
D
[has homonym: clomp] a wooden shoe worn in the Low countries.
The Dutch villager proudly showed Pam a klomp that he had just finished carving.

knapsack

n
/ 'nap.sak /
G&D
a bag or case often of canvas supported on the back by a strap over each shoulder and used especially for carrying supplies while on a march or hike.
The next morning, Boris found a young snapping turtle in his knapsack.

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knave

knavery

knead

kneadable

adj

/ 'nēdəbəl /

E + Ecf

having the proper texture for mixing into a well-blended whole by or as if by repeatedly drawing out and pressing together.

Flour was mixed with other ingredients to produce a kneadable dough.

knickers

n pl

/ 'nikə(r)z /

American name

[has homonym: nickers] loose-fitting knee-length pants gathered at the knee on a band for sports and informal wear.

The man was dressed in a shaggy tweed jacket and knickers with long woolen stockings.

knickknacky

knight

knightling

knish

n

/ kə'nish /

Russ > Yiddish

a round or square of rich baking-powder dough folded over a savory meat or cheese filling and baked or fried.

Sol searched his new neighborhood in vain for a restaurant that served a decent knish.

knishes

knock

knockabout

knoll

n

/ 'nōl /

E

a usually small rounded land eminence.

Drucilla lay at the top of the knoll to catch some rays.

knout

knowledge

n

/ 'nālɪj /

E

the fact or condition of knowing.

Jack's knowledge of carpentry immediately earned him a job when he arrived in Miami.

knuckle

knucks

knurl

kohlrabi

n

/ kōl'räbē /

G

a variety of cabbage having a turnip-shaped edible stem.

The flesh of the kohlrabi resembles that of the turnip but is sweeter and milder.

kookaburra

n

/ 'kūkəbərə /

Australian name

a kingfisher of Australia that is about the size of a crow, has a call resembling loud laughter, and feeds in part on reptiles.

While vacationing in Melbourne, Lindsay was at first startled by the peculiar chortling of a kookaburra.

kremlin

n

/ 'kremlən /

Russ

the citadel or fortress of a Russian city or town.

Bruce hiked to the ancient kremlin for the best view of the city.

kriegspiel

n

/ 'krēgz,pē(ə)l /

G

chess in which neither player sees the other's board but is given some information as to the opponent's moves by a referee who keeps track of all moves on a third board.

Orvil attributes his ability to mentally picture a chessboard in play to his fondness for kriegspiel.

Krugerrand

n

/ 'krügə.rənd /

S Afr name + S Afr geog name

a one-ounce gold coin of the Republic of South Africa.

Martin purchased a Krugerrand at the New York Coin Show last year.

krypton

n

/ 'kript.tən /

Gk

a colorless relatively inert gaseous element found in air at about one part per million and used especially in electric lamps.

A light bulb filled with krypton will last longer and shine more brightly than a regular bulb of the same wattage.

kuchen

n

/ 'kükən /

G

any of several varieties of coffee cake typically made from sweet yeast dough and variously shaped, flavored, and frosted.

Aunt Mitzi served a warm apple kuchen for Christmas brunch.

kudize

v

/ 'k(y)ü.dīz /

Gk

grant honors to : praise.

The planning committee had a luncheon to kudize Mr. Blalock, who donated 100 acres of land for the city park.

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kudos

n pl

/ 'k(y)ü.dōz /

Gk

praises given for achievement.

Daphne received many kudos from the drama coach after her performance in the school play.

kudzu

n

/ 'küd()zü /

Jpn

a vine of China and Japan that is used widely in the southern United States for erosion control and soil improvement.

Along many highways of the deep South, kudzu covers the roadside like drapery.

kwashiorkor

n

/ .kwäshē'örkər /

Ghana name

severe malnutrition in infants and children caused by a high-carbohydrate, low-protein diet.

Supplying protein supplements to affected children is one way in which UNICEF works to eradicate kwashiorkor.

labefaction

laboratory

laborious

adj

/ lə'bōrēəs /

L

involving much work : tiresome.

Restoration of the mansion will require laborious effort.

labyrinth

n

/ 'labə.rin(t)th /

Carian? > Gk > L > E

a structure full of intricate passageways that make it difficult to find the way from the interior to the entrance or from the entrance to the interior.

Lost in the labyrinth of passages beneath the castle, the invaders gave up the attack plan and instead concentrated on finding a way out.

labyrinthine

laccate

adj

/ 'lakāt /

L + Ecf

having a varnished or lacquered appearance.

The leaves of some tropical evergreens have a laccate surface.

lacerate

laceration

n

/ .lasə'rāshən /

L > F

a wound made by tearing or rending roughly.

Forty stitches were required to close the laceration in Jeremy's scalp.

lachrymose

adj

/ 'lakrə.mōs /

L

dismal, melancholy.

The lachrymose play ruined Samantha's weekend.

lackadaisical

adj

/ .lakə'dāzəkəl /

E + Ecf

lacking life, spirit, or zest : devoid of energy or purpose.

John's piano teacher criticized him for his lackadaisical performance in the recital.

laconic

adj

/ lə'känik /

Gk > L

spoken, written, or expressed briefly or tersely : pithy.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick's laconic speaking style was quite popular with her students.

lacrosse

n

/ lə'krōs /

F

a game that is played on a turfed field by two teams of ten players, each of whom uses a long-handled stick with which the ball is caught, carried, and thrown, with the object being to throw the ball into the opponents' goal.

Curious about lacrosse, Pamela signed up for a college intramural team.

lacteal

adj

/ 'laktēəl /

L + Ecf

relating to, consisting of, producing, or resembling milk.

Liz was surprised to learn that her lacteal drink was made from soybeans.

lacuna

n

/ lə'k(y)ünə /

L

a blank space : a missing part : gap, hole.

Gabe discovered a mysterious lacuna in the manuscript.

ladle

lageniform

adj

/ lə'jēnə.fōrm /

L + Ecf

shaped like a flask : dilated below and tapering to a slender neck above.

While on the field trip, the botanist directed the class to an example of a lageniform fungus.

laggard

adj

/ 'lagə(r)d /

Scand + Ecf

slow or relatively slow to act, move, follow, or respond.

Successful mail order companies are rarely laggard in handling complaints.

laggardly

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lagniappe

lagomorph

n
/ 'lagə.mɔrf /
Gk > L

[Note: Could be confused with Lagomorpha.] any of several gnawing animals (as hare, rabbit, or pika) resembling the rodents.
A lagomorph has well-developed incisors to help it sever plant stems and gnaw on bark.

laity

n
/ 'lāede /
Gk > L > F > E + Ecf
[Note: Could be confused with lady.] the great body of the people of a religious faith as distinguished from its clergy.
In most churches, many tasks and duties are given to the laity.

lallation

laloplegia

n
/ .lələ'plēj(ē)ə /
Gk
paralysis of the muscles involved in speech.
Since Uncle Harry's stroke caused laloplegia, he had to communicate with pencil and paper.

lamasery

n
/ 'lāməsərē /
Tibetan > F + Per > F
a monastery of Tibetan Buddhist monks or priests.
Xiang returned from the lamasery a wiser and more introspective man.

lambda

lambent

lambently

adv
/ 'lambəntlē /
L
in a light and brilliant manner.
Carla's eyes flashed lambently under her dark brows.

lambrequin

n
/ 'lambə(r)kən /
D > F
a short decorative drapery for a shelf edge or for the top of a window casing : valance.
An embroidered lambrequin hung over each of the mansion's windows.

lament

v
/ lə'ment /
L
express sorrow for : bewail, mourn.
Railroad buffs still lament the demise of the steam locomotive.

lampoon

n
/ lam'pün /
F
a light mocking satire.
The new movie is a lampoon of the horror films that are made especially for teenagers.

lamppost

n
/ 'lamp.pōst /
Gk > L > FE + E
a pole supporting a usually outdoor lighting device.
The speeding automobile didn't make the curve and slammed into a lamppost, knocking it to the ground.

lamprey

n
/ 'lamprē /
Gaulish? > L > F
any of various freshwater and saltwater vertebrates that are widely distributed in temperate and subarctic regions and resemble eels but have a large circular jawless suctorial mouth with numerous small conical teeth.
A large lamprey slithered out of the underwater cave, startling the diver.

lampyrid

n
/ 'lampərəd /
Gk > L
a beetle or firefly of medium or small size having an elongate form.
The lightning bug is a common lampyrid.

lancet

landau

n
/ 'lan.daü /
G geog name
a four-wheeled covered carriage.
People who cannot picture what a landau looks like should think of Cinderella's carriage.

landscape

n
/ 'lanz.kāp /
D
a portion of land or territory that can be seen in a single view including all the objects so seen.
After the snowstorm the landscape looked like a winter wonderland.

langlauf

langouste

n
/ lä'güst /
L > OProv > F
spiny lobster.
Alicia ordered the langouste at the fancy seafood restaurant.

language

n
/ 'langwij /
L > F > E
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] the inner tongue or flat plate opposite the mouth of an organ flue pipe.
A small chip in the organ's smallest language subtly affected its tone.

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languescent

adj
/ lan'gwes^{nt} /
L

becoming listless or fatigued.
The languescent ballerina struggled through the final scene.

languid

adj
/ 'lanwəd /
L > F

sluggish in character or disposition.
In India Mary had always felt hot and too languid to care much about anything.

languor

languorous

languorously

adv
/ 'lan(g)(ə)rəslē /
L + Ecff
in a manner characterized by listless indolence or sluggishness.
After returning from work, Cora reclined languorously on the sofa.

laniary

adj
/ 'lānē.erē /
L
adapted for tearing.
Laniary teeth are common in most carnivores.

lanolated

adj
/ 'lan'l.ādəd /
L > ISV + Ecff
containing wool grease refined for use in ointments and cosmetics.
Agnes used lanolated cream to treat her dry, rough skin.

lantern

n
/ 'lantərn /
Gk > L > F > E
a portable lamp.
The red light in the distance came from a lantern that hung from the last car of the train.

lapidary

lapideous

adj
/ lə'pidēəs /
L
of the nature of stone.
Lapideous concretions that form in the bladder or kidneys can cause extreme pain.

lapillus

larcenous

larceny

n
/ 'lārs(ə)nē /
L > F > E
the unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property without the consent of its lawful possessor.
When Tina first saw Victor's art collection, she suspected him of larceny.

largetto

adv
/ lār'ged(,)ō /
It
in a somewhat slow manner—used as a direction in music.
In the second movement, which is played largetto, Beethoven unfolds one melodic idea after another.

largitional

adj
/ lār'jishən'l /
L + Ecf
of or relating to a gift or gratuity.
The seed money for the new museum consists entirely of largitional funds.

lariat

n
/ 'larēət /
L > Sp
a long light but strong rope used with a running noose for catching livestock.
Jonathan watched in fascination as the cowboy demonstrated his skill with the lariat.

larigo

n
/ 'lārə.gō /
Sp
a ring at each end of the cinch of a western saddle through which the straps pass.
When Lynn investigated her loose saddle, she found that a larigo had broken.

larithmics

n pl
/ lə'riθmiks /
Gk
the scientific study of the quantitative aspects of population.
In accordance with a principle of larithmics, the emigration from the country was offset by an increased rate of population growth.

larmoyant

adj
/ lār'mōiənt /
L > F
given to tears or weeping : tearful.
Even Jorge, who is not usually larmoyant, had to wipe his eyes during the eulogy.

larrigan

n
/ 'larəgən /
unknown
an oil-tanned moccasin with legs that is used especially by loggers and trappers.
The statue of Paul Bunyan depicted him with an ax over his shoulder and a hole in one larrigan.

larva

n
/ 'lārvə /
L
the immature, wingless, and often vermiform feeding form of an insect which has hatched from the insect egg.
The caterpillar is the larva of the butterfly.

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laryngitic

adj
/ ˌlɑrənˈjɪdɪk /
Gk

affected with an inflammation of the upper part of the trachea containing the vocal cords.

After a long day of pitching his merchandise, the salesman returned home exhausted and laryngitic.

laryngitis

larynx

n
/ ˈlɑrɪŋ(k)s /
Gk > L

the modified upper part of the respiratory passage of air-breathing vertebrates bounded above by the glottis and continuous below with the trachea.

The vocal cords are situated within the larynx.

laser

n
/ ˈlāzə(r) /
English acronym
a device that utilizes the natural oscillations of atoms or molecules between energy levels for generating coherent electromagnetic radiation.
The surgeon used a laser to make the incision.

lassitude

n
/ ˈlɑsəˌtʃud /
L
a condition of weariness or debility : fatigue.
Lassitude is a symptom of many tropical diseases.

latensify

laterigrade

adj
/ ˈlɑdərəˌɡrād /
L + L
running sidewise or characterized by such running.
The laterigrade movements of the crab delighted the children on the beach.

lathe

n
/ ˈlɑθ /
E
a machine in which work is rotated about a horizontal axis and shaped by a fixed cutting tool while being held in a chuck.
Chloe donned her safety glasses before switching on the lathe.

laticiferous

adj
/ ˌlɑdəˈsɪf(ə)rəs /
Gk? > L + Ecff
containing, bearing, or secreting latex.
Some laticiferous tropical vines are good sources of rubber.

latitude

latitudinous

adj
/ ˌlɑdəˈtʃudˈnəs /
L
having breadth especially of thought or interpretation.
Poetry is a latitudinous category, ranging from the moralistic to the nihilistic.

latkes

lattice

n
/ ˈlɑdəs /
Gmc? > F > E
a framework or structure of wood or metal made by crossing laths or other thin strips so as to form a network.
The window has a lattice, but that did not stop Renton from getting through it.

laud

v
/ ˈlɒd /
L
sing the praises of.
The proud parents would laud their child's slightest accomplishment.

laudatory

adj
/ ˈlɒdəˌtɔrē /
L
of, relating to, or containing praise.
Seth made sure everyone saw his laudatory telegram from the dean.

laughable

adj
/ ˈlɑfəbəl /
E + Ecff
comical, absurd.
Marlene wore antique finery which would have been laughable on any other woman.

laughter

launder

launderer

n
/ ˈlɒndərə(r) /
L > F > E
one who washes and irons clothing.
Gina took her blouse to the launderer for cleaning.

laureation

n
/ ˌlɔrēˈɑʃən /
L
an act of crowning with or as if with a wreath of leaves as a mark of honor or achievement.
At her laureation the recipient of the honorary degree paid tribute to her college professors.

laurel

n
/ ˈlɔrəl /
L
[has homonym: loral] foliage used by the ancient Greeks to crown victors in the Pythian games.
The ancient statue of an unknown athlete bore a carefully carved wreath of laurel.

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lavash

n
/ 'lä.väsh /
Armenian
a large thin crisp unleavened wafer with a rough surface caused by air bubbles during baking.
Phil served lavash with goat cheese.

lavatory

n
/ 'lavə.tōrē /
L
a room with conveniences for washing the hands and face and usually with one or more toilets.
All of the soap dispensers in the lavatory were empty.

lavender

layette

league

n
/ 'lēg /
Gaulish > L > E
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an English unit of distance of about 3 miles.
Long car rides seem shorter if you figure them by the league instead of by the mile.

leaky

leasable

lease

leatherine

leaven

n
/ 'levən /
L > F > E
[has homonym and near homonyms: levin and eleven, levan] a substance (as yeast) acting or used to produce fermentation in a dough or a liquid.
Nina neglected to add the leaven that causes the bread dough to rise.

lebkuchen

n
/ 'läp.kükən /
G
a Christmas cookie usually made with honey, brown sugar, almonds, candied fruit peel, and spices.
Bart slipped a lebkuchen to the schnauzer.

lecithin

n
/ 'lesəthən /
Gk
a substance that is obtained in the manufacture of soybean oil and that is used in foods (as margarine, chocolate, bakery products).
Lecithin is used in the production of caramel to make it smoother.

lectern

n
/ 'lektə(r)n /
L
a desk or stand with a sloping top and usually a ledge at the bottom of the slope designed to support a book or script in a convenient position for a reader standing before it.
Miguel clutched the lectern in an attempt to conceal his nervousness.

lectionary

lectotype

lederhosen

n pl
/ 'lädə(r).hōz'n /
G
knee-length leather trousers worn especially in Bavaria.
All the men who volunteered to work at Oktoberfest were asked to wear lederhosen.

legacy

n
/ 'legəsē /
L > F > E
money or property given to someone by direction of a will.
Tim opened a small business with the legacy from his father.

legerdemain

n
/ .lejə(r)də'mān /
F
skill and dexterity in the performance of juggling or conjuring tricks.
The performer's legerdemain included making a coworker disappear from an enclosure.

legerity

n
/ lə'jerədē /
L > F
mental or physical agility and quickness.
The gymnast performed on the balance beam with remarkable legerity.

leggieramente

legibility

legible

legislate

legislatorial

adj
/ .lejəslə'tōrēəl /
L + Ecf
having the power or performing the function of making laws.
Unfinished legislatorial duties kept Congress in session past its normal adjournment date.

legislature

n
/ 'lejə.slāchə(r) /
L + Ecf
an organized body of persons having the authority to make laws.
Ellen served as a page for the legislature last year.

legitimacy

leguminous

adj
/ lə'gyümənəs /
L
of, resembling, or consisting of peas or other vegetables.
The only leguminous food that Mandy likes is peas.

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leisurable

adj

/ 'lēzh(ə)rəbəl /

L > F > E

proceeding deliberately without haste.

The bikers made a leisurable tour of the campus.

leisure

lemming

n

/ 'lemɪŋ /

ON > Norw

any of several small rodents of circumpolar distribution.

The legend of suicide by drowning associated with the lemming is fascinating but probably untrue.

lemniscate

lemonade

lemur

n

/ 'lēmə(r) /

L

any of numerous arboreal chiefly nocturnal mammals formerly widespread but now largely confined to Madagascar that are related to the monkeys.

The lemur is lower on the evolutionary scale and less intelligent than the monkey.

length

n

/ 'len(k)th /

E

the longer of the two straight-line dimensions of a surface or plane or the longest of the three straight-line dimensions of a solid : extent from end to end.

Marsha and her father frequently argue over the length of her skirts.

leniency

n

/ 'lēnēənsē /

L

the quality or state of being tolerant or merciful.

At his sentencing the convicted felon expressed remorse and pleaded for leniency.

lenient

leoncito

n

/ .ləən'sē(.)tō /

Sp

a lion monkey; any of several South American marmosets.

The leoncito has a mane of fur around its head like a lion.

leonine

adj

/ 'lēə.nīn /

L

resembling or suggesting that of a lion.

Portraits of Beethoven and Einstein always depict them with leonine hairstyles.

leopard

n

/ 'lepə(r)d /

Gk > L > F > E

a large strong cat of southern Asia and Africa that is adept at climbing and is usually tawny or buff with black spots.

The so-called "black panther" is actually a black-coated form of the leopard.

leopardess

leotard

n

/ 'lēə.tārd /

F name

a close-fitting garment for the torso that is worn for practice or performance by dancers and acrobats.

In modern dance, performers often wear a very simple leotard.

lepidopterist

n

/ .lepə'däptərəst /

Gk

a specialist in the study of butterflies and moths.

Judy was well on her way to becoming a lepidopterist; she already had her own butterfly net.

leporiform

adj

/ 'lepərə.fōrm /

L + E

resembling a hare or rabbit in form.

For Easter, Mom decorates the windows with leporiform figures bearing baskets of eggs.

leprosy

n

/ 'leprəsē /

Gk > L

a progressive infectious disease that affects the skin and nerves and causes lumps, ulcers, white scaly patches, deformities, and eventual loss of sensation.

Even though approximately 270 cases of leprosy are diagnosed in the United States each year, effective medications have made the existence of leper colonies unnecessary.

leptocercal

adj

/ .leptə'sərkəl /

Gk + Gk

tapering off to a long slender point—used of the tail of a fish.
The scuba diver showed Jane his scar from a wound he received when whipped by the leptocercal tail of a stingray.

lesion

n

/ 'lēzhən /

L > F > E

[has near homonym: legion] an abnormal change in structure of an organ or part due to injury or disease.

Sarah had Dr. Kendall treat the lesion on her shin.

lethal

adj

/ 'lēthəl /

L

of, relating to, or causing death.

The lethal fire spread through the Riggs Building rapidly.

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lethargic

adj

/lə'thɑːrjɪk/

Gk > L > F

slow-moving, sluggish.

Rhea's dry throat and lethargic disposition warned her that a cold was coming.

lethargy

n

/ˈleθə(r)jē/

Gk

the quality or state of being lazy or indifferent : lassitude, apathy.

The hot, humid air of the tropics spreads a feeling of lethargy over everyone.

letteret

lettuce

n

/ˈledəs/

L > F > E

a common garden vegetable with succulent leaves that are often used in salads.

Rosemarie prefers romaine lettuce for her salads.

leucitite

leucoryx

n

/ˈlʊkə(ɪ)riks/

Gk

a large chiefly pale brownish antelope of North Africa.

The horns of the leucoryx are evenly curved backwards.

levade

n

/ləˈväd/

F > G

a show-ring movement in which a horse raises the forequarters, brings the hindquarters under him, and balances with haunches deeply bent and forelegs drawn up.

When a horse's body is at a less-than-45-degree angle with the ground, the movement is called a "levade."

levanter

n

/ləˈvʌntə(r)/

L > F > E + Ecf

a strong easterly Mediterranean wind.

When the levanter hits the Rock of Gibraltar, it soars up 1,400 feet, and its vapor becomes a dense white cloud.

levee

n

/ˈlevē/

L > F

[has homonym: levy] an embankment built alongside a body of water to prevent flooding of nearby land.

The city plans to construct a levee to prevent flooding from the river.

level

leverage

leveret

n

/ˈlev(ə)rət/

L > F > E

a wild rabbit in its first year.

Jimmy's pet rabbit is a leveret that his dad caught while cutting hay.

leviathan

adj

/ləˈvɪəθən/

Heb > L > E

of enormous size.

The ore was hauled away in leviathan trucks.

levity

n

/ˈlevədē/

L

excessive or unseemly frivolity : lack of fitting seriousness.

The minister's levity during the eulogy was inappropriate.

levy

v

/ˈlevē/

F > E

impose or collect by legal process or by authority.

The political candidate promised to levy no new taxes if he were elected.

lexicography

lexicon

n

/ˈleksəkən/

Gk

the vocabulary of a subject or of an occupational group.

The lexicon of computer programmers is slowly becoming part of everyday language.

liability

liable

liaison

libel

liberalism

n

/ˈlib(ə)rəˌlɪzəm/

L + Ecf

a political philosophy based on the belief in freedom for the individual and on the belief of governmental guarantees of human rights and civil liberties.

Alex believes that persons attracted to liberalism are often more compassionate than practical.

liberalize

librarian

n

/lɪˈbrerēən/

L

one whose vocation is working with collections of books, manuscripts, or other literary materials kept for study or reading.

Juan asked the librarian for the key to the rare-book cabinet.

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library

n
/ 'li.brerē /
L

a room or section of a building or a building itself given over to books, manuscripts, or other literary and sometimes artistic materials usually kept in some convenient order for use but not for sale.

Stella owns many books and plans to convert a spare bedroom to a library.

libretto

n
/ lə'bre(,)dō /
L

the text of a work (as an opera) for the musical theater.

Michelle bought a dual-language edition of the libretto of Tosca for a quarter at a garage sale.

licensable

licentiate

n
/ lɪ'senchēāt /
L

an academic degree ranking below that of a doctor given by some European institutions of higher education.

After two years' study, Reverend Pease received a licentiate in canon law.

lichen

n
/ 'lɪkən /
Gk > L

[has homonym: liken] any of numerous complex plants that are made up of an alga and a fungus growing in symbiotic association on various solid surfaces (as rocks or the bark of trees).

Sean used a mixture of green paint and sawdust to simulate lichen on his model train layout.

lichenified

lichenophagous

licit

adj
/ 'lɪsət /
L

not forbidden by law : lawful.

Even licit drugs can be dangerous if not used as directed by a physician.

lidocaine

liege

adj
/ 'lēj /
L > F > E

having the right to feudal allegiance and service.

The serf bowed low before his liege lord.

lien

lienholder

n
/ 'lēn.hōldər /
L > F + E

one having a valid mortgage.

When she returned from vacation, Iris was mortified to find a stack of letters from her lienholder.

lieu

n
/ 'lü /
L > F

[has homonym: loo] place, stead.

Miss Woodhouse had many acquaintances, but not one among them could be accepted in lieu of her best friend Miss Taylor for even half a day.

lieutenancy

n
/ lü'tenənsē /
L > F > E

the term of a commissioned officer in the army, air force, or marine corps ranking below a captain.

During his lieutenancy, Lionel served in Guam.

lieutenant

n
/ lü'tenənt /
L > F > E

a military officer in the army, navy, air force, or marine corps.

At the end of the novel, the young naval hero was finally promoted to lieutenant.

ligament

n
/ 'lɪgəmənt /
L

something that ties or unites one thing or part to another.

International law is considered by some to be the ligament of mankind.

ligature

n
/ 'lɪgəçə(r) /
L > F > E

something that is used to bind; specifically : a thread, wire, or other material used in surgery.

Dr. Adams removed the ligature that had held the vein closed during the operation.

lightning

adj
/ 'lɪtnɪŋ /
E

[has near homonym: lightening] moving with or having the speed and suddenness of lightning.

The lightning rapidity of Mr. Julia's jargon and wit is a tool of his trade as an auctioneer.

ligneous

adj
/ 'lɪgnēəs /
L

of or resembling wood.

Mr. Hart described the plant as a perennial herb with a ligneous crown.

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ligniperdous

adj

/ˌlɪgnəˈpərdəs /

L + L

destructive to wood.

The house had to be inspected for any ligniperdous insects before it could be sold.

lilac

liliaceous

adj

/ˌlɪləˈæʃəs /

L

of, relating to, or resembling any of numerous erect perennial leafy-stemmed bulbous herbs.

Deb's curtain material has a colorful liliaceous pattern.

lilliputian

adj

/ˌlɪləˈpyʊʃən /

imaginary geog name + Ec
extremely small.

The lilliputian furniture and fixtures in the dollhouse astounded and delighted the museum visitors.

limb

n

/ˈlɪm /

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: limn.] the outer edge of the apparent disk of a celestial body or a portion of the edge.

Teresa spied a crater directly on the Moon's limb.

limbiferous

adj

/ˌlɪmˈbɪf(ə)rəs /

L + L

having a border or margin.

Mr. Lovejoy told his pupils that they would be expected to use limbiferous paper for all their assignments.

limby

limerick

n

/ˈlɪm(ə)rɪk /

Irish geog name

a light verse form of five anapestic lines.

Noel composed a funny limerick about his teacher.

limitrophe

adj

/ˈlɪməˌtrɒf /

L + Gk

situated on a border or frontier : adjacent, neighboring.

The geography teacher asked the class to name all the countries that are limitrophe to Russia.

limn

v

/ˈlɪm /

L > F > E

[has homonym: limb] outline in clear sharp detail : delineate.

The object of the video game is to fire when the periscope sights limn the tanker.

limnology

n

/ˌlɪmˈnäləjē /

L + Gk

the scientific study of physical, chemical, meteorological, and biological conditions in fresh waters especially of ponds and lakes.

An expert in limnology testified that pollution is reducing the fish population in Crystal Lake.

limousine

n

/ˈlɪməˌziːn /

F geog name

a small bus (as for transporting passengers to and from an airport).

Mrs. Waldrupe was disappointed that her airport limousine was a ramshackle van.

limpid

adj

/ˈlɪmpəd /

L

completely free from cloudiness or other obstacles to the passage of light.

Mary got an eerie feeling when she looked into the limpid blue eyes of the Siberian Husky.

linctus

lineament

linear

adj

/ˈlɪnēə(r) /

L

involving a single dimension : not square or cubic.

The micrometer caliper is an instrument for making precise linear measurements of dimensions such as diameters, thicknesses, and lengths.

linen

lingerie

linguist

n

/ˈlɪŋgwəst /

L

a student of or expert in languages.

The famous linguist described how many tribal languages are becoming extinct.

linguistically

liniment

n

/ˈlɪnəmənt /

L > E

a liquid or semiliquid alcoholic, oily, or saponaceous preparation for application to the skin with friction.

Winona delicately rubbed liniment over her sore shoulder.

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linoleum

n
/ lɪˈnɒlᵻəm /
L

a floor covering made by laying on a cloth backing a mixture of solidified linseed oil and various solid particles and usually pigments.
The pattern in Sheena's kitchen linoleum resembles inlaid pebbles.

liquefaction

n
/ ˌlikwəˈfakʃən /
L

the process of making or becoming liquid : conversion of a solid into a liquid by heat or of a gas into a liquid by cold or pressure.
Much earthquake damage results from the liquefaction of soil on which buildings stand.

liquefiable

adj
/ ˌlikwəˈfiəbəl /
L

capable of being reduced to a liquid state.
Many familiar solid materials are easily liquefiable by heating.

liquescent

adj
/ ˌliˈkwesnt /
L

being, becoming, or tending to become liquid : melting.
When a giant asteroid hits the ground, it is transformed into a liquescent mass that becomes a fireball.

liqueur

liquidate

lisle

lisse

litany

literate

adj
/ ˈlɪdərət /
L

able to read and write.
The government's goal for all adult citizens to be literate in 20 years needs a strategic plan.

literati

n pl
/ ˌlɪdəˈrædē /
L&It

the educated class : intelligentsia.
The New York literati gathered at the book-signing party.

literature

lithesome

adj
/ ˈlɪθsəm /
E + E
characterized by agile grace.
Denise's lithesome performance in her audition won her a place in the Royal Ballet.

lithification

n
/ ˌlɪθəfəˈkæʃən /
Gk + L
the conversion of unconsolidated sediments into solid rock.
Ben's science project explained how limestone is formed by lithification.

lithochromy

n
/ ˈlɪθəˌkrōmē /
Gk
the art of painting on stone.
Arthur's work in lithochromy earned him a commission to paint a scene on the museum's slate wall.

lithograph

lithoid

adj
/ ˈliˌθɔɪd /
Gk
resembling a stone.
The lava eventually solidified into lithoid masses.

litigation

litigator

n
/ ˈlɪdəˌɡædər /
L

one that prosecutes or defends by pleadings, evidence, and debate in a court.
The cough drop manufacturer hired a famous litigator to appear in its new commercial.

litigiousness

n
/ ˌlɪˈtɪʃəsnəs /
L
the quality or state of being prone to engage in lawsuits.
An increase in lawsuits can be attributed in part to the growing litigiousness of American society.

litmus

n
/ ˈlɪtməs /
Scand
a coloring matter that turns red in acid solutions and blue in alkaline solutions and is obtained from several lichens.
Chris will use litmus to test for acidity in the chemical solution.

litotes

n
/ ˈlɪdəˌtēz /
Gk
understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by a negative of the contrary (as in "He's not a bad ball player").
Rupert loved to use the litotes "not bad" to convey high praise.

litterateur

litterbug

littoral

adj
/ ˈlɪdərəl /
L
[has homonym: literal] of, relating to, or being near a shore, especially of the sea.
Eduardo finally realized his dream when he established a littoral nature preserve.

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liturgical

adj
/ lɪ'tərjəkəl /
Gk > L

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of ceremonial or ritualistic worship.

The priest donned his liturgical vestments before the mass.

liturgy

n
/ 'lɪdə(r)jē /
Gk

a rite or series of rites, observances, or procedures prescribed for public worship in the Christian church in accordance with authorized or standard form.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the use of the vernacular language, rather than Latin, has become widespread in Catholic liturgy.

livelihood

liveried

livid

adj
/ 'lɪvəd /
L > F
discolored by or as if by bruising : black-and-blue.
The bicycle accident left a large livid patch on Violet's arm.

llama

n
/ 'ləmə /
Quechua > Sp
[has homonym: lama] any of a genus of wild or domesticated cud-chewing mammals of South America related to the camels but smaller and without a hump.
The llama thrives in the Alpine grasslands of Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina.

loam

loathsome

lobotomy

n
/ lɒ'bädəmē /
Gk
incision into the brain to sever nerve fibers for the relief of certain mental disorders and tension.
Lobotomy is no longer the preferred treatment in cases of extreme psychosis.

lobscouse

n
/ 'ləb.skaʊs /
unknown
a sailor's dish prepared by stewing or baking bits of meat with vegetables, hardtack, and other ingredients.
After Fritz returned from his fishing trip, he ordered a hearty portion of lobsouse for dinner.

locale

n
/ lɒ'kal /
L > F
a place or locality especially when viewed in relation to a particular event or characteristic.
Evan's doctor told him he needed to live in a drier locale, so he moved to Tucson.

location

lochetic

adj
/ lɒ'kēdɪk /
Gk
lying in wait for prey—used especially of insects.
Josh claimed that the ants in the nest next to his porch must be lochetic, because they always seemed to know when he was barefoot.

locomotion

locust

n
/ 'lɒkəst /
L > E
a grasshopper that frequently travels in swarms.
Cooper placed the captured locust in a mason jar.

lodging

n
/ 'ləjɪŋ /
E
a place to live : dwelling.
After a fire destroyed their home, the family depended on relatives for temporary lodging.

logarithm

n
/ 'lɒgə.rɪθəm /
Gk
the exponent that indicates the power to which a number must be raised to produce a given number.
When the math teacher said that 4 is the logarithm of 16 to the base 2, only half the class understood what she was saying.

logarithmic

loggia

n
/ 'ləj(ē)ə /
F > It
[has near homonym: logia] a roofed open gallery or arcade in the side of a building especially when facing upon an open court.
An airy second-floor loggia ran around three sides of the tiny courtyard.

logician

logion

n
/ 'lɒjē.ən /
Gk
a usually short pointed saying or observation especially of a religious teacher.
The guru's devotees treasured every logion that he uttered.

logistics

n pl
/ lɒ'jɪstɪks /
Gk
military science in its planning and handling and implementation of personnel, equipment, and facilities.
Juan has been interested in logistics since he first played with toy soldiers.

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logograph

n
/ 'lɒɡəˌɡrɪf /
Gk
[has near homonym: logograph] a word puzzle.
Katrina spent the afternoon constructing a logograph for her little brother.

logomachy

n
/ lɒˈɡəməki /
Gk
a dispute over or about words.
Behind the legislature's logomachy about what makes a Great Lake "great" lay political and economic motives.

logorrhea

n
/ .ləɡəˈrēə /
Gk
pathologically excessive and often incoherent talkativeness.
The patient's logorrhea was indicative of deep emotional problems.

loiter

lonely

adj
/ 'lɒnlē /
E + Ecf
being without company.
Allie took a picture of a lonely fisherman on the pier.

longanimity

n
/ .lɒŋəˈnɪmədē /
L
a disposition to bear injuries patiently : forbearance.
Murphy's Law strikes often in George's project, but his longanimity will help him weather all setbacks.

longevity

n
/ lɒnˈjeɪvədē /
L
a long duration of individual life.
Mr. Wade's longevity was remarkable, considering he had been sickly as a child.

longiloquence

longitudinal

loquacious

adj
/ lɒˈkwəʃəs /
L
given to excessive talking : garrulous.
Bryn's loquacious sister was quite a hit at the rehearsal party.

loquacity

lorgnette

n
/ lɒ(r)nˈyet /
F
a pair of eyeglasses or opera glasses with a handle.
Lorgnette in one hand and hankie in the other, Mrs. Vandergriff looked just like the opera-goers portrayed in cartoons.

loricate

n
/ 'lɒrəkət /
L
an animal having a hard protective case or shell.
The armadillo is a well-known loricate, as is the alligator.

lorikeet

n
/ 'lɒrəkēt /
Malay + Sp&F
any of numerous small arboreal parrots that are found in Australasia and that feed largely upon the nectar of flowers.
Ginger has a pet lorikeet that rides on her shoulder.

lounge

loupe

n
/ 'lup /
Gmc > F
[has homonyms: loop and loup]
small magnifying glass used by jewelers and watchmakers.
At his jewelry store Arlo always wears a loupe on a chain around his neck.

lovat

loveliness

n
/ 'ləvlənəs /
E
the state of being beautiful.
Colette was awestruck by the loveliness of the stained-glass windows.

loxocosm

n
/ 'ləksəkəzəm /
Gk
a device to show how the inclination of Earth's axis causes the day's length to vary from season to season.
John constructed a loxocosm for the science fair.

lozenge

n
/ 'ləzˈnj /
F
a small diamond-shaped medicated candy.
Mother gave Rick a cherry-flavored lozenge for his sore throat.

luau

n
/ 'liː.ə /
Hawaiian
a feast with Hawaiian food and usually Hawaiian entertainment.
Sabrina wore a grass skirt to the luau.

lucernal

adj
/ .liːsərnəl /
L + Ecf
of or relating to a lamp.
A slide projector is a lucernal device for displaying images on a screen.

lucid

adj
/ 'lūsəd /
L
penetrated with light : translucent.
The otters romped and played in the lucid stream.

lucidity

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lucrative

luculent

adj
/ 'lūkyələnt /

L
transparently clear in thought or expression.
The audience was pleasantly amazed at the luculent commentary on the state of the economy.

ludicrous

adj
/ 'lūdəkrəs /
L
meriting derisive laughter or scorn : absurd.
The jury was instructed to disregard the ludicrous remarks made by the defendant.

luftmensch

n
/ 'lūft.mench /
G > Yiddish
an impractical contemplative person having no definite trade, business, or income : dreamer.
Every large family seems to have at least one luftmensch among its members.

lugubrious

adj
/ lə'gūbrēəs /
L > E
expressive of, marked by, or giving rise to grief or sorrow.
The funeral director spoke in lugubrious tones as she explained the arrangements.

lullaby

n
/ 'lələ.bī /
E
a soothing refrain; especially : a song used to quiet children or lull them to sleep.
The baby was asleep before Mary finished singing the lullaby.

lumen

n
/ 'lūmən /
L
a unit of luminous flux equal to the light emitted in a unit solid angle by a uniform point source of one candle.
The lumen is used in calculations regarding artificial lighting.

luminaire

n
/ .lūmə'na(a)(ə)r /
L > F
a complete lighting unit including lamp, shade, reflector, fixture, and other accessories.
A luminaire was built into each cubicle in the office.

luminary

n
/ 'lūmə.nerē /
L
one that is an inspiration to others : one who has achieved success in his or her chosen field.
Although a luminary in the field, Peter was reluctant to weigh in with his opinion about the ethics of cloning.

luminosity

n
/ .lūmə'näsədē /
L
the quantity of radiation emitted by a star or other celestial source usually expressed in terms of the Sun's intensity.
The comet's luminosity was so great that it could be seen during the day.

luminous

adj
/ 'lūmənəs /
L
emitting or seeming to emit a steady suffused light that is reflected or produced from within.
During the movie Stan periodically checked the time on the luminous dial of his watch.

luncheon

luncheonette

n
/ .ləŋchə'net /
E + Fcf
a place where light lunches are sold.
After playing racquetball, Jaime stopped at the luncheonette for a sandwich.

lunge

v
/ 'ləŋj /
F
make a forceful forward movement.
Every few seconds the swordsman would lunge at his opponent.

lunule

luscious

adj
/ 'lēshəs /
E
having a delicious taste or smell.
The waiter pointed to cakes and pastries, each more luscious than the last, as he told us about them.

lustrous

adj
/ 'ləstrəs /
L > It > F + Ecf
having a gloss or shine : gleaming.
When dining out, Marcia always wears some lustrous jewelry.

lute

n
/ 'lūt /
Ar > OProv > F > E
[has homonym: loot] a stringed musical instrument of Oriental origin that has a large pear-shaped body.
The court minstrel strummed his lute thoughtfully, deciding which song to play next.

luthier

n
/ 'lūdēə(r) /
Ar > OProv > F
a maker of stringed instruments.
The luthier gave Dolores a choice of inlay patterns for her new guitar.

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lux

n
/ 'ləks /
L

[has homonyms: lucks, luxe] a unit of illumination equal to the direct illumination on a surface that is everywhere 1 meter from a uniform point source of one candle.
Paul's new video camera is designed to operate in a light intensity of only 1 lux.

luxate

luxuriant

luxurious

adj
/ ,ləg'zhūrēəs /
L

characterized by wealth or rich abundance.
The price of the car with the luxurious interior astounded even wealthy customers.

luxury

lycanthrope

n
/ 'likən.thrōp /
Gk

a person transformed temporarily or permanently into a wolf or capable of assuming a wolf's form.
The zoologist contends that the myth of the lycanthrope is one of the reasons wolves are so maligned.

lyceum

lycopene

lymphatic

adj
/ lim'fəd-ik /
Gk > L
conveying a pale fluid that bathes the tissues of an organism.
The lymphatic system is vital in removing harmful bacteria from tissues.

lynx

n
/ 'lɪŋ(k)s /
Gk

[has homonym: links] any of several wildcats with relatively long legs, a short stubby tail, mottled coat, and often tufted ears.
The lynx lives in cold northern latitudes, where its favorite prey is the snowshoe hare.

lyonnaise

adj
/ 'liənāz /
F geog name
prepared or seasoned with onions and sometimes parsley.
Ricardo ordered lyonnaise potatoes as an elegant alternative to french fries.

lyre

lyrically

macadam

n
/ mə'kadəm /
British name
broken stone used in roadway paving.
Depending on the climate, some roads are best made of macadam and others, of asphalt.

macaque

n
/ mə'kak /
Pg > F
any of numerous short-tailed Old World monkeys chiefly of southern Asia and the East Indies.
The islanders trained a macaque to perform several routines for public entertainment.

macarize

v
/ 'makə.rīz /
Gk
pronounce happy or blessed : felicitate, laud.
After the wedding ceremony various friends will give speeches to macarize the happy couple.

macaroni

n
/ ,makə'rōnē /
It
an alimentary pasta composed chiefly of semolina dried in the form of slender tubes or small fancy shapes.
Lucy's favorite pasta dish is macaroni and cheese.

macaroon

n
/ ,makə'rūn /
It > F
a small cake composed chiefly of the white of eggs, sugar, and ground almonds or almond paste or coconut.
Cheryl placed a fresh macaroon on each saucer before serving the coffee.

macaw

maceral

n
/ 'masə.rəl /
L?
a fragment of plant debris in coal.
Penny examined the maceral under a microscope.

macerate

Machiavellian

adj
/ ,makēə'velēən /
It name
of or relating to Machiavelli or his political theory that any means however lawless or unscrupulous can justifiably be used in achieving political power.
The Machiavellian politician was accused of wheeling and dealing, backstabbing, and creating fall guys and cover-ups.

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machicolation

n
/ məˈchɪkəˈlāshən /
F > L + L

an opening on a parapet of a battlement for the purpose of dropping missiles upon assailants attacking from below.
Whenever a castle gets stormed in the movies, the defenders are shown pouring boiling oil through a machicolation onto the enemy attacking the gates.

machination

machinator

mackerel

mackinaw

n
/ ˈmakənə /
Amer geog name
a short usually double-breasted and belted coat or jacket of heavy fabric.
“No guts, no glory!” exclaimed the skier in a plaid mackinaw as he pushed off down the slope.

macle

macrame

n
/ ˈmakrə.mā /
Ar > Turk > It or F
a coarse lace or decorative fringe made by knotting threads or cords in a geometrical pattern.
Penny prefers to use soft yarn in her macrame.

macrocosm

Madagascar

adj
/ ˌmɑdəˈgɑskə(r) /
African geog name
of or from Madagascar, an island in the Indian Ocean.
Lemurs, cute large-eyed furry monkey-like animals, are the best known Madagascar fauna.

madarosis

n
/ ˌmɑdəˈrōsəs /
Gk > L
loss of the eyelashes or of the hair of the eyebrows.
Dorothy suffered from madarosis during chemotherapy, but her eyelashes eventually grew back even thicker than before.

madeleine

n
/ ˈmadˈlɛn /
F name
a small rich cake baked in a tin shaped like a shell.
Knut skipped the main course and went right to the madeleine.

mademoiselle

n
/ ˌmɑdəmwəˈzel /
F
an unmarried French woman.
Robert is smitten by a young mademoiselle he met during his trip to Paris.

madrigal

n
/ ˈmɑdrɨgəl /
L > It > E
a polyphonic part-song originating in the 14th century.
At the coronation feast the haunting madrigal brought tears to the eyes of the new king.

madrilene

maelstrom

n
/ ˈmälztrəm /
D
a powerful water current that usually moves in a circular direction with extreme rapidity.
A memorable scene from the movie Fantasia features the sorcerer's apprentice caught in a maelstrom.

maestro

n
/ ˈmī(ɪ)strō /
L > It
a master or teacher of an art (as music).
The award-winning singer gave tribute to her maestro at the conservatory.

maffick

magazine

magenta

n
/ məˈjɛntə /
It geog name
a deep purplish red; specifically : one of the subtractive primary colors.
The visual afterimage of magenta is green.

maggoty

magisterial

adj
/ ˈmajəstirēəl /
L
of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a master or teacher : authoritative.
Jubril's magisterial air served him well with everyone but his daughter.

magistracy

n
/ ˈmajəstrəsē /
L
the office of a public official entrusted with administration of the laws : magisterial power and dignity.
The dissenters were persecuted by the state for refusing to accept the authority of the magistracy.

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magnanimity

n
/ ˌmagnəˈnimədē /
L

a nobility of feeling that is superior to meanness, pettiness, or jealousy and that disdains revenge or retaliation.

The philosopher praised the victor's magnanimity in allowing the captives to return home.

magnanimous

adj
/ ˌmagˈnanəməs /
L

showing or suggesting nobility of feeling and generosity of mind.
Simone's magnanimous attitude toward the homeless wasn't shared by her sister.

magnetic

adj
/ magˈnetɪk /
Gk geog name
possessing the ability or power to attract.
Even as a child, Julie's magnetic personality charmed everyone who spoke to her.

magnetizable

magnificat

magnificent

mahatma

n
/ məˈhätmə /
Skt
a person held worthy of reverence for high-mindedness, wisdom, and selflessness.
Raoul trekked for three days to seek the advice of the mahatma.

mahogany

n
/ məˈhägəne /
unknown
the durable yellowish brown to reddish brown wood of a West Indian tree that is widely used for cabinetwork and fine finish work.
Kate's bedroom furniture is made of solid mahogany.

mahout

n
/ məˈhaüt /
Skt > Hindi
a keeper and driver of an elephant.
The mahout trained his elephant to move logs.

mai

n
/ ˈmī /
Jpn
[has homonym: my] a slow Japanese folk or theater dance featuring hand gestures.
Midori is an expert in all forms of Japanese dance, but her favorite is the mai.

maillot

n
/ maˈyō /
F
[has near homonym: mayo] a woman's one-piece usually strapless bathing suit.
Becky thought that the maillot was out of fashion until she saw several in the catalog.

maimed

adj
/ ˈmāmd /
Gmc > F > E
crippled, mutilated.
The maimed dog was taken to the animal hospital for treatment.

maintenance

n
/ ˈmānt(ə)nən(t)s /
F
the labor of keeping something (as buildings or equipment) in a state of repair or efficiency : upkeep.
Excellent maintenance preserved the original gingerbread trim on the Victorian house.

maize

n
/ ˈmāz /
Taino > Sp
[has homonym: maze] Indian corn.
Gina enjoys hearing the story of how the native Americans taught the Pilgrims to grow maize.

majordomo

n
/ ˌmājə(r)ˈdō(ˌ)mō /
L > It > Sp
[has near homonym: mayordomo] a head steward or palace official.
Jeeves has been majordomo of Huntington Castle for the last 30 years.

majority

n
/ məˈjōrədē /
L
a number greater than half of a total.
A runoff is necessary because none of the candidates captured a majority of the votes in the primary.

majuscule

adj
/ ˈmajəˌskyül /
L > F
written in large letters (as capitals).
Dr. Jenkins could see immediately that the majuscule scripts of the two letters were identical and deduced that the same scribe had written both.

malachite

n
/ ˈmaləˌkīt /
Gk > L > E
a mineral consisting of a green carbonate of copper that is an ore of copper and is used to make ornamental objects.
Pierre bought a piece of malachite at the museum of natural history.

maladive

maladroit

malady

n
/ ˈmalədē /
L > F > E
a disease, distemper, disorder, or indisposition of the body proceeding from impaired or defective functions.
In the 14th century, the malady known as The Black Death swept across Europe, leaving about 25 million people dead.

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malaguena

n
/ ˌmaləˈɡānyə /
Sp geog name
a Spanish couple dance similar to a fandango.

Juan and Carmela danced the malaguena with extraordinary grace and emotional excitement.

malapropism

n
/ ˈmaləˌprəˌpizəm /
F > E theater name
a blundering use of a word that sounds somewhat like the one intended but is ludicrously wrong in the context.
No matter how careful he tries to be, Sherman usually utters at least one malapropism in every campaign speech.

malaria

n
/ məˈlerēə /
L > It + Gk > L > It
a disease caused by sporozoan parasites in the red blood cells, transmitted by the bite of anopheline mosquitoes, and characterized by periodic attacks of chills and fevers.
During the construction of the Panama Canal many workers succumbed to malaria.

malaxage

n
/ ˈmāˌlaksij /
Gk > L > F
the act or process of softening a material (as clay) by moistening and working it.
After the malaxage the clay was ready for molding on the potter's wheel.

malediction

n
/ ˌmaləˈdikshən /
L
curse, execration.
The villain's last words were a malediction on the entire royal family.

malefactor

n
/ ˈmaləˌfaktə(r) /
L
one who commits an offense against the law.
The state's correctional program was designed to rehabilitate as well as punish the malefactor.

maleficent

malice

n
/ ˈmaləs /
L > F > E
revengeful or unfriendly feelings : ill will, enmity.
In spite of all he has had to put up with from his classmates, Joel bears them no malice.

malign

malignant

adj
/ məˈlignənt /
L
evil in nature or influence or effect.
The dark clammy coldness surrounded her like a malignant beast of prey.

malingerer

n
/ məˈlɪŋɡərə(r) /
Gmc? > F
one who pretends to be ill or otherwise physically or mentally incapacitated so as to avoid duty or work.
*Jamie Farr's character on the television series M*A*S*H was an entertaining malingerer.*

mallard

n
/ ˈmalə(r)d /
F > E
a common wild duck of the northern hemisphere.
When Timmy fed the ducks at the marina, he gave his last piece of bread to the mallard.

malleable

adj
/ ˈmalēəbəl /
L > F > E
capable of being extended or shaped by beating with a hammer or by the pressure of rollers.
Because tin is malleable at ordinary temperatures, it has been used to make many household implements.

malleolus

n
/ məˈlēələs /
L
[has somewhat near homonym: malleus] the rounded lateral projection on each bone of the leg at the ankle.
When Marcie realized that her brother was about to reveal her secret, she kicked him on the malleolus.

mallet

n
/ ˈmalət /
F > E
a tool with a large head for striking a surface without marring it.
Ray used a rubber mallet to put the wheel cover back in place after he changed the flat tire.

mallooseismic

adj
/ ˌmalōˈsīzmik /
Gk
of, relating to, or being a region subject to frequent destructive earthquakes.
Chris refuses to move to any of the mallooseismic areas of California.

malocclusion

n
/ maləˈklūzhən /
L
an abnormality in the fitting together of upper and lower teeth or dentures.
Hector wore braces on his teeth to correct a malocclusion.

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malodorous

adj

/ mal'ōdərəs /

L + L

having a bad odor : rank, fetid, stinking.

Evelina smelled the malodorous skunk from 500 yards away.

mammoth

adj

/ 'maməθ /

Yakut? > Russ

gigantic.

Clarence specialized in growing mammoth vegetables and held several records for his specimens.

manacle

managerial

adj

/ .manə'jirēəl /

L > It + Ecf

of, relating to, or characteristic of a person who conducts, directs, or supervises something.

The classified ads included a notice for a managerial position at the steel wool factory.

mandate

n

/ 'man.dāt /

L

a formal order from a superior court or official to an inferior one.

The clerk delivered the written mandate to the lower court judge by hand.

mandatory

adj

/ 'mandə.tōrē /

L

containing, constituting, or relating to an authoritative command, order, or injunction.

Several states are instituting a mandatory work program for employable welfare recipients.

mandible

n

/ 'mandəbəl /

L

any of various invertebrate mouthparts serving to hold or bite into food materials.

Most insects use the mandible for crushing their food.

mandolinist

manducatory

adj

/ 'manjəkə.tōrē /

L

relating to, employed in, or adapted for chewing.

Mr. Rollins brought a live lobster to our biology class so that we could observe its manducatory processes.

manganese

n

/ 'mangə.nēz /

Gk > L > It

a grayish white metallic element that is ordinarily hard and brittle, resembles iron but is not magnetic, and is used chiefly in making steel. *Manganese nodules, which cover vast stretches of ocean floor, are composed mostly of manganese but also contain iron, nickel, copper, and cobalt.*

mange

mangle

v

/ 'mangəl /

F > AF > E

[has homonym: mangel] cut, bruise, or hack with repeated blows or strokes.

As an act of vengeance, Scott vowed that he would mangle Sara's prize-winning painting.

mangonel

n

/ 'mangə.nəl /

Gk > L > F > E

a military engine formerly used for throwing missiles.

With a sharp twang the mangonel hurled a boulder at the castle gate.

manicotti

n pl

/ .manə'kädē /

L > It

tubular pasta shells stuffed with ricotta.

The caterer filled the chafing dish with manicotti.

manifesto

n

/ .manə'fe(,)stō /

L > It

a public declaration of intentions, motives, or views.

The Unabomber's rambling manifesto appeared in a number of newspapers nationwide.

manipulator

manna

n

/ 'manə /

Heb > Gk > L > E

[has near homonym: mana]

something of value that falls one's way : windfall.

Children swarmed the parade route collecting the manna of treats tossed from the float.

manoptoscope

mansard

mansuetude

n

/ 'man(t)swə.tüd /

L

the quality or state of being gentle : meekness.

Gary remembered his mother as having the sensitivity and mansuetude of a saint.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

manumit

v
/ 'manyə.mit /
L

set free; especially : release from slavery.

The tobacco farmer had agreed to manumit his one slave just before the Civil War began.

manuscript

maraca

n
/ mə'rākə /

Tupi > Pg

a dried gourd or rattle containing dried seeds or pebbles that has a handle and is used as a percussion instrument often in pairs.

The band's percussionist accentuated the rhythm with a maraca.

maraschino

n
/ .marə'skē.nō /

It
a sweet liqueur that is used as a cocktail ingredient and in preserving cherries.

Even though she's a grown woman, Evelyn sometimes likes to make herself a Shirley Temple with clear soda and maraschino.

maraud

marauding

v
/ mə'rōdɪŋ /
F

roaming about and making irregular sudden small-scale attacks, raids, or incursions for the sake of obtaining loot.

Outlaws were marauding in areas where the law was not well established.

marble

marcescent

adj
/ mār'ses'nt /
L

of a plant part : withering without falling off.

Autumn's first cold snap left many marcescent leaves in its wake.

marchioness

n
/ 'märsh(ə)nəs /
L

a woman who holds in her own right the rank of marquess.

Once a month the workers on the estate brought their disputes before the marchioness to be resolved.

mare

n
/ 'mä(,)rā /
L

[has near homonym: moray] one of several dark areas of considerable extent on the surface of either the Moon or Mars.

The Sea of Tranquility is perhaps the best-known mare on the Moon.

margaritaceous

adj
/ .märgərə'tāshəs /
Gk > L > F > E
having a satiny iridescence like that of pearl or mother-of-pearl : pearly.
The tabletops at the diner have a margaritaceous finish.

mariachi

n
/ .mä're'ächē /
F > Sp

a group of Mexican folk musicians usually consisting of singers, guitarists, and a violinist.

On weekends the mariachi entertained diners at the Mexican restaurant.

maricolous

marine

adj
/ mə'rēn /
L

of or relating to the sea.

Marine iguanas live on the shores of the Galapagos Islands and eat seaweed.

marionette

n
/ .ma(a)rēə'net /
F

a puppet moved by strings or by hand (as in a puppet show).

A marionette of Jay Leno was the hit of the show.

maritime

adj
/ 'marə.tīm /
E name

of or relating to navigation or commerce on the sea.

After Bob graduates, he plans to join the Navy to study maritime law.

marjoram

n
/ 'mär.jərəm /
L > F > E

any of various usually fragrant and aromatic mints that include several forms used as seasoning in cookery.

Vance likes to add marjoram and cream cheese to his scrambled eggs.

marmalade

n
/ 'märm.lād /
Gk > L > Pg

a soft clear translucent jelly holding in suspension pieces or slices of fruit and fruit rind.

Mom's homemade marmalade on toast is always a great treat for breakfast.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

marmoset

n
/ 'märmə.set /
F > E

any of numerous small soft-furred South and Central American monkeys with claws instead of nails on all the digits except the great toe.
The chisel-like incisors of the marmoset are used for gouging trees to obtain gums and saps.

marotte

n
/ mə'rät /
F name + Fcf

a pet idea or notion.
Katrina's marotte is that she is really too good for life as a bookkeeper and should be a company vice-president.

marplot

marriageable

marshmallow

n
/ 'märsʰ.melō /
E

a confection made from corn syrup, sugar, albumen, and gelatin, beaten to a light creamy consistency, and usually rolled in powdered sugar when partly dry.
Burt toasted a marshmallow and put it between layers of graham crackers and chocolate squares.

marsupial

n
/ mär'süpēəl /
Avestan? > Gk > L
any of an order of mammals having a pouch for carrying the young and including kangaroos, wombats, bandicoots, and opossums.
The common stereotype of a marsupial is a female kangaroo with a large young one in her pouch.

martial

adj
/ 'märsʰəl /
L

[has homonyms: marshal, marshall] belonging or relating to an army or to military life.
Patrick Henry believed that the only purpose of England's martial array in the colonies and their seaports could be to force the colonists into submission.

martinet

n
/ 'märt'n.ət /
F name

one who lays stress on a rigid adherence to the details of forms and methods.
A true-born martinet never thinks he is at all severe.

martinetish

adj
/ .märt'n'edish /
F name + Ecf

like or characteristic of a person who lays stress on a rigid adherence to the details of forms and methods.
Though all the students disliked Mr. Wall's martinetish attitude, most of them thought he was an excellent teacher.

martyr

n
/ 'märdər /
Gk

one who voluntarily suffers death as the penalty of witnessing to and refusing to renounce his or her religion or a tenet, principle, or practice belonging to it.
St. Stephen, who was stoned to death, is believed to have been the first Christian martyr.

martyrology

n
/ .märdər'äləjē /
Gk

an official catalog of martyrs and saints of the Roman Catholic Church.
Keith bought an old martyrology at the rummage sale.

marzipan

n
/ 'märtsə.pän /
Ar > It > G

a confection made of crushed almonds or almond paste, sugar, and egg whites that is often shaped into various forms (as fruit or animals).
Marlene filled the candy dish with marzipan.

mascara

masonry

masquerade

n
/ .maskə'räd /
It > F

a social gathering of persons wearing covers on their faces and often fantastic costumes especially to impersonate characters from history or legend.
Todd and Sheila wore Conehead costumes to the masquerade.

massacre

n
/ 'masəkə(r) /
F

the act or instance of killing a considerable number of human beings or animals.
The massacre of buffalo is a regrettable part of the history of the West.

massage

masseter

n
/ mə'sēd-ə(r) /
Gk > L

a large muscle that raises the lower jaw and assists in chewing.
Tracy argued that she was trying to strengthen her masseter, but Mr. Gold made her throw out her chewing gum anyway.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

masseuse

n
/ ma'sə(r)z /
Ar > F + Fcf

a woman who practices massage and physiotherapy.

Delia spent an hour with the club's masseuse working out the kinks in her back.

massif

n
/ ma'sēf /
F

a block of Earth's crust bounded by faults or flexures and displaced as a unit without internal change.

In the late 13th century a roadway was opened over the St. Gotthard massif in Switzerland.

mastiff

n
/ 'mastēf /
L > F > E

a very large powerful deep-chested smooth-coated dog of a very old breed used chiefly as a watchdog and guard dog.

A big brown mastiff stood motionless behind the gate.

mastodon

n
/ 'mastədän /
L

someone or something of gigantic size or unusually large size : giant.
Mrs. Campbell's automobile collection ranges from a tiny two-seater to an antique mastodon.

mastoiditis

n
/ .ma.stoi'dīdēs /
Gk > L

inflammation of the process of the temporal bone behind the ear.

Amy's doctor treated her mastoiditis immediately so that it wouldn't cause any permanent hearing damage.

matelot

matelote

n
/ 'madʰl.ōt /
F

a sauce made of wine, onions, seasonings, and fish stock.

Even though it is served with fish, a matelote often contains red wine.

mathematician

mathematics

n pl
/ .mathə'mad:iks /
Gk

a science that deals with the relationship and symbolism of numbers and magnitudes and that includes quantitative operations and the solution of quantitative problems.

Jill's favorite subject in school is mathematics.

matinee

n
/ .mat'nā /
L > F

a performance of a production (as a play, opera, film) or the presentation of a concert or sometimes the holding of some other event in the afternoon or occasionally in the morning or at midnight.

The English class attended a matinee of Our Town at the local playhouse.

matriarch

matriarchal

matriculant

matriculation

matrimony

n
/ 'matrə.mōnē /
L + L

the union of man and woman as husband and wife : marriage.

The Las Vegas chapel specialized in instant matrimony.

matrix

mattock

n
/ 'madək /
L > E

a tool that combines features of an ax, adze, and pick and is used for digging and chopping.

It took Mark three hours of hard work with a mattock and shovel to dig up the tree stump.

mattress

marescent

matutinal

matutine

adj
/ 'machətīn /
L

of a star : rising in or just before the dawn.

For centuries those who live outdoors have used matutine stars as a kind of alarm clock.

maudlin

adj
/ 'mōdlən /

Biblical Gk name > L > F > E
tearfully or weakly emotional : effusively sentimental.

Brian allowed himself to become maudlin only on St. Patrick's Day.

maudlinism

mausoleum

mauve

n
/ 'mōv /
L > F

a strong purple with a bluish cast.
Karen has tired of her bedroom of mauve and blue.

maverick

n
/ 'mav(ə)rik /

Amer name

a member of any group who refuses to conform and who takes an unorthodox stand.

The rest of the teachers considered Ms. Thorne to be a maverick because she invited her students to call her by her first name.

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mawkish

mawkishly

adv

/ 'mɔkɪʃlɪ /

ON > E

in a cloying or sickly sentimental manner.

During a mawkishly romantic scene in the movie, Ted got up to get some popcorn.

maxim

n

/ 'maksəm /

L

a saying of proverbial nature.

"The early bird gets the worm" is Toni's favorite maxim.

mayhem

n

/ 'mā.həm /

AF > E

willful and permanent crippling, mutilation, or disfigurement of any part of another's body.

The victim was so badly disfigured that the assailant was charged with felony mayhem.

mayonnaise

n

/ 'māə.nāz /

geog name? > F

a semisolid dressing made by emulsifying a mixture of raw eggs or egg yolks, vegetable oil, and vinegar or lemon juice usually together with salt and condiments.

Helga wouldn't eat a roast beef sandwich without mayonnaise.

mayoralty

n

/ 'māərəltɪ /

L > F > E

the term of office as the chief executive or nominal head of a city or borough.

His opponent's television commercial made the point that Henry Vermillion had accomplished little during his mayoralty.

meadow

mealymouthed

adj

/ 'mēlɛ.maʊθɪd /

E + E

tending to cloak thoughts, ideas, or intents by the use of obscure or devious language.

All of Judy's friends saw through her mealymouthed explanation.

meandrous

adj

/ mē'andrəs /

Gk geog name

winding, flexuous, rambling.

Over thousands of years the river had cut a meandrous channel through the plain.

measles

n pl

/ 'mēzəlz /

E

a contagious disease characterized by red spots.

Most doctors recommend that children be vaccinated against measles, mumps, and rubella.

measurable

mecometer

medallion

n

/ mə'dalyən /

L > It > F

a large medal (as for a memorial purpose).

Charise bought a World War II medallion on eBay.

medallionist

meddlesome

adj

/ 'med'lsəm /

L > F > E

officiously intrusive.

Her landlady's meddlesome manner annoyed Hatty so much that she moved out.

mediate

v

/ 'mēdɛ.ət /

L

interpose between parties in order to reconcile them or to interpret them to each other.

The envoy attempted to mediate between the warring factions.

medicinal

medicine

n

/ 'medəsən /

L

the science and art dealing with the maintenance of health and the prevention, alleviation, or cure of disease.

Campbell knows that she would like to one day pursue a career in the field of medicine.

medicolegal

mediocre

adj

/ .mēdɛ'ɔkə(r) /

L

of but a moderate or low degree of quality.

Jill's grades were mediocre until she started wearing glasses.

Mediterranean

adj

/ .medətə'rānɛən /

L

of, relating to, characteristic of, or situated near the Mediterranean Sea.

The Mediterranean island of Malta has been the location for the filming of several movies.

medulla

n

/ mə'dələ /

L

a posterior portion of the brain.

The medulla governs various involuntary vital functions such as respiration.

meemies

meerschau

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

megacephalic

megalomaniac

n
/ .megə'lō'mānē.ək /
Gk
one affected with or exhibiting an excessive enthusiasm for doing great or grandiose things.
The candidate decried his opponent as a publicity-seeking megalomaniac.

megalopolis

n
/ .megə'löpələs /
Gk
a very large city.
Without community growth guidelines, a moderately sized city could become a megalopolis like Los Angeles in just a few decades.

megaphone

megaseism

n
/ 'megə.sīzəm /
Gk + Gk
a violent earthquake.
A nuclear bomb can have effects far worse than those of a megaseism.

megohmmeter

n
/ 'me.gōm.mēdə(r) /
Gk + G name + Gk
an instrument for the measurement of large electrical resistances.
Professor Allen designed a laboratory session to acquaint students with the use of the megohmmeter.

melancholia

melancholy

adj
/ 'melən.kälē /
Gk > L > F > E
depressed in spirits : mournful.
The melancholy chirp of a cricket was the only sign of life near him.

melba

n
/ 'melbə /
Australian name
fruit served with ice cream, raspberry sauce, and whipped cream.
The peach melba was served in a crystal goblet.

melee

n
/ 'mā(,)lā /
F
[has homonyms: Malay, mele] a fight or contest between individuals mingled in a confused mass : a confused struggle.
The soccer match turned into a melee after angry fans stormed the field.

melitensis

adj
/ .melə'ten(t)səs /
L geog name
of, derived from, or caused by a particular bacterium of the genus *Brucella*.
Clyde's melitensis fever was reduced by antibiotics.

mellifluous

adj
/ me'liflʊəs /
L
sweetly flowing : smooth, honeyed.
The soprano's mellifluous voice lulled Frank to sleep.

mellisonant

adj
/ me'lis'nənt /
L + L
pleasing to the ear.
Tonia's mellisonant voice never failed to put her little sister to sleep.

mellophone

mellow

adj
/ 'me(,)lō /
E
[has homonym: melo] relaxed and at ease : pleasantly convivial.
The after-dinner crowd enjoyed listening to the mellow, laid-back singer.

melodrama

n
/ 'melə.drāmə /
Gk > L > F
a play characterized by extravagant theatricality, subordination of characterization to plot, and predominance of physical action.
George was put off by the opera's melodrama but was enthralled by the beauty of the music.

melophonic

memoir

n
/ 'mem.wär /
L > F
a history or narrative composed from or stressing personal experience and acquaintance with the events, scenes, or persons described.
The memoir of Burton Smith was published last year.

memorabilia

n pl
/ .memərə'bیلē /
L
things remarkable and worthy of remembrance or record.
The memorabilia in the hall of fame traced the history of basketball from its beginning in 1891.

memoriter

adv
/ mə'mōrə.te(ə)r /
L
by or from memory : by heart.
Much to her surprise, Sue was able to recite the soliloquy that 20 years ago she had learned memoriter.

memory

menace

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

menagerie

n
/ mə'naj(ə)rē /
F

a collection of wild or foreign animals in cages or enclosures.
The eccentric billionaire's menagerie includes two pandas and a white rhino.

mendacious

mendicancy

n
/ 'mendəkənsē /
L

the practice or act of begging.
Panhandlers became so aggressive in the city that its voters demanded legal enactments against mendicancy.

mendicant

n
/ 'mendəkənt /
L

one who begs; especially : one who lives by begging.
The mendicant on the street corner once had a high-paying job.

menehune

n
/ .menə'hünē /
Hawaiian

a small mythical Polynesian being living in the mountains and working at night as a stone builder.
The Hawaiian folklorist told the tale of a stone temple built overnight by a menehune.

menial

adj
/ 'mēnēəl /
L > E

of, relating to, or being work not requiring special skill or not calling into play the higher intellectual powers and often regarded as lacking dignity, status, or interest.
Viewed by some office workers as a menial task, making coffee can be quite an art.

meningitis

n
/ .menən'jīdəs /
Gk > L

a disease in which microorganisms cause inflammation of the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord.
Trudy had meningitis when she was seven.

meniscus

n
/ mə'niskəs /
Gk > L
the curved upper surface of a liquid column.
Because mercury sticks to itself better than to other substances, its meniscus is convex, or rounded upward.

menorah

n
/ mə'nōrə /
Heb
a candelabrum with nine candlesticks used in the celebration of Hanukkah.
Stuart put the candles in the menorah just before the ceremony.

mentality

n
/ men'talədē /
L
intellectual power or capacity : learning ability.
The mentality of dolphins is greater than that of sharks.

menthol

n
/ 'men.thəl /
L > G
an alcohol that occurs naturally in peppermint oil and Japanese mint oil and can be made synthetically.
Menthol is used in medicines to relieve pain, itching, and nasal congestion.

mentor

n
/ 'men.tó(ə)r /
Gk name
teacher, tutor, coach.
After Helen won the spelling competition, she said that her mother was her mentor.

mephitis

n
/ mə'fīdəs /
OScan > L
a noxious, pestilential, or foul exhalation from the earth.
Ivy suspected she was approaching the geyser when she smelled a strong mephitis.

mercantilism

n
/ 'mərkan.tē.lizəm /
L > It > F + Ecff
devotion to commercial enterprise.
The turn of the century saw a boom in mercantilism.

mercenarily

adv
/ .mərs'n'erəlē /
L + Ecff
in a manner showing conspicuous lust for money.
Being mercenarily inclined, Joel refused to work for just the minimum wage.

mercenary

adj
/ 'mərs'n'erē /
L
showing conspicuous lust for money : based on or marked by greed.
No one in the family knows where Antonio gets his mercenary tendencies.

mercurial

adj
/ .mər'kyūrēəl /
L
characterized by rapid and unpredictable changeableness or by quick-wittedness : sprightly, temperamental, volatile.
Christopher's mercurial twists of temperament were a trial to his mother.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

merely

adv

/ 'mi(ə)rlē /

L > E + Ecf

no more than : barely, only.

Joseph was merely pretending to be asleep.

merganser

n

/ mər'gan(t)sər /

L

any of various fish-eating diving ducks with a slender bill and usually a crested head.

Many people consider the red-breasted merganser one of the most beautiful ducks.

meridian

n

/ mə'ridēən /

F > E

a great circle of the celestial sphere passing through its poles and the zenith of a given place.

The apparent solar day is measured by the interval of time between two successive passages of the Sun across the observer's celestial meridian.

meringue

n

/ mə'reŋ /

F

[has near homonym: marang] a mixture of beaten egg whites and powdered sugar baked at low temperature and used as a topping (as on pies and puddings).

Thelma scraped the meringue off her pie.

mermaid

n

/ 'mər.mād /

E

a fabled marine creature having the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a fish.

As they sailed closer to what they thought was the end of the world, the sailors kept expecting to see a mermaid.

mermithergate

merotomize

v

/ mə'rädə.mīz /

Gk + Ecf

divide into parts.

In tomorrow's biology class Jan will merotomize a frog to study its anatomy.

merriment

meshummad

mesmerize

mesoscale

adj

/ 'mezə.skāl /

Gk > L + ON > E

of or relating to a meteorological phenomenon approximately 1 to 100 kilometers in horizontal extent.

Unlike a blizzard, which can blanket a dozen states for days, mesoscale weather covers only a small area and passes through quickly.

mesoseismal

adj

/ .mezə'sīzməl /

Gk

of or relating to the center of an area of earthquake disturbance.

The town in the mesoseismal area suffered the most damage from the earthquake.

metachrosis

n

/ .medə'krōsəs /

Gk

the power of some animals (as many fishes and reptiles) to change color voluntarily by the expansion of special pigment cells.

Metachrosis helps octopi blend with their environments to avoid being easy prey.

metagnomy

metallurgical

metallurgist

n

/ 'med'ɪ.ərjəst /

Gk

a specialist in the study of the structure and properties of metals.

Theobald hired a metallurgist to evaluate the ore deposits on his ranch.

metamorphosis

n

/ .medə'mò(r)fəsəs /

Gk > L

change of physical form or substance that takes place during an insect's life as it matures.

Complete metamorphosis is characteristic of beetles, butterflies and moths, flies, and wasps.

metaphor

n

/ 'medə.fò(ə)r /

Gk

an implied comparison in contrast to the explicit comparison of the simile.

The poet used the image of a drifting boat as a metaphor for the troubled soul.

metaphrast

n

/ 'medə.frast /

Gk

translator; specifically : one who turns verse into a different meter or prose into verse.

In translating the epic poem, Elliott consulted a well-known metaphrast.

metastasis

v

/ mə'tastə.sīz /

Gk

spread, as a disease-producing agent, from the original site of disease to another part of the body.

The oncology professor pointed on the diagram to where the cancer cells would metastasize next.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

meteoroidal

adj

/ˌmɛdɛəˈrɔɪdəl/

Gk + Ecf

of or relating to meteors in orbit around the Sun.

The many craters on the Moon are the result of meteoroidal bombardment.

methodical

meticulosity

n

/məˈtɪkʏəˈlæsədə/

L + Ecf

the quality or state of being extremely painstaking in the consideration or treatment of details.

The gallery visitor marveled at the artist's meticulousity in depicting details so realistically.

metonymy

n

/məˈtɒnəmē/

Gk

a figure of speech that consists in using the name of one thing for that of something else with which it is associated (as in "spent the evening reading Shakespeare").

The metonymy "threads" for clothes has recently come back into popular slang.

metoposcopy

n

/ˌmɛdəˈpɒskəpē/

Gk

the art of reading character or telling fortunes from the markings of the forehead.

Gerald has a high, bumpy forehead that would provide a truly interesting study in metoposcopy.

metronome

n

/ˈmɛtrəˌnōm/

Gk

an instrument that emits an audible repetitive tap regulated to mark rhythm (as for music or marching).

Martina used a metronome to hypnotize her cat.

mettwurst

meuniere

meuse

mezzanine

n

/ˈmezˈniːn/

L > It > F

the lowest balcony in a theater.

Melinda says that she enjoys the view from the mezzanine better than the view from the orchestra.

miasma

n

/mɪˈazmə/

Gk > L

[Note: Could be confused with miasm.] a vaporous exhalation (as of a marshy region or of rotting matter) formerly believed to contain a substance causing disease.

Eloise couldn't wait to escape from the miasma that had settled over the entire swamp.

Micawber

n

/məˈkɒbə(r)/

E literary name

[has near homonym: macabre] an improvident person who lives in expectation of an upturn in his fortunes.

Jenny was careful not to live like a Micawber just because she expected to receive a fellowship.

microcosm

n

/ˈmɪkrəkəzəm/

Gk

a miniature universe.

Kate could spend hours watching the microcosm of her ant farm.

microfiche

n

/ˈmɪkrəˌfɛʃ/

F

a sheet of film containing several rows of photographic records on a reduced scale that are enlarged for reading or viewing.

Norma examined a microfiche of old newspaper pages while doing research at the library.

micrograph

n

/ˈmɪkrəˌɡrɑf/

Gk + Gk

a graphic reproduction of the image of an object formed by a microscope.

The biology teacher showed the class a micrograph of a plant cell.

micrurgy

n

/ˈmɪ(ˌ)krərjē/

Gk > ISV

the practice of using minute tools in a magnified field.

Lorraine's excellence at micrurgy helped her greatly with her model making.

midgetism

n

/ˈmɪdʒɪzəm/

E + Ecf

the state of being an unusually small creature or thing.

In the art of bonsai, midgetism is highly valued.

midinette

n

/ˈmɪdˈnɛt/

F

a Parisian shopgirl.

In the novel, Marie was a midinette who worked as a seamstress during the 1890s.

midriff

n

/ˈmɪˌdrɪf/

E

the midregion of the human torso; especially : its external ventral aspect.

According to the dress code, any student coming to school with an exposed midriff will be sent home.

mien

n

/ˈmiːn/

L > F > E

[has homonym: mean] the air or bearing of a person.

Fame and fortune did not alter Cindy's humble mien.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

mignonette

n
/ .minyə'net /
F

an annual plant native to North Africa that has long racemes of fragrant yellow or greenish white flowers.

Lord Bateman sent seeds of mignonette to England in 1742 and called it mignonette, although it was not known by that name in France at the time.

migraine

n
/ 'mī.grān /
Gk > L > F

a condition marked by recurrent severe headache often with nausea and vomiting.

Karen's doctor found out that her migraine was due to a food allergy.

mikado

n
/ mə'kä(.)dō /
Jpn

an emperor of Japan.

The Mikado is one of Gilbert and Sullivan's best-loved operettas.

milacre

milchig

adj
/ 'mil.kik /

G > Yiddish

made of or derived from milk or dairy products.

The dairy association posted on its web site several menus for milchig meals.

mildewed

militancy

militia

n
/ mə'lishə /
L

a reserve unit of the armed forces.

Captain Weston's military career began when he entered his county's militia.

millennialism

millennium

n
/ mə'lenēəm /
L

a period of 1,000 years.

In his "Four Freedoms" speech, Franklin D. Roosevelt stressed that his vision was not that of a distant millennium.

millinery

millionaire

mimeograph

v
/ 'mimēə.graf /
Gk + Gk

copy with a duplicator that consists of a frame in which the stencil is stretched and an inking roller for pressing ink through the porous lines of the stencil onto paper.

Kerry was puzzled when her grandmother talked of how she used to mimeograph her boss's company memos.

mimic

v
/ 'mimik /
Gk > L

copy or imitate very closely especially in external characteristics (as voice, gesture, or manner).

Christie has learned to mimic Grandma so well on the telephone that she can fool the whole family.

mimicry

mimosa

n
/ mə'mōsə /
L

a tree or shrub that is native to tropical and warm regions and that has usually bipinnate leaves and globular heads of small pink or white flowers.

Deanna planted a mimosa in the front yard.

minacious

adj
/ mə'nāshəs /
L

of a menacing or threatening character.

Though the butler seemed minacious, he was not the culprit.

minaret

minatory

adj
/ 'minə.tōrē /
L

having a menacing quality :

expressive of or conveying a threat.

In a minatory tone, Mrs. Sampson asked the boys what they planned to do about her broken window.

minestrone

n
/ .minə'strōnē /
L > It

a rich thick vegetable soup with dried beans, macaroni, vermicelli, or similar ingredients sometimes topped with grated cheese.

Steve crumbled oyster crackers into his minestrone.

miniascape

n
/ 'minēə.skāp /
L > It > L

a dish garden made with dry or other plant materials that do not require water.

A miniascape makes an interesting host or hostess gift.

miniature

adj
/ 'min(ē)ə.chù(ə)r /
L > It

being or represented on a small scale.

The miniature productions of architects' dream houses were all made out of children's building blocks.

miniaturize

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

minimization

n
/ .mɪnəmə'zāshən /
L + Ecff
the action or process of reducing to the smallest possible number, degree, or extent.
The credit counselor told Shanika that the first step should be the minimization of her interest payments.

minor

n
/ 'mɪnə(r) /
L
[has homonym: miner] a person under full age or majority : one who has not attained the age at which full civil rights are accorded.
Because Randy is a minor, the airline will not allow him to take the red-eye flight unaccompanied.

minstrel

minuend

n
/ 'mɪnyəwənd /
L
a quantity in mathematics from which another quantity is to be subtracted.
In the equation $7 - 5 = 2$, 7 is the minuend.

minuscular

adj
/ mə'nəskyələ(r) /
L
very small in size or importance.
A minuscular speck of dirt on Alison's frock was enough to infuriate her.

minutia

mirabelle

n
/ 'mɪrəbel /
F
the fruit of a small hardy European plum tree used especially for preserves and for making a liqueur.
Joey ate a stewed mirabelle as he helped his grandmother make jam.

mirador

n
/ 'mɪrədō(ə)r /
L > Catal > Sp
a turret or a bay window or enclosed balcony designed to command an extensive outlook—used chiefly of Spanish architecture.
The castle's mirador offered a commanding view of the sea.

mirage

Miranda

adj
/ mə'rændə /
American name
of, relating to, or being the legal rights of an arrested person to have an attorney and to remain silent so as to avoid self-incrimination.
At the time of arrest, each person must be advised of his Miranda rights.

mirrored

v
/ 'mɪrə(r)d /
L > F > E + EcF
reflected.
The moonlight was mirrored in the smooth surface of the pond.

misanthropic

adj
/ .mɪs'n'thräpɪk /
Gk + EcF
marked by a hatred or contempt for humankind.
The moral corruption the policeman witnessed caused him to become a misanthropic cynic.

miscellanea

n pl
/ .mɪsəl'änēə /
L
a collection of assorted objects.
Among the miscellanea on Ernie's bookshelf were five textbooks on world history and a complete set of the works of Shakespeare.

miscellaneous

miscellany

mischief

n
/ 'mɪs(h)chəf /
F > E
action or conduct that annoys or irritates without causing or meaning to cause serious harm.
Hearing the puppy's thumping and barking, Erica went to investigate the mischief he was creating.

mischievous

miscible

adj
/ 'mɪsəbəl /
L
[Note: Pronouncer should provide definition of this word.] capable of being mixed in any ratio without separation of two phases—used especially of fluids.
Oil and kerosene are miscible, but carbon tetrachloride and water are not.

miscreant

n
/ 'mɪskrənt /
L > F > E
one who behaves criminally or viciously.
Some miscreant dumped a bucket of paint in Herb's convertible.

misdemeanor

n
/ .mɪsdə'mēnə(r) /
E + L > F > E
a crime less than a felony.
The trespasser was arrested and charged with a misdemeanor.

miserable

adj
/ 'mɪz(ə)rəbəl /
L
marked by extreme discomfort or unhappiness.
The refugees struggled for survival in the miserable mountainside encampment.

misericordia

misfeasance

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misnomer

n
/ mə'snōmə(r) /
L > F > E
an incorrect designation or term.
The name "Greenland" is a misnomer because an icecap covers most of the island.

misogynistic

adj
/ mə'sājə'nistik /
Gk
relating to or given to a hatred of women.
The soprano complained that only a critic with misogynistic cruelty could have written the review.

misogyny

misoneism

n
/ .misə'nē.izəm /
Gk + Gk
a hatred or intolerance of something new or changed.
Because of his mom's misoneism, Brian still does not have a computer in his home.

misopedist

n
/ .misə'pēdəst /
L + Ecf
one who hates children.
W. C. Fields was a famed misopedist.

misprision

n
/ mə'sprizhən /
L > F > E
the active or passive concealment of treason or felony from the prosecuting authorities by one not guilty of those crimes.
Congressman Walters was charged with misprision of felony in the election fraud.

misshapen

adj
/ mis(h)shāpən /
E
having an ugly or deformed shape.
The misshapen pumpkin made a fierce-looking jack-o'-lantern.

missile

n
/ 'misəl /
L
[has homonym: missal] a weapon or other object thrown or projected.
Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late.

missionary

mistassini

n
/ .mistə'sēnē /
Canadian geog name
a dwarf primrose of northern and alpine America.
Ava saw a mistassini growing in a rock crevice.

mistigris

n
/ 'mistē.gris /
F
a joker or blank card that the holder can play as any card.
Darryl won the hand using a mistigris and three queens for four of a kind.

mistletoe

n
/ 'misəl.tō /
E
any of various American plants of the genus Phoradendron that grow on deciduous trees.
Lance earned extra Christmas money selling mistletoe at the mall.

mistral

n
/ 'mistrəl /
L > OProv > F
a violent cold dry northerly wind of the Mediterranean provinces of France.
In Provence, the mistral sometimes dries out the vines and grapes.

misuse

v
/ mis'yüz /
Ecf + L > F > E
employ for a wrong or improper purpose.
Employees who misuse their Internet connection at work will be fired.

mitigate

v
/ 'midə.gāt /
L
make less severe, cruel, intense, painful.
The general interceded to mitigate the soldier's punishment.

mitigative

adj
/ 'midə.gādiv /
L
tending to make less severe : alleviating.
Mariko's herbal tea had a mitigative effect on Raga's headache.

mitochondrion

n
/ .mīdə'kāndrēən /
Gk + Gk
any of various round or long cellular organelles that are found outside the nucleus, produce energy for the cell through cellular respiration, and are rich in fats, proteins, and enzymes.
Gabrielle easily found the mitochondrion in the image projected by the electron microscope.

mitrailleuse

mittimus

n
/ 'midəməs /
L
a warrant committing the person specified to prison.
In this state no person can be committed to a correctional facility without a mittimus from a judge.

mixology

mneme

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mnemonic

mnesic

adj

/ 'nestik /

Gk

of or relating to memory or the persistent effect of past experience of the individual.

Granny spends much of her time reminiscing and performing other mnesic activities.

mocha

n

/ 'mōkə /

Arabian geog name

a flavoring made of a strong coffee infusion or of a mixture of cocoa or chocolate with coffee.

Samantha detected a hint of mocha in her hot chocolate.

moderate

adj

/ 'mäd(ə)rät /

L > E

neither small nor large.

Sally's room was of moderate size, but her sister's was quite small.

modicum

n

/ 'mädəkəm /

L > F

a small portion : a limited quantity or amount.

Bernie displayed not even a modicum of modesty as he bragged about his hole in one.

modificative

adj

/ 'mädəfəkädiv /

L + Ecf

serving to make minor changes in the form or structure of.

To thicken the runny sauce, Hester used flour as the modificative ingredient.

modiste

mohair

n

/ 'mō.ha(a)(ə)r /

Ar > It > E

any of various fabrics or yarns made wholly or in part of the hair of the Angora goat.

For her birthday Linda got a matching scarf and sweater, both made of mohair.

moiety

n

/ 'mōiədē /

L > F > E

a share paid by the government to an informer out of duties and penalties collected because of the individual's help.

The whistleblower received a moiety of the large fine imposed upon his employer for supplying faulty engine parts to the military.

molasses

n

/ mə'lasəz /

L > Pg

the thick dark to light brown syrup that is separated from raw sugar in sugar manufacture.

Mollie always adds molasses to beans before baking them.

molecule

molecules

molinary

adj

/ 'mälənerē /

L

of or relating to a mill or the process of grinding.

Elsworth's firm specializes in the manufacture of molinary equipment.

mollify

momentousness

n

/ mō'mentəsnəs /

L > F > E

the quality or state of being very important.

An orchestra fanfare accentuated the momentousness of the occasion.

momentum

n

/ mō'mentəm /

L

a property of a moving body that determines the length of time required to bring it to rest when under the action of a constant force or moment.

The snowball gained momentum as it rolled down the hill.

monadnock

n

/ mə'nad.näk /

New Hampshire geog name

a hill or mountain of resistant rock surmounting an eroded plain.

The familiar shape of the monadnock was a landmark for travelers.

monarch

monastery

n

/ 'mänə.sterē /

G > L > E

a house of religious retirement or of seclusion from the world for persons under religious vows.

Last fall Stan attended a retreat at a monastery near Bardstown, Kentucky.

monetarily

adv

/ .mä'nə'terəlē /

L + Ecf

with respect to money.

Bud said he wasn't broke, just monetarily deficient.

monetary

adj

/ 'mänə.terē /

L

of or relating to money or to the instrumentalities and organizations by which money is supplied to the economy.

So many Americans are active investors that even a slight change in interest rates can have serious monetary repercussions.

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mongoose

n
/ 'mäŋgüs /
Dravidian? > Prakrit > Hindi
an agile keen-sighted grizzled
brown and black mammal of India
that is about the size of a ferret and
feeds on snakes and rodents.
*The mongoose is an active, bold
predator.*

mongrel

n
/ 'mäŋgrəl /
E
an animal or plant resulting from
the interbreeding of two or more
breeds or strains.
*Jeff's dog is a friendly mongrel
named Mutt.*

monocle

n
/ 'mänəkəl /
L
[has homonyms: monacal,
monachal] an eyeglass for one eye.
*The villain wore a tuxedo, a top
hat, and a monocle.*

monocoque

monolith

n
/ 'män'lith /
Gk
something resembling a single
great stone.
*Sir Larry is considered a pillar of
strength by his friends and a
hulking obstinate monolith by his
enemies.*

monomachy

monomaniacal

adj
/ .män'mə'nīəkəl /
Gk + Gk + Ecf
relating to, characterized by, or
affected with such concentration on
a single object or idea as to suggest
mental derangement.
*Stuart's obsession with racing cars
seems almost monomaniacal to his
friends.*

mononucleosis

n
/ .mänō.n(y)üklē'ōsəs /
Gk + L
an acute infectious disease
associated with Epstein-Barr virus
and characterized by fever,
swelling of the lymph nodes, and
an increase in the number of
lymphocytes in the blood.
*Morgan had to spend several weeks
in bed after contracting
mononucleosis.*

monopoly

monotonous

adj
/ mə'nät'nəs /
Gk
having no change or variety :
wearisomely uniform.
*The lecturer's monotonous tone put
half the audience to sleep.*

monotony

monsoon

n
/ män'sün /
Ar > Pg > D
a periodic wind especially in the
Indian Ocean and in southern Asia.
*The monsoon brought
thunderstorms that blanketed the
city with a dust cloud and then
flooding rains.*

monstrosity

n
/ mänz'träsədē /
L
an object of terrifying size or force
or complexity.
*The atom bomb is the greatest
monstrosity of the 20th century.*

monstrous

adj
/ 'mänztrəs /
L > F > E
having extraordinary and often
overwhelming size : unusually and
unpleasantly huge.
*The tourists in South America were
terrified and sickened by the
monstrous flying cockroach.*

montage

n
/ män'täzh /
F
an impressionistic sequence of
images introduced into a film or
television program to develop a
single theme, suggest a state of
mind, or bridge a time lapse.
*The program's opening credit
sequence is a montage of white
beaches, swaying palm trees,
racing boats, and attractive sun
worshippers.*

moppet

moraine

n
/ mə'rān /
F
an accumulation of earth and stones
carried and finally deposited by a
glacier.
*A push moraine is carried ahead of
an advancing glacier, whereas a
lateral moraine is deposited at the
side of a glacier as it moves.*

morass

moratorium

n
/ .mōrə'tōrēəm /
L
a suspension of activity : a
temporary ban on the use or
production of something.
*Environmentalists demanded a
moratorium on the mining
operation until its potential effects
on the ecosystem could be
evaluated.*

morbid

adj
/ 'mōrbəd /
L
abnormally susceptible to or
characterized by gloomy or
unwholesome feelings.
*The inventor was haunted by a
morbid sense of guilt about the
possible harmful effects of her
invention.*

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morbidezza

n
/ ˌmò(r)bə'detsə /
L > It

an extreme delicacy and softness.
The piano music had a certain morbidezza that required a delicate touch.

morceau

n
/ mòr'sō /
F

[Note: Could be confused with more so. Also, plural of word can be similarly pronounced.] a short literary or musical piece.
Natasha entertained the partygoers with a lively morceau on the violin.

mordacious

mordancy

n
/ 'mò(r)d'nsē /
L > F
a biting and caustic quality of style.
The mordancy of the candidate's comments made her opponent wince.

mores

n pl
/ 'mò(,)rāz /
L
[has homonym: morays] the fixed customs or folkways of a particular group which are morally binding upon all members of the group and necessary to its welfare and preservation.
Some religious groups have developed a society of their own with distinct and strict mores.

morigeration

n
/ məˌrijə'rāshən /
L
servile obedience : obsequiousness.
The judge expected morigeration from everyone in the courtroom.

morion

n
/ 'mōrēən /
F
a visorless high-crested helmet of Spanish origin worn by foot soldiers in the 16th and 17th centuries.
The conquistador was pictured wearing a morion, with the brim forming high peaks at the front and back.

mormorando

adj
/ ˌmò(r)mə'rän(,)dō /
L > It
in a murmuring manner—used as a direction in music.
At first Ralph thought his CD player was broken, but then he realized he was listening to a mormorando passage.

morose

adj
/ mə'rōs /
L
marked by or expressive of gloom.
The basketball team was morose after losing in the state finals.

Morpheus

n
/ 'mòrfēəs /
Gk
something that induces or prolongs sleep.
Tim cannot recall exactly what Morpheus caused Rip van Winkle to sleep for 20 years.

mortal

adj
/ 'mòrdəl /
L
destructive to life : causing or capable of causing death.
The diver's cage would protect him from receiving a mortal wound from a shark.

mortar

n
/ 'mòrdər /
L > F > E
something that binds or holds together.
Sam watched as the bricklayer expertly set the bricks into the hardening mortar.

mortarboard

n
/ 'mòrdər.bō(ə)rd /
L > F > E + E
an academic cap consisting of a closely fitting headpiece with a broad flat projecting square top.
Lamont adjusted his mortarboard as he joined the procession to begin the commencement program.

mortgage

n
/ 'mòrgij /
L > F > E
a binding obligation.
Sarah found a signed copy of the mortgage in Richard's desk.

mortuary

adj
/ 'mò(r)chə.werē /
L
of or relating to the burial of the dead.
Professor Habib is an expert in ancient mortuary rituals.

mosaic

mosaicist

n
/ mō'zāəsəst /
L > It > F > E
a designer who creates surface decoration by inlaying small pieces of variously colored material.
An expert mosaicist decorated the altar of the new church.

mosque

n
/ 'mäsk /
Ar > Sp > It > F
an Islamic place of public religious worship.
Visitors were required to remove their shoes before entering the mosque.

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mosquito

n
/ mə'skēd(,)ō /

L > Sp

any of numerous two-winged flies that have a rather narrow abdomen and usually a long slender rigid proboscis with which they puncture the skin of animals to suck the blood.

Dr. Walter Reed proved that the yellow fever virus is carried by the mosquito.

mosquitoey

mostaccioli

n
/ .mōstāt'chōlē /

It
a pasta in the form of a short tube with oblique ends.

It was the usual banquet fare: mostaccioli and roast beef.

motley

adj
/ 'mätlē /

E
composed of a haphazard and incongruous mixture of heterogeneous elements.

Each guest drew a gift from the motley assortment in the grab bag.

moulage

n
/ mü'lāzh /

F

an impression (as of a tire mark or tooth print) made for use as evidence in a criminal investigation.

At the scene of the crime, detectives were able to make a moulage of the tire marks left by the criminal's car.

mountain

n
/ 'maünt'n /

L > F

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a vast number or quantity : pile, slew.
Mrs. Johnson assigned her students a mountain of homework that was due the day after the holiday break.

mountebank

n
/ 'maüntəbāŋk /

It

an entertainer (as a juggler or magician) employed by a quack to attract a crowd.

The charlatan used a mountebank to entice crowds into the tent.

mourn

moussaka

n
/ mü'sākə /

Turkish > Gk

a dish of ground meat (as lamb) and sliced eggplant or potatoes often topped with a seasoned sauce.

Dimitrio's restaurant serves the best moussaka in the area.

mousse

n
/ 'müs /

L > F

[has homonym: moose] a frothy dessert; especially : a dessert of sweetened and flavored whipped cream, or thin cream and gelatin, frozen without stirring.

Michael ordered chocolate hazelnut mousse for dessert, but Vera ordered just coffee.

mousseline

mozambique

mozzarella

n
/ .mätsə'relə /

It

a moist white rubbery unsalted cheese.

Mozzarella is used in many Italian foods.

mucedine

mucilage

mucilaginous

adj
/ .myüsə'lajənəs /

L

relating to or resembling a liquid adhesive of low bonding strength.
Billy's mother told him to wash the mucilaginous remains of his peanut butter and jelly sandwich from his face and hands.

mufti

n
/ 'məftē /

Ar

civilian dress when worn by one in military service.

The general ambled down the street unrecognized in mufti.

mugient

adj
/ 'myüjēənt /

L

making a lowing sound : bellowing.

In mid-April the mugient herds of cattle are turned out to pasture.

mugwump

n
/ 'məgwəmp /

Natick

one who is undecided or neutral (as in politics) often as a result of an inability to make up one's mind.

William is too much a mugwump to ever realize his ambition to hold elective office.

mugwumpery

mulberry

n
/ 'məl.berē /

Gk > L > F > E

a tree or shrub that bears a fruit resembling a raspberry.

The Nelsons planted a mulberry in their backyard.

mulch

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muliebral

adj

/ ˌmyūlēˈeɪbrəl /

L + Ecf

of, relating to, or characteristic of women.

The artist captured the essence of muliebral beauty in his portrait of Venus.

mulligan

n

/ ˈmʌləɡən /

E name

a free shot sometimes awarded a golfer in nontournament play when the preceding shot has been poorly played.

Gordy took a mulligan after hitting a “worm burner” on the first tee.

mullion

multifarious

adj

/ ˌmʌltəˈfa(a)rēəs /

L

having multiplicity : having great diversity or variety.

The multifarious activities at the Hands-On Museum make it a place that everyone can enjoy.

multiplication

n

/ ˌmʌltəpləˈkāshən /

L

a mathematical operation commonly indicated by ab that repeats b as many times as there are units in a.

The fourth grade class was learning the process of multiplication of whole numbers.

multipotent

multitude

n

/ ˈmʌltəˌtʊd /

L

a great number : host.

A multitude of reporters besieged the plaintiff as she left the courtroom.

multitudinous

adj

/ ˌmʌltəˈtʊdənəs /

L + Ecf

existing in great numbers.

Multitudinous varieties of wildflowers grow on Sand Mountain.

mummery

n

/ ˈmʌməre /

F

a performance given by actors in a pantomime.

Costumed actors performed a comic mummery in the school auditorium.

mumps

n pl

/ ˈmʌmps /

imit

an acute contagious viral disease marked by fever and swelling of the parotid gland.

Russell sympathized with his brother who was suffering with mumps, but couldn't help but laugh at his swollen face.

municipal

adj

/ myūˈnɪsəpəl /

L

of or relating to a primarily urban political unit (as a town or city).

Real estate taxes are set by the municipal government.

municipally

munificence

n

/ myūˈnɪfəsən(t)s /

L

a giving or bestowing with extraordinary liberality : lavish generosity.

Hazel's uncle, known widely for his munificence, hosted an elaborate dinner for her bat mitzvah.

murarium

n

/ myūˈra(a)rēəm /

L

a place for rearing mice or rats under controlled conditions.

Research at the murarium resulted in the initial claim that saccharine consumption causes cancer.

murenger

n

/ ˈmyūrənʒə(r) /

L > F > E

one in charge of the wall of a town and its repairs.

When city walls served as fortresses, the murenger was responsible for the security of the citizens.

murmur

v

/ ˈmɜrmər /

L

utter or give forth in low or indistinct sounds or words.

Mrs. Chambers reminded Dylan not to murmur his introduction.

murRAIN

musciform

adj

/ ˈməʊəfɔrm /

L

resembling moss.

Rosa's new hat has a musciform texture.

muscle

musculature

n

/ ˈməʊskyələˌchū(ə)r /

L

the muscles of an animal that are related to each other and function together.

Dissection of the frog revealed its underlying musculature.

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muse

v
/ 'myüz /
L > F > E
[has homonyms: meuse, mews]
become absorbed in thought.
When he was a boy, Howard used to sit on the porch and muse on what he would do with his life.

museum

n
/ myü'zēəm /
Gk > L
an institution devoted to the procurement, care, study, and display of objects of lasting interest or value.
The National Air and Space Museum is one of the components of the Smithsonian Institution.

muskmelon

n
/ 'mæsk.melən /
Skt > Per > Gk > L > F > E + Gk > L
the usually sweet odorous edible melon that is the fruit of a trailing or climbing Asiatic herbaceous vine.
The muskmelon was one of the foods that Columbus introduced to the New World.

muslin

n
/ 'məzlən /
Iraq geog name > Ar > It > F
[has near homonym: Muslim] a plainwoven cotton fabric that is used bleached or unbleached for sheeting, embroidery, or other purposes.
The simple look of tab curtains made of unbleached muslin is perfect for Barbara's den.

mussitation

n
/ .məsə'tāshən /
L
movement of the lips as if in speech but without accompanying sound.
The cameras picked up the speller's mussitation as she pondered the word.

mutable

adj
/ 'myüdəbəl /
L
prone or liable to change.
The weather in the foothills was extremely mutable due to the nearby mountains.

mutafacient

adj
/ .myüdə'fāshənt /
L + L + Ecf
capable of inducing a biological change in hereditary material.
Botanists make use of mutafacient chemicals to develop new strains of plants.

mutinous

mutton

n
/ 'mət'n /
Celt > F > E
the flesh of a sheep that is used for food.
Ingrid purchased some mutton and pork chops from the butcher.

muumuu

n
/ 'mü.mü /
Hawaiian
a loose dress with gay colors and patterns, worn chiefly in Hawaii.
Pandora bought a red flowered muumuu during her trip to Maui.

myasthenia

n
/ .mīəs'thēnēə /
Gk > L
muscular debility.
Keith was informed that his myasthenia was brought on by overexertion and would disappear with rest.

mycophagous

adj
/ mī'kāfəgəs /
Gk
feeding on fungi.
Because they are mycophagous, ladybugs are good for gardens.

myelitis

n
/ .mīə'līdəs /
Gk > L
inflammation of the spinal cord or of the bone marrow.
Myelitis is usually a result of a viral infection such as mononucleosis or mumps.

myelopathy

n
/ .mīə'läpəthē /
Gk
a disease or disorder of the spinal cord or the bone marrow.
After the accident Ursula's dog had to be treated for myelopathy.

mynheer

n
/ mīn'he(ə)r /
D
mister—used as a polite address to a Dutch gentleman.
The owner of the village bank was addressed as Mynheer Grauer.

myocarditis

n
/ .mīə.kär'dīdəs /
Gk > L
inflammation of the middle muscular layer of the heart wall.
A severe case of myocarditis could result in heart failure.

myopia

n
/ mī'ōpēə /
Gk
nearsightedness.
Kyle's myopia was first apparent when he had trouble reading what was on the chalkboard at school.

myriads

n pl
/ 'mīrēədz /
Gk
immense numbers.
The plain was covered with myriads of insects swarming and devouring all the vegetation.

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myringitis

n
/ .mīrən'jīdəs /
Gk > L

inflammation of the tympanic membrane.

Dr. Croke explained that Amy's myringitis was caused by a bacterial infection in her ear.

myrmecologist

n
/ .mɜrmə'käləjəst /
Gk

a specialist in the scientific study of ants.

The myrmecologist told the reporter that his interest in ants began when he had been given an ant farm at the age of seven.

myrmecology

n
/ .mɜrmə'käləjē /
Gk

a scientific study of ants.

Receiving an ant farm for Christmas was the beginning of Art's interest in myrmecology.

myrmidon

n
/ 'mɜrmədän /
Gk

a follower or subordinate who unquestioningly or pitilessly executes orders : hireling.

Although the mayor always speaks civilly to everyone, his myrmidon can be ruthless in criticizing opponents.

myrrh

n
/ 'mɜr /
Semitic > Gk > L > E

a yellow to reddish brown aromatic bitter gum resin that is obtained from various trees of East Africa and Arabia.

In medieval Europe myrrh was rare and precious.

mysticity

mystique

n
/ mī'stēk /
Gk > L > F

the special esoteric skill or mysterious faculty essential in a calling or activity.

The mystique of computer programming is completely foreign to Jacqueline.

mythologem

mythomania

nabob

n
/ 'nābāb /
Ar > Hindi

man of great wealth.

The Hollywood nabob rarely traveled without his personal chef, secretary, and masseur.

nacelle

n
/ nə'sel /
L > F

an enclosed shelter on an aircraft for an engine or sometimes for the crew.

The cramped, stifling nacelle gave Rico an attack of claustrophobia.

Naderism

n
/ 'nādərīzəm /
American name
named after consumer advocate Ralph Nader, the promotion of consumer interests especially by public outcry against dangerous or defective goods.
The policy of Naderism is named for an outspoken consumer advocate.

nadir

n
/ 'nādə(r) /
Ar > F > E
the point of the celestial sphere that is directly opposite the zenith and vertically downward from the observer.

There was no way for Amos to see the Moon, since it was at the nadir.

naiad

n
/ 'nāəd /
Gk

one of the nymphs believed by the ancient Greeks and Romans to live in and give life to lakes, rivers, springs, and fountains.

Glenda came upon a statue of a naiad by the lake.

naiant

nainsook

n
/ 'nān.sūk /
Skt > Hindi

a soft lightweight cotton fabric in plain weave and various finishes that is used especially for clothing and curtains.

Janet's new summer blouse is made of nainsook.

naology

n
/ nā'äləjē /
Gk

a study of sacred edifices.

With her background in architecture and naology, Shauna is just the right person to help restore the old cathedral.

napalm

v
/ 'nāpām /
Iranian > Gk > L + L > F
attack with bombs made with a highly flammable jellied fuel composed of gasoline and a mixture of aluminum soaps as a thickener.
The decision to napalm enemy territory had more ramifications than the intended destruction of vegetation.

naprapathy

n
/ nə'prəpəthē /
Czech + Gk > E
a therapeutic system of drugless treatment by manipulation of the ligaments and connective tissues.
Norma relied on naprapathy to relieve her pain after she sprained her back.

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narcissus

n
/ năr'sisəs /
Gk > L
any plant of the genus *Narcissus* of which the flowers have a short corona and are usually borne separately.
The common daffodil is a type of narcissus.

narcoleptic

adj
/ .närkə'leptik /
Gk
of, relating to, or affected with a transient compulsive tendency to attacks of deep sleep usually of unknown causes.
Steve becomes narcoleptic whenever he is under great stress.

narcoticism

n
/ năr'kädə'sizəm /
Gk
addiction to habit-forming drugs.
The police sergeant lectured Zakia's class about the dangers of narcoticism.

naricorn

n
/ 'na(a)rəkörn /
L
the horny covering protecting the nostrils of albatrosses and some other birds.
The naricorn is an irregularly convoluted little scroll, very thin and delicate in texture.

narrate

v
/ 'narāt /
L
tell or recite the happenings of (a story).
Jacob volunteered to narrate the slide show.

narrative

adj
/ 'narədɪv /
L
having the form of a story.
A ballad is a poem that has several distinct characteristics, including a strong narrative element.

narrow

adj
/ 'nɑ(ɹ)rō /
E
not possessing usual or expected width.
The sidewalk was too narrow for the three friends to walk side by side.

narthex

n
/ 'när.theks /
Semitic? > Gk
a vestibule leading to the nave of a church.
The bridal party lined up in the narthex and waited for the cue to proceed down the church's center aisle.

nasal

adj
/ 'nāzəl /
L
of or relating to the nose.
Juno's nasal inflammation caused considerable discomfort and made it hard for her to breathe.

nascency

n
/ 'nas'nsē /
L
the condition or process of being born or of beginning to exist.
The nascency of the novel as a literary form can be traced to 18th-century England.

nascent

adj
/ 'nās'nt /
L
undergoing the process of being born : beginning to exist.
The Boston Tea Party revealed nascent revolutionary tendencies among the American colonists.

nastaliq

nasturtium

n
/ nə'stərshəm /
L
any of several herbs having showy variously colored spurred flowers.
The nasturtium will add color to a drab landscape design.

natal

natator

natatorium

n
/ .nādə'tōrēəm /
L
a place for swimming; especially : an indoor swimming pool.
William Randolph Hearst built an ostentatious natatorium at his California mansion.

naupathia

n
/ nŏ'pathēə /
Gk
seasickness.
Several spells of naupathia made Joni's cruise an experience she hopes never to repeat.

nausea

n
/ 'nŏshə /
Gk > L
a feeling of discomfort in the stomach usually associated with an urge to vomit.
A bout of nausea kept Denise from enjoying the ferry ride.

nauseate

nauseous

adj
/ 'nŏshəs /
L
causing a sensation of discomfort in the stomach and an urge to vomit.
The smell emanating from the swamp was nauseous.

nautical

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nautilus

n
/ 'nòd'ʌs /
Gk > L
any of several cephalopod mollusks of the southern Pacific and Indian oceans that produce a spiral chambered shell.
Frank keeps a polished shell of a nautilus in his bookcase.

nebula

n
/ 'nebyələ /
L
any of many immense bodies of highly rarified gas or dust in interstellar space.
The astronomer identified the Horsehead Nebula on the chart.

nebulous

adj
/ 'nebyələs /
L
vaguely defined, poorly grasped, or dimly realized.
Melissa's nebulous fears about the future interfered with her enjoyment of the present.

necessary

necklace

neckwear

n
/ 'nek.wa(a)r /
E
articles of clothing worn about the neck.
Greta thinks warm neckwear is the key to avoiding a cold.

necromancy

n
/ 'nekrə.man(t)sē /
Gk > L > F > E
the art or practice of magically conjuring up the souls of the dead.
Abraham Lincoln was interested in necromancy, and his wife held séances in the White House.

nectar

nectarine

n
/ 'nektərēn /
Gk > L + Ec
a peach that has a smooth-skinned fruit.
Jason prefers a nectarine to a common peach.

nefarious

adj
/ nə'fa(a)rēəs /
L
heinously or impiously wicked : detestable.
The murderer's crimes were considered so nefarious that he was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.

negative

neglect

negligent

negotiable

adj
/ nə'gōsh(ē)əbəl /
L
that can be converted into cash or the equivalent value.
Leah wondered if the old bills she found in the trunk were still negotiable.

negotiate

negotiator

negus

neigh

nematocyst

n
/ nə'madə.sist /
Gk + Gk
one of the minute stinging organs of coelenterates (as corals, sea anemones, and jellyfishes) used in catching prey.
Each nematocyst of the jellyfish contains a spiral-coiled thread tipped with a toxin-bearing barb that can be ejected into the skin.

nemesis

n
/ 'neməsəs /
Gk
a formidable and usually victorious rival or opponent.
The Tigers were defeated by the first-rate pitching of their old nemesis.

nemoral

adj
/ 'nem(ə)rəl /
L
of, relating to, or inhabiting a wood or grove.
Doris collected a basketful of nemoral mushrooms.

nenuphar

n
/ 'nenyə.fär /
Skt > Per > Ar > L
water lily; especially : Egyptian lotus.
The nenuphar is a common motif in Egyptian art.

neolalia

n
/ .nēō'lālēə /
Gk
speech especially of a psychotic that includes words that are new and meaningless to the hearer.
The doctor recorded the patient's neolalia for further study.

neologism

n
/ nē'älə.jizəm /
Gk > F
a new word, usage, or expression.
Nelson encountered a neologism in almost every paragraph of the computer article.

neomenia

neon

adj
/ 'nē.än /
Gk
of, relating to, or resembling the reddish glow of neon lamps.
Even though Tim was wearing neon swimming trunks, his mom had trouble spotting him on the crowded beach.

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neonatology

n
/ .nēōnā'täləjē /
Gk + L + Gk

a branch of medicine concerned with the care, development, and diseases of newborn infants.
Jackie hopes to specialize in either pediatrics or neonatology.

neophyte

n
/ 'nēə.fīt /
Gk

a new convert; especially : a convert to the Christian faith in the early church.
In just three years St. Cyprian of Carthage went from being a neophyte to being the bishop of Carthage.

neossology

n
/ .nē.ä'säləjē /
Gk

the study of young birds.
The student of neossology was thrilled to receive a baby parrot for his birthday.

nepenthe

n
/ nə'pen(t)thē /
Gk

something capable of causing oblivion of grief and suffering.
The old man sought respite and nepenthe from bad memories.

nephalism

n
/ 'nefə.lizəm /
Gk

total abstinence from alcoholic beverages.
In Muslim countries nephalism is a way of life for many people.

nephelognosy

n
/ .nefə'lägnəsē /
Gk + Gk

scientific observation of clouds.
Satellite photos of cloud formations and movements have been a great aid in the field of nephelognosy.

nephelometer

n
/ .nefə'lämədə(r) /
G + G

an instrument for measuring cloudiness.
The nephelometer has been proved useful in detecting and measuring air pollution.

nephew

nephology

nephoscope

n
/ 'nefə.skōp /
Gk
an instrument for observing the direction of motion and velocity of clouds.
Mr. Tadeusz explained to his new assistant how the nephoscope worked.

nephrectomy

n
/ nə'frektə.mē /
Gk
the surgical removal of a kidney.
Barry's kidney was so diseased that his physician recommended a nephrectomy.

nepotism

n
/ 'nepə.tizəm /
L > It > F
favoritism shown to relatives (as by giving them positions because of their relationship rather than on their merits).
Most employees resent nepotism because it reduces motivation for advancement via hard work.

nescience

nescient

adj
/ 'nesh(ē)ənt /
L
exhibiting or characterized by lack of knowledge or awareness : ignorant.
George's nescient response to the question about the plot demonstrated that he had not read the book.

nettlesome

adj
/ 'ned'lsəm /
E + E
causing vexation : irritating.
The city's traffic situation was nettlesome to the visitors from the small town.

neuralgia

n
/ n(y)ü'raljə /
Gk
an acute paroxysmal pain radiating along the course of one or more nerves usually without demonstrable changes in the nerve structure.
Garret's neuralgia was so painful that he sought relief from a chiropractor.

neurasthenic

adj
/ .n(y)ūras'thenik /
Gk
affected with a syndrome characterized by easy fatigability, by worrying and depression, and often by headache and digestive and circulatory problems.
The neurasthenic patient complained of being bored, neglected, and depressed.

neurokyme

neurological

adj
/ .n(y)ū'räljəkəl /
Gk
of or relating to the scientific study of the nervous system.
Dr. Will is a specialist in the treatment of neurological disorders.

neuropathy

n
/ n(y)ü'räpəthē /
Gk > ISV
an abnormal and usually degenerative state of the nervous system or nerves.
Neuropathy can lead to numbness and weakness of the hands, feet, or limbs.

neurotic

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neuston

neutercane

n
/ 'n(y)üde(r).kän /
L + Taino > Sp
a subtropical cyclone that is usually less than 100 miles in diameter and that draws energy from sources common to both the hurricane and the frontal cyclone.
The weather bureau is tracking the neutercane to see if it develops into a hurricane.

neutral

neutralize

v
/ 'n(y)ütrə.līz /
L + Ecf
make chemically neither acid nor base.
Scientists used nitric acid to neutralize the magnesium hydroxide that had formed on the space capsule tape when it came in contact with seawater.

newel

newspaporial

nexus

n
/ 'neksəs /
L
a connected group or series.
A nexus of events led to the overthrow of the government and the exile of the king.

Nicaraguan

adj
/ .nikə'rägwən /
Central American geog name of or relating to the country of Nicaragua in Central America.
Much Nicaraguan coffee is exported to the United States.

nicety

n
/ 'nīsədē /
F > E
a dainty, delicate, or elegant thing or feature.
Dad considered a meal at a posh restaurant to be a nicety of good living.

niche

n
/ 'nich /
L > F
a place suitable for the capabilities or merits of a person.
Wendy felt she had found her niche at school in the student government association.

nickelodeon

n
/ .nikə'lōdēən /
G? > Sw + F > G
a theater affording a motion-picture exhibition or a variety show for an admission price of five cents.
The silent movies at the nickelodeon were usually enhanced by piano music.

nicotinism

n
/ 'nikə.tē.nizəm /
F name + cff
the effect of the excessive use of tobacco.
Patients who suffer from nicotinism exhibit lung and heart problems.

nictitant

nidicolous

adj
/ nī'dikələs /
L
living in a nest; especially : sharing the nest of another kind of animal.
Many insects are nidicolous, sharing the nests of birds who sometimes eat their larvae.

nidificate

v
/ 'nidəfə.kāt /
L
build a nest.
While recuperating, Jan watched the robin gather bits of string and small twigs to nidificate in the maple tree outside the bedroom window.

nidifugous

adj
/ nī'difyəgəs /
L
leaving the nest soon after hatching.
Because they are relatively highly developed when they hatch, ducks and chickens are nidifugous.

nidor

n
/ 'nī.dō(ə)r /
L
[Note: Alternate pronunciation has homonym: niter/nitre.] a strong smell : reek.
The nidor of the hot grease warned Della that she should lower the temperature.

nidorous

adj
/ 'nīdərəs /
L
smelling of or like burning or decaying animal matter.
The sailors were repulsed by the nidorous bilge water.

niece

niello

n
/ nē'e(,)lō /
L > It
any of several alloys of sulphur with silver, copper, or lead having a deep black color.
After cutting a design in the silver jewelry box, Phillip filled in the design with niello.

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Nietzschean

adj
/ 'nēchēən /
G name
of or relating to the German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche.
Norman characterized John's views as juvenile Nietzschean nonsense.

niggardly

adj
/ 'nigə(r)dlē /
Scand > E
characterized by a reluctance to part with money : tightfisted.
The wealthy banker was best known for his niggardly spending habits.

nightingale

n
/ 'nīt'n.gāl /
E
a thrush common in Great Britain that is noted for the sweet song of the male often heard at night during the breeding season.
Haley was awakened by a nightingale singing outside her bedroom window.

nightmare

n
/ 'nīt.ma(a)(ə)r /
E
a frightening dream accompanied by anxiety or terror.
Cara's nightmare was caused by the ghost stories told around the campfire.

nihilism

n
/ 'nīə.lizəm /
L + Ecf
a viewpoint that all traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that all existence is consequently senseless and useless.
The rock star's lyrics were criticized for advocating a bleak nihilism.

nimety

n
/ ni'miədē /
L
excess, redundancy.
Usually Caleb's writing is concise, but his most recent essay is a glowing example of nimety.

nimious

adj
/ 'nimēəs /
L
[Note: Could be confused with niveous.] excessive, extravagant.
Oscar, who could barely afford to rent a costume for the masked charity ball, found the whole thing oppressively nimious.

nineteenth

ninetieth

nippy

adj
/ 'nipē /
E
chilly, chilling.
The nippy breeze reddened Ryan's cheeks.

nisei

n
/ 'nē.sā /
Jpn
a son or daughter of Japanese immigrant parents who is born and educated in the United States.
Tomoko is the only nisei in her family; all her siblings were born in Japan.

nitidity

n
/ ni'tidədē /
L + Ecf
the quality or state of being bright, glossy, or lustrous.
The moon's nitidity helps owls find their prey.

nitrogen

n
/ 'nītrəjən /
Gk
a colorless tasteless odorless element that as a diatomic gas is relatively inert and constitutes 78 percent of the atmosphere by volume and occurs as a constituent of all living tissues.
Lightning causes the oxidation of nitrogen to nitric oxide, which is rained out as nitrate.

niveau

n
/ nē'vō /
F
[Note: Plural form is pronounced similarly.] a level (as of existence or achievement) especially in a progression.
Ben's tennis class is at the intermediate niveau.

niveous

adj
/ 'nivēəs /
L
of, relating to, or resembling snow.
The niveous landscape looked most inviting to the cross-country skiers.

nobiliary

adj
/ nō'bilē.ərē /
L > F > E + Ecf
of or relating to the nobility.
By threat of force the king quelled the nobiliary squabbles.

nobly

nocent

nociceptor

n
/ 'nōsē.septə(r) /
L
a part of the body that transmits to the central nervous system injurious or painful stimuli.
The spicy salsa activated each nociceptor on Michelle's tongue, bringing her to tears.

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nocive

adj
/ 'nōsiv /
L

harmful, injurious.
The laboratory assistant wore a mask to protect himself from nocive fumes.

noctivagant

adj
/ năk'tivəgənt /
L

going about in the night : night-wandering.
The bat, being a noctivagant mammal, has inspired many legends.

nocturnal

adj
/ năk'tərnəl /
L > F

active at night.
Some zoos have special habitats for nocturnal animals.

nocuous

nodosity

n
/ nō'däsədē /
L

a protuberance or swelling.
Ardis felt a slight nodosity on the cat's back.

nodule

noeogenesis

noisome

adj
/ 'nōisəm /
E

offensive to the senses : noxious, harmful, unwholesome, destructive.
A noisy odor emanated from the plastics factory.

nomenclature

n
/ 'nōmən.klāchə(r) /
L

the collective names given to or borne by places in a particular region or area.
The nomenclature of Boston streets confused Ling when she first arrived.

nominal

adj
/ 'nāmənəl /
L

of, relating to, or being a word that is otherwise characteristically an adjective or adverb but that takes a noun construction in a given context.

A good example of a nominal word is good in "the good die young."

nominee

n
/ .nāmə'nē /
L + Ecf

a person named or proposed for an office, duty, or position.
The president's nominee for the Supreme Court had to be approved by a Senate committee.

nomological

nonage

n
/ 'nānij /
F > E

a period of youth, childhood, or infancy.
The pieces that Mozart wrote in his nonage demonstrate an understanding of music that few adults ever attain.

nonagenarian

n
/ .nānjə'nerēən /
L + Ecf
a person who is 90 or more and less than 100 years old.
Ernestus bragged that he was the only nonagenarian at the rock concert.

nonchalance

n
/ .nānshə'län(t)s /
F

a display or air of jaunty unconcern or indifference.
Sarah reacted with nonchalance when her neighbors complained about her unruly dog.

nonchalant

noncommittal

adj
/ .nānkə'midəl /
L
taking no clear position or giving no clear indication of attitude, feeling, or point of view.
Lacy's tone was friendly but noncommittal.

nondescript

adj
/ .nändə'skript /
L
lacking distinguishing characteristics.
Because he was utterly nondescript, Virgil was the perfect infiltrator.

nonmetal

nonpareil

adj
/ .nānpə'rel /
L > F
having no equal : peerless.
Tom's lack of common sense overshadowed his nonpareil intellect.

nonplus

v
/ nān'pləs /
L
cause to be at a loss as to what to say, think, or do.
Vince's aggressive interviewing technique tends to nonplus inexperienced candidates.

nonsense

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nonuple

adj

/ 'nä.n(y)üpəl /

L > F

consisting of nine : being nine times as great or as many.

There was a nonuple increase in the rate of traffic citations after the new regulations went into effect.

noology

n

/ nō'äləjē /

Gk

the study of mind : the science of phenomena regarded as purely mental in origin.

Ahmet found that his interests in philosophy and psychology converged in the field of noology.

noontide

normocyte

nosocomial

adj

/ .nä.sə'kōmēəl /

L

originating or taking place in a hospital.

Since implementing its new disinfection protocol, the hospital has seen a 40 percent drop in nosocomial infections.

nostalgia

n

/ nə'stalj(ē)a /

Gk > L

homesickness.

Theo was overcome with nostalgia at the sight of a McDonald's in Istanbul.

nostril

n

/ 'nästrəl /

E

either of the outer openings of the nose.

In some cultures, a pierced nostril adorned with a ring is considered attractive.

nostrum

n

/ 'nästrəm /

L

a remedy or medicine of secret composition recommended by its preparer but usually lacking general repute or acceptance.

Mr. Sherwood insists that his nostrum will cure warts within a week.

notabilia

notarize

notoriety

n

/ .nō.də'riədē /

L

the condition of being an object of wide or general attention, interest, and comment for something reprehensible or scandalous.

A red convertible enhanced Thurmon's notoriety.

nougat

n

/ 'nügət /

L > Prov > F

a confection of nuts or fruit pieces in a sugar paste.

Lynn's boyfriend gave her a box of chocolates filled with hazelnut nougat.

noumenal

adj

/ 'nümənəl /

Gk

of or relating to an object of purely rational apprehension as opposed to an object of perception.

Philosophy deals with noumenal concepts, while science deals with phenomenal concepts.

novemdecillion

novercal

adj

/ nə'værkəl /

L

of, relating to, or characteristic of a stepmother.

Helene's novercal relationship with her husband's children is close and loving.

novice

n

/ 'nävəs /

L > F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] one who has entered a religious house for a trial period.

The film The Nun's Story stars Audrey Hepburn as a young novice who eventually becomes a nurse in Africa.

noxious

adj

/ 'näkshəs /

L

harmful or destructive to man or to other organisms.

Emma is studying the noxious effects of gasoline fumes.

noxiously

noyade

nuance

n

/ 'n(y)ü.än(t)s /

L > F

minute variation : delicate

gradation : subtle distinction.

The music critic took notes on every nuance of the performance.

nubbin

nubilous

adj

/ 'n(y)übələs /

L

cloudy, foggy, misty.

Trade wind clouds are constantly piling up in nubilous traffic jams.

nuchal

adj

/ 'n(y)ükəl /

Ar > L + Ecf

of or relating to the nape, the back part of the neck.

Midge's new necklace gave her a nuchal rash.

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nuciform

adj
/ 'n(y)üsəförm /

L
like a nut in shape.
Preston gave Anna a box of nuciform chocolate candies.

nuclear

nugacious

adj
/ n(y)ü'gāshəs /

L
trifling, trivial.
Arguments about who sits in the front seat seem nugacious to many adults.

nugacity

nugatory

adj
/ 'n(y)ügə'tōrē /

L
having little or no consequence : worthless.
The prize Jeff won at the carnival was just a nugatory plastic trinket.

nugget

n
/ 'nəgət /
unknown
a lump; especially : a lump of gold.
Adrian kept a gold nugget as a good-luck charm.

nuisance

n
/ 'n(y)üs'n(t)s /
L > F > Ar > E
something that is disagreeable or troublesome : annoyance.
The barking dogs in Jeff's backyard were a nuisance he could not ignore.

nullibicity

n
/ .nələ'bisədē /
L + Ecf
the quality or state of being nowhere.
Natalie accused the state of putting freedom and basic rights into nullibicity.

nullification

n
/ .nələfə'kāshən /
L
the act of depriving of legal or binding force or validity.
Louis XIV's accession to the throne was ushered in by the nullification of his father's will.

nullifidian

n
/ .nələ'fidēən /
L
a person of no faith or religion.
The nullifidian decided to start a magazine devoted to the theory and practice of secular humanism.

numb

numerology

numinous

adj
/ 'n(y)ümənəs /
L + Ecf
dedicated to or hallowed by association with a deity : sacred.
A soft light seemed to glow from the numinous vessel on the altar.

numismatist

n
/ n(y)ü'mizmədəst /
L
a specialist in the study of coins : a coin collector.
When Emery wanted to know the value of a coin, he showed it to his neighbor, who was a numismatist.

nummary

numnah

nunchaku

n
/ nün'chäk(ü) /
Jpn dialect
a weapon of Japanese origin made of two hardwood sticks joined at their ends by a short length of rawhide, cord, or chain.
Eli insists that a nunchaku with a Bruce Lee image would make his martial arts paraphernalia complete.

nuncio

n
/ 'nən(t)sēō /
L
a top-ranking diplomatic envoy of the pope accredited to a civil government.
The papal nuncio worked with the governor's office to prepare for the pope's tour of the region.

nuncupation

n
/ .nəŋkyə'pāshən /
L
an oral will.
While the sailor was ill aboard ship, he made a nuncupation in which he bequeathed his property to his mother.

nuncupative

adj
/ 'nəŋkyə'pādɪv /
L
stated verbally : oral—used chiefly of a will.
The terms of Grandpa's nuncupative will were not contested by the family.

nuptiality

n
/ .nəpshē'alədē /
L
the marriage rate.
Nuptiality usually increases dramatically in June.

nurture

nurturer

nutrient

nutrition

nutritiously

adv
/ n(y)ü'trishəslē /
L + Ecf
in a manner that promotes growth and development.
Judging from the kinds of foods that George likes, it is not going to be easy to get him to eat nutritiously.

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nyala

n
/ 'nyälə /
Tsonga&Venda
an antelope of southeastern Africa with vertical white stripes on the sides of the body and with shaggy hair along the male underside.
The nyala thrives in the heaths and forests of the Ethiopian highlands.

nyctalopia

n
/ .niktə'löpēə /
Gk
a defect of vision characterized by reduced visual capacity in faint light or at night.
Nyctalopia may be corrected by vitamin therapy.

nymph

nystagmus

n
/ nə'stagməs /
Gk
a rapid involuntary oscillation of the eyeballs occurring normally with dizziness during and after bodily rotation or abnormally after injuries.
Bart suffered from nystagmus for several days following the boxing match.

oakenshaw

oakum

oarlock

oasis

n
/ ɔ'āsəz /
Hamitic? > Gk > L
a small isolated fertile area that is surrounded by general barrenness and typically marked by trees or other greenery and that has a water supply.
The caravan rested for two days at the oasis.

obdurate

adj
/ 'äbd(y)ərət /
L
resistant to persuasion or softening influences : unyielding.
Fritz is maintaining an obdurate opposition to the new highway bypass.

obedient

adj
/ ɔ'bēdēənt /
L > F > E
submissive to the restraint, control, or command of authority.
The toddler was not very obedient and even seemed to enjoy being defiant.

obeisance

n
/ ɔ'bāsⁿn(t)s /
L > F > E
an attitude of respect : deference, homage.
Josh demonstrated his obeisance for the famous professor by writing down her every word.

obeisant

adj
/ ɔ'bāsⁿnt /
F
servile, obsequious.
By the third course, the waiter's obeisant behavior was starting to get on Tara's nerves.

obelisk

n
/ 'äbəlisk /
Gk
an upright four-sided monolithic pillar that tapers as it rises and terminates in a pyramid.
The Washington Monument is a world-famous obelisk.

obese

obesity

obfuscate

obfuscatory

adj
/ äb'fəskə.tōrē /
L
tending to make difficult of comprehension or interpretation.
Oleg found the obfuscatory language in his apartment lease infuriating.

obituary

objective

n
/ əb'jektiv /
L
a lens or system of lenses that forms an image of the object in the focal plane of an eyepiece (as in a telescope).
The light-gathering power of a telescope is a function of the diameter of its objective.

objicient

n
/ əb'jishənt /
L
one who opposes something with words or argument.
The bill became a law despite the protests of a very influential objicient.

objurgation

objurgatory

adj
/ əb'jərgə.tōrē /
L
expressing sharp reprimand.
The mayor sent an objurgatory letter to the negligent department head.

obligation

n
/ .äblə'gāshən /
L
something that one is bound to do : an imperative duty.
Because of Carra's past assistance, Craig felt an obligation to return the favor.

obligatory

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oblique

adj
/ ə'blēk /
L

neither perpendicular nor parallel :
having a slanting direction or
position.

*All triangles have at least one
oblique side.*

obliquity

n
/ ə'blikwədə /
E > F > L + Ecf

the angle between the planes of
Earth's equator and orbit.

*Seasonal changes in temperature
are due to the obliquity of Earth's
orbital path.*

obliterative

oblivion

obliviscence

n
/ əblə'visən(t)s /
L

[Note: Could be confused with
obliviscence.] forgetfulness.

*Serious obliviscence in older
people may be a symptom of
Alzheimer's disease.*

obloquy

n
/ 'äbləkwē /
L

a strongly and often intemperately
condemnatory utterance.

*Mr. Willett recited the names of the
pranksters with uncharacteristic
obloquy.*

obmutescence

n
/ äbmyə'tesən(t)s /
L

a becoming or keeping silent.

*To ensure the press's obmutescence
regarding the case, the judge
issued a gag order.*

obnounce

obreptitious

adj
/ äbrep'tishəs /
L

done or obtained by trickery or by
concealing the truth.

*The undercover agent passed the
obreptitious information to his
superiors.*

obrogate

obsecration

n
/ äbsə'krāshən /
L

a supplicatory prayer mentioning in
its appeal things or events held to
be sacred.

*"Through thy victory over death, O
Lord, deliver us" is an obsecration.*

obsequious

adj
/ əb'sēkwēəs /
L > E

meanly or servilely attentive.

*Marshall tends to be obsequious
toward Mrs. Kirby.*

obsessive

obsolescence

obsolescent

adj
/ äbsə'lesənt /
L

falling into disuse especially as
unable to compete with something
more recent.

*Many linguists believe that the
relative pronoun whom is
obsolescent except when it follows
a preposition.*

obsolete

obstacle

n
/ 'äbz(,)tikəl /
L

something that hinders progress :
hindrance.

*Carrie believes there is no obstacle
she cannot overcome in her quest
to become an Olympian.*

obstetrician

n
/ äbz'te'trishən /
L

a physician or veterinarian
specializing in birth and its
antecedents and sequels.

*The obstetrician often relied more
on instincts and old-fashioned
psychology than he did on his
medical expertise.*

obstetrics

obstinate

adj
/ 'äbz'tənət /
L

pertinaciously adhering to an
opinion, purpose, or course.

*Franklin has missed at least two
promotions because he is so
obstinate about doing things his
own way.*

obstreperous

adj
/ əbz'trep(ə)rəs /
L

stubbornly defiant : resisting
control or restraint often with a
show of noisy disorder.

*The noisy diner was asked to leave
but became obstreperous and had
to be escorted out of the restaurant.*

obtenebrate

v
/ äb'tenəbrāt /
L

darken by or as if by shadowing.

*As the storm approaches, dark
clouds obtenebrate the valley.*

obtrusive

obtundent

adj
/ äb'təndənt /
L

blunting irritation or lessening pain.

*Aspirin is used for its obtundent as
well as its antipyretic qualities.*

obviate

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obvious

adj
/ ˈäbvēəs /
L

readily and easily perceived by the sensibilities or mind.

"We're moving!" Harold shouted, which was a fact that had already become obvious to everyone.

ocarina

n
/ ˌäkä'rēnə /
L > It

a simple wind instrument or toy of the flute class having a mouthpiece and fingerholes.

Professor Miller unearthed a four-hole ocarina used by the ancient Mayas.

occasion

occasionally

adv
/ ə'kāzhənˈlē /
L

now and then : here and there.

The Spelling Bee replied, "Years ago I was just an ordinary bee minding my own business, smelling flowers all day, and occasionally picking up part-time work in people's bonnets."

occipital

adj
/ äk'sipədˈl /
L

of or relating to the back part of the head of a vertebrate or an insect.

In the accident Mr. Stein's occipital bone was fractured.

occision

n
/ äk'sizhən /
L

an act or instance of slaughtering.

Ecologists are protesting the wholesale occision of sea turtles within national boundaries.

occlude

occlusion

n
/ ə'klüzhən /
L

the front formed by a cold front overtaking a warm front and lifting the warm air above Earth's surface.

As the advancing cold air met the warm front, a cold occlusion developed that caused the temperature to drop.

occult

occultation

n
/ ä(ɪ)kəl'tāshən /
L > E

the shutting off of the light of a celestial body by the intervention of some other celestial body.

A solar eclipse is the occultation of the Sun by the Moon.

occurrence

occurring

ocellus

n
/ ɔ'seləs /
L

one of usually three simple eyes in an insect located in a triangle between the compound eyes.

A single ocellus can do no more than detect light, but more than one grouped together can produce an image of the surrounding area.

ocelot

n
/ ˈɔsəlät /
Nahuatl > F

a medium-sized American wildcat ranging from Texas to Patagonia and having a tawny yellow or grayish coat that is dotted and striped with black.

The ocelot appears in Aztec stone carvings.

ochlocratic

adj
/ ˌäklə'kradik /
Gk

of or relating to mob rule.

Pure ochlocratic government would pay no heed to minority voices.

ochlophobia

n
/ ˌäklə'fōbēə /
Gk

morbid fear of crowds.

Alice never attended rock concerts because of her ochlophobia.

ochlrophobist

octane

octave

n
/ ˈäktəv /
L > E

a musical interval embracing eight diatonic degrees.

Tricia explained the concept of an octave to her music class at school.

octavo

octogenarian

octopus

oculauditory

oculogyric

adj
/ ˌäkyəlō'jirik /
L + Gk > L

relating to or involving circular movements of the eyeballs.

The silent movie comedian specialized in oculogyric close-ups.

oculus

n
/ ˈäkyələs /
L

an architectural part resembling or suggestive of an eye.

In the west end of Norman churches there is often an oculus.

oddment

odious

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odium

odograph

n
/ ˈɒd.ə.graf /

Gk
an instrument for automatically plotting the course and distance traveled by a vehicle.
Now that Carlos has a car equipped with a Global Positioning System receiver, an odograph is the logical next step.

odontoloxia

n
/ ɒ.dəntəˈlɒksēə /

Gk
irregularity of the teeth.
Odontoloxia can usually be corrected with braces.

odyssey

n
/ ˈɒd.əsē /

Gk
a long wandering or series of adventurous journeys.
When he talks about his odyssey, André means the summer he spent working his way across Europe.

oeuvre

n
/ ˈɔv(r) /
L > F

a substantial body of work constituting the lifework of a writer, an artist, or a composer.
The poet won the award not for any particular work, but for his oeuvre.

officiousness

ogive

n
/ ˈɒ.jɪv /
L? > F? > E

a diagonal arch or rib across a Gothic vault.
The middle of a Gothic vault, where each ogive cuts across the others, is called the key and is often in the form of a rose.

ogle

ogre

n
/ ˈɒɡə(r) /
L > F

a hideous giant represented in fairy tales and folklore as feeding on human beings : monster.
Jason wrote a tale about an ogre who lived under a bridge and feasted on every tenth person who crossed.

ohm

n
/ ˈɒm /

G name
[has homonyms: aum, om] the practical meter-kilogram-second unit of electric resistance that is equal to the resistance of a circuit in which a potential difference of 1 volt produces a current of 1 ampere.
Michael was confused by the Greek symbol for omega in his textbook until he realized that it was the abbreviation for an ohm.

oilcloth

n
/ ˈɔɪl.klɒθ /
Gk > L > F > E + E
cotton cloth coated with a dull or glossy finish made of oil, clay, and colored pigment to make the cloth waterproof.
A kitchen stove, a table covered with oilcloth and two chairs could be seen from the doorway.

ointment

okapi

n
/ ɒˈkæpē /
African name
an African animal that is related to the giraffe but has a relatively short neck and solid reddish coat with black and cream rings on its legs.
In Zaire the meat of the okapi is a favorite food of the Pygmies.

oleaginous

adj
/ ɒlɪˈəjənəs /
Gk > L > F
characterized by smooth courtousness or sickly sentimentality.
Grandpa was too smart to be taken in by oleaginous salesmen.

oleander

n
/ ˈɒlɪ.ə.ndə(r) /
L
an ornamental evergreen shrub that has narrow leaves and clusters of fragrant white to red flowers.
The sweet aroma of the oleander wafted through the window.

oleiculture

olericulture

n
/ ˈɒlərəkəlchə(r) /
L + Ecf + L
a branch of horticulture that deals with the production, storage, processing, and marketing of vegetables.
As a college subject, olericulture is generally divided into market gardening and truck farming.

olfactory

adj
/ ɒlˈfakt(ə)rē /
L
of, relating to, or connected with the sense of smell.
Humans have relatively weak olfactory abilities compared to many other animals.

oligarchic

adj
/ ɒləˈɡærkɪk /
Gk
of, relating to, characteristic of, or supporting a group or organization that is controlled by a privileged few.
A society dominated by large-scale oligarchic organizations eventually develops an oligarchic political regime.

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oligarchy

n
/ 'älə.gärkē /
Gk + Gk
government by the few.
Over the years, the tiny state's government eroded from a democracy to an oligarchy.

oligophrenia

n
/ .äləgō'frēnēə /
Gk
mental deficiency.
Although afflicted with oligophrenia, Cynthia was capable of taking care of herself in her home.

ombrometer

n
/ äm'brämədə(r) /
Gk + Gk
an instrument for measuring the quantity of precipitation that falls at a given place and time.
Precipitation in the area was studied by collecting data from radar scans and an ombrometer.

ombrophilous

adj
/ äm'bräfələs /
Gk
capable of withstanding or thriving in the presence of much rain.
After three days of rain, Kathy hoped that her garden plants were ombrophilous.

ombrophobous

adj
/ äm'bräfəbəs /
Gk
incapable of withstanding long-continued rain.
Ombrophobous plants would perish in a Seattle garden.

ombudsman

n
/ 'äm.büdzmən /
Sw
[Note: Plural form is pronounced identically.] one that investigates complaints (as from students or customers), reports findings, and helps to achieve equitable settlements.
The college hired a special ombudsman to investigate widespread charges of unfair grading practices.

omega

ominous

adj
/ 'ämənəs /
L
indicative of future misfortune or calamity : causing anxiety and fear.
For an instant there was an ominous stillness, quieter and more silent than ever before, as if even the air was holding its breath.

omissible

omission

n
/ ō'mishən /
L
the act of failing to insert, include, or name.
Katie refused to believe that Joe's omission of her name on the guest list was accidental.

omitted

v
/ ō'midəd /
L
left out.
Harry Nebuchadnezzar Schwartz usually omitted his middle name when he filled out forms.

omnibus

adj
/ 'äm'nə.bəs /
L
of, relating to, or providing for many things or classes at once : containing or including many items.
Ursula purchased an omnibus edition of Shakespeare's works, which was bound in leather.

omnifarious

adj
/ .äm'nə'fa(a)rēəs /
L
of all varieties, forms, or kinds.
The natural history museum has an omnifarious collection of animal bones.

omnigenous

omnilegent

adj
/ äm'niləjənt /
L
reading or having read everything : characterized by encyclopedic reading.
The omnilegent student was a valued member of the academic team.

omnipotence

n
/ äm'nipədən(t)s /
L
almighty or unlimited power.
With an attitude of omnipotence, the government presumed that it could take any land it wanted.

omnipotent

omniscience

omniscient

adj
/ äm'nishənt /
L
having infinite awareness, understanding, and insight : knowing all things.
In most monotheistic religions, God is understood to be both omniscient and all-powerful.

omnivorous

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onager

n
/ ˈənəjə(r) /
Gk > L > E
an Asian wild ass that usually has a broad dorsal stripe.
Although the onager looks like a donkey, it runs as swiftly as a horse.

oncogeny

n
/ ˈŋkəjənē /
Gk > L
the process of tumor formation.
Certain plant extracts have been shown to inhibit oncogeny.

oncology

n
/ ˈŋkələjē /
Gk
the study of tumors.
Ed is focusing on oncology in his medical studies and is particularly interested in pancreatic cancer.

oneiric

onerous

adj
/ ˈənərəs /
L > F > E
that involves, imposes, or constitutes much oppressive or irksome work, effort, difficulty, or responsibility.
Ron grudgingly completed the onerous task of cutting and stacking the firewood.

oniomania

onion

onionskin

onlooker

onomastics

n pl
/ ˈänəˈmastiks /
Gk
the science or study of the origins and forms of proper names of persons or places.
A book on onomastics explained that the name Donald is a Scottish Gaelic word meaning “world ruler.”

onomatope

n
/ ˈänəməˌtōp /
Gk
a word formed in imitation of natural sounds.
Tim found the onomatope kaboom in today’s comic strip.

onomatopoeia

onslaught

n
/ ˈön.slót /
D > E
an especially fierce attack.
The Britons were unable to withstand the onslaught of the Saxons.

ontogeny

n
/ ˈänˈtəjənē /
Gk + Gk
the biological development or course of development of an individual organism.
The role of brain ontogeny in Alzheimer’s disease requires that an autopsy be performed to obtain a definitive diagnosis.

onus

n
/ ˈönəs /
L
burden.
Caring for her six children was an onus for the young widow.

onychosis

n
/ ˈänəˈkōsəs /
Gk
[has near homonym: onchoses] a disease of the nails.
Even though he had only a mild onychosis, Eric was not allowed to work in the lab.

onyx

adj
/ ˈäniks /
Gk
of the color jet black.
The teacher told the schoolchildren that space looks onyx from the shuttle.

oometer

n
/ ˈōˈämədə(r) /
Gk + Gk
an instrument for measuring eggs.
Mr. Horton uses an oometer to determine which eggs go in which cartons.

oophagous

adj
/ ˈōˈäfəgəs /
Gk
living or feeding on eggs—used of insects or reptiles.
Oophagous insects help control the bug population.

opacity

n
/ ˈōˈpasədə /
L > F
the quality or state of a body that renders it impervious to the rays of light : lack of transparency or translucency.
The envelope’s opacity made it impossible for Garnet to see if there was a check inside.

opah

opalescence

n
/ ˈöpəˈlesˈn(t)s /
Skt > L + Lcf
the quality or state of reflecting an iridescent light.
The moonstone’s opalescence gave it a pearly luster.

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opalescent

opaque

adj

/ ɒ'pāk /

L

impervious to the rays of visible light : not transparent or translucent.

The Dornans hung an opaque window shade in their son's nursery.

opeidoscope

n

/ ɒ'pīdə.skōp /

Gk

an instrument using light rays, a flexible membrane, and a mirror to exhibit the vibratory motions caused by sounds.

Mr. Peterson used a simple opeidoscope to compare the sounds of musical instruments.

operatable

adj

/ 'äpə.rādəbəl /

L + Ecff

fit, possible, or desirable to use.

Renata hoped that her car would be operatable after the collision.

operettist

ophelimity

ophicleide

ophiolatry

n

/ .äfē'älətrē /

Gk

the worship of or the attribution of divine or sacred nature to snakes.

Before the rise of monotheism, ophiolatry in one form or another was nearly universal among ancient peoples.

ophthalmic

ophthalmologist

n

/ .äf.thäl'mäləjəst /

Gk

a physician that specializes in the study and treatment of defects and diseases of the eye.

Monica goes to the ophthalmologist once a year because she has a family history of glaucoma.

ophthalmology

opiate

opine

v

/ ɒ'pīn /

L > F

state as an opinion.

There are some things humans think they know, and some that they merely opine.

opodeldoc

opossum

n

/ ə'päsəm /

Algonquian

[Note: Could be confused with possum.] an omnivorous largely nocturnal and arboreal mammal that has a prehensile tail and an abdominal pouch to which the young are transferred at birth.

Arnold caught the opossum eating the cat's food.

oppidan

adj

/ 'äpədən /

L

of or relating to a town or to town as opposed to country.

The painter sold his oppidan scenes of market day on the sidewalk, earning just enough to live on.

opportune

adj

/ .äpə(r)'tün /

L > F > E

fit, suitable, or convenient for a given purpose.

We could not have chosen a more opportune spot for a picnic than the shore of Lake Walcott.

opportuneness

opposite

n

/ 'äpəzət /

L

the person occupying the position across from one's own in square dancing.

Daniel's opposite in the square dance is a better dancer than he.

opposition

n

/ .äpə'zishən /

L

a configuration in which one celestial body is opposite another in the sky.

The Moon, when full, is said to be in opposition to the Sun.

opprobrious

adj

/ ə'prōbrēəs /

L > F > E

conveying or intending to convey disgrace.

The principal denounced the vandals in opprobrious terms.

opprobrium

oppugn

v

/ ə'pyün /

L

challenge the accuracy, propriety, probity, or other quality of.

The newspaper had a tendency to oppugn the actions of Congress in its editorials.

optimistic

adj

/ .äptə'mistik /

L > F + Ecff

anticipating the best.

Jackie remained optimistic about winning the national spelling bee.

option

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

opulent

adj
/ 'ɒpyələnt /
L

exhibiting or characterized by wealth or affluence.

Leather wall covering is one feature of the room's opulent décor.

opusculum

n
/ ɒ'pəskyələm /
L

a minor work (as of literature).
Although critics regarded Jerome's first novel as an opusculum, it has steadily risen on the best-seller lists.

oracle

orally

orator

n
/ 'ɒrədə(r) /
L
one distinguished for skill and power in public speaking.
Daniel Webster was an eminent 19th-century orator.

orbital

n
/ 'ɒ(r)bədəl /
L
a solution of the Schrödinger wave equation describing a possible mode of motion of a single electron in an atom or molecule.
There is theoretically no outer limit to the orbital of an electron.

orchard

n
/ 'ɒrchəd /
L + E
a plantation or enclosure containing fruit trees, nut-bearing trees, or sugar maples.
In the orchard were bare fruit trees growing in the winter-browned grass.

orchestra

n
/ 'ɒ(r)kəstrə /
Gk
a large group of players of musical instruments including typically strings, woodwinds, brasses, and percussion organized especially for performing one of the larger forms of concert music or for accompanying an oratorio or other dramatic work.
The orchestra dazzled the audience with its performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

orchid

n
/ 'ɒrkəd /
Gk > L
a distinctive and often brightly colored tropical flower with three petals.
Many varieties of the orchid can be found in Hawaii.

orchidaceous

adj
/ ɒrkə'dəʃəs /
Gk > L + Ecf
expressing or characterized by a showy or ostentatious quality.
Today's journalists generally eschew orchidaceous writing.

ordeal

ordination

n
/ ɒ(r)də'nāʃən /
L
the act or state of being admitted into the Christian ministry.
At her ordination Heather delivered a sermon on the 23rd Psalm.

ordnance

n
/ 'ɒrdnən(t)s /
F
[has homonym and near homonym: ordinance and ordonnance] military supplies including weapons, ammunition, and combat vehicles.
As quartermaster, Sergeant Russo was responsible for all of the ordnance on the base.

orfeverie

n
/ ɒrfevrə'rē /
F
goldsmith's or jeweler's work : jewelry.
Dave carefully looked over the orfeverie, trying to decide what his wife would like for her birthday.

organ

oriel

n
/ 'ɒrēəl /
L? > F > E
[has homonym and near homonym: oriole and aureole] a large bay window of semihexagonal or semisquare plan projecting from the face of a wall and supported by a corbel or bracket.
Megan set her chair in the pleasantly sunny oriel and sat down to read.

orifice

n
/ 'ɒrəfəs /
L > F
the mouth or opening of something.
Each sprinkler head had an orifice of one-half inch.

oriflamme

origami

n
/ ɒrə'gāmē /
Jpn
the art or process of Japanese paper folding.
After only a few hours of studying origami, Veronica was creating paper cranes by the dozen.

original

oriole

orison

n
/ 'ɒrəsən /
L > F > E
prayer.
The pastor designated time in the service for a silent orison for the hostages.

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ormolu

n
/ 'ò(r)mə.lü /
F

brass made to imitate gold and used in mounts for furniture and for other decorative purposes.

The large mirror's frame was decorated with ormolu.

ornithopter

ornithotomy

n
/ ò(r)nə'thäd-əmē /
Gk

the anatomy or dissection of birds.

Through ornithotomy Derrick learned how a bird's bones are interconnected.

orofacial

adj
/ òrə'fāshəl /
L

of or relating to the mouth and face.

Roseanne underwent plastic surgery to correct orofacial abnormalities.

orogeny

n
/ ò'räjənē /
Gk

the process of mountain making especially by folding of Earth's crust.

Mrs. Scott was demonstrating orogeny when she used a piece of carpet to show how mountains form.

orotund

adj
/ 'òrə.tənd /
L

unduly full and strong in delivery or style : pompous, bombastic.

The more nervous Jeff gets while giving a speech, the more orotund his delivery becomes.

orphan

n
/ 'òrfən /
Gk > L

a child without parents.

Oliver Twist is a famous fictional orphan.

orphanage

orpiment

n
/ 'ò(r)pə.mənt /
L > F > E

an orange to yellow mineral consisting of arsenic trisulfide and used in fireworks and as a pigment.
Orpiment is used to produce yellow pigment for painting.

orrery

n
/ 'òrərē /
E name

an apparatus that illustrates the relative positions and motions of bodies in the solar system.
Sheila fashioned a crude orrery out of coat hangers and Styrofoam.

orthodox

adj
/ 'ò(r)thə.däks /
Gk + Gk

marked by conformity to doctrines or practices especially in religion that are held as right or true by some authority, standard, or tradition.

In orthodox Jewish synagogues, men and women are seated separately.

orthoepy

n
/ 'ò(r)thə.wepē /
Gk > L

the study of the pronunciation of a language.
Differences between the English spoken in the United States and that spoken in England is a topic of orthoepy familiar to many linguists.

orthogonal

orthographize

oryx

n
/ 'òriks /
Gk > L

any of a genus of large heavily built African and Arabian antelopes that have a light-colored coat with dark conspicuous markings especially on the face.
The adaptations of the Arabian oryx to the desert include its predominantly white coat to reflect heat and its splayed hooves for walking on sand.

oscillating

oscillation

n
/ 'äsə'lāshən /
L

a swinging or moving backward and forward like a pendulum.
Engineers specified that slots be constructed in the deck of the bridge to reduce oscillation.

oscillatory

adj
/ 'äsələ.tōrē /
L

characterized by the action of swinging or moving backward and forward like a pendulum.
The oscillatory motion of the airplane caused Deborah to become airsick.

oscilloscope

n
/ ə'silə.skōp /
L + Gk > L

an instrument in which the variations in a fluctuating electrical quantity appear as a visible wave form on the fluorescent screen of a cathode-ray tube.
The technician used an oscilloscope to help him pinpoint the problem.

oscitation

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

osculatory

adj

/ 'äskyələ.tōrē /

L

of, relating to, or characterized by kissing.

Julie had no idea Shaun was talking about kissing when he asked if she would help him refine his osculatory skill.

osmosis

n

/ äz'mōsəs /

Gk

the flow or diffusion that takes place through a semipermeable membrane typically separating either a solvent and a solution or a dilute solution and a concentrated solution.

An experiment using red dye gave a dramatic demonstration of osmosis.

osprey

n

/ 'äsprē /

L > F > E

a large hawk that is a dark brown color above and mostly pure white below and feeds on fish that it captures by hovering and diving. *Because of its preferred diet, the osprey is also called a "fish hawk."*

ossicle

n

/ 'äsəkəl /

L

any of certain small bones.

The sports doctor told Nate that an ossicle in his left ear had been damaged by the blow from his opponent.

ossuary

ostensible

adj

/ ä'sten(t)səbəl /

L

professing genuineness and sincerity but often concealing the real aspects behind a plausible facade.

Mr. Elton's ostensible reason for stopping by was to ask whether Mr. Woodhouse's party could be made up in the evening without him.

ostentatious

adj

/ ästən'tāshəs /

L

for the purpose of attracting attention : pretentious.

Mrs. Howell's purchase of a diamond-studded collar for her poodle was one of her many ostentatious extravagances.

ostentatiously

osteoclasia

osteoporosis

n

/ ästēōpə'rōsəs /

Gk + L

a condition characterized by decrease in bone mass with decreased density and enlargement of bone spaces producing porosity and fragility.

Diane's doctor recommended increasing her calcium intake to prevent osteoporosis.

ostracism

ostracize

ostrich

otacoustic

adj

/ ōdə'küstik /

Gk

assisting the sense of hearing.

Mrs. Jordan fashioned a piece of cardboard into an otacoustic horn.

otalgia

n

/ ō'talj(ē)ə /

Gk

pain in the ear : earache.

Otalgia is more common in children than in adults.

otherwise

adv

/ 'əðə(r).wīz /

E

in a different way or manner : differently.

Bret told us to always back up our work; otherwise, we would be sorry.

otitis

n

/ ō'tīdās /

Gk > L

inflammation of the ear.

Jeff's earache was diagnosed as a symptom of otitis of the middle ear.

otolaryngology

n

/ ōdə.larən'gäləjē /

G

a branch of medicine that deals with the ear, nose, and throat and their disorders and diseases.

When Hazel's sore throat persisted, her family physician recommended an appointment with a specialist in otolaryngology.

otomycosis

n

/ ōdə.mī'kōsəs /

Gk

disease of the ear produced by the growth of fungi in the external auditory canal.

Jane's otomycosis proved resistant to treatment.

otter

n

/ 'ädə(r) /

E

[has homonym: odder] any of various largely aquatic carnivorous mammals that are related to the weasels and minks and usually have webbed and clawed feet and dark brown fur.

The sea otter places a stone on its chest and uses it as an anvil on which to open mussels and clams.

ottoman

n

/ 'ädəmən /

Turk name > It > F

an overstuffed footstool.

Andrew spilled orange juice all over the ottoman.

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oubliette

n
/ ˌüblē'et /
L > F
a dungeon with an opening only at the top and often a concealed pit below the floor.
Every medieval French castle Karen visited on the tour had an oubliette.

ourselves

outlet

outrageous

adj
/ ˌaʊt'rājəs /
F
extravagant, fantastic.
The sophomores created an outrageous float for the homecoming parade.

ouzo

ovation

overbearance

overcast

adj
/ ˈovə(r).kast /
E
clouded over.
On a gloomy overcast muggy Minnesota summer day, the circus came to town.

overcompensate

override

overriding

overt

overweening

adj
/ ˌovə(r)'wēniŋ /
E
unduly confident.
Elaine's overweening pretensions fell flat when it was revealed that she could not even speak French.

oviparous

adj
/ ˈoʊvɪpərəs /
L
producing eggs that develop and hatch outside the maternal body.
The platypus is an oviparous mammal.

ovoid

oxbow

oxen

oxidation

oximeter

oxlip

oxydactyl

adj
/ ˌäksə'daktl /
Gk + Gk
having slender tapered digits.
The glove was made for a delicate, oxydactyl hand.

oxygen

n
/ ˈäksəjən /
Gk > F
a nonmetallic element that is normally a colorless odorless tasteless nonflammable gas, is the most abundant of the elements on Earth, and occurs in air and water, in most common rocks and minerals, and in a great variety of organic compounds.
Oxygen is the second most abundant element in Earth's atmosphere.

oxylophyte

n
/ äk'silə.fīt /
Gk
a plant that prefers or is restricted to an acid soil.
Sphagnum moss, which grows in bogs, is a common oxylophyte.

oxymoron

n
/ ˌäksə'mōr.ən /
Gk
a combination for epigrammatic effect of contradictory or incongruous words.
Dexter feels that the phrase jumbo shrimp is an oxymoron.

oyez

v
/ ˈō'yā /
F
—used by criers of courts as a command to secure silence and attention before a proclamation.
“Oyez, oyez, oyez!” yelled the crier as the judge entered the courtroom.

oyster

n
/ ˈöistə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E
a marine bivalve mollusk found along seacoasts or in the mouths of rivers.
Dad would not eat an oyster.

ozonic

ozonosphere

pabulum

n
/ ˈpabyələm /
L
rudimentary or sentimental writing.
The famous poet's early works were pure pabulum.

pachinko

n
/ pə'chɪŋ(ɪ)kō /
Jpn
a Japanese gambling device resembling a pinball machine but with automatic payoff as in a slot machine.
Since the 1950s, playing pachinko has been a favorite pastime among the youth of Japan.

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pachyderm

n
/ 'pakədɜrm /
Gk > F
one of a group of thick-skinned mammals (as an elephant or rhinoceros).
When the circus came to town, it usually featured at least one pachyderm.

pacificator

pacifist

pacifistically

adv
/ .pasə'fistək(ə)lē /
L > F > E
in a manner characterized by opposition to violence as a means of settling disputes.
Randall approached his angry neighbor pacifistically.

paddock

padishah

n
/ 'pādəshā /
Per
a powerful important personage : mogul.
George Lucas is a padishah of motion picture epics.

paella

n
/ pə'elə /
L > F > Catal
a saffron-flavored stew containing rice, chicken, seafood, and various vegetables.
Paella can be an expensive dish to prepare because saffron threads are so costly.

pagan

adj
/ 'pāgən /
L
of, relating to, or having the characteristics of followers of a polytheistic religion (as in ancient Rome).
New Age spirituality has given rise to a number of organized pagan groups.

pageant

pageanteer

n
/ .pajən'ti(ə)r /
L + EcF
an actor or other performer in a spectacle.
The pageanteer startled Benji by leaping onto the table.

pageantry

n
/ 'pājəntre /
L > E
colorful, rich, or splendid display.
Rachel could not wait to see the pageantry of the medieval festival.

pagination

pagoda

n
/ pə'gōdə /
Skt > Pg
a Far Eastern structure resembling a tower that is often richly decorated and typically has projecting roofs that curve upward between each story and that is erected usually as a temple or memorial.
The tour guide claimed that 1000 pounds of gold went into the decoration of the ornate pagoda.

paisley

adj
/ 'pāzlē /
Scottish geog name
printed with an elaborate design consisting typically of curved abstract figures.
Mrs. Whatsit untied a blue and green paisley scarf.

pajamas

n
/ pə'jäməz /
Hindi
loose clothing designed for sleeping and relaxation.
Danielle received some flannel pajamas for Christmas.

palace

paladin

n
/ 'paləd'n /
L > It > F
a champion of a medieval prince : a legendary hero.
A medieval prince could be challenged to a duel, but his paladin would do the actual fighting.

palatable

adj
/ 'palədəbəl /
Etruscan? > L > E + EcF
agreeable to the palate or taste : savory.
Mom poured cheese over the spinach to make it more palatable.

palatial

palatially

adv
/ pə'lāshəlē /
L + EcFf
in a manner suitable for a palace.
The new hotel was palatially surrounded by high stone walls with elaborate bronze gates.

palatinate

n
/ pə'lat'nət /
L
the province or territory of a European nobleman.
Prince Vlad bowed, saying "I offer you the hospitality of my palatinate."

palaver

n
/ pə'lavə(r) /
Gk > L > Pg
profuse, idle, or worthless talk : chatter.
Dean left when the seminar discussion degenerated into palaver.

palazzo

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

paleontology

n
/ ˌpālɛ.ən'täləjē /
Gk > F

a science that deals with the life of past geological periods, is based on the study of fossil remains of plants and animals, and gives information especially about the chronology of the history of Earth.

Theo traces his interest in paleontology back to his discovery of fossils in his yard when he was a young boy.

palilalia

n
/ ˌpələ'lālɛə /
Gk > L

a speech defect marked by abnormal repetition of syllables, words, or phrases.

Palilalia is a symptom of some mental disorders.

palimpsest

n
/ ˌpələm(p).sɛst /
Gk

a parchment, tablet, or other portion of writing material that has been used twice or three times after the earlier writing has been erased.

Special equipment will help determine whether the old parchment Colin found is a palimpsest.

palindrome

n
/ ˌpələn.drəm /
Gk

a word, verse, or sentence that reads the same backward or forward.

Ada struggled to contrive a palindrome centered around her own name.

palladium

n
/ pə'lādēəm /
Gk > L

something that affords effectual protection or security.

Many consider the Second Amendment to be the palladium of democracy.

pallbearer

n
/ ˈpɒl.bərə(r) /
L > E+E

an attendant at a funeral who helps carry the coffin.

Each pallbearer wore a carnation in his lapel.

pallescent

pallesthesia

palliate

v
/ ˈpālɛ.ət /
L

moderate the intensity of : lessen.

For many prisoners, books palliate the boredom of isolation from society.

palliative

pallor

n
/ ˈpələ(r) /
L

abnormal paleness.

The pallor of Julian's stage makeup gave his girlfriend a fright.

palmyra

n
/ ˌpəl'mīrə /
L > Pg

a tall fan palm that is native to Africa but widely cultivated in India.

The palmyra made a stately addition to Ramu's garden.

palometa

n
/ ˌpələ'medə /
L

any of various butterfishes (as the California pompano).

The fish dealer readily identified Chet's greenish, slippery-coated catch as a palometa.

palooka

n
/ pə'lūkə /
unknown

an inexperienced or incompetent boxer.

The boxing manager told his fighter to box like a palooka for one round, then come out swinging hard.

palouser

palpability

palpable

adj
/ ˈpəlpəbəl /
L

easily perceptible by the mind : obvious, manifest.

The injustice of the situation was palpable to even the least fair-minded individual present.

palpebral

adj
/ ˈpəlpəbrəl /
L

[has near homonym: palpable] of, relating to, or located on or near the eyelids.

Mike's palpebral spasms were alleviated when he was treated with a muscle relaxant.

palpitant

adj
/ ˈpəlpədənt /
L

trembling, quivering, throbbing.

Darryl jabbed his fork into the palpitant pudding.

palpitation

n
/ ˌpəlpə'tāshən /
L

an abnormally rapid beating of the heart when excited by violent exertion, strong emotion, or disease.

Ron could feel the palpitation in his chest as he approached Marie to ask her out on a date.

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paludal

adj
/ pə'lüd'əl /
L

of, relating to, or made up of marshes.

The map shows a boardwalk trail through the paludal areas.

palustrine

adj
/ pə'ləstrən /
L

living or thriving in a marshy environment.

The alligator is an excellent palustrine hunter.

palynology

pamphlet

pamphleteer

n
/ ,pam(p)flə'ti(ə)r /
Gk > L name + Ecf

a writer of pamphlets attacking something or urging a cause.

Thomas Paine made a name for himself in colonial America as a pamphleteer.

panacea

panacean

adj
/ ,panə'sēən /
Gk > L + Ecf

having the properties of a remedy for all ills and difficulties.

Advertisements for the new pain medicine suggest that it has panacean qualities.

panache

n
/ pə'nash /
L > It > F

dash or flamboyance in style or action.

The novel's great strength is the splendidly depicted panache of the protagonist.

panary

panbroil

v
/ 'pan.brōil /
L > F > E

cook food in a skillet with little or no fat.

The recipe called for one to panbroil the chicken along with the vegetables.

pancreatitis

n
/ ,pankrēə'tidəs /
Gk > L

inflammation of the gland that produces insulin.

The physician recommended immediate surgery for Gordon's acute pancreatitis.

pandiculation

n
/ pan.dikyə'lāshən /
L

a stretching and stiffening especially of the trunk and extremities (as when fatigued and drowsy or after waking from sleep).

A cat usually extends its claws during pandiculation.

panegyric

n
/ ,panə'jirik /
Gk > L

an oration or writing expressing praise.

Walt Whitman composed a famous panegyric on the occasion of Abraham Lincoln's death.

panelist

panettone

n
/ ,pänə'tōnē /
L > It

a usually yeast-leavened holiday bread containing raisins and candied fruit peels.

Tad received a panettone in the mail from his Italian grandmother.

panickiness

n
/ 'panəkēnəs /
Gk > E

the quality or state characterized by or resulting from sudden overpowering fright.

In her panickiness in calling for an ambulance, Gretchen forgot to give the street address.

panoramic

pantisocracy

n
/ ,pantə'säkrəsē /
Gk

a utopian community in which all rule equally.

The romantic poets dreamed of establishing a pantisocracy wherein everyone would share in the governing of the community.

pantomime

n
/ 'pantə.mīm /
Gk > L

a dramatic performance using no dialogue.

The sixth-grade class put on a pantomime of the story "Androcles and the Lion."

papacy

paparazzi

n pl
/ ,päpə'rätsē /
It name

free-lance photographers who aggressively pursue celebrities in order to take candid photographs.

Many people still blame the paparazzi for their apparent role in the death of Princess Diana.

papeterie

paprika

n
/ pə'prēkə /
Gk > Serb > Hung

a condiment consisting of the dried finely ground pods of various cultivated sweet peppers.

Paprika has been a prized export of Hungary for centuries.

papyrus

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

parable

n
/ 'parəbəl /
L

a usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle.
Ella's Sunday school teacher began every class with a parable.

parabolize

parabulia

n
/ ,parə'byülēə /

Gk > L
abnormality or perversion of willpower.

One critic called Nietzschean philosophy "a celebration of parabulia."

parachute

paraclete

n
/ 'parə.klēt /
Gk

[Note: Could be confused with parrakeet.] one called to aid or support : an advocate.

The popular senator was hailed as a paraclete of civil rights.

paradigm

n
/ 'parədīm /
Gk

an outstandingly clear or typical example or pattern.
The paradigm of sin and salvation underlies much of 17th-century English poetry.

paradise

parador

paradox

n
/ 'parədäks /
Gk

a statement or sentiment that is seemingly contradictory or opposed to common sense and yet perhaps true in fact.

The homework assignment was to write an essay on the following paradox: "To guarantee freedom of religion, the government must be free from religion."

paraffinic

adj
/ ,parə'finik /
L > G

of, relating to, or characterized by paraffin hydrocarbons or paraffin wax.
The new pesticide contains a highly refined paraffinic oil.

paragraph

parallax

n
/ 'parəlaks /
Gk > F

the apparent displacement or the difference in apparent direction of an object as seen from two different points not on a straight line with the object.

Sujata carefully allowed for the parallax when framing the picture in her viewfinder.

parallel

adj
/ 'parələl /
Gk

extending in the same direction and everywhere equidistant.

The parallel lines of the railroad tracks tipped off analysts to the location of the munitions plant.

paralogize

v
/ pə'raləjīz /
Gk

reason falsely : draw conclusions not warranted by the premises.
Although James tends to paralogize, he is so eloquent that his listeners often overlook his faulty reasoning.

paralysis

n
/ pə'raləsəs /
Gk

a state of powerlessness or inactivity.
A sort of paralysis overcame the frightened child.

paramedic

paramount

adj
/ 'parə.maunt /
L > F > AF
superior to all others (as in power, position, or importance).
Victor holds the paramount seat on the library's board of directors.

paranoia

n
/ ,parə'nòi(y)ə /
Gk

a tendency on the part of individuals or of groups toward suspiciousness and distrustfulness of others that is based not on objective reality.
Paranoia of government eavesdropping caused members of the militia to encrypt their communications.

paraparesis

n
/ ,parəpə'rēsəs /
Gk

partial paralysis affecting the lower limbs.
Kent's paraparesis was caused by a skateboarding accident.

parapet

n
/ 'parəpət /
L > It

a rampart raised upon or above the main wall in a permanent fortification.
The princess walked along the parapet every evening at dusk, watching for the return of her beloved.

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paraph

n
/ 'parəf /
Gk > L
a flourish at the end of a signature
sometimes used as a sort of rude
safeguard against forgery.
*Delia always signs her name with
an elaborate paraph ending in a
smiley face.*

paraphernalia

n pl
/ ,parəfə(r)'nālyə /
Gk > L
articles of equipment.
*Mark lugged all his photographic
paraphernalia to every spelling
bee.*

paraphrasable

adj
/ 'parəfrāzəbəl /
Gk + Ecf
capable of being restated in another
form usually for clearer and fuller
exposition.
*The teacher asked the students if
the meaning of the poem was
paraphrasable.*

paraplegic

adj
/ ,parə'plējik /
Gk
affected with paralysis of the lower
half of the body including both legs
due to disease or injury to the
spinal cord.
*With much determination, effort,
and training, the paraplegic patient
learned how to take care of himself
at home.*

parasite

parasitic

adj
/ ,parə'sidɪk /
Gk > L
living in or on another organism.
*Dogs are susceptible to parasitic
organisms such as fleas and
heartworms.*

parasol

n
/ 'parəsəl /
L > It > F
a lightweight umbrella used as a
sunshade.
*Georgina decided to splurge on an
antique parasol even though she
knew she'd never actually use it.*

parboil

v
/ 'pär:bōil /
L > F > E
cook briefly in simmering liquid as
a preliminary or incomplete
cooking procedure.
*It is advisable to parboil dense
vegetables like carrots before stir-
frying them with other vegetables.*

parcel

pare

parenthesize

parfait

n
/ pär'fā /
L > F
a cold dessert consisting of
alternating layers of fruit, syrup, ice
cream, and whipped cream.
*Following a light lunch, Carmen
ordered a parfait of tropical fruits.*

pariah

n
/ pə'riā /
Tamil
a person despised or rejected by
society : outcast.
*The candidate became a pariah to
his party, and many members
refused to be seen with him.*

parietal

adj
/ pə'riədəl /
L > F
of, relating to, or located in the
upper posterior part of the head.
*The X ray revealed no damage to
Hernando's parietal bone.*

parishioners

n pl
/ pə'rish(ə)nə(r)z /
Gk > L > F > E + Ecf
the members of a local church
community.
*The parishioners held a meeting
and decided to build a new
gymnasium for the school.*

parity

n
/ 'parədē /
L
[has homonym: parody] the quality
or state of being equal : close
equivalence or resemblance.
*American automobile
manufacturers believe they have
achieved parity with their foreign
competitors.*

parkin

parlance

n
/ 'pärlən(t)s /
F
idiom, phraseology.
*In educational parlance the new
high school is a "magnet school."*

parley

n
/ 'pärlē /
L > F
[has homonym: parlay]
conversation, discussion.
*Mr. Elton and Harriet had a very
interesting parley about what could
be done and should be done.*

parliament

parochial

adj
/ pə'rōkēəl /
L > F > AF > E
of or relating to a church parish.
*Five of Susan's friends attended
parochial schools.*

parodist

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parody

n
/ 'parədē /
Gk

[has homonym: parity] a writing in which the language and style of an author or work is closely imitated for comic effect or in ridicule.
The Battle of the Frogs and the Mice is a Hellenistic parody of the Iliad.

paroemia

n
/ pə'remēə /
Gk > L

a rhetorical proverb.
Coach Morgan's favorite paroemia is "A rolling stone gathers no moss."

paroxysm

n
/ 'parək.sizəm /
Gk

a sudden, violent, and uncontrollable action or occurrence of emotion.
When Jeff unknowingly sat on the whoopie cushion, Al burst into a paroxysm of laughter.

paroxysmal

adj
/ ,parək'sizməl /
Gk > L > F

marked or accompanied by sudden attacks or spasms (as of a disease).
Mike's whooping cough was treated with antibiotics in its early paroxysmal stage.

parquet

n
/ pār'kā /
F

a patterned flooring.
Terry had expensive parquet installed in the foyer.

parrhesia

n
/ pa'rēzh(ē)ə /
Gk

[Note: Could be confused with Parisian.] boldness or freedom of speech.
When Bill was in elementary school, his parrhesia earned him many stints of standing in the corner.

parsec

n
/ 'pär.sek /
Gk + L

a unit of measure for interstellar space equal to a distance of 3.26 light-years or to 19.2 trillion miles.
Porgy estimated the distance between the stars to be one parsec.

parsimony

parsnip

n
/ 'pärsnip /
L > F > E

a biennial plant with yellow flowers and a long, thick, sweet, white root used as a vegetable.
Jake yanked a parsnip from his garden.

parterre

n
/ pär'te(ə)r /
L > F

the part of the floor of a theater behind the orchestra.
For the season premiere, the seats in the parterre were reserved for the stockholder of the opera company.

parthenogenesis

n
/ ,päρθə'nō'jenəsəs /
Gk

reproduction that involves development of a gamete without fertilization.
Parthenogenesis occurs commonly among some stick insect species.

partridge

n
/ 'pätrij /
L > F > E

any of several game birds belonging to the same subfamily as the bobwhite.
A partridge fluttered out of the tall grass and startled Katrina.

parturition

n
/ ,pärd-ə'rishən /
L

the action or process of giving birth to offspring.
In some cultures, women return to manual labor within hours of parturition.

parvenuism

n
/ 'pärvən(y)ü.izəm /
L > F + EcF

the behavior of one who makes great pretensions because of acquired wealth.
The parvenuism of the steel and railroad barons caused them to build some of the most amazing private homes in the United States.

pasigraphy

pasimology

n
/ ,pasə'mäləjē /
Gk? + Gk + Gk
the study of gestures as a means of communication.
Native American sign language is one means of communication studied in pasimology.

pasqueflower

pasquinade

n
/ ,paskwə'nād /
It > F

a lampoon or satire usually having a political significance.
The president's misadventure quickly became the subject of an editorial pasquinade.

passemeterie

passenger

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passerine

adj

/ 'pasərən /

L

of or relating to the largest order of birds including more than half of all living birds and consisting chiefly of songbirds of perching habits.

Mr. Perrault, an avid birder, told us that passerine birds have a maximum life-span of about ten years in the wild.

pasteurization

pasteurize

v

/ 'pas(h)chə.rīz /

F name + Ecf

subject to heating long enough to kill disease-causing microorganisms.

Dairies pasteurize milk before delivering it to stores.

pastiche

n

/ pa'stēsh /

It > F

a usually incongruous medley of different styles and materials : hodgepodge.

Jordan considers the design for the new library a pretentious pastiche.

pasture

n

/ 'pas(h)chə(r) /

L > F > E

land that is used for the grazing of animals.

Every morning the cows returned to the grassy pasture.

patache

patella

n

/ pə'telə /

L

kneecap.

Shelby bumped her patella against the bottom of the desk when she stood up too quickly.

pathogeny

n

/ pə'thājənē /

Gk

the origination and development of a disease.

Much research has been done on the factors involved in the pathogeny of muscular dystrophy.

pathos

n

/ 'pā.thās /

Gk

an element in experience or in artistic representation evoking pity or compassion.

The actress was highly praised for the pathos she evoked in her death scene.

patois

n

/ 'pat.wä /

F

a dialect other than the standard or literary dialect.

Parisians considered the French spoken in the English court to be a patois.

patriarch

n

/ 'pātrē.ärk /

Gk

a man regarded as father or founder (as of a race, science, religion, or class of people).

In many religious circles Adam is considered to be the patriarch of the human race.

patrician

adj

/ pə'trīshən /

L

of, relating to, or characteristic of gentle or noble birth or of breeding and cultivation.

Escorting Cassie to her debutante ball is a patrician experience Rob will never forget.

patriciate

n

/ pə'trīshēət /

L

a class of high-ranking nobles or aristocrats.

As members of the New York patriciate, Donald and his wife kept a high social profile and lived extravagantly.

patrikin

patriot

n

/ 'pātrēət /

Gk > L > F

a person who loves his country and defends and promotes its interests.

The foreign spy convinced others that he was a flag-waving patriot.

patroness

n

/ 'pātrənəs /

L

a woman who provides for or promotes the interests of a protégé.

Emma was soon left in peace, not forced to be the very active patroness of Jane Fairfax.

patronymic

patulous

adj

/ 'pachələs /

L

spreading widely from a center.

The old apple tree had many patulous branches.

patzer

n

/ 'pātsə(r) /

G

an inept chess player.

When Drew won the chess game so easily, he jokingly called his opponent a "patzer."

paucispiral

paucity

n

/ 'pōsədē /

L

a small number : fewness.

The choir suffered from a paucity of male voices.

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paunchiness

paupiette

n
/ pə'pyet /
F
a thin slice of meat or fish wrapped around a filling (as of forcemeat).
At the new restaurant Carol enjoyed a veal paupiette stuffed with ham and cheese.

pavement

pavilion

n
/ pə'vilyən /
L > F > E
a large often sumptuous tent.
The servants scurried to set up the queen's pavilion before the Sun went down.

pavonine

adj
/ 'pavənɪn /
L
of, relating to, or resembling the peacock.
Audrey cooled herself by waving a pavonine fan.

paysanne

adj
/ pə'zan /
F
prepared (as with diced root vegetables) in country or simple style.
Errol served a paysanne sauce with the tenderloins.

peaceable

adj
/ 'pēsəbəl /
L > F > E + Ecf
marked by freedom from war, strife, hostilities, or disorder.
Aggressive doctrines are incompatible with any peaceable administration of the government.

pearlescent

pearly

adj
/ 'pərlē /
L > F > E
having the color of a pearl, which is usually white or light-colored.
"Show me your pearly whites," encouraged the photographer.

peccadillo

n
/ ,pekə'di(ɪ)lō /
L > Sp
a slight offense or petty fault.
The defense lawyers lost the case when they tried to classify high treason as a "minor peccadillo."
peccant
adj
/ 'pekənt /
L
guilty of a moral offense : sinning, corrupt.
The council members railed against the peccant mayor.

peculiar

pecuniary

adj
/ pə'kyünē.ērē /
L
taking the form of or consisting of money.
Margaret values her grandmother's engagement ring for its sentimental rather than its pecuniary worth.

pedagogist

n
/ 'pedəgājəst /
Gk
a specialist in education.
It didn't take a pedagogist to know the school was overcrowded.

pedantic

adj
/ pə'dantik /
L? > It > F + Ecf
excessively meticulous.
Frazier's pedantic approach bored the few remaining audience members.

pedestrian

adj
/ pə'destrēən /
L
marked by drabness or dullness : commonplace.
The critic wrote the play off as a pedestrian imitation of Shakespeare.

pedicure

pedodontist

n
/ ,pedō'däntəst /
Gk
a specialist in the branch of dentistry that is concerned with the dental care of children.
The pedodontist recommends that infants and toddlers not be allowed to fall asleep with a bottle of milk or juice in their mouths.

peekaboo

n
/ 'pēkəbü /
E + cf + E
a game to entertain an infant or young child in which one hides his or her face and then reappears and makes an exclamation.
The photographer finally managed to elicit a smile from the baby when she started playing peekaboo.

peerless

adj
/ 'pi(ə)rləs /
E
matchless, incomparable.
Randy wondered how he could compete against the peerless defending champion.

peevisishly

adv
/ 'pēvəshlē /
E
in a manner marked by ill temper.
"There, you see," he said peevisishly; "I'm even afraid to make a positive statement."

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peirastic

adj

/ pɪˈrastɪk /

Gk

fitted for trial : experimental.

The new drug has been approved only for peirastic use with patients who volunteer to take it.

pejorative

adj

/ pəˈjɒrədɪv /

L

having a tendency to make or become worse : depreciatory, disparaging.

The critic's pejorative comments angered the entire cast.

pelagic

pelican

pelisse

n

/ pəˈlɛs /

L > F

[has homonym: police] a woman's loose lightweight cloak with wide collar and fur trimming.

Grandmother's old pelisse was a perfect costume for our production of A Christmas Carol.

pellagra

pellucid

Peloponnesian

adj

/ .peləpəˈnɛzhən /

Gk name + Gk

of or relating to the southern peninsula of Greece.

The Peloponnesian War was between Athens and Sparta.

pemphigoid

penalty

n

/ ˈpenˈltē /

L

a disadvantage (as loss of yardage, time, or possession of the ball) imposed for violation of the rules of a contest.

In ice hockey a penalty of two minutes off the ice is frequently given to players who commit minor infractions of the rules.

penance

n

/ ˈpenən(t)s /

L > F > E

[has homonym: pennants] act of self-abasement either voluntarily performed to show sorrow for sin or imposed as a punishment for sin by a church official.

Emma resolved to keep Harriet no longer in the dark and went, the very next day, to undergo the necessary penance of communication.

penchant

n

/ ˈpɛnʃənt /

L > F

a strong leaning or attraction; broadly : liking.

While traveling overseas, Brad developed a penchant for Turkish coffee.

pencraft

pendeloque

pendulum

n

/ ˈpenjələm /

L

a body suspended from a fixed point so as to swing freely to and fro under the action of gravity and commonly used to regulate the movements of clockwork and other machinery.

Trina stops the grandfather clock's pendulum each evening so that the chimes will not ring during the night.

penguin

penicillin

n

/ .penəˈsɪlən /

L

a mixture of antibiotic relatively nontoxic acids produced especially by molds of the genus *Penicillium*.

When penicillin did not cure Frankie's ear infection, the doctor prescribed a different antibiotic.

peninsula

n

/ pəˈnɪn(t)s(ə)lə /

L

a portion of land nearly surrounded by water and connected with a larger body by an isthmus.

Florida is actually a very large peninsula.

penitence

n

/ ˈpenədən(t)s /

L

sorrow for sins or faults.

Because of Ella's true penitence, her best friend was quick to forgive her for her breach of confidence.

penitentiary

n

/ .penəˈtɛnʃ(ə)rē /

L > E

a public institution in which offenders against the law are confined for detention or for punishment, discipline, and reformation and in which they are generally compelled to labor.

The judge sentenced the bank robber to 25 years in the state penitentiary.

pennant

n

/ ˈpenənt /

L

a flag or banner.

Whenever the queen was in residence, her pennant was raised on the palace flagpole.

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pensive

adj

/ 'pen(t)siv /

L > F > E

absorbed or engrossed in or given to sober thoughtfulness.

Lori appeared pensive on the last day of vacation.

pentathlon

n

/ pen'tath.län /

Gk

a contest in the modern Olympic Games involving participation by each contestant in horseback riding, shooting, fencing, swimming, and running.

Miguel is practicing four hours a day for the upcoming pentathlon.

pentecostys

penumbra

n

/ pə'nəmbɹə /

L

a shadow cast (as in an eclipse) where the light is partly but not wholly cut off by the intervening body.

Bert caused a penumbra on the screen when he walked in front of the slide projector.

penurious

penury

n

/ 'penyərē /

L

scantiness.

Jane cited the penury of intelligent conversation at the children's table as her reason for wanting to sit with the adults in the main dining room.

peony

n

/ 'pēənē /

E

any of a genus of perennial often double-flowered plants with large pink, white, red, or yellow showy flowers.

Ben placed a brightly colored peony in a tall vase.

perambulate

v

/ pə'rambyə.lāt /

L

travel over or through especially on foot.

Sid and Amy often perambulate the park on sunny days.

perceive

perceptible

percipient

percnosome

n

/ 'pərkənə.sōm /

Gk

a small body occurring in the androcyte of a fern.

Under the microscope, the dark shape of the percnosome was clearly visible.

percolate

v

/ 'pərkə.lāt /

L

prepare by causing (a liquid) to pass through (as coffee) in order to extract the essence.

Sal did not allow enough time to percolate his coffee before he had to go to work.

percussor

n

/ pə(r)'kəsə(r) /

L

a small hammer with a rubber head used as a diagnostic tool by physicians.

Dr. Goldman tested Paula's reflexes with a percussor.

peregrinate

v

/ 'perəgrənāt /

L

travel on foot : walk, tour.

Nicki hopes to peregrinate across England in the fall.

peremptory

adj

/ pə'rem(p)t(ə)rē /

L

putting an end to or precluding a right of action, debate, or delay.

Mr. Stone interrupted Cindy's wrong answer by raising his hand in a peremptory gesture.

perennate

v

/ 'perənāt /

L

live over from season to season :

persist.

Ornamental banana trees will seldom perennate outdoors north of the subtropics.

perennial

adj

/ pə'renēəl /

L

continuing or lasting through several years—used specifically of a plant that dies back seasonally and produces new growth from a part that lives over from season to season.

The garden is bare of flowers because the perennial plants have been cut down for their winter rest.

perestroika

n

/ (ɪ)pə'rə'strōikə /

Russ

extensive restructuring and reform intended to revitalize the government and economy of the former Soviet Union.

Perestroika was the key that unlocked the former Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations to democratization.

perezone

perfervid

adj

/ .pə'r'fərvəd /

L

extremely or excessively fervent : zealous, impassioned.

In front of the Capitol a man was giving a perfervid speech on the evils of national taxation.

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perfidious

perfidy

perforate

perfume

n
/ 'pær.fyüm /
L > OProv > F
a fluid preparation used for scenting : fragrance.
Some theaters designate a fragrance-free seating area for those persons allergic to perfume and scented lotions.

pergelisol

n
/ pær'jeləsəl /
L
permanently or perennially frozen ground : permafrost.
Chan's theory is that there are large oil deposits beneath the pergelisol.

Periclean

adj
/ ,pærə'klēən /
Gk name
of or relating to Pericles or his age when Athens was at its highest material and intellectual state.
Periclean Athens bequeathed the Parthenon and many other monuments of artistic splendor to the world.

perigee

n
/ 'perə(,)jē /
Gk
the point in the orbit of a satellite of Earth that is nearest to the center of Earth.
As the communications satellite neared perigee, its signal became stronger.

perinatal

peripatetic

adj
/ ,pærəpə'tedɪk /
Gk
performed or performing while moving about : itinerant.
Adrian spent an exciting three years as a peripatetic journalist before settling in Chicago.

peripety

n
/ pə'ripədə /
Gk > F
a sudden or unexpected reversal of circumstances or situation in a literary work.
The peripety in the last act of the play stunned the audience.

peripheral

adj
/ ,pə'rɪf(ə)rəl /
Gk
located away from a center or a central portion.
Although Kerry's main interest lies in literature, she has peripheral interests in art history and psychology.

periphery

n
/ pə'rɪf(ə)rē /
Gk
the external boundary or surface of any body or area.
Many villages dotted the periphery of the extinct volcano.

periphrasis

n
/ pə'rɪfrəsəs /
Gk
the use of a longer phrasing in place of a possible shorter and plainer form of expression.
Frustrated by the document's endless periphrasis, Ludwig threw up his hands in despair.

perishable

adj
/ 'perəʃhəbəl /
L > F > E + EcF
subject to quick deterioration or spoilage except under proper conditions (as of temperature or moisture content).
The advent of refrigeration changed the way perishable foods are packaged.

peristalsis

n
/ ,pærə'stòlsəs /
Gk
successive waves of involuntary contraction passing along the walls of the intestine and forcing the contents onward.
Disruption of peristalsis can lead to digestion problems.

perjury

n
/ 'pəɹj(ə)rē /
L > AF > E
the voluntary violation of an oath.
One thing is certain after the testimony: Either Mr. Jakes or Mr. Cleveland has committed perjury.

perlustrate

permanence

permeable

permeate

v
/ 'pərmē.āt /
Gk
spread or diffuse through.
Igor wiped up the spill immediately, lest the smell of formaldehyde permeate the room.

pernicious

adj
/ pə(r)'nɪʃəs /
L
highly injurious or destructive : deadly.
The doctors finally eradicated the pernicious infection from the patient's lungs.

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pernoctate

v
/ (i)pər'näk.tāt /
L

stay up or out all night.
Brian knew he would have to pernoctate at least once in order to finish his term paper.

peroration

n
/ .perə'rāshən /
L

a flowery, highly rhetorical speech.
Trudy's peroration was lost on her audience at the school board meeting.

perpendicular

perpetual

adj
/ pə(r)'pech(əw)əl /
L > F > E

everlasting, eternal.
Shawna expected to enjoy perpetual bliss in heaven.

perplexing

adj
/ pə(r)'pleksiŋ /
L

that causes an agitated or confused mental condition.
Silvio found English grammar terribly perplexing.

perquisite

n
/ 'pərkwəzət /
L

a privilege, gain, or profit incidental to an employment in addition to regular salary or wages.
A perquisite attractive to many business executives is unlimited use of a cellular telephone.

persecute

v
/ 'pərsə.kyüt /
L

harass in a manner to injure, grieve, or afflict usually because of some difference of opinion.
The revolutionary extremists vowed to persecute the peasants who would not support their cause.

perseverance

n
/ .pərsə'virən(t)s /
L

continued or steadfast pursuit or prosecution of an undertaking or aim.
After much perseverance, Frank induced the most upright female mind in creation to stoop in charity to a secret engagement.

persevere

persevered

v
/ .pərsə'vi(ə)rd /
L > F > E

persisted in spite of counter influences, opposition, or discouragement.
Winston persevered at his post in accordance with his duty.

persiflage

n
/ 'pərsə.fläzh /
F

frivolous bantering talk : a frivolous and somewhat derisive manner of treating a subject.
As the teams moved up and down the court, both benches kept up a constant stream of persiflage.

persillade

adj
/ .persē'äd /
F

dressed with or containing parsley.
Marina's dinner guests enjoyed a flavorful sea bass in a persillade sauce.

persimmon

n
/ pə(r)'simən /
Algonquian

a medium-sized tree of the southern and eastern United States with hard fine-grained wood, oblong leaves, and bell-shaped flowers followed by an orange several-seeded berry that is edible when fully ripe but usually extremely astringent when unripe.
Leroy's mouth puckered when he bit into an unripe persimmon.

personification

personnel

perspicacious

adj
/ .pərspə'kāshəs /
L + Ecf
of acute mental vision or discernment.
The chairman attributed the company's record profits to perspicacious management.

perspicuity

perspiration

persuade

pertinacious

adj
/ .pərt'n'āshəs /
L

stubbornly unshakable.
There was something mysterious in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion.

pertinent

pertinently

perusal

n
/ .pə'rüzəl /
L? > E + E

the action of reading through or over with some attention and typically for the purpose of discovering or noting one or more specific points.
The legal advisor's perusal of the proposed contract identified many points of concern.

peruse

v
/ pə'rüz /
L > E

read; specifically : read through or read over with some attention and typically for the purpose of discovering or noting one or more specific points.
Jan plans to peruse several journals in the hope of getting needed material for further research.

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pervasive

adj

/ pə(r)'vāsiv /

L + Ecf

that permeates or tends to permeate.

The turkey farm had a pervasive odor that clung to clothes.

pervicacious

perwitsky

pessimist

n

/ 'pesəməst /

L > F

one inclined to put the least favorable construction on actions and happenings, to emphasize adverse aspects, conditions, and possibilities, or to anticipate the worst possible outcome.

Being a pessimist made keeping friends very difficult for Mark.

pestilence

n

/ 'pestələn(t)s /

L

a contagious or infectious epidemic disease that is virulent and devastating.

Pestilence has historically been one of society's main causes of death.

pestle

n

/ 'pesəl /

L > F > E

a usually club-shaped implement for pounding or grinding substances especially in a mortar.
Grandma bought a brass mortar and pestle from an antique dealer.

petchary

petechia

petrogeny

n

/ pə'trājənē /

Gk + Gk

the science of the origin of rocks.
A vacation trip to the Grand Canyon sparked Lauren's interest in petrogeny.

petrolage

n

/ 'petrəlɪj /

L > F + Ecf

the treatment of stagnant water with mineral oil so as to exterminate mosquitoes.

The health department was advised to use petrolage every spring to eliminate the mosquitoes.

petroleum

petrophilous

adj

/ pə'trəfələs /

Gk

attached to or living on rock; used especially of algae and crustaceans.
Petrophilous barnacles and limpets can be found along rocky shores.

pettifogger

n

/ 'pedē.fägə(r) /

E + G name?

lawyer whose methods are petty, underhanded, or disreputable.

Unlike the pettifogger who hung out his shingle across the street, Mr. Patterson was a gentleman of the law.

petulance

petulant

adj

/ 'pechələnt /

L

characterized by temporary or capricious ill humor : peevish.
The striking ballplayers were characterized as spoiled, petulant, and self-obsessed.

petunia

n

/ pə'tünyə /

L > F

a common garden plant with funnel-shaped flowers of many colors and patterns.

Russell pulled a purple petunia from the flower bed.

phaeton

n

/ 'fäət'n /

Gk > L

[has near homonym: Phaëthon] an open automobile with two cross seats, usually four doors, and a folding top.

Charles almost bought the 1931 Rolls Royce phaeton at the auction.

phalacrosis

n

/ .falə'krōsəs /

Gk

baldness.

Phalacrosis is an inherited characteristic.

phalanx

n

/ 'fā.laŋks /

Gk

a group or body in close formation.

Sarah craned her neck in wonder as the phalanx of military jets flew over in tight formation.

phansigar

pharaoh

n

/ 'fe(,)rō /

Egypt > Heb > Gk > L

a ruler of ancient Egypt.

Tutankhamen is one pharaoh whose name most people recognize.

pharisaical

adj

/ .farə'sāəkal /

Aram > GK > L + E

making an outward show of piety and morality but lacking the inward spirit : hypocritical.

Cardinal Newman spoke of the vast numbers of pharisaical individuals among baptized Christians.

pharmaceutical

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

pharos

n
/ 'fā.rās /
Gk

a lighthouse or beacon to guide seamen.

Leland said the restaurant acted like a pharos for all those at sea off the tip of the island.

pharynx

phase

n
/ 'fāz /

Gk
[has homonyms: fays, faze] a homogeneous, physically distinct, and mechanically separable portion of matter that is present in a nonhomogeneous physical-chemical system and that may be either a single compound or a mixture.

Water exists in the solid phase as ice, in the liquid phase as water, and in the gaseous phase as vapor or steam.

pheasant

n
/ 'fez.ənt /

Gk > L > F > AF > E
any of numerous large, often long-tailed, and brilliantly colored Old World birds with legs adapted for running and scratching the ground where most of their food (as seeds or worms) is found.

After a morning of hunting, Larry returned with a pheasant, two rabbits, and a wild duck.

phenomenon

n
/ fə'nämə.nən /

Gk > L
an observable fact or event.
The civil rights movement began as a startling phenomenon to many complacent Americans.

pheon

pheromone

n
/ 'fer.əmōn /
Gk

a chemical substance that is produced by an animal and serves as a specific stimulus to other individuals of the same species for one or more behavioral responses.
When attacked by another beetle, the defensive beetle emitted a repellent pheromone.

phew

phial

philatelist

philately

n
/ fə'lād.ɪl /
Gk > F
[has near homonym: flatly] stamp collecting.
Philately can be an excellent inexpensive hobby.

philharmonic

n
/ .filə(r)'mänik /
Gk > L > It
a musical concert or musical organization (as a society or orchestra).
The philharmonic celebrated the Fourth of July with a program of patriotic music.

philhellene

n
/ fil'he.lēn /
Gk
an admirer or supporter of Greece or of the Greeks.
After one trip to the museum, Lydia became an instant philhellene.

philippic

philippics

n pl
/ fə'lipiks /
Gk
declamations full of acrimonious invective : tirades.
The philippics that the two legislators shot back and forth across the chamber roused the lethargic Senate.

philistine

adj
/ 'fil.ə.stēn /
Heb > Gk
of, relating to, or characterized by crass materialism and insensitivity to aesthetics.
Nineteenth-century essayists derided the English middle class as being vulgar and philistine.

phillumenist

n
/ fə'lümənəst /
Gk > L + Ecf
one who collects matchbooks or matchbox labels.
The phillumenist kept a fire extinguisher near his prize collection.

philologist

n
/ fə'läləjəst /
Gk
a scholar concerned with human speech as the vehicle of literature and as a field of study that sheds light on cultural history.
Hannah wants to become a philologist and study ancient Russian dialects.

philology

philomath

philosopher

phlebitis

n
/ flə'bīdəs /
Gk + Lcf
inflammation of a vein.
If phlebitis is not treated early, a blood clot can form in the inflamed vein.

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phlebotomize

phlegm

phlegmatic

adj
/ fleg'madik /
Gk

calm, composed, undemonstrative.
Phlegmatic game-show contestants are usually not as entertaining as those who show excitement.

phloem

n
/ 'flō.em /
Gk > G

a complex tissue in the vascular system of higher plants functioning chiefly in distributing food materials but also in support and storage.
Mr. Cartwright pointed out the xylem and the phloem on the newly cut tree.

phlox

n
/ 'fläks /
Gk > L

any plant of a genus of American herbs having red, purple, white, or variegated flowers.
Dean planted phlox along the sidewalk.

phocine

adj
/ 'fō.sīn /
Gk > L + Ecf
of, relating to, or resembling seals.
One of the phocine characteristics is having limbs modified into webbed flippers adapted primarily to swimming.

phoenix

n
/ 'fēniks /
Gk
a legendary bird represented by the ancient Egyptians as living five or six centuries in the Arabian desert, being consumed in fire by its own act, and rising in youthful freshness from its own ashes.
The phoenix is a well-known symbol of immortality.

phonasthenia

n
/ fōnəs'thēnēə /
Gk
weakness or hoarseness of voice.
After the football game some of the cheerleaders complained of phonasthenia.

phoresy

n
/ 'fōrəsē /
Gk > L
the nonparasitic association of one kind of animal with another in order to obtain transportation.
Feather lice accomplish phoresy by clinging to the body hairs of blood-sucking flies.

phosphoresce

v
/ fäsfə'res /
Gk > L > F
glow especially in the dark.
Emmet's jigsaw puzzle will phosphoresce after being exposed to a strong light source.

photogenic

photogrammetry

photograph

photophygous

adj
/ fō'täfəgəs /
Gk + Gk + Ecf
preferring or thriving in shade.
Ferns and hostas are photophygous plants often used in gardens.

photosynthesis

n
/ fōdō'sin(t)thəsəs /
Gk + Gk
synthesis of chemical compounds with the aid of light.
Photosynthesis in plants provides them with necessary carbohydrates.

phraseology

n
/ frāzē'äləjē /
Gk > L
choice of words : vocabulary.
The candidate's careful phraseology avoided any hint of controversy.

phrasing

n
/ 'frāziŋ /
Gk > L
style of expression : wording.
In writing poetry, phrasing is critically important.

phrenology

n
/ frə'näləjē /
Gk + Gk + Ecf
the study of the conformation of the skull as indicative of mental faculties and traits of character.
Phrenology enjoyed great popular appeal well into the 20th century but has been wholly discredited by scientific research.

phylactery

n
/ fə'lakt(ə)rē /
Gk
either of two small square leather boxes containing slips inscribed with scriptural passages and traditionally worn by Jewish males during morning prayer.
Milton explained that a phylactery is worn as a reminder to keep the laws of Judaism.

phylliform

adj
/ 'filə.förm /
Gk + Ecf
having the shape of a leaf.
Every fall, phylliform silhouettes adorn the windows of Mrs. Gaskin's classroom.

phyllophorous

adj
/ fə'läf(ə)rəs /
Gk + Gk
producing leaves : leaf-bearing.
Softwoods come from coniferous trees, while hardwoods come from phyllophorous trees.

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phylon

physically

adv

/ˈfɪzək(ə)lē /

Gk + Ecff

in respect to the body.

It was physically impossible for the campers to hike another mile.

physician

physicist

n

/ˈfɪzəsəst /

Gk

a specialist in the science of matter and energy and their interactions.

The physicist explained how a laser is used to read what is recorded on a compact disc.

physics

physiognomy

n

/ˌfɪzēˈä(g)nəmē /

Gk

the technique or art of discovering temperament and character from outward appearance (as from facial features).

The artist's careful study of physiognomy showed up in his brilliant caricatures of politicians.

physique

phytocoenosis

n

/ˌfɪdōsēˈnōsəs /

Gk

the whole body of plants occupying a particular habitat.

William studied the effects of acid rain on the Adirondack phytocoenosis.

phytophilous

adj

/fɪˈtäfələs /

Gk + Gk + EcF

living or feeding on plants.

The forest fire deprived many phytophilous animals of their habitat and food.

piacular

adj

/pɪˈakyələ(r) /

L

of, relating to, or involving sacrifice : sacrificial.

While visiting the island of Patmos, tourists saw an ancient altar where the Greeks burned piacular offerings to the gods.

pianissimo

piazza

n

/pɛˈazə /

L > It

an arcaded and roofed gallery that often surrounds an open court.

The tourists ran to the abandoned monastery's piazza when the rain started pouring down.

pica

n

/ˈpɪkə /

ML

[has homonym: pika] a size of type equivalent to 12 point.

Part of Katie's proofreading job was to add another line of pica to pages that had enough space.

picaresque

adj

/ˌpɪkəˈresk /

Sp

relating to or being a type of prose fiction in which the principal character is a rogue or vagabond and the narrative is a series of incidents or episodes.

In a typical picaresque novel, the hero has many adventures.

picayune

adj

/ˌpɪkēˈyün /

L > Prov > F

of little value : paltry, measly.

The other players chided the halfback for his picayune contribution to the team.

piccalilli

n

/ˈpɪkəlɪlē /

unknown

a relish of chopped vegetables and pungent spices.

Wanda put a dab of piccalilli in her tuna salad.

piccata

n

/pəˈkädə /

F > It

thin slices of meat (as veal) sautéed and served in a lemon and butter sauce.

Julia served veal piccata and asparagus at Jack's birthday dinner.

piccolo

pickelhaube

n

/ˈpɪkəlˌhaübə /

G

[Note: Could be confused with pickelhauben.] a spiked helmet formerly worn by German soldiers. *In the chapter on World War I, the history book included a photo of a German general wearing a silver-plated pickelhaube.*

pickle

v

/ˈpɪkəl /

D? > E

[has homonyms: pickel, picol, picul, pikel, pikol] steep in a solution of salt or vinegar for preservation.

Every year, the Johnsons pickle enough onions to give a jar to everyone in the neighborhood.

picnicking

pictorialism

picturesque

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pidan

n
/ pē'dän /
Chinese
[has near homonym: piton] duck
eggs preserved in brine to which
lime, ashes, and tea are added.
*Art's grandmother makes authentic
pidan.*

piecemeal

adv
/ 'pē.smē(ə)l /
Gaulish > L > F > E + E
one piece at a time : little by little.
*The magazine published the novel
piecemeal for several weeks.*

piety

pigeon

n
/ 'pijən /
L > F > E
[has homonym: pidgin] a bird
having a stout body with rather
short legs and smooth and compact
plumage.
*A pigeon fluttered about the eaves
of the old barn.*

pignorate

pilaster

n
/ pə'lastə(r) /
Gk > L > It > F
an upright architectural member
that is structurally a vertical
support but architecturally treated
as a column that usually partially
projects from the wall and may be
load-bearing or merely applied as
surface decoration.
*The architect explained that
because the pilaster was merely a
decoration, removing it for the
room's renovation would be
permissible.*

pilchard

n
/ 'pilchə(r)d /
unknown
a fish related to the herring and
sardine occurring in great schools
along the coasts of Europe.
*The pilchard is the principal fish
used for canning by the French and
Portuguese.*

pilferage

n
/ 'pilf(ə)rij /
F > E
the act of stealing stealthily in
small quantities.
*Pilferage in stores usually leads to
increased prices for the customers.*

pilgrimage

n
/ 'pilgrəmiʃ /
L > F > E
a journey to visit a shrine or a holy
place as a devotee.
*Felipe made a pilgrimage to
Santiago last year.*

pillar

pillbox

n
/ 'pil.bäks /
L + Gk > L > E
a small round brimless hat;
specifically : a woman's shallow
hat with a flat crown and straight
sides.
*Margaret wore her blond hair
pinned up under a leopard skin
pillbox.*

pillion

n
/ 'pilyən /
ScotGael or IrGael
a motorcycle or bicycle riding
saddle for a passenger.
*Denny improvised a pillion in
order to give LaToya a ride home.*

pillory

n
/ 'pilərə /
F > E
a device formerly used for the
public punishment of wrongdoers
that consists of a wooden frame
with holes in which the head and
hands can be locked.
*Pam took a snapshot of Julian
standing by a pillory in the
reconstructed colonial village.*

piloncillo

n
/ ,pəlōn'sē(,) (y)ō /
Sp
unrefined sugar especially when
molded into cones or sticks.
*Rosita grated piloncillo into a bowl
of custard.*

pinafore

n
/ 'pinə.fō(ə)r /
E
a covering garment worn to protect
clothes from soil, made variously
as an apron with or without a bib.
*Mrs. Dobbins wears a canvas
pinafore while working in the
potting shed.*

pinioned

pinnacle

n
/ 'pinəkəl /
L
a lofty mountain peak.
*The clouds obscured the pinnacle
from the view of those in the valley
below.*

pinnigrade

adj
/ 'pinə.grād /
L
walking by means of fins or
flippers.
*The seal and the walrus are
pinnigrade animals.*

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pinniped

n
/ 'pinə,ped /
L

any of a suborder of aquatic carnivorous mammals (as a seal or walrus) with all four limbs modified into flippers.
Although the pinniped finds its food in the sea, it needs to be on land or ice to give birth to its young.

pinocytosis

pintle

pioneer

adj
/ ,pīə'ni(ə)r /
F

of, relating to, or characteristic of early settlers or their time.
Julie worked last summer in a restored pioneer village.

pious

adj
/ 'piəs /
L
devout.

The pious Jewish historian saw in Israel's exile God's punishment for sin.

piquancy

n
/ 'pēkənsē /
F + Ecf

the quality of being agreeably stimulating to the palate : pleasantly tart.
Colette especially liked the piquancy of Cajun cuisine.

piqued

v
/ pēkt /
F
[has homonyms: peaked, peeked]
excited or aroused by a provocation, challenge, or rebuff.
The envelope sealed with sealing wax piqued Helen's curiosity.

piracy

n
/ 'pīrəsē /
Gk > L
robbery on the high seas.
Charged with piracy, Blackbeard was hunted down by government warships.

pirouette

n
/ ,pirə'wet /
F
a full turn on the toe or ball of one foot in ballet.
The pirouette is one of the most striking movements in a dancer's repertoire.

piscatorial

pistachio

n
/ pə'stashē.ō /
Gk > L > It
the edible green seed of a small tree of southern Europe and Asia
Minor.
Patricia placed a pistachio on each parfait.

piston

n
/ 'pistən /
L > It > F
the part of an engine that is forced back and forth inside a cylinder due to combustion.
Kyle learned to identify a piston in the automobile repair class.

pitcher

piteous

adj
/ 'pidēəs /
E
arousing or deserving pity or compassion.
The piteous kitten stood shivering in the snow.

pitiable

piton

pittance

n
/ 'pit'n(t)s /
L > F > E
a usually small often barely sufficient portion, amount, or allowance.
Gloria was tired of working long hours for a pittance.

pityriasis

n
/ ,pidə'rīəsəs /
Gk
one of several skin diseases marked by the formation and peeling of scales.
Uncle Nick's pityriasis prevents him from sleeping well.

pivot

n
/ 'pivət /
L > F
a person or thing on or around which something turns or depends : central point.
The pivot of controversy is Roberta's questionable handling of public funds.

pivotally

pizzeria

n
/ ,pētsə'rēə /
L > It + Itcf
An establishment (as a bakery, restaurant, shop) where pizzas are made and sold.
Hank waited tables in the pizzeria on weekends.

pizzicato

adv
/ ,pitsə'käd(,)ō /
It
played by plucking with the fingers.
The score called for the violins to play the passage pizzicato.

placable

placatory

placebo

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placet

n
/ 'plāsôt /
L

an expression of approval or vote of assent.

The commander got the placet of the other generals for his coup d'etat.

placidity

n
/ pla'sidədə /
L

the quality or state of being calm or composed.

Not resenting the repeated attention offered to another woman was a degree of placidity which Emma could neither comprehend nor respect.

plagiarism

plagiarize

v
/ 'plājə.rīz /
L + Ecf

present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

Simon knew that it would be better not to turn in an essay at all than to plagiarize.

plaintiff

n
/ 'plāntəf /
L > F > E

[has near homonym: plaintive] one who commences a personal action or lawsuit to obtain a remedy for an injury to one's rights.

The plaintiff was suing the hospital for negligence because he suffered bacterial infection after surgery.

planetarium

planetary

adj
/ 'planə.tərē /
Gk > L > F > E
global, worldwide.

Deforestation is a planetary concern.

plangi

plantar

planxty

plasticize

platelet

n
/ 'plātlət /
Gk? > L > F > E + Ecf
a minute flattened body.
A blood platelet is a minute protoplasmic disk that plays a role in blood clotting.

platinum

platypus

n
/ 'pladəpəs /
Gk
a small egg-laying aquatic mammal of southern and eastern Australia and Tasmania having a fleshy bill resembling that of a duck, dense blackish brown fur, five-toed webbed feet, and a broad flattened tail.
Cindy has asked for a pet platypus for her birthday.

plaudit

n
/ 'plōdət /
L
strong and openly expressed approval : enthusiastic approbation.
Claudette's report on UFOs was accorded a special plaudit by the professor for its originality.

plauditory

plaustral

playwright

n
/ 'plā.rīt /
E + E
a person who writes a composition arranged for enactment (as by actors on a stage) and intended to portray life or character or to tell a story through the actions and usually dialogue of the enactors.
The playwright based his drama on the struggles between gangs in the ghetto.

pleach

pleiad

n
/ 'plēəd /
Gk > F
[has near homonym: plead] a group of illustrious or brilliant persons or things usually seven in number.
The maestro named a pleiad of pianists who were once his pupils.

plenary

adj
/ 'plenərə /
L
fully attended or constituted : including all entitled to be present.
Because of the important bills to be voted on, the legislature convened a plenary session.

plenilune

n
/ 'plēnəlün /
L > E
the time of full Moon.
Zeke will begin planting after the plenilune.

plenipotentiary

plentiful

adj
/ 'plentəfəl /
L > F > E + Ecf
containing or yielding abundance.
The orange growers are looking forward to a plentiful harvest.

pleonasm

n
/ 'plēə.nazəm /
Gk
iteration or repetition in speaking or in writing : the use of more words than those necessary to denote mere sense.
Mr. Miller gave the phrase true facts as an example of a pleonasm to be avoided.

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plethora

n
/ 'pleθərə /
Gk
excess, profusion.
The jury retired to consider the plethora of evidence presented in court.

pleurisy

n
/ 'plürəsē /
Gk > L > F > E
inflammation of the membrane lining the chest cavity and enveloping the lungs.
Pleurisy, causing fluid to accumulate in Zachary's chest cavity, further complicated his pneumonia.

pleuston

n
/ 'plüstən /
Gk
small but macroscopic floating organisms that form mats or layers on or near the surface of a body of water.
The mat of pleuston floating in the swamp consists mostly of green algae.

plexus

n
/ 'pleksəs /
L
an intricately interwoven combination of elements or parts in a cohering structure.
The transportation board carefully mapped out the plexus of commuter paths across the city.

pliant

adj
/ 'pliənt /
F > E
flexible, workable, lithe.
To make his catcher's mitt more pliant, Gary smeared shaving gel on it and baked it at a low temperature.

plover

n
/ 'pləvə(r) /
L > F > E
any of numerous shore-inhabiting birds having a short hard-tipped bill and a stout compact build.
Taylor could see that the plover circling over the tennis court had spotted upper plumage.

plucky

adj
/ 'pləkē /
E + EcF
having or marked by courage : spirited, brave, resolute.
Henry was plucky enough to get back on his bicycle although he had just fallen for the seventh time.

plumage

n
/ 'plümij /
L > F > E
the entire clothing of feathers of a bird.
The plumage of the male peacock is more colorful than that of the female.

plumassier

n
/ 'plümə'si(ə)r /
F
one who prepares or deals in ornamental plumes or feathers.
The plumassier showed DeeDee a boa that complemented her recital costume perfectly.

plumbeous

adj
/ 'pləmbēəs /
L
having a dull gray color like that of lead.
The plumbeous core of a so-called "lead pencil" is graphite.

plumber

n
/ 'pləmə(r) /
L > F > E
one who installs, repairs, and maintains piping, fittings, and fixtures that are involved in the distribution and use of water in a building.
The plumber replaced the lead pipes in the Davidsons' house with copper ones.

plummet

plurality

n
/ plü'ralədē /
L
a number of votes cast for a candidate in a contest of more than two candidates that is greater than the number cast for any other candidate but not more than half the total votes cast.
Because all three candidates have strong voter support, the number of votes cast for the winner will probably be a plurality, not a majority.

plutology

n
/ plü'täləjē /
Gk + Gk
the scientific study of wealth : theoretical economics.
Jeremy is using his expertise in plutology to study emerging democracies.

pluvioscope

n
/ 'plüvēə.sköp /
L + Gk > L
rain gauge.
Johnny ordered a pluvioscope from the scientific catalog.

pneumatic

adj
/ n(y)ü'madik /
Gk
[has homonym: neumatic] adapted for holding compressed air : inflated with air.
The development of the pneumatic tire was a major advance for the bicycle.

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pneumatography

poacher

n
/ 'pōchə(r) /
Gmc > F > E
one who kills or takes wild animals
(as game or fish) illegally.
*The sign at the reservation stated
that any poacher would be
prosecuted to the fullest extent of
the law.*

podiatrist

n
/ pə'diətrəst /
Gk
one who practices the care and
treatment of the human foot in
health and disease.
*The podiatrist recommended that
Carlita get special inserts for her
shoes.*

poetaster

n
/ 'pōəd.əstə(r) /
L
a writer of worthless or inferior
verses.
*The poetaster spewed out poem
after poem, each worse than the
last.*

poetic

adj
/ pō'edik /
Gk
of or relating to poets.
*Ovid tried to become a lawyer
early in life, but his true and
natural poetic character would not
be suppressed.*

pogonip

n
/ 'pägə.nip /
Paiute
a dense winter fog containing
frozen particles that is formed in
deep mountain valleys of the
western United States.
*The dense pogonip leaves a sheath
of frost crystals on every shrub and
blade of grass.*

poignant

adj
/ 'pōin(y)ənt /
L > F > E
painfully sharp with regard to the
feelings : piercing, keen.
*Emma's distress was not poignant
enough to keep her from falling
asleep, and she awoke feeling
somewhat more hopeful.*

poinciana

n
/ ,pōin(t)sē'anə /
F name + Lcf
an ornamental tropical tree or shrub
having bright orange or red
flowers.
*While in southern Florida, Jake
was impressed by the fiery flowers
of the poinciana.*

poinsettia

n
/ pōin'sedēə /
American name
a showy Mexican and South
American plant with tapering
scarlet petallike leaves that
surround small yellow flowers.
*The delivery woman brought a
poinsettia to Karen's door.*

poise

poised

adj
/ 'pōizd /
L > F > E + Ecf
marked by easy composure of
manner or bearing.
*The poised skater performed her
routine with great precision and
self-assurance.*

poisonous

adj
/ 'pōiz(ə)nəs /
L > F > E + Ecf
having the qualities or effects of a
toxin.
*The mushrooms looked and tasted
great but were devastatingly
poisonous.*

polarize

v
/ 'pōlə.rīz /
L > F
cause (as light waves) to vibrate in
a definite pattern.
*Sunglasses that polarize light
reflected off water help the wearer
see into the water.*

polder

n
/ 'pōldə(r) /
Gk
a tract of low land reclaimed from
the sea or other body of water.
*Leanne and Amy scoured the
polder for fossils.*

polemic

adj
/ pə'lemik /
Gk
of, relating to, or of the nature of a
controversial discussion or
argument.
*Try as he might, Rupert could not
prevent the conversation from
turning into a polemic debate.*

polemology

n
/ (,)pōlə'mäləjē /
Gk + Gk > E
the study of war.
*In polemology, military and naval
strategies are studied and
discussed.*

polemoscope

n
/ pō'lemə.skōp /
Gk
an opera or field glass with an
oblique mirror arranged for seeing
objects not directly before the eye.
*The detective used a polemoscope
to observe the suspect
unobtrusively.*

policize

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

poliomyelitis

n
/ ˌpɒliˈeɪ.mɪəˈliːdɪs /
Gk
an acute infectious viral disease characterized by fever, motor paralysis, and atrophy of skeletal muscles often with permanent disability and deformity.
Up to about 40 years ago, poliomyelitis often meant a lifetime on crutches or in an iron lung.

poliosis

n
/ ˌpɒliˈɔːsɪs /
Gk
loss of color from the hair.
One of the effects of the disease was poliosis.

politesse

n
/ ˌpɒləˈtes /
L > F
formal and cultivated politeness.
The ambassador greatly enjoyed the diplomatic world of pomp and politesse.

polka

n
/ ˈpɒlkə /
Pol > Czech
a lively Bohemian dance in fast duple time that consists of three steps and a hop.
Gwen taught her dance students the polka.

pollen

n
/ ˈpɒlən /
L
the fine, dustlike mass of grains produced by seed plants.
Many hay fever sufferers are bothered by ragweed pollen.

pollutant

n
/ ˈpɒlʊˈtənt /
L
any substance that makes the air or water impure or unclean.
Ethylene gas is a pollutant associated with industrial manufacturing and automobile exhaust.

pollute

polonaise

n
/ ˌpɒləˈnāz /
L geog name > Pol > F
a stately Polish processional dance fashionable in 19th-century Europe.
Chopin wrote many compositions based on the rhythm of the polonaise.

poltergeist

n
/ ˈpɒltə(r)ˌɡɪst /
G
a noisy and usually mischievous ghost.
Our favorite Halloween story is about a poltergeist who tormented the tenants of a house in which there had previously been a murder.

poltroon

poltroonery

n
/ pɒlˈtrʊn(ə)rē /
L > It > F
cowardice.
The historian said that poltroonery among politicians in an election year is not uncommon.

polychrest

polychromatic

adj
/ ˌpɒləkrɒˈmædɪk /
Gk
showing a variety or a change of colors : multicolored.
It is not unusual for people to drive by Sarah's house simply to admire its polychromatic brickwork.

polydactyly

n
/ ˌpɒləˈdaktəlē /
Gk + Gk
the condition of having more than the normal number of toes or fingers.
The Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum on Key West is home to approximately 60 cats, about half of which exhibit polydactyly.

polyester

n
/ ˈpɒləˌestər /
Gk
a synthetic fiber consisting wholly or chiefly of a complex ester formed by polymerization.
Bridget bought the loudest polyester jacket she could find at the thrift store to wear on Halloween.

polygamous

polyglot

adj
/ ˈpɒləˌɡlɒt /
Gk
containing matter in several languages; especially : composed of correlative text in several languages often arranged in parallel columns.
Products sold in electronics stores often have polyglot instructions.

polygonal

adj
/ pəˈlɪɡənəl /
Gk
having many sides.
Mr. Ewing taught his math class how to find the areas of polygonal figures.

polyphagism

n
/ pəˈlɪfəˌjɪzəm /
Gk
the habit of feeding on a variety of plants or animals.
By feeding various kinds of foods to the insects, the researcher could discover which ones exhibited polyphagism.

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polysaccharide

n
/ ˌpālēˈsəkəˌrīd /
Gk
a carbohydrate that can be decomposed by hydrolysis into two or more molecules of monosaccharides or their derivatives; especially : one of the more complex carbohydrates (as starch or cellulose).
Cellulose is the polysaccharide providing the chief constituent of the framework of plants.

polysemous

adj
/ ˌpālēˈsēməs /
Gk + Gk
having many meanings.
Puns are based on the humorous use of polysemous words.

polysyllabic

adj
/ ˌpālēsəˈlabɪk /
Gk > L + Ecf
having three or usually four or more units of spoken language.
Martha often uses polysyllabic words to impress her teachers.

pomaceous

pomade

n
/ pəˈmäd /
L > It > F
a perfumed ointment.
Mr. Underwood was partial to sweet-smelling pomade.

pomander

n
/ pōˈmandə(r) /
L > F > E
a mixture of perfumed or aromatic substances usually made in a ball and enclosed in a perforated bag or box.
Gayle included a pomander in the chest containing her winter clothes.

pomegranate

n
/ ˈpām(ə)ˌgranət /
L > F > E + L
a thick-skinned several-celled reddish berry that is about the size of an orange and has many seeds in a crimson acid pulp.
The bright red splotches on Julia's hands testified to her having eaten a pomegranate.

pomological

adj
/ ˌpōməˈlājəkəl /
Gk > L
of or relating to the science of the cultivation of fruits.
Certainly in the pomological sense, one bad apple eventually spoils the whole bunch.

pompadour

n
/ ˈpämpəˌdō(ə)r /
F name
a man's style of hairdressing in which the hair is combed back so as to stand up straight.
Chuck spent an hour in front of the mirror preening his pompadour.

pompous

ponderous

adj
/ ˈpänd(ə)rəs /
L > F > E
unwieldy or clumsy because of weight and size.
Roy could barely lift the ponderous ancient weapon.

pontificalibus

pontificate

v
/ pänˈtifəkāt /
L
deliver oracular utterances or dogmatic opinions.
Randy proceeded to pontificate for five minutes on the dangers of listening to loud music.

populous

porcelain

n
/ ˈpōrs(ə)lən /
L > It > F
[has near homonym: purslane] a hard, fine-grained, white ceramic ware that has a hard paste body, is fired at a high temperature, and is used especially for table and ornamental wares.
Many old houses have doorknobs made of porcelain.

porcine

porcinely

adv
/ ˈpōr.sɪnlē /
L + Ecf
swinishly.
In Wanda's opinion, Bart treated his hosts porcinely.

porcupine

n
/ ˈpōrkyəˌpɪn /
L > It > F > E
any of various relatively large rodents having stiff sharp erect bristles mingled with the hair.
The yelping dog's snout was covered with quills from a porcupine.

porphyry

n
/ ˈpō(r)fərē /
Gk > L
an Egyptian rock consisting of feldspar crystals embedded in a dark red or purple groundmass much used by the ancient Romans.
At the archaeological dig Carlo unearthed a broken urn made of porphyry.

porpoise

n
/ ˈpōrpəs /
L > F > E
a small, friendly whale with teeth and a short, rounded snout and that somewhat resembles a dolphin.
Miles saw a porpoise at the aquarium.

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porraceous

adj
/ pŏ'rāshəs /
L

having the clear light green color of leek leaves.

The deep green of the kitchen countertops seemed to tint the walls a porraceous color.

porridge

n
/ 'pŏrij /
F > E

a soft food made by boiling grains or legumes in milk or water until thick.

The campers were extremely hungry, and each consumed a large bowl of porridge.

porringer

portcullis

n
/ pŏrt'kələs /
F > E

a large grating of iron bars or heavy timbers suspended by chains over the gateway of a fortified place and lowered between grooves to prevent passage.

The guard quickly lowered the portcullis after the king and his knights had passed through the gate.

portentous

adj
/ ,pŏr'tentəs /
L

of, relating to, or constituting something that foreshadows a coming event : ominous.

Oliver's dream proved portentous.

portiere

portmanteau

n
/ pŏrt'mant(ə) /
L > F

a large traveling bag.

The clown removed an enormous pumpkin from his portmanteau.

portraiture

portrayal

n
/ pŏr'trā(ə)l /
L > F > E

the act of representing something in a drawing or painting.

Vincent used witnesses' descriptions in his portrayal of the criminal.

posology

n
/ pŏ'säləjē /
Gk

a branch of medical science concerned with dosage.

Derek took several classes in posology for his pharmacy degree.

posse

n
/ 'päsē /
L

a detachment or body (as of police) often assigned to or brought together because of a particular emergency.

Noah's favorite part of westerns is when the marshal and his posse corner the bandit.

possessed

v
/ pə'zest /
L

influenced or controlled by something (as an evil spirit or a passion).

During the race the winning horse ran as if he were possessed by a demon.

possessor

posset

v
/ 'pästät /
E

[has near homonym: posit] pamper with delicacies.

Aunt Mimi expects everyone to posset Pedro, her chihuahua.

postcibal

adj
/ pŏs(t)'sibəl /
L

occurring after a meal.

George and Harriet hired a vocalist for the banquet's postcibal entertainment.

posterity

n
/ pä'sterədē /
L > F > E

all succeeding generations : future time.

The seventh grade class put together a time capsule for posterity.

postern

n
/ 'pŏstə(r)n /
L > F > E

a back door or gate.

The thief escaped through the postern without being detected.

posthumous

adj
/ 'päschəməs /
L

published after the death of the author.

Ironically, the novelist's posthumous works were his most popular.

postprandial

adj
/ ,pŏs(t)'prandēəl /
L > E

of, relating to, or occurring in the period after a meal.

After the huge dinner, George and Barbara decided to take a leisurely postprandial walk.

posttension

v
/ pŏs(t)'tenchən /
L + L

apply stress to (reinforcing steel) after concrete has set.

The construction crew will posttension the steel in the columns.

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postulate

n
/ 'päsçələt /
L

an underlying hypothesis or assumption.

Most cosmologists base their work upon the postulate of the Big Bang.

posture

n
/ 'päsçə(r) /
L

characteristic position or bearing of the body.

A dancer's posture is as important in ballroom dancing as it is in ballet.

potable

adj
/ 'pōdəbəl /
L

suitable, safe, or prepared for drinking.

Chemicals are often added to water supplies to make them potable.

potamology

potassium

n
/ pə'tasēəm /
L

an element of the alkali metal group.

Bananas and potatoes are good dietary sources of potassium.

potatoes

n pl
/ pə'tādōz /
Taino > Sp

the edible starchy tubers of plants of the genus *Solanum* and species *tuberosum*.

For dinner Harry made roast beef and baked potatoes.

potentate

n
/ 'pōt'n.tāt /
L

one who possesses great power or sway : ruler.

Barry acts more like a potentate than a leader in his role as class president.

potpourri

n
/ 'pōpərə /
F

a jar of flower petals mixed with spices and used for scent or perfume.

Stella kept a potpourri on her kitchen windowsill.

poultice

n
/ 'pōltəs /
L

a soft mass usually heated and spread on cloth for application to inflamed areas to supply moist warmth, relieve pain, or act as a counterirritant.

Aunt Julia's remedy for rashes or skin problems of any sort is a mustard poultice.

poultry

pourboire

n
/ pürb'wär /
L > F

a tip or gratuity.

When he checked out of the hotel, Jonathan left a pourboire for the chambermaid.

pourparler

poussette

v
/ pü'set /
F

swing in a semicircle hands joined with one's partner.

The caller instructed the couples to poussette before changing partners.

poussin

n
/ pü'saⁿ /
L > F

a young chicken of about one pound weight for table use : a small broiler.

Celeste was not sure how to season and cook a poussin, so she consulted a cookbook by Julia Child.

praline

n
/ 'prälēn /
F name

a round patty of creamy brown sugar containing pecan meats.

The praline is a favorite candy of the southern United States.

precaution

precautionary

adj
/ prē'kōshə.nerē /
L

advising, suggesting, or using caution beforehand.

Vaccinating children against polio is a wise precautionary measure.

precedent

n
/ 'presədənt /
L

something done or said that may serve as an example or rule to authorize or justify a subsequent act of the same or an analogous kind.

As far as Sasha knew, the decision to allow a girl to play on the football team was without precedent.

precept

n
/ 'prē.sept /
L

a command or principle intended as a general rule of action.

Mark owes his success to the precept that it never hurts to ask a question.

precibal

adj
/ prē'sībəl /
L

occurring before meals.

The host graciously proposed a precibal toast to the guest of honor.

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precinct

n
/ 'prē.sɪŋ(k)t /
L > E

a part of a territory (as a city)
having definite bounds or functions
and often established for
administrative purposes.

*In this precinct voters cast their
ballots at the middle school.*

preciosity

precipice

n
/ 'presəpās /
L

a very steep, perpendicular, or
overhanging place (as the face of a
cliff).

*Just looking down from the
precipice made Gloria dizzy.*

precipitately

precisionist

precocious

precocity

n
/ prē'kāsədə /
L

exceptionally early or premature
development; especially : early
development of the mental powers.
*The precocity of five-year-old
Stella becomes evident after just a
few minutes of talking with her.*

preconceive

precursor

n
/ prē'kərsər /
L

one that precedes another in an
office or process : forerunner.
*Greek geometry was the precursor
to modern calculus.*

precursory

predator

n
/ 'predədə(r) /
L

an animal that preys on or devours
other animals for its food.

*An insect may be of value because
it is a predator on another insect
that is a pest to humans.*

predecessor

n
/ 'predəsəsə(r) /
L

one who comes before in order of
time; especially : a person who has
previously occupied a position or
office to which another has
succeeded.

*The employees are hoping that the
new CEO is more labor-friendly
than his predecessor.*

predestine

predilection

n
/ .prəd'lekshən /
L

inclination, liking, preference.

*Moirā has a predilection for
bittersweet chocolate.*

preeminent

adj
/ .prē'emənənt /
L

having paramount rank, dignity, or
importance : first, outstanding,
supreme.

*The attorney introduced her expert
witness as the preeminent
researcher in his field.*

preen

v
/ 'prēn /
E

trim or dress with or as if with the
beak or the tongue.

*Kitty liked to sit and preen herself
in the afternoon sun.*

prefatorily

preferential

prejudicial

adj
/ .prejə'dishəl /
L > E

leading to premature judgment or
unwarranted opinion.

*The jury was sequestered in order
to prevent exposure to any
prejudicial material.*

preliminary

n
/ prē'limənērē /
L

something introductory or
preparatory.

*As a preliminary to a video there is
usually a warning regarding its
use.*

premeditation

n
/ prē.mədə'tāshən /
L

consideration or planning of an act
beforehand that shows intent to
commit that act.

*The prosecutor's position is that
the accused killer acted with
premeditation and thus should be
charged with first-degree murder.*

premonition

n
/ .premə'nishən /
L

anticipation of an event without
conscious reason.

*Yolanda had a premonition that she
would win the lottery.*

prepollent

preposterous

prerogative

n
/ prē'rägədɪv /
L

a special right or privilege
belonging to a person, group, or
class of individuals.

*It is the prerogative of the president
of the United States to have Air
Force One at his disposal.*

presage

presbyter

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prescience

n
/ 'prēsh(ē)ən(t)s /
L
the human faculty or quality of being able to anticipate the occurrence or nature of future events : foresight.
In 1955 the city authorities had the prescience to set aside land for a future park site.

prescient

adj
/ 'prēsh(ē)ənt /
L
having foreknowledge : characterized by foresight.
Carrie seemed unusually prescient as she sat smugly under her umbrella on what was once a clear afternoon.

presentient

adj
/ prē'senchənt /
L
apprehensive in advance : feeling or perceiving beforehand.
Kate was presentient of her lost dog's return.

prestidigitation

prestidigitator

n
/ ,prestə'dijə.tādə(r) /
L&F&It
a performer of sleight of hand.
The prestidigitator mystified the children by making cards appear and disappear.

presumably

adv
/ prē'z(y)üməblē /
L
by reasonable assumption : probably.
Mrs. Janko is presumably going to the Christmas party this year.

presume

v
/ prē'z(y)üm /
L&F > E
accept as true or credible without proof.
If it rains that day, Nancy will presume that our tennis game will be postponed.

pretentious

adj
/ prē'tenchəs /
L > F
making or possessing claims (as of excellence, superiority, greatness).
The pretentious candidate found little support among the common people.

preterition

n
/ ,predə'rishən /
L
the act or an instance of passing by or over without mention, notice, or attention.
"I won't even mention his lesser crimes," cried the orator in preterition.

prevalent

prevaricate

v
/ prē'varəkāt /
L
deviate from the truth : speak equivocally or evasively : lie.
Emmy tends to prevaricate whenever the teacher questions her behavior.

priest

n
/ 'prēst /
Gk > L > E
one who performs sacrificial, ritualistic, mediatorial, interpretative, or ministerial functions especially as an authorized or ordained religious functionary or official minister of a particular religion.
A Greek Orthodox priest, unlike a Catholic priest, is allowed to be married.

primaveral

primitive

adj
/ 'primədɪv /
L
of or relating to the earliest age or period of something.
Primitive humans fashioned tools from rocks.

primordial

adj
/ prɪ'mò(r)dēəl /
L
existing at or from the beginning : first created or developed : earliest, primeval.
Blake's story depicted a creature emerging from the primordial ooze.

principal

adj
/ 'prin(t)səpəl /
L
[has homonym: principle] most important, consequential, or influential.
The map showed principal roads, towns and cities, and locations of historic sites.

pristine

adj
/ 'prɪstēn /
L
belonging to the earliest period or state.
The antique chest was in pristine condition.

private

privilege

n
/ 'prɪv(ə)lɪj /
L
a peculiar or personal advantage or right.
Mr. Neng grants his neighbors the privilege of fishing in his pond.

proaulion

n
/ prō'olēən /
Gk
a portico or colonnade that opens into the narthex of a church or temple.
Pine garlands adorned the proaulion.

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proboscis

n
/ prŏ'bäsəs /
Gk > L
the flexible conspicuously long
snout of some animals; especially :
the trunk of an elephant.
*An elephant's proboscis can
support great weight.*

probouleutic

procedure

n
/ prəs'ējər /
L > F > E
a particular way of doing or of
going about the accomplishment of
something.
*Even though he carefully followed
all the steps in the procedure, Jack
still couldn't retrieve his messages.*

proceed

procellous

adj
/ prŏ'seləs /
L
stormy.
*There are many dangers for a small
boat on a procellous sea.*

proclivity

n
/ prŏ'klivədə /
L
an inclination or predisposition
toward something.
*After spending a couple of days in
Las Vegas, Conan decided he had
no proclivity for gambling.*

procrustean

adj
/ prŏ'krəstēən /
Gk name > L
marked by complete disregard of
individual differences and by
violent forcing into conformity
with something.
*The principal's procrustean
attitude left no room for a student
government at the school.*

proctor

procumbent

procurable

prodigal

adj
/ 'prädəgəl /
L + EcF
given to reckless extravagance.
*Victor has written a memoir of his
prodigal youth in Europe.*

prodigious

adj
/ prəd'ijəs /
L
extraordinary in bulk, extent,
quantity, or degree : enormous,
immense.
*The public works crews were
complimented for coping with this
year's prodigious job of snow
plowing.*

producible

proem

n
/ 'prŏ'em /
Gk > L > F > E
a preliminary discourse to a longer
piece of writing.
*The excited scholar was sure he
had found a previously unknown
proem to Plato's Republic.*

profane

v
/ prŏ'fān /
L
treat as not sacred : desecrate.
*Michael was told sternly not to
profane the holy water font by
throwing pennies in it.*

profiterole

profligacy

n
/ 'präfləgəsē /
L
reckless wastefulness and
extravagance.
*Arno's profligacy during his
sophomore year caused him to
forfeit his scholarship.*

profuse

adj
/ prə'fyüs /
L
overly plentiful : bountiful.
*Buttons on the entertainer's suit
were so profuse that not another
one could be placed anywhere.*

progenitor

n
/ prŏ'jenədə(r) /
L
an ancestor in the direct line :
forefather.
*Tad assumed his unusual height
was inherited from a particularly
tall progenitor.*

progeny

prognosis

n
/ präg'nŏsəs /
Gk
the act or art of foretelling the
course of a disease.
*Although the patient's surgery was
touch and go, Dr. Symm's
prognosis was for complete
recovery.*

prognostication

prognosticator

n
/ (,)präg'nästəkādə(r) /
L
one that forecasts from signs or
indications.
*The local prognosticator predicted
a balmy spring weekend.*

prolegomenon

n
/ ,prŏlə'gämənən /
Gk
a reading or group of readings or
intellectual exercises leading to
further understanding,
development, or advance in
knowledge or technique in a
subject matter field.
*Dr. Taylor's course in art history
constituted a carefully planned
prolegomenon for students who
would be choosing art as their
major.*

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proletarian

adj
/ ˌprələˈterēən /
L

of, relating to, or representative of the lowest social or economic class of a community.

Gina's proletarian background proved to be an asset in her campaign for mayor.

proliferation

prolific

adj
/ prəˈlifək /
L > F

occurring or existing in large numbers : abundant, profuse.
The article's prolific footnotes hampered rather than aided Tina's comprehension.

prolix

adj
/ ˈprɒˌliks /
L

given to verbosity and diffuseness in speaking or writing : long-winded.

Quentin's prolix style was not well suited to a short-answer exam.

prolonger

n
/ prəˈlɒŋə(r) /
L > E

one who lengthens in time, extends in duration, or draws out.

Dr. Murphy kept his remarks short because he did not want to be the prolonger of the meeting.

prolusionary

promenade

n
/ ˌpräməˈnād /
L > F

a leisurely walk or ride especially in a public place for pleasure, display, or exercise.

After the meeting Gilda and Jaime took a promenade down Main Street.

prominent

promontory

n
/ ˈprämən.tōrē /
L

a high point of land projecting into a body of water.

The architect designed a home that blended in with the rocky promontory.

promulgate

v
/ ˈpräməl.gāt /
L
make known (as a decree, a dogma) by open declaration : proclaim.
The high school principal attempted to promulgate the attendance policy many times, but the seniors mostly ignored him.

pronounceable

adj
/ prəˈnaʊn(t)səbəl /
L > F > E + Ecf
capable of being pronounced.
A word that Dr. Cameron finds easily pronounceable could tie your tongue into knots.

propaedeutic

adj
/ ˌpröpēˈd(y)üdik /
Gk
needed as preparation for learning or study.
Reading is a propaedeutic skill.

propaganda

n
/ ˌpräpəˈgandə /
L
dissemination of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.
In 1941 President Roosevelt warned that the democratic way of life was being assailed by secret spreading of poisonous propaganda.

propagate

v
/ ˈpräpə.gāt /
L
cause to spread out and affect a greater number or greater area : foster the spread of.
Chris uses e-mail to propagate news among his friends.

propensity

n
/ prəˈpen(t)sədē /
L
a natural inclination.
Most cats have a propensity to be curious.

propinquity

n
/ prəˈpɪŋkwədē /
L
nearness in place : proximity.
The roots of the trees in close propinquity to the new sidewalk will soon ruin it.

propitiate

propitious

adj
/ prəˈpɪshəs /
L > E
being of good omen : auspicious, encouraging, favorable.
Ray's perfect score on his science test was a propitious start for the new school year.

propolis

n
/ ˈpräpələs /
Gk > L
a brownish resinous material of waxy consistency collected by bees from the buds of trees and used as a cement.
A honeycomb is constructed from beeswax and propolis.

proportion

n
/ prəˈpɔrshən /
L
relative size or portion.
The proportion of local, domestic, and foreign news varies considerably on television.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

proposition

n
/ ˌprəpəˈzɪʃən /
L

a project, plan, undertaking, or situation requiring some action.
The highway superintendent presented his proposition for spring street repair to the mayor.

proprietor

propulsion

prorogue

v
/ prəˈrɒɡ /
L > F
defer, postpone.
Parliament decided to prorogue discussion of the bill until after the election.

prosaical

adj
/ prəˈzɑːkəl /
L
of, relating to, or written in the ordinary language of speaking and writing.
Jonathan's Veteran's Day poem was more memorable than the major's 20-minute prosaical speech.

prosateur

n
/ ˌprɒzəˈtər /
L > It > F
a writer of prose.
Scott's fountain pen belonged to a famous prosateur of the 19th century.

proscenium

n
/ prəˈsɛnɪəm /
Gk
the wall that separates the stage from the auditorium in a modern theater.
An apron stage juts out from the proscenium.

prosciutto

n
/ prəˈʃiʊd(ɪ)ɔ /
L > It
dry-cured spiced ham.
Melon slices wrapped in prosciutto make a classic appetizer.

proselyte

n
/ ˈpræsəˌlɪt /
Gk > L
one who has been converted from one religious faith to another.
Edith Stein, canonized in 1998 as Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, was a proselyte to Catholicism.

proselyting

v
/ ˈpræsəˌlɪtɪŋ /
Gk
recruiting members for an institution, team, or group especially by the offer of special inducements.
Though it does not engage in proselyting, the college usually turns out fine basketball teams.

prosody

n
/ ˈpræsədə /
Gk
the study of versification.
The prosody of Horace's first ten odes was Humbert's downfall on the exam.

prospectus

n
/ prəˈspektəs /
L
a preliminary printed statement describing a business or other enterprise and distributed to potential buyers, investors, or participants.
According to the prospectus, the scooter market increased threefold in the last year.

prospicience

n
/ prəˈspɪʃən(t)s /
L
the act of looking forward : foresight.
Qualities associated with leadership usually include prospicience.

protagonist

n
/ prəˈtəɡənəst /
Gk
one who takes the leading part in a drama.
The protagonist was portrayed with his faults as well as his virtues.

protean

adj
/ ˈprɒdɛən /
Gk name
[has near homonym: protein]
readily assuming different shapes or forms.
An amoeba is a protean organism.

protocol

n
/ ˈprɒdəˌkɒl /
Gk + Gk
a rigid long-established code prescribing complete deference to superior rank and strict adherence to due order of precedence and precisely correct procedure.
Lieutenant Griffin was censured for violating protocol after he got up in the middle of the meal without excusing himself.

protuberant

provenance

n
/ ˈprävənən(t)s /
L
place of origin.
The lecturer maintained that Africa was the provenance of all human life.

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provincial

adj

/ prəˈvɪnchəl /

L

exhibiting the ways and manners of a province or rural district : unsophisticated.

Katie's open midwestern

friendliness was labeled

"provincial" by the snooty big city dwellers.

proviso

n

/ prəˈvɪ(ː)zō /

L

an article or clause (as in a statute, contract, or grant) that introduces a condition, qualification, or limitation and usually begins with the word provided.

The grant's proviso was that the money would be awarded only if the student maintained an A average in his studies.

provost

n

/ ˈprɒ.vɒst /

L > E

a high-ranking administrative officer of an American university.

Professor Myers met with the provost to discuss the new curriculum.

prowess

n

/ ˈpraʊəs /

F > E

distinguished bravery : gallantry.

The knight's prowess on the battlefield was surpassed only by the king's.

proximity

n

/ prækˈsɪməde /

L > F

the quality or state of being close.

The Fletchers bought the house on Vine Street because of its proximity to neighborhood schools.

prudent

prytanis

psalmody

n

/ ˈsäl(l)mədə /

Gk

the act, practice, or art of singing sacred songs in worship.

Although the New England

Puritans did away with church

organs and instruments, they kept their psalmody.

psilanthropy

n

/ sɪˈlan(t)θrəpe /

Gk + Gk

a doctrine of the merely human existence of Christ.

A well-known subscriber to

psilanthropy was Thomas

Jefferson, who regarded Jesus as a great moral teacher but not as a divine being.

psilosis

n

/ sɪˈlɒsəs /

Gk

a falling out of hair.

Jerome's psilosis was a side effect of chemotherapy.

psoriasis

psyche

n

/ ˈsɪ(ː)ke /

Gk

soul, self, personality.

Brianna loves music so much that

she considers it part of her psyche.

psychedelic

adj

/ ˌsɪkəˈdelɪk /

Gk + Gk

very bright in color.

Kate showed Mary a psychedelic

Peter Max poster she had saved as a memento of the '60s.

psychiatry

n

/ səˈkɪətrē /

Gk + L

a branch of medicine that deals with the science of treating mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders.

The concept of multiple

personalities is of special interest to Helen, who plans to pursue a career in psychiatry.

psychological

psychomachy

n

/ sɪˈkäməkē /

Gk > L

a conflict of the soul (as with the body or between good and evil).

Countless novels have as their theme the psychomachy within the hero as he struggles to do right.

psychrometer

n

/ sɪˈkrämədə(r) /

Gk + Gk

a hygrometer whose operation depends on two similar thermometers with the bulb of one being kept wet so that it is cooled as a result of evaporation and shows a temperature lower than that of the dry-bulb thermometer. *Greg built a crude psychrometer out of two old thermometers and some cotton gauze.*

psychrophilic

adj

/ ˌsɪkrəˈfɪlɪk /

Gk

thriving at a relatively low temperature.

The psychrophilic bacteria died when the refrigerator's compressor failed.

ptarmic

n

/ ˈtärmik /

Gk > L

a substance that causes sneezing. *Andrea is extremely allergic to dust, an everpresent ptarmic difficult for her to avoid.*

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ptarmigan

n
/ 'tärmägən /
ScotGael
any of various grouses of northern regions having completely feathered feet.
"Why did the ptarmigan cross the road?" asked Martha.

pteridology

pterodactyl

n
/ ,terə'daktəl /
Gk
any of numerous extinct flying reptiles having a featherless wing membrane and a rudimentary tail.
The museum's dinosaur exhibit includes a mechanical replica of a pterodactyl.

ptomaine

n
/ 'tō.mān /
Gk > It
any of various organic bases some of which are poisonous and which are formed by the action of putrefactive bacteria on nitrogenous matter.
About three hours after he had eaten, Dunstan realized that his lunch had been tainted with ptomaine.

ptosis

n
/ 'tōsəs /
Gk
[has near homonym: tussis] a sagging or prolapse of an organ or part; specifically : drooping of the upper eyelid.
The film star had a clear case of ptosis.

publication

puce

pucellas

n pl
/ pyə'seləs /
It
a spring tool resembling tongs and used for shaping molten glass.
With the pucellas the glassblower grasped the lip of the vase and turned it over in a graceful curve.

puchero

n
/ pü'che.rō /
L > Sp
a Latin American boiled dinner or stew containing beef, sausage, bacon, and various vegetables.
Olivia sampled puchero at an Argentine restaurant.

puerile

adj
/ 'pyü(ə)rəl /
L
childish or immature.
Mrs. Yolton was not impressed by Tommy's puerile behavior.

puerilely

adv
/ 'pyü(ə)rəl(l)ē /
L + Ecf
[Note: Could be confused with purely.] in an immature or childish manner.
Hunter reacted puerilely when his mother told him it was time for bed.

pugilist

n
/ 'pyüjələst /
L + E
a professional boxer.
Years as a pugilist took their toll on Leo's coordination.

pugilistic

pugnacious

adj
/ pəg'nāshəs /
L
having a quarrelsome or belligerent nature.
Bushpigs are pugnacious enough to put up a fight against a leopard.

puissance

puissant

adj
/ 'pyüəs'nt /
F
strong, powerful.
Enduring Adria's piano practice called on all of her mother's puissant patience.

pulchritude

pullulate

v
/ 'pəlyə.lāt /
L
swarm, teem.
At rush hour the train station began to pullulate with activity.

pulmonary

adj
/ 'pül.mə.nerē /
L
of, relating to, or associated with the lungs.
Uncle Rob's pulmonary disease requires that he breathe pure oxygen at all times.

pulsatile

adj
/ 'pəlsəd'əl /
L
beating, throbbing.
The heart is a pulsatile muscular organ that maintains the flow of blood.

pultaceous

adj
/ ,pəl'tāshəs /
L + Ecf
having a consistency like that of porridge.
Serena dislikes rice pudding because of its pultaceous consistency.

pulverize

pulverulent

adj
/ pəl'veryələnt /
L
consisting of or reducible to fine powder.
Chalk is a pulverulent deposit of calcium carbonate.

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pumice

n
/ 'pəməs /
L
[has homonyms: pomace and pumace] hardened volcanic froth.
Ground pumice is sometimes used as an abrasive ingredient in soap.

pumpnickel

n
/ 'pʌmpə(r).nikəl /
G
a sourdough bread made with rye and wheat flours.
Sam's favorite sandwich is ham and Swiss on pumpnickel.

punchinello

punctilious

adj
/ .pʌŋ(k)'tilēəs /
L
marked by precise exact accordance with the details of codes or conventions.
Inflexible people often pay punctilious attention to rules of etiquette.

punctual

adj
/ 'pʌŋ(k)ch(əw)əl /
L
marked by exact adherence to an appointed time.
Everybody was punctual for the wedding, and all behaved charmingly.

punctuation

punditry

pungent

adj
/ 'pʌnjənt /
L
causing a sharp sensation : pricking, irritating, acrid.
The pungent odor of wet dog sent the guests out for fresh air.

punishment

punitive

purgatory

purlieu

n
/ 'pɜrl(i)yü /
F
a place of resort : haunt.
Vince can be found most evenings in the local pool hall, his favorite purlieu.

purlain

v
/ pə(r)'lōin /
L > F > E
appropriate wrongfully and often under circumstances that involve a breach of trust.
The district manager was fired when he was caught trying to purloin company earnings.

purportedly

pursued

pursuer

n
/ pə(r)'süə(r) /
E
one that chases or follows after.
By the middle of the race, Gail had outdistanced her nearest pursuer by two yards.

purveyor

n
/ pə(r)'vāə(r) /
L > F > E
one who provides supplies of food or whose business is to make provisions for the table : caterer.
The reception was delayed because the purveyor got stuck in traffic.

pusillanimous

adj
/ .pyüsə'lanəməs /
L
lacking or showing a lack of courage, manly strength, and resolution : marked by mean-spirited and contemptible timidity.
Edgar never forgave his brother's pusillanimous desertion during the war.

putrescent

adj
/ pyü'tres'nt /
L
decaying, rotting.
The disagreeable odor was coming from the putrescent skunk carcass.

putrid

adj
/ 'pyütrəd /
L
in an advanced state of decomposition : rotten.
The putrid heap of kitchen scraps will compost in no time.

putsch

n
/ 'püch /
imit G
a secretly plotted and suddenly executed attempt to overthrow a government or governing body.
The right-wing nationalist group plotted a putsch for early September.

putty

n
/ 'pædē /
F
[has homonym: puttee] a cement usually made of whiting and boiled linseed oil beaten or kneaded to the consistency of dough and used in fastening glass in sashes and stopping crevices in woodwork.
The window repairman smoothed the new putty and inserted the double-paned glass into the sash.

puzzling

adj
/ 'pəz(ə)liŋ /
unknown + Ecf
mystifying : difficult to understand.
The puzzling directions in the instruction manual rendered it useless.

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pylon

n
/ 'pī.län /
Gk
a tower for supporting either end of a wire over a long span.
The steel pylon at the north end of the footbridge was showing dangerous signs of wear.

pylorus

n
/ pī'lörəs /
Gk > L
the opening in a vertebrate from the stomach into the intestine.
The pylorus regulates the flow of food and liquid from the stomach.

pyramid

n
/ 'pī.rə.mīd /
Gk
an ancient massive structure of huge stone blocks found especially in Egypt having typically a square ground plan, outside walls in the form of four triangles that meet in a point at the top, and inner sepulchral chambers.
The sight of a pyramid on the desert horizon took Rico's breath away.

pyre

pyrethrum

n
/ pī'rēthrəm /
Gk > L
any of various chrysanthemums with finely divided and often aromatic leaves.
The pyrethrum is a source of a natural insecticide.

pyretogenic

adj
/ .pī.rətō'jenik /
Gk
inducing fever.
Because Jamie's illness was not pyretogenic, his mom did not initially believe that he was sick.

pyrite

pyrosis

n
/ pī'rōsəs /
Gk
heartburn.
Gill had a wicked case of pyrosis after eating at Billy Joe Bob's Char and Grill.

pyrotechnics

n pl
/ .pī.rə'tekniks /
Gk
a display of fireworks.
The amusement park had a show including pyrotechnics every night.

Pyrrhic

adj
/ 'pīrik /
Gk > L
[has homonym: pyric] of, relating to, or resembling that of Pyrrhus, a king who sustained heavy losses in defeating the Romans.
When the team's star quarterback broke his leg in the game it won against its toughest rival, the win was indeed a Pyrrhic victory.

pythonic

adj
/ pī'thānik /
Gk > L
of, relating to, or like a python : huge, monstrous.
In classical mythology, the god Apollo killed a pythonic serpent at Delphi.

quackery

quadragenarian

n
/ .kwādrəjə'na(a)rēən /
L
a person who is 40 or more and less than 50 years old.
Evelyn became a grandmother while she was a quadragenarian.

quadrangle

n
/ 'kwā.drəŋgəl /
L > F > E
a square or rectangular enclosure or court especially when surrounded by buildings (as in some schools and colleges).
Norm sailed a pie tin across the quadrangle.

quadrant

quadrennial

quadrilateral

n
/ .kwādrə'lādərəl /
L
a plane figure of four sides and consequently four angles.
The perimeter of a baseball diamond forms a quadrilateral.

quadrille

n
/ kwā'dril /
F
a four-handed form of a card game played throughout Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries.
Mrs. Bates was a very old lady, almost past everything but tea and quadrille.

quadrumanous

adj
/ kwā'drūmənəs /
L
having four hands.
Luke complained that a bass player would have to be quadrumanous to master the piece he was given to play.

quagmire

n
/ 'kwag.mī(ə)r /
unknown + ON > E
a complex or precarious position where disengagement is difficult.
In his position as protocol officer, Russell often found himself in a quagmire of delicate relationships.

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quail

n
/ 'kwāl /
L > F > E
a migratory game bird of Europe, Asia, and Africa that is about seven inches long.
The vintner decided to name his wine after the quail because the birds were so plentiful on his property.

quaint

adj
/ 'kwānt /
L > F > E
uncommon, old-fashioned, or unfamiliar but often agreeable or attractive in character, appearance, or action.
In the middle of the ultramodern mall was a quaint tearoom that drew customers from miles around.

qualitative

adj
/ 'kwälə.tādiv /
L
of, relating to, or involving quality or kind.
Although the essay was judged to be short quantitatively, it was a qualitative masterpiece.

qualm

quandary

n
/ 'kwänd(ə)rē /
unknown
a state of perplexity or doubt : dilemma.
Taylor's advice left Miriam in more of a quandary than she was in when she sought his help.

quantum

quaquaversal

adj
/ kwāk wə'vərsəl /
L
dipping from a center to all points of the compass.
From the air, the quaquaversal shape of the Indian mound could be seen.

quarantine

quarrel

quarrelsome

adj
/ 'kwör(ə)lsəm /
L > F > E + E
apt or disposed to argue : contentious.
If Angie weren't so quarrelsome, she might have more friends.

quarry

quartz

quash

quasi

quaternion

n
/ kwə'tərnēən /
L
a set of four parts, things, or persons.
The auto parts store offered a special price on a quaternion of tires.

quatorzain

n
/ kə'tòr.zān /
F
a poem of 14 lines that resembles a sonnet but lacks strict sonnet structure.
When his English teacher was satisfied with Walter's quatorzain, she encouraged him to write a sonnet.

quatrefoil

n
/ 'kadə(r).föil /
F
a conventionalized representation of a flower with four petals or of a leaf with four leaflets.
The Gothic window featured a quatrefoil at the top of its arch.

quay

quebracho

n
/ kə'bra(ç)chō /
Sp
a tree that is native to Argentina and is used as a source of tannin and in dyeing.
In Argentina grows the quebracho, which literally means "ax-breaker," so named because its wood is so hard.

quell

quellable

adj
/ 'kweləbəl /
E
capable of being quieted or allayed.
The restless crowd proved quellable at the sight of the entertainer they had come to see.

quench

v
/ 'kwench /
E
put out (as a fire or a light).
For three days the firefighters tried to quench the blaze.

quenelle

n
/ kə'nel /
G > F
a ball or oval of meat stuffing cooked in boiling water or stock and served as a garnish or as a separate dish.
Martha served a quenelle of chicken in brown onion sauce as an appetizer.

quercitron

n
/ 'kwər.sitrən /
L
a black oak or the bark of this tree used in tanning and dyeing.
When used as a dye, quercitron turns fabrics yellow.

querimonious

adj
/ kwərə'mōnēəs /
L
habitually complaining.
Luther was known for his querimonious temperament.

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quern

n
/ 'kwərn /
E

a primitive mill for grinding grain consisting of two circular stones with the upper one being turned by hand.

Some Tibetan villagers still grind wheat into flour by using a quern.

querulous

adj
/ 'kwɛr(y)ələs /
L

expressing or suggestive of complaint : fretful, whining.

As the crow fluttered from the tree, it gave a loud, querulous caw.

querulously

query

quest

n
/ 'kwest /
L > F > E

an act or instance of searching : expedition, pursuit, venture.

In "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," the horseman rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head.

question

v
/ 'kwes(h)chən /
L

express doubt about : dispute.

Corporal Sage decided he had to question Sergeant McGonigle's orders.

questionnaire

queue

queuer

quibble

quiche

n
/ 'kēsh /
G > F

a baked custard pie usually having an added savory ingredient (as chopped ham, seafood, or vegetables).

Lois served soup and a seafood quiche for lunch today.

quiddity

n
/ 'kwɪdədē /
L

the essential nature or ultimate form of something.

The photographer was noted for her ability to capture the quiddity of her subjects.

quidnunc

n
/ 'kwɪd.nəŋk /
L

one that is avidly curious and given to speculating especially about ephemeral or petty things.

Every neighborhood seems to have a quidnunc.

quiescent

quietus

n
/ kwɪ'ēdəs /
L

final discharge or acquittance (as from debt or obligation) : final settlement.

The judge is expected to rule tomorrow on a quietus in Mr. Ford's civil case.

quill

n
/ 'kwɪl /
E

a bird's feather; especially : one of the large stiff feathers of a bird's wing or tail.

Jay found a beautiful quill and placed it alongside his mom's antique inkwell on her desk.

quincentennial

quincunx

n
/ 'kwɪŋkən(k)s /
L

an arrangement of five things with one at each corner and one in the middle of a square.

Any nine-block square of a chessboard will include a quincunx of either black or white blocks.

quinine

n
/ 'kwɪ.nɪn /
Quechua > Sp

a bitter alkaloid derived from cinchona bark and used in medicine especially in the form of bitter salts to reduce fever.

Quinine was a common remedy when Dr. Prentice was young.

quinquennial

adj
/ kwɪn'kwɛnēəl /
L + L
occurring at the end of every five years.

The philanthropist makes a quinquennial gift to the school.

quinsyberry

n
/ 'kwɪnzē.berē /
Gk > L > F > E + E

an Old World black currant.

Edgar mashed a quinsyberry on his sister's new yellow dress.

quintessence

n
/ kwɪn'tesⁿ(t)s /
L

the most typical example or representative : the consummate instance (as of a quality or class).

To be steadfast in the face of mortal danger is the quintessence of courage.

quire

n
/ 'kwɪ(ə)r /
L

four sheets (as of paper) folded together into eight leaves.

The teacher showed the second-graders how to make a book from a quire of paper.

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quirt

n
/ 'kwɜrt /
L > Sp

a riding whip with a short handle and a rawhide lash.

Eager to get home, Juanita urged her horse on by using the quirt.

quisling

n
/ 'kwizliŋ /

Norw name

a traitorous national who aids the invader of his country and often serves as chief agent or puppet governor.

Many French citizens thought that Marshal Petain, head of the Vichy regime during World War II, was little better than a quisling.

quiver

n
/ 'kwivə(r) /
Gmc > F > AF > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a case for carrying arrows.

The archer slung his quiver over his shoulder and set out in search of deer.

quixotic

quizzical

quizzically

adv
/ 'kwizək(ə)lē /
unknown + Ecff
in a questioning, curious manner.
Martin sat with his head quizzically tilted as the algebra teacher was explaining the new concept.

quodlibet

n
/ 'kwädləbet /
L

a subtle or debatable point; especially : a theological or scholastic question proposed for argument or disputation.
The best students in the philosophy seminar were often given a quodlibet to sharpen their debating skills.

quoits

n pl
/ 'k(w)óits /
F > E

a game played with flattened rings of iron or circles of rope that are thrown from a mark toward a pin in an attempt to ring the pin or to come as near to it as possible.
Jordan had never played quoits before but found it very similar to horseshoes.

quokka

n
/ 'kwäkä /
Australian name
a stocky Australian reddish or chestnut brown wallaby with a short tail—called also “short-tailed wallaby.”
Meggie’s pet quokka wanted to follow her everywhere.

quomodo

n
/ 'kwōmədō /
L
means, manner.

Devon claims that he lacks the quomodo to repay Philip before next month.

quondam

adj
/ 'kwändəm /
L
having been formerly.
Jared and his quondam stepbrother are still the best of friends.

quorum

n
/ 'kwōrəm /
L
the number of members of an organization who when assembled can legally transact business in the absence of the other members.
There were not enough members present at the school board meeting to constitute a quorum, so no voting took place.

quotable

adj
/ 'kwōdəbəl /
L
fit to be repeated or published.
Tonya likes to highlight quotable passages in the books she reads.

quotation

quotidian

adj
/ 'kwō'tidēən /
L
commonplace, ordinary.
Thelma rebelled against her quotidian existence.

quotient

n
/ 'kwōshənt /
L
the number resulting from the division of one number by another.
In the equation $48 \div 4 = 12$, 12 is the quotient.

rabbinate

Rabelaisian

adj
/ 'rabə'lāzēən /
F name
marked by or manifesting a gross robust humor or extravagance of caricature, characteristic of the French humorist François Rabelais.
In the 19th century many writers, including Mark Twain, were criticized for having a Rabelaisian view of life.

rachimeter

n
/ 'rākē'ämədə(r) /
Gk
an instrument for measuring spinal curvatures.
When Kate complained of back problems, her orthopedist used a rachimeter to examine her spine.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

racketeer

n
/ ˌrækə'ti(ə)r /
imit?
one who extorts money or advantages by threats of violence or blackmail.
The Justice Department was successful in prosecuting the racketeer for tax evasion.

raconteur

n
/ ˌrækən'tər /
F
one who excels in telling anecdotes : storyteller.
Mr. Backstrom is the resident raconteur at the county library.

radar

n
/ ˈræ.där /
E acronym
a radio device for locating an object.
With the help of radar, the weather bureau was able to track the storm.

radarscope

n
/ ˈrædär.sköp /
E acronym + Gk
the oscilloscope or screen serving as the visual indicator in a radar receiver.
The pilot relied on the radarscope to fly through the storm safely.

radiant

adj
/ ˈrædēənt /
L
marked by or expressive of joy, pleasure, love, confidence, or happiness.
Emily looked positively radiant when she saw her newborn sister for the first time.

radical

adj
/ ˈradəkəl /
L > E
characterized by a significant difference from the norm: extreme.
The new governor promised radical changes in the state's welfare system.

radicchio

n
/ ˌræ'dikēō /
L > It
a chicory of a red variety with variegated leaves that is used as a salad green.
Instead of lettuce, Angela always uses radicchio in her salads.

radioactive

n
/ ˌrædē.ō'ak.tiv /
L + L
of, relating to, caused by, or exhibiting the emission of radiant energy.
Radioactive materials are carefully tracked and monitored.

radioactivity

radioscopy

n
/ ˌrædē'äskəpē /
L + Gk + Ecf
direct observation of objects opaque to light by means of some other form of radiant energy (as X rays).
Upon radioscopy Thelma's fracture became clearly visible.

radius

ragamuffin

raglan

ragout

n
/ ˌrə'gü /
L > F
meat and vegetables well seasoned in a thick rich usually brown sauce.
The rich ragout made a complete meal.

raillery

n
/ ˈrälərə /
F
good-natured ridicule : mockery.
The new students soon became accustomed to the raillery of their dormitory mates.

raiment

n
/ ˈrāmənt /
E
clothing, garments.
The stranger's raiment was well-worn but clean and pressed.

raisiny

adj
/ ˈrāz'nē /
L > F > E
containing or resembling sun-dried grapes.
Taylor enjoyed the raisiny trail mix.

ramage

n
/ ˈramij /
L > F
the boughs or branches of a tree.
As soon as Buttons got out the door, she disappeared into the ramage of the big poplar.

rambunctious

adj
/ ˌram'bən(k)shəs /
E
excessively exuberant : wild, uncontrollable.
Nothing pleases a group of rambunctious youngsters more than a good pillow fight.

ramellose

adj
/ ˈramələs /
L
having little branches.
In the biology lab Carla observed the ramellose extremities of freshwater algae.

ramification

n
/ ˌraməfə'kāshən /
L
a resulting development : consequence.
Tina felt that the only negative ramification of accepting the job offer was that she would have to take a pay cut.

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rampage

v
/ 'ram.pāj /
Scots
act, rush, or storm wildly or excitedly.
Crazed fans began to rampage in the streets after their team won the championship.

rampant

adj
/ 'rampənt /
F
marked by the absence of check or restraint.
A rampant smallpox epidemic decimated the population.

ramshackle

adj
/ 'ram.shakəl /
ON > E
appearing as if ready to collapse : dilapidated, rickety.
Bonnie heard strange noises coming from the ramshackle house next door.

rancid

adj
/ 'ran(t)səd /
L
having an offensive smell or taste usually from chemical change or decomposition.
After a month at room temperature, most cheese will be rancid.

rancor

n
/ 'rəŋkə(r) /
L
vehement hatred or ill will.
Samuel's rancor flashed from his eyes.

rancorous

ransack

ransom

rantipole

adj
/ 'rantē.pōl /
D? + G > E?
characterized by a wild unruly manner or attitude.
The antics of the rantipole bear cubs amused the zoo visitors.

rapacious

rapier

rappelled

v
/ ra'peld /
L > F
[has near homonym: repelled]
descended a precipitous cliff by means of a rope.
Simon pushed off with his feet as he rappelled down the precipice.

rappelling

rapport

n
/ ra'pō(ə)r /
F
relation characterized by harmony, accord, or affinity.
Mr. Sanchez works hard to achieve rapport with all his students.

rapprochement

n
/ ra.prōsh'mä" /
F
establishment or a state of cordial relations.
The rapprochement between the country's two religious groups suffered a setback when members of one group bombed a church that belonged to the other group.

rapscallion

raptatorial

rapturous

adj
/ 'rapchərəs /
L
feeling, expressing, or marked by ecstasy : ecstatic.
Cecilia always became rapturous during the final movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

rascette

n
/ ra'set /
Ar > L > F
a line crossing the wrist below the palm of the hand that is sometimes held by palmists to provide additional indication of a strong or weak constitution.
Madame Xantha peered closely at Helen's rascette and told her she would live to be 100.

rasgado

n
/ räs'gä(,)dō /
L > Sp
the arpeggio effect produced by sweeping the strings with the thumb in guitar playing.
Rod ended his guitar solo with a resounding rasgado.

rasorial

raspberry

n
/ 'raz.berē /
unknown + E
any of various usually black or red sweet juicy edible berries.
The raspberry is highly prized for making jams and preserves.

ratafia

n
/ ra.də'fēə /
F
a small sweet biscuit made from almond paste.
May ate a ratafia with her coffee for breakfast.

rataplan

n
/ ra.də'plan /
F
the iterative sound of beating (as from a drum or the hooves of a galloping horse).
One verse of the song required the campers around the bonfire to make a rataplan by clapping their hands and slapping each thigh in turn.

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ratatouille

n
/ rătătüy /
L > F
a stew made of eggplant, tomatoes, green peppers, squash, and sometimes meat.
Marnie used vegetables from her own garden to make the ratatouille.

rathskeller

n
/ 'rät.skələ(r) /
G
a restaurant located usually below the street level and patterned after the cellar or basement of a German city hall.
There are three good restaurants on this block, but college students seem to prefer the rathskeller.

ratification

ratihabition

ratiocinate

v
/ .radē'ōs'n.āt /
L
reason according to a logical process.
A philosopher should ratiocinate strictly and rigorously.

ratiocination

ration

rational

rationale

rattlesnake

n
/ 'rad'ɫ.snāk /
E + E
any of numerous pit vipers that have a series of interlocking joints at the end of the tail which make a sharp rattling sound when vibrated.
Mr. Bergson's valuable stallion died last summer after being bitten by a rattlesnake.

raucous

adj
/ 'rōkəs /
L
disagreeably harsh or strident.
Up in one of the elms an old black crow gave its raucous cry.

ravel

ravenous

adj
/ 'rav(ə)nəs /
F
craving for satisfaction or gratification.
The children tore into the meal with a ravenous hunger.

ravigote

n
/ rävē'gōt /
L > F
a sauce or dressing colored green with spinach puree and seasoned with vinegar and a mixture of herbs.
The specialty of the seafood brunch was shrimp ravigote.

ravine

ravioli

n
/ .ravē'ōlē /
L > It
alimentary paste made in little shells or cases and stuffed (as with cheese, spinach, or meat).
Fletcher bought a package of frozen spinach ravioli and a jar of tomato sauce.

rawinsonde

rayonnant

adj
/ 'rānənt /
F
depicted with rays darting forth—used especially in heraldry.
The sun rayonnant on the Philippine flag signifies liberty and freedom.

razzia

realize

v
/ 'rēə.līz /
F
bring into existence.
With her inheritance money, Marty was able to realize her dream of owning a small business.

realm

realpolitik

n
/ rā'äl.pōlē'tēk /
(L + Gk) > G
politics based on practical factors as distinguished from theoretical objectives.
Some analysts credit realpolitik for the increase in voter participation.

realschule

realty

n
/ 'rē(ə)ltē /
L > F > E
land and its permanently affixed buildings or other structures together with its improvements and its natural assets (as minerals, crops, waters).
Aurora built a large business in corporate realty.

reappraisal

rebarbative

adj
/ rē'bärbədīv /
L
serving or tending to repel or irritate.
Teresa complained that she found the school play rebarbative.

rebellion

reboant

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reboation

n
/ ˌrɛbəˈwāʃhən /

L
a loud reverberation.
The reboation of the ship's foghorn signaled the ship's entrance into the harbor.

rebote

rebus

n
/ ˈrɛbəs /

L
a representation of words or syllables by pictures of objects or by symbols whose names resemble the intended words or syllables in sound.
A popular game show required contestants to solve a rebus to win.

rebuttal

n
/ rəˈbʊdɪəl /

F > E
the act of contradicting.
Dennis's convincing rebuttal sent Oscar home in a huff.

recalcitrant

adj
/ rəˈkalsətrənt /

L
obstinately defiant of authority or restraint : stubbornly disobedient.
An extremely recalcitrant adolescent, Tommy rejects everything any authority figure says.

recapitulate

v
/ ˌrɛkəˈpɪtʃələt /

L
repeat the principal points of : restate briefly : give a summary of.
It is customary for Professor Burns to recapitulate his lecture at the end of class.

receipt

receive

recension

n
/ rəˈsɛnʃən /

L
a critical revision of a text (as of an ancient author) by an editor.
Patricia recently read a modern recension of Dante's Inferno.

receptacle

recess

recidivism

n
/ rəˈsɪdɪvɪzəm /
L + Ecff
repeated relapse into criminal or delinquent habits.
Unemployment of ex-convicts is at the root of much of the recidivism that leads to overcrowded prisons.

recipe

n
/ ˈres(ə)pē /

L
a formula for cooking or preparing something to be eaten or drunk.
Chuck's chili recipe is a closely guarded secret.

recipient

reciprocal

adj
/ rəˈsɪprəkəl /
L + Ecf
consisting of or functioning as a return in kind.
James is truly unselfish, always ready to help without expecting reciprocal benefit.

reciprocity

n
/ ˌresəˈpræsədē /

L
mutual dependence, action, or influence.
A treaty of reciprocity called for the lowering of protective tariffs by both countries.

recital

recluse

n
/ ˈrɛˌklüs /

L
one who leads a retired or solitary life.
Alison was shocked when the old recluse next door called to invite her for tea.

recognizance

n
/ rəˈkəgnəzən(t)s /
L > F > E
an obligation of record entered into before a court or magistrate requiring the performance of an act (as appearance in court) usually under penalty of a money forfeiture.
The suspect was arraigned the next morning and released on his own recognizance.

recommendation

reconcile

v
/ ˈrɛkən.səl /

L
obtain agreement between two financial records.
Because he kept such poor records, it often took Evan several hours to reconcile his checkbook to his bank statement.

recondite

adj
/ ˈrɛkən.dīt /

L
very difficult to understand and beyond the reach of ordinary comprehension and knowledge.
Mansur chose the recondite subject of quantum mechanics for his paper.

recreant

recrementitious

recrudescence

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recrudescent

adj

/ ˌrɛkruˈdesənt /

L

breaking out again : renewing disease or dangerous activity after abatement, suppression, or cessation.

Because of the recrudescent nature of tuberculosis, those who have been exposed to this disease should be tested for it periodically.

recuperate

v

/ rɛˈk(y)ʊpəˌrāt /

L

recover health or strength.

Aaron spent a month in Florida to recuperate after the campaign.

recurrence

recurrent

recusancy

n

/ ˈrekyəzənsē /

L

refusal to accept or obey constituted authority : nonconformity.

In post-Reformation England, recusancy was the refusal especially of Roman Catholics to attend the services of the Church of England.

recusant

redingote

redolent

adj

/ ˈredələnt /

L > F > E

conveying an aura : tending to suggest.

Every page of Ryan's essay is redolent of fine scholarship.

redoppe

n

/ rɛˈdäp /

L > It > F

a show-ring movement in which a horse gallops in circles whose diameter never exceeds ten feet.

The last movement in Thunder's performance was a fast redoppe.

redoubtable

adj

/ rɛˈdaüdəbəl /

F > E

inspiring awe or reverence : august, eminent.

Mount Rushmore is a fitting memorial to four redoubtable statesmen.

reductase

redundancy

referee

referential

refluence

refocillate

v

/ rɛˈfäsəˌlāt /

L

refresh, revive.

Mom hopes that a good watering will refocillate her drooping ferns.

refraction

n

/ rɛˈfrakshən /

L

the deflection from a straight path undergone by a light ray in passing obliquely from one medium into another in which its velocity is different.

Mr. Popkin explained that an oar in water is not bent, but that refraction makes it appear bent.

refuge

n

/ ˈre(ɪ)fyüj /

L > F > E

shelter or protection from danger or distress.

The high hills are a refuge for wild goats.

refugium

refulgent

regale

v

/ rɛˈgāl /

F

entertain (as a person) sumptuously or agreeably : feast with delicacies.

The hostess will regale her bridge club members with a variety of delightful homemade desserts.

regardless

regatta

n

/ rɛˈgädə /

It

an organized series of rowing, speedboat, or sailing races.

The famous rowing regatta at Henley-on-Thames has been held each year since 1839.

reggae

n

/ ˈrā(ɪ)gā /

unknown

a popular music of Jamaican origin that combines indigenous styles with elements of rock 'n' roll and soul music and is performed with the accent on the offbeat.

The video travelogue about Jamaica included a soundtrack of reggae.

regicide

n

/ ˈrejəsɪd /

L

the killing or murder of a king.

The peasants resorted to regicide when their pleas were ignored by the tyrannical monarch.

regime

n

/ rāˈzhēm /

L > F

the period during which a government or social system prevails.

During the communist regime in Romania, environmental problems were flagrantly ignored.

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regimen

n
/ 'rejəmən /
L

a systematic plan designed to improve and maintain health.
Cassandra's regimen includes getting at least seven hours of sleep per night.

regurgitate

v
/ rə'gərjətāt /
L

throw, cast, or pour back or out again.
Brenda watched the redbird regurgitate food to feed his nestlings.

rehabilitation

n
/ .rē(h)ə.bilə'tāshən /
L

the process of restoring an individual (as a convict, mental patient, or disaster victim) to a useful and constructive place in society.
The penitentiary employed psychologists and educators to help in the rehabilitation of the prisoners.

rehearsal

n
/ rə'hərsəl /
E

a private recital or practice session held in preparation for a public appearance.
Roland was somewhat nervous during his first rehearsal with the New York City Ballet.

reindeer

reiterate

v
/ rē'īdərāt /
L

say or do over repeatedly.
The new teacher decided to reiterate each point of the lesson at the end of the period so that the students could not claim they missed the information.

rejoice

rejuvenescence

relegate

v
/ 'relə.gāt /
L

[has homonym: religate] degrade, demote.
The coach decided to relegate the quarterback to second string after his poor performance in the game.

reliable

relic

n
/ 'relik /
L

an object (as a bone, an article of clothing or of personal use) kept in esteem and veneration because of its association with a saint or martyr.
The Shroud of Turin is the most famous relic in Christendom, in spite of its disputed history.

relinquish

reliquary

remainder

remedial

adj
/ rə'mēdēəl /
L

concerned with the correction of faulty study habits, the improvement of skills imperfectly learned, and the raising of a pupil's general competence.
The test results indicate that 20 percent of the students in Laura's school need to take a remedial course in math.

reminisce

v
/ .remə'nīs /
L&F

indulge in the practice of thinking about past experiences.
The old photographs prompted Grandpa to reminisce about his youth.

reminiscence

reminiscingly

remuneration

n
/ rə'myünə.rāshən /
L
an act of paying an equivalent for a service, loss, or expense : compensation.
Mr. Shimada gave Mitzi two tickets to Disneyland as remuneration for the many errands she had run for him.

renaissance

n
/ .renə'sän(t)s /
L > F
enthusiastic activity along literary, artistic, and cultural lines distinguished by a revival of interest in the past and an increasing pursuit of learning.
In the 1970s, there was a renaissance of interest in organic gardening techniques.

render

v
/ 'rendə(r) /
L > F > E
melt down : extract or clarify by melting.
The process of cooking a few strips of bacon can render enough fat to fry several eggs.

rendezvous

n
/ 'rändə.vü /
F
a meeting at an appointed place and time.
The astronauts completed a rendezvous with the orbiting space station.

renege

renitent

adj
/ 'renədənt /
L
resisting pressure, constraint, or compulsion.
Mark's dog proved too renitent to learn any tricks.

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renounce

v
/ rə'naʊn(t)s /
L

[has near homonym: renowns]
announce one's abandonment of the ownership of : give up, abandon, or resign usually formally (something possessed).
In 1936 Edward, Prince of Wales, decided to renounce his claim to the throne of England and marry American divorcée Wallis Simpson.

renovation

renovator

n
/ 'renə.vədə(r) /
L

one that restores to a former state (as worn or damaged articles).
The Rehmers hired a renovator to work on the old farmhouse they bought.

renvoi

n
/ ren'vòi /
F

the return by a government of an alien to his own country.
Because of crowded prisons, New York has been practicing renvoi on illegal aliens who have committed a crime.

repaint

reparation

repartee

n
/ repə(r)'tē /
F

a succession of clever retorts.
Susie and Josh's repartee is so excessive that even their friends tire quickly of the constant retorts.

repechage

n
/ ,repə'shāzh /
L > F

a second-chance trial heat (as in Olympic rowing) in which losers in the first round of competition are given another chance to qualify for the semifinals.
Luigi fell behind in the first heat of the single sculls, but he hoped to make up for it in the repechage.

repercussions

repertoire

n
/ 'repə(r).twär /
L > F

a list or supply of pieces or parts that a company or person has thoroughly rehearsed and is prepared to perform.
The folk dance troupe has added several Balkan dances to its repertoire.

repertory

n
/ 'repə(r).tōrē /
L

the practice of presenting with a resident company a number of different productions (as plays or dances) during a season either successively or alternately.
The ballet company is presenting four productions in repertory this winter.

repetition

n
/ ,repə'tishən /
L

the fact of occurring, appearing, or being said again.
The repetition in the epic poem was anything but boring.

repetitious

adj
/ ,repə'tishəs /
L

marked by the act of repeating something already said or done.
Bettina complained that her piano lessons were repetitious.

replaceable

replenish

v
/ rə'plenish /
L

fill up again.
The heavy rain from the hurricane served to replenish the drought-stricken reservoirs of the state.

replevin

n
/ rə'plevən /
L? > F

the return to or recovery by a person of goods claimed to be wrongfully taken or detained upon the person's giving security to try the matter in court and return the goods if defeated in the action.
Before the goods could be moved from the warehouse, the judge issued a writ of replevin.

repository

repoussage

n
/ rə.pü'sāzh /
F

the art or process of hammering out or pressing thin metal from the reverse side.
Fiona bought a brass box decorated with repoussage at the antique shop.

reprehensible

adj
/ ,reprə'hən(t)səbəl /
L > E

deserving rebuke or reprimand : censurable.
This amiable, upright, perfect Jane Fairfax was apparently cherishing very reprehensible feelings.

represent

reprieve

n
/ rə'prēv /
F?

a formal suspension of the execution of a sentence especially of death.
Bowing to public pressure, the governor granted a reprieve to the convict awaiting execution.

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reprimand

v
/ 'reprə.mənd /
L > F
reprove severely : chide for a fault :
censure formally and especially
with authority.
*Dean felt guilty as he began to
reprimand Shirley; was the blame
partially his?*

reprisal

n
/ rə'prɪzəl /
L > It > F > E
an action of retaliation (as for
injury or attack).
*The team captain decided to use a
trick play as a reprisal for the other
team's roughhousing.*

repristinate

v
/ rē'prɪstə.nāt /
L
restore to an original state or
condition : revive.
*Barb and Ray spent the better part
of the summer working to
repristinate the old farm house.*

reproach

v
/ rə'prɔːch /
F > E
rebuke strongly or sternly : scold.
*Van hoped that Mrs. Krishnan
wouldn't reproach him in front of
the whole lunchroom crowd.*

reprobate

v
/ 'reprə.bāt /
L
disapprove of : reject as unworthy
or evil.
*Patty will not be going to the sock
hop because her parents reprobate
dancing.*

reptilian

repudiate

v
/ rə'pyüdē.āt /
L
refuse approval or belief to : reject
as untrue or unjust.
*Jacqueline wanted to repudiate her
family's ideas about class
distinction, so she married their
chauffeur.*

repugnance

n
/ rə'pəgnən(t)s /
L
strong dislike, distaste, or
antipathy.
*Mr. Churchill felt deep repugnance
toward his aunt, whose illnesses
never occurred but for her own
convenience.*

Requiem

n
/ 'rekwēəm /
L
a grand musical hymn in honor of
the dead.
*Many orchestras include a
classical Requiem in their
repertoire.*

requiescence

requisite

adj
/ 'rekwəzət /
L
required by the nature of things or
by circumstances or by the end in
view.
*Buried under a calmness that
seemed all but indifference was an
attachment that would have led
either of the two brothers, if
requisite, to do everything for the
good of the other.*

rescind

v
/ rə'sɪnd /
L
repeal.
*The new bill would rescind several
outdated laws.*

rescindable

rescue

v
/ 're(,)skyü /
L > F > E
free from confinement, violence,
danger, or evil : save, deliver.
*Three lifeguards dived into the pool
to rescue the flailing girl.*

reservoir

n
/ 'rezəv.wär /
L > F
a place where water is collected
and kept in quantity for use when
wanted.
*Because of the dry spell, our
reservoir was only half full, and
water restrictions had to be
imposed.*

residential

residual

residue

n
/ 'rezə.d(y)ü /
L
the part of a molecule that remains
after the removal of a portion of its
constituents.
*Sondra asked Jeff to analyze and
write out the formula for the
residue in the Erlenmeyer flask.*

residuum

resile

v
/ rə'zɪl /
L
draw back : recoil, retract, recede.
*The rubber bands in Greta's desk
were so old that several had lost
their ability to resile.*

resilience

n
/ rə'zɪlyən(t)s /
L + EcF
an act of springing back : rebound,
recoil.
*Vera showed her resilience by
recovering so quickly from her
skiing accident.*

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

resiliency

n
/ rə'zilyənsē /
L + Ecff

capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress.

A pole vaulter must adjust to the resiliency of his pole.

resilient

resinous

resipiscence

n
/ .resə'pis'n(t)s /
L

change of mind or heart; often : return to a sane, sound, or correct view or position.

The soldier's severe war experience brought about in him a resipiscence marked by much regret for shortcomings in his personal life.

resistible

resolute

adj
/ 'rezəlüt /
L

having or characterized by a decided purpose : determined.
Jody remained resolute in his decision to resign from the committee.

resonance

n
/ 'rez'nən(t)s /
L

[Note: Could be confused with plural noun resonants.] a phenomenon that is shown by a molecule, ion, or radical to which two or more structures differing only in the distribution of electrons can be assigned.

To illustrate the concept of resonance, Mr. Abadi drew two different Lewis structures of ozone on the board.

respiratory

respite

n
/ 'respət /
L > F

temporary intermission of labor or of any process or operation : interval of rest.
Seeking respite from the arguing of his siblings, Jerold left the table in the middle of their family dinner.

resplendence

n
/ rə'splendən(t)s /
L > E

the quality or state of shining brilliantly.

The resplendence of the sunset over Loon Lake enticed Eric to stay one more day.

restauratrice

n
/ .restərə'trēs /
L

a woman who operates or owns a public eating place.
While Ted and Sue were dining, the restauratrice came to their table to ask for their comments on the food and service.

restitution

restitutory

adj
/ .restə'tüdərē /
L

of, relating to, or aiming at the return of something to its rightful owner.

The judge's verdict included punitive as well as restitutory features.

resurgence

resurgent

adj
/ rə'sərjənt /
L

rising again from an inferior state to a superior state.

The former Soviet republic is experiencing resurgent nationalism.

resurrection

resuscitate

v
/ rə'səsə,tāt /
L

revive from apparent death or from unconsciousness.

A young intern pushed through the crowd to resuscitate the unconscious child.

resuscitation

reticence

n
/ 'redə'sən(t)s /
L > F

restraint in speaking or communicating : reserve.

Jordan's usual reticence disappears when he sits at the radio microphone.

reticulated

adj
/ rə'tikyə,lādəd /
L + EcF
constructed or faced with diamond-shaped stones or square stones placed diagonally.
The hotel lobby's reticulated floor provided stark geometric contrast with the gentle curves of the atrium.

reticule

n
/ 'redə.kyül /
L

a woman's small drawstring bag used as a pocketbook, workbag, or carryall.

Mrs. Bates folded up a letter which she had been reading and returned it into the purple and gold reticule by her side.

retina

n
/ 'ret'nə /
L > E

the multilayered innermost lining of the eyeball that contains various types of photoreceptive cells that are connected to the brain via the optic nerve.

The ophthalmologist treated Mrs. Simpson for a detached retina.

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retinue

n
/ 'ret'n.(y)ü /
L > F > E
a train of attendants.
The actress obtained coveted awards ceremony tickets for her entire retinue.

retractile

retribution

n
/ .retrə'byüshən /
L
something given or exacted in compensation.
Art felt certain that his fender bender was divine retribution for all the times he had honked his horn impatiently at other drivers.

retrocedence

n
/ .retrə'sēd'n(t)s /
L
the act of ceding back typically by treaty.
In 1997 the British government completed the retrocedence of Hong Kong to China.

retrogress

retrospect

v
/ 'retrəspekt /
L
practice the act of surveying the past.
Colin's ability to retrospect makes history classes a breeze for him.

revanche

n
/ rə'väñch /
F
the policy of a government intent on the recovery of lost territory.
Under the domination of the USSR, tendencies toward revanche were kept under tight control.

reveille

revenant

adj
/ 'revənənt /
F
coming back : recurring.
The more Rachel tries to put the revenant dream out of her mind, the more often it recurs.

revenue

n
/ 'revə.n(y)ü /
L
the income that comes back from an investment.
The revenue from Maria's rental property enabled her to buy a vacation cabin.

reverberate

v
/ rə'vərbə.rāt /
L
continue or become repeated in or as if in a series of echoes.
Kevin stood on one side of the canyon, yelled as loudly as he could, and waited for his voice to reverberate.

reverberated

v
/ rə'vərbə.rādəd /
L
returned or sent back : echoed.
Loud sounds reverberated throughout the cave.

revere

reverence

reversible

adj
/ rə'vərsəbəl /
L > F > E
made to be worn either side out and often with a different fabric on each side.
Mark's reversible vest matches everything else in his wardrobe.

revictualment

n
/ rē'vid'lmənt /
L + L > F > E + EcF
the obtaining of fresh stocks of provisions (as by an army).
We cannot go that far into enemy territory without a clear plan for revictualment.

revirescent

adj
/ .revə'res'nt /
L
growing fresh or young again : reviving.
The incumbent surprised his opponents with the revirescent vigor of his campaign.

reviviscent

rhabdomancer

n
/ 'rəbdə.man(t)sə(r) /
Gk
one who practices divination by rods or wands.
With his divining rod in hand, the rhabdomancer set out to find an undiscovered spring of water.

rhapsodical

adj
/ rap'sädəkəl /
Gk
extravagantly emotional : rapturous.
The music critic lavished rhapsodical praise on the Brahms concert.

rheostat

n
/ 'rēə.stat /
Gk
a resistor for regulating a current by means of variable resistances.
The light dimmer has refused to work ever since Henry adjusted the rheostat.

rhetoric

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rhetorician

n
/ ˌrɛdəˈrɪʃən /
Gk
one who writes or speaks in an inflated or bombastic style.
People tend to ignore Mr. Wade's good ideas because he is such a rhetorician.

rheumatic

adj
/ rüˈmadɪk /
Gk > L > F
of, relating to or characteristic of inflammation, pain, and swelling in and around the joints.
Once Ben had rheumatic fever, and once he had typhoid.

rheumatism

n
/ ˈrüməˌtɪzəm /
Gk
any of numerous conditions characterized by inflammation or pain in muscles, joints, or fibrous tissue.
Shea's grandfather complained of rheumatism whenever the weather was cold and damp.

rheumy

rhinarium

n
/ rɪˈna(a)rēəm /
Gk > L
the hairless area of roughened skin at the tip of the snout of a mammal.
Vince checked the puppy's temperature by touching its rhinarium.

rhinestone

n
/ ˈrɪnz.tōn /
geog name + E
a colorless imitation stone of high luster made of glass, paste, or gem quartz.
Basil didn't bother looking for the rhinestone that fell out of his belt buckle.

rhinitis

n
/ rɪˈnɪdəs /
Gk
common cold.
The doctor diagnosed rhinitis and prescribed rest.

rhinoceros

n
/ rɪˈnäs(ə)rəs /
Gk
any of various large powerful herbivorous thick-skinned mammals that have one or two heavy upright horns on the snout.
The videotape showed dramatic footage of a rhinoceros charging a photographer.

rhizotomy

rhodium

rhododendron

n
/ ˌrɒdədˈdendrən /
Gk
any of various plants of the genus Rhododendron with persistent leathery leaves and bell-shaped flowers.
Evan's mother plants a rhododendron along the driveway every year on his birthday.

rhodolite

n
/ ˈrɒdˌlɪt /
Gk + Gk
a pink or purple garnet that is used as a gem.
The gem exhibit included a 75-carat rhodolite from Tanzania.

rhomboid

n
/ ˈräm.bɔɪd /
Gk > L > F
a parallelogram in which the angles are oblique and adjacent sides are unequal.
One of our geometry problems was to find the area of a rhomboid.

rhombus

n
/ ˈräm.bəs /
Gk > L
an equilateral parallelogram.
The most familiar form that a rhombus takes must certainly be a square.

rhubarb

n
/ ˈrü.bərb /
(Gk + L) > L? > F > E
a plant having large leaves with thick succulent stems that are often eaten in pies or preserves.
Rhubarb and strawberries make a good combination for a pie.

rhythm

n
/ ˈrɪθəm /
Gk > L > F
the aspect of music comprising all the elements (as accent, meter, time, tempo) that relate to forward movement as contrasted with pitch sequence or tone combination.
Latin American music is usually easily recognizable by its distinctive rhythm.

ribald

adj
/ ˈrɪbəl /
Gmc > F > E
characterized by broad coarse humor.
Sharon's mom was surprised to learn that the ribald tale her daughter was reading was written by Geoffrey Chaucer.

ricochet

n
/ ˈrɪkəʃhā /
F
a glancing rebound or skipping (as of a flat stone thrown along the surface of water).
Albert and Tyler carefully counted each ricochet in the stone-skipping contest.

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ricotta

n
/ rē'kòdə /
L > It

a white unripened whey cheese of Italian origin that resembles cottage cheese.
Angela's favorite Italian recipe calls for ravioli stuffed with ricotta.

rictus

n
/ 'rɪktəs /
L

a gaping grin or grimace.
Reuben's face was frozen in a rictus of horror during the movie's last scene.

rideau

n
/ rə'dō /
F

a small ridge or mound of earth.
The cottage was built on a rideau overlooking the marsh.

ridiculous

rifeness

riffler

rift

n
/ 'rɪft /
Scand > E

a divergence (as of interests or beliefs) resulting in disagreement or dispute.
Deciding what the puppy should be named caused a temporary rift between the twins.

rigatoni

n
/ ˌrɪgə'tōnē /
Gmc > It

hollow alimentary paste made in short curved fluted pieces.
Paula served rigatoni stuffed with cheese and diced vegetables.

righteous

adj
/ 'rɪchəs /
E

characterized by uprightness or justice.
The civil rights protesters were fearless in their righteous cause.

rigorous

rime

n
/ 'rɪm /
E

[has homonym: rhyme] a covering of minute ice crystals on a cold surface that is formed by the condensation of atmospheric vapor at temperatures below freezing : frost.
Rime may occur in large, feathery flakes, but they lack the crystalline patterns of snowflakes.

riparian

adj
/ rə'perēən /
L

[Note: Could be confused with riparial.] of, relating to, or living or located on the bank of a watercourse (as a river or stream).
Most wildlife depends on riparian areas for survival.

risibility

n
/ ˌrɪzə'bɪlədē /
L

the ability or inclination to laugh : alertness or sensitiveness to the ridiculous, incongruous, or absurd.
Mary's risibility has earned her the nickname "Giggle Girl."

rissole

n
/ rə'sōl /
L > F

[has near homonym: resole]
minced meat or fish covered with pastry and fried in deep fat.
Marianne ate a rissole for lunch.

ritziiness

riverain

rivulet

n
/ 'rɪvylət /
L > It

a small stream : brook.
The fast-melting snow gushed down the rivulet to the pond below.

roan

adj
/ 'rōn /

Gothic > Sp > F
[has near homonym: rowan] of an animal's coat : having the base color (as black, red, gray, or brown) muted and lightened by a liberal admixture of white hairs.
The roan pony is the tamest mount at Camp Wannagohome.

roborant

adj
/ 'rəbərənt /
L

strengthening.
In China, ginseng has for ages been esteemed for its roborant effects on the body.

rococo

adj
/ rə'kō(,)kō /
F

excessively ornate or intricate.
The rococo decor of Griselda's new house is typical of those built with "new money."

rodomont

n
/ 'rədə.mənt /

It name
a vain or blustering boaster.
James's new roommate is something of a rodomont.

rognon

rogue

n
/ 'rōg /

unknown
a dishonest unprincipled person.
The sheriff warned the newcomers that he would not tolerate a rogue in his town.

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roleo

n
/ 'rōlē.ō /
L > F > E&E
a logrolling tournament.
A roleo is similar to a rodeo but has floating logs instead of bucking broncos.

romance

rondache

n
/ rän'dash /
F
a small shield carried by a foot soldier.
In medieval warfare the rondache often had a slit in the upper part for seeing through.

ronquil

n
/ 'ränkəl /
Sp
any of several fishes of the northwest coast of North America that resemble the jawfishes.
Sheila caught a ronquil while fishing off the Alaskan coast.

rood

n
/ 'rüd /
E
[has homonym: rude, rued] a unit of land area used in England and Scotland equal to 40 square rods or 1/4 acre.
After the uprising, every rood of the estate of Hugh of Thorpe was left burnt and barren.

roommate

roriferous

adj
/ rō'rif(ə)rəs /
L
generating dew.
The cool, roriferous evenings were a pleasant contrast to the hot, dry days.

Rorschach

n
/ 'rō(ə)r.shäk /
Swiss name
a psychological test of personality and intelligence using inkblot designs.
Keesha's responses during the Rorschach caused the examiner to believe that she was trying to make the results unreliable.

rosemaling

n
/ 'rōzə.mäliŋ /
L > ON > Norw + G > Norw
painted or carved decoration (as on furniture, walls, or wooden dinnerware) in Scandinavian peasant style that consists of colorful floral and other designs and inscriptions.
Tad restored the rosemaling on his wife's antique chair.

roseola

rostrum

n
/ 'rästrəm /
L
a pulpit or platform occupied by an orator or public speaker.
Robin stepped up on the rostrum, took a drink of water, and then began her speech.

rotisserie

n
/ rō'tisərē /
F
a cooking appliance with a spit on which food is rotated before or over a source of heat.
Herb cooked the chicken on a rotisserie over his gas grill.

rotogravure

n
/ .rōdəgrə'vyü(ə)r /
L + F
a photogravure process in which the impression is produced by a rotary press.
Rotogravure is used to print the magazine section of the Sunday paper.

rotulet

n
/ 'rächəlät /
L
a small scroll or register.
The circuit judge logged all his court business in a rotulet.

rotundity

n
/ rō'təndədē /
L
roundness.
When he looked in the fun-house mirror, Chris was astounded by his rotundity.

rouge

n
/ 'rüz /
L > F
any of various cosmetics that give a red coloring to the cheeks or lips.
Loretta's mother said she was too young to wear rouge.

rough

adj
/ 'rəf /
E
[has homonym: ruff] difficult to travel over or penetrate.
The rough waters off its coast made the island a bane for sailors.

roughhewn

roulette

n
/ rü'let /
L > F
a gambling game in which players bet on which compartment of a revolving wheel a small ball spun in the opposite direction will come to rest in.
Bonita spent the entire time on the riverboat playing roulette.

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roundelay

n
/ 'raʊndə.lā /
F

a folk or ritual group or couple dance in which participants form a ring and move in a prescribed direction.

The roundelay dates back to prehistoric times, when people danced around a central totem.

rowel

v
/ 'raʊ(ə)l /
F > E

goad with a revolving disk at the end of a spur.

After she rounds the bend, Gabrielle will rowel her horse to a fresh burst of speed.

ruade

rubefacient

n
/ ˌrʊbə'fæʃənt /
L

a substance for external application that causes redness of the skin.

Isopropyl alcohol is a well-known rubefacient found in many people's medicine cabinets.

rubella

n
/ rʊ'belə /
L

an acute contagious disease usually affecting children and young adults and characterized by a red skin eruption, mild symptoms, and a short duration : German measles.

Rubella is especially dangerous when contracted by an expectant mother because it can threaten the health of her unborn child.

Rubenesque

adj
/ ˌrʊbə'nesk /
Flem name

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of the Flemish painter Peter Paul Rubens.

The luxuriant drapery, use of light, and coloration of the painting in the Jones's entryway were Rubenesque.

rubicund

rubicundity

n
/ ˌrʊbə'kʌndədē /
L

the quality or state of being ruddy or reddish.

The rubicundity of Laura's face was evidence of her embarrassment.

rubric

n
/ 'rʊ(ɪ)brik /
L

name, title.

The fields of botany, zoology, and geology were once classified together under the rubric of "natural history."

rudimentary

adj
/ ˌrʊdə'mentərē /
L

basic, fundamental.

Thurston possessed only a rudimentary knowledge of opera.

ruefully

adv
/ ˌrʊfələ /
E + Ecf

in a pitiable or woeful manner.

Joe ruefully replied that he hadn't been able to bring any lunch with him.

ruminant

n
/ 'rʊmənənt /
L

any of a suborder of even-toed hoofed mammals (as sheep, giraffes, deer, and camels) that chew the cud and have a complex usually four-chambered stomach.

Microorganisms play an essential role in the digestive system of a ruminant.

ruminate

v
/ 'rʊmə.nāt /
L

muse upon : contemplate over and over.

Luke likes to ruminate in the backyard while chewing on a stem of grass.

rumored

rumormonger

n
/ 'rʊmə(r).mæŋgə(r) /
L + Gk > L > E

one that spreads unconfirmed pieces of information.

If Alfonso doesn't learn to hold his tongue, he's going to earn a reputation as a rumormonger.

runnel

rupestrian

adj
/ rʊ'pestrēən /
L

composed of rock.

The designer of the famous rupestrian monument known as "Mt. Rushmore" died before the 14-year project was completed.

rural

adj
/ 'rʊrəl /
L

of, relating to, associated with, or typical of the country.

Kevin has always resided in the city and knows little about the rural way of life.

rurigenous

adj
/ rʊ'rijənəs /
L

born or living in the country.

As the town grew, some of the stores began to neglect their rurigenous customers.

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ruse

n
/ 'rüs /
F

a stratagem or trick usually intended to deceive.
Little did Carey know that Mrs. Bradley was onto his ruse.

russet

adj
/ 'rəsət /
L > F > E

reddish brown.
Troy's Robin Hood costume featured a russet top and forest green pants.

rustic

adj
/ 'rəstik /
L

naturally simple in character or manners.
Visitors to the village considered the inhabitants rustic.

rutabaga

n
/ 'rüdə.bāgə /
ON > Sw

a turnip with a very large yellowish root that is used as food both for stock and for human beings.
In England, the vegetable Americans know as a rutabaga is called a "swede."

rutch

rutilant

adj
/ 'rüdə'lənt /
L

having a reddish glow : shining.
The evening sun put a rutilant sheen on the sunbathers' skin.

sabbatical

sable

n
/ 'sābəl /
Slav > G > F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] the heraldic color black.
Anita began painting her family's coat of arms by creating a background of sable.

sabotage

n
/ 'sabə.tāzh /
F

malicious destruction of or damage to property with the intention of injuring a business or impairing the economic system or weakening a government or nation in time of war or national emergency.
When a drug enforcement agency airplane crashed, sabotage was suspected and an investigation was launched.

saboteur

sacalait

n
/ 'sakə.lā /
Choctaw > F

a crappie that is typically smaller and more silvery than the black crappie and that is highly esteemed as a food fish.
Ray and Moira went to the French Quarter to dine on sacalait and cornbread.

saccade

n
/ sa'käd /
F

a small rapid jerky movement of the eye especially as it jumps from fixation on one point to another (as in reading).
Mary felt that her eyes could not take one more saccade, so she closed them during the remainder of the PowerPoint presentation.

saccadic

adj
/ sa'kädik /
F

[has near homonym: psychotic] of or relating to a sudden movement : jerky.
Virginia's saccadic motions were symptomatic of a neurological disorder.

saccharify

sacciform

adj
/ 'sak(s)ə.förm /
L

resembling a pouch.
The squirrel filled its sacciform cheeks with acorns.

sacerdocy

n
/ 'sasə(r).dösē /
L

priesthood.
Will announced in a letter to his sister that he felt a calling to the sacerdocy.

sacerdotal

adj
/ ,sasə(r)'dödəl /
L

of or relating to priests or a priesthood.
Some types of sacerdotal clothing distinguish the clergy from the laity, and some signify rank within the priesthood.

sachem

n
/ 'sächəm /

Narraganset&Pequot the leader of a political party; specifically : one of the 12 governors of the Tammany Society.
William Tweed was a sachem of the political organization known as Tammany Hall.

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sachet

n
/ sa'shā /
F

[has homonym: sashay] a small bag or packet; especially : a small bag containing a perfumed powder that is used to scent clothes.

Aunt Kate keeps a sachet in her clothes closet.

sacralize

sacrifice

v
/ 'sakra.fis /
L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] bunt in baseball with fewer than two out, enabling a base runner to advance a base while the batter is put out at first base.

The coach told Marvin to sacrifice because George was on third base and the team needed one more run to win.

sacrificial

sacristy

sacroiliac

sacrosanct

adj
/ 'sakraṣaŋ(k)t /
L
most holy or sacred : inviolable.
The use of loud voices is inappropriate in the sacrosanct temple.

safari

n
/ sə'fārē /
Ar > Swahili
a hunting or other expedition in east Africa, especially on foot.
While on safari, Ariel photographed lions and elephants.

saffron

n
/ 'safrən /
Ar > L > F > E
a deep orange-colored substance consisting of the aromatic pungent dried stigmas of the saffron crocus and used to color and flavor foods.
Saffron is the most expensive spice at Walker's Market.

sagacious

adj
/ sə'gāshəs /
L
possessing quick intellectual perceptions.
The neighbors often came to the sagacious old man for advice about investments.

sagacity

n
/ sə'gasədē /
L
quickness or acuteness of sense perceptions.
Chuck's sagacity made him the finest detective in the arson unit.

sagathy

sagebrush

sagittal

adj
/ 'sajədʰl /
L
of, relating to, or shaped like an arrow or arrowhead.
Murray fantasized that the sagittal rock he found in the quarry was an Indian arrowhead.

Sagittarius

n
/ .sajə'ta(a)rēəs /
L
the ninth sign of the zodiac.
The Moon was in Sagittarius when Sherman was born.

salaam

salamander

n
/ 'salə.mandə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E
a metal disk or plate heated and held over a food (as pastry or pudding) to brown the top of it.
A salamander is often used to caramelize the top of desserts like crème brûlée.

salami

n
/ sə'lāmē /
L > It
a highly seasoned sausage made of pork and beef.
Randy made a sandwich of salami and cheese.

salesclerk

salicetum

n
/ .salə'sēdəm /
L
a collection or plantation of willows.
The salicetum is Nikki's favorite picnic spot.

salicylate

salient

saline

salivary

salmon

n
/ 'samən /
L > F > E
a variable color of salmon's flesh averaging a strong yellowish pink.
Unable to find a purse in the right shade of salmon, Vera decided to stick with basic black.

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salmonellosis

n
/ˌsalməˈneɪlōsəs /
American name + Lcff
infection with a bacterial disease typically marked by gastroenteritis but often complicated by septicemia, meningitis, and other conditions.
Vaughn contracted salmonellosis while on the cruise.

salon

salsilla

n
/salˈsilə /
L
a tropical American plant with edible roots sometimes used as a substitute for potatoes.
In the West Indies we had our first taste of salsilla.

saltine

n
/səlˈtēn /
E
a thin, crisp cracker sprinkled with salt.
The stale saltine crumbled as the raccoon tried to wash it in the creek.

salutary

adj
/ˈsalyəˌterē /
L
promoting health : curative, restorative.
The long vacation had a salutary effect on Grace's mental health.

salve

n
/ˈsav /
E
a healing ointment.
Jason's grandmother prepared a mustard oil salve and told him that if he used it, his troubles would be over in three days.

salvo

n
/ˈsal(ɪ)vō /
L > F > It
a sudden eruption or explosion (as of laughter, cheers, or handclaps).
When the villain met with doom after an intense struggle, the movie theater was filled with a salvo of applause.

samba

n
/ˈsambə /
African > Pg
a Brazilian dance of African origin characterized by a sprightly step pattern in duple time and a bending of the knee at each beat of the music.
The Campbells, who love Latin dancing, went to special classes to learn the samba.

samizdat

n
/ˈsämēz.dät /
Russ
the system in the former U.S.S.R. by which government-suppressed literature was clandestinely printed and distributed; also : such literature.
After the fall of communism, numerous small publishers of samizdat found their place in the open market.

samovar

samphire

n
/ˈsam.fī(ə)r /
F name
a fleshy European coastal plant that is sometimes pickled.
Daphne ordered the salad of samphire and other greens.

sampler

samurai

sanctified

sanctimonious

adj
/ˌsən(k)təˈmōnēəs /
L
displaying high-mindedness with intent to impress.
Ronnie's voice took on a sanctimonious tone when he volunteered to give his mother his meal.

sanction

sanctity

sanctum

n
/ˈsən(k)təm /
L
a sacred place.
The innermost sanctum of the temple in Jerusalem was known as the Holy of Holies.

sandal

n
/ˈsandəl /
Gk > L > E
a shoe consisting essentially of a sole fastened to the foot by means of straps or thongs passing over the instep and around the ankle.
Lorraine stopped to refasten the strap of her sandal because her ankle had swollen.

sangaree

sangfroid

n
/sənˈfrwä /
L > F
extraordinary self-possession or imperturbability, especially under strain.
Justin remained calm during the prosecutor's attack and replied to the questions with sangfroid.

sanguinary

sanguine

adj
/ˈsəŋgwən /
L
marked by eager hopefulness.
Ever sanguine, Kathy said that she would one day win the lottery.

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sanguinolent

adj

/ ˈsɑŋˈɡwɪnələnt /

L

of, containing, or tinged with blood.

Theo's phlegm became sanguinolent for a while from bronchitis.

sanitary

adj

/ ˈsæn.ət.ərē /

L

for or relating to the preservation of health.

Conditions at Christ Hospital are as sanitary as is humanly possible.

sapiential

adj

/ ˈsāpē.ənchəl /

L

characterized by wisdom.

The philosopher's library is filled with sapiential books.

saponaceous

adj

/ ˌsapəˈnāshəs /

L

soapy.

Talc and soapstone have a saponaceous feel.

saporous

adj

/ ˈsapərəs /

L

having flavor; especially : agreeable in taste.

When Dad returned from work, Mom treated him to a saporous beef stew.

sapphire

n

/ ˈsɑ.fī(ə)r /

Skt > Heb > Gk > L > F > E

a precious stone of transparent rich blue corundum of great value.

Sapphire has been highly prized as a gemstone since 800 B.C.

sapphiric

adj

/ səˈfɪrɪk /

Skt > Heb > Gk > L > F > E

having the nature of or resembling a sapphire.

Diane's bracelet held a series of sapphiric stones.

saprogenous

adj

/ səˈprājənəs /

Gk + Gk + Ecf

capable of producing decay or putrefaction.

Saprogenous bacteria aid in the decomposition of dead organic matter.

saprophagous

adj

/ səˈpräfəgəs /

Gk + Gk

feeding on decaying matter.

While hiking, Ted and Paul passed the carcass of a squirrel that was covered with saprophagous insects.

saran

sarcasm

sarcophagus

sardine

n

/ ˌsärˈdēn /

Gk? > L > F > E

any of several small or immature fishes preserved for food.

The only way to entice the frightened cat from under the porch was to offer him a sardine.

sardonic

sardonyx

sarong

sarrazin

sarsaparilla

n

/ ˌsas(ə)pəˈrɪlə /

Sp

a sweetened carbonated beverage similar to root beer with the predominant flavor from birch oil and sassafras.

Sylvester's yen for sarsaparilla is well known to cartoon aficionados.

sartorial

adj

/ särˈtōrēəl /

L

of or relating to dress or to tailored clothes.

Sandy, who longed to be a sartorial rebel, sometimes went to class wearing purple tights under her uniform.

sashay

v

/ saˈshā /

F > E

[Note: Could be confused with chassé. Also, word has homonym: sachet] strut in an ostentatious or conspicuous manner.

Tommy and Suzanne tried to sashay as the caller instructed, but they both tripped and fell.

Saskatchewan

adj

/ səˈskachəwən /

Cree > Canad geog name

of or from the province of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Among the Saskatchewan flora is the saskatoon, a sweet purple berry.

saskatoon

n

/ ˌsaskəˈtūn /

Canadian geog name

a junberry of the northern and western United States and adjacent Canada.

The purple fruit of the saskatoon is eaten eagerly by birds.

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sassafras

n
/ 'sas(ə).fras /
Sp > L
the dried bark of the root of an aromatic tree used as a diaphoretic, a flavoring agent, an aromatic stimulant, or as a source of an aromatic volatile oil used in perfumes.
Alba's family has a recipe for medicinal tea that contains sassafras.

satchel

satellite

n
/ 'sədˌlīt /
Etruscan? > L > F
a celestial body orbiting another of larger size.
Earth has only one natural satellite—the Moon.

satiate

satiety

n
/ sə'tiədē /
L > F
the quality or state of being fed to or beyond capacity.
Nell wondered if her beagle puppy would ever reach satiety.

satire

n
/ 'sa.tī(ə)r /
L
a usually topical literary composition holding up human or individual vices, folly, abuses, or shortcomings to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, or other method sometimes with an intent to bring about improvement.
Gulliver's Travels is a scathing satire of political and religious hypocrites.

satiric

satirical

adj
/ sə'tirəkəl /
L > F
characterized by caustic or ironic comment.
Ned's cartoons have a sharp, satirical edge.

saturate

v
/ 'sachə.rāt /
L
infuse thoroughly or cause to be pervaded.
The aroma of a turkey roasting in the oven began to saturate the entire house.

saturnine

adj
/ 'sədə(r).nīn /
L
of a moody or surly character : morose, sullen.
Shirley's father-in-law is a saturnine person with a quick temper.

saucer

sauciness

n
/ 'sôsēnəs /
L > F + Ecf
the quality or state of being amusingly or unobjectionably forward or impertinent.
Emma felt they were friends again, and the conviction gave her at first great satisfaction, and then a little sauciness.

sauerbraten

n
/ 'sau(ə)r.brät'n /
G
oven-roasted or pot-roasted beef marinated in a vinegar solution with peppercorns, garlic, onions, and bay leaves before cooking.
Phil's favorite German restaurant features sauerbraten during Oktoberfest.

sauger

saunter

saurian

sausage

n
/ 'sôsij /
L > F > E
highly seasoned chopped or ground meat that is used either fresh or cured.
Harry's favorite pizza is topped with sausage and onions.

savagism

savory

adj
/ 'sāv(ə)rəs /
L > F > E
pleasurable to the taste : flavorful.
Mabel prepared a savory Thanksgiving dinner for her family.

savory

adj
/ 'sāv(ə)rē /
F
fragrant.
Guido bought a savory wooden bowl smelling of rich cedar and varnish.

savvy

n
/ 'savē /
L > Sp
expertness in a particular field based on experience and native ability.
Officer Ramos's street savvy was a great help in apprehending drug dealers.

saxophone

sayonara

n
/ ,säyə'närə /
Jpn
good-bye.
Charlene found it hard to bid Nagano sayonara at the end of the 1998 Winter Olympics.

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scabbard

n
/ 'skabə(r)d /
G > AF > E
a usually leather or metal sheath in which the blade of a sword, dagger, bayonet, or other cutting weapon is enclosed when not in use.
The knight began to pull his sword from its scabbard, but a look from the queen stopped him.

scabrous

adj
/ 'skabrəs /
L
rough to the touch : having small raised dots, scales, or points.
The leaf's scabrous texture was caused by insect attacks.

scaffold

scalene

adj
/ 'skālēn /
Gk
having the sides unequal—used of a triangle.
The boat's sail formed a scalene triangle.

scallopini

scalpel

n
/ 'skalpəl /
L
a small straight knife with a thin keen blade used especially for dissecting.
In surgery the scalpel is now often replaced by a laser beam.

scampi

scandal

scansion

n
/ 'skanchən /
L
the analysis of a rhythmic structure (as a verse) so as to show the elements or units of which its rhythm is composed.
There are three major types of English scansion: the graphic, the musical, and the acoustic.

scaphoid

adj
/ 'ska.fōid /
Gk > L
shaped like a boat.
Terence found a scaphoid depression in the rock.

scarce

adj
/ 'ske(ə)rs /
L > F > E
not plentiful or abundant.
Lettuce became scarce and expensive after the recent flooding.

scarcity

scarifier

n
/ 'ska(a)rə.fī(ə)r /
Gk > L > F
an implement or machine that tears up the surface of a road prior to resurfacing.
Paul operates a scarifier for the Highway Department.

scarlatina

n
/ 'skärlə'tēnə /
L
an acute contagious disease marked by fever.
Diseases such as scarlatina were once the scourge of childhood.

scarlet

adj
/ 'skärlət /
Per > L > F
having the face reddened by emotion (as embarrassment, anger) : red-faced.
Jill turned scarlet with rage when she discovered her sister was wearing her new sweater.

scaturlent

adj
/ skə'türēənt /
L
gushing forth : effusive, overflowing.
The explorers followed the river to its scaturient source.

scavenging

scelidosaur

scenario

n
/ sə'na(a)rē.ō /
Gk > L
an outline or synopsis of a play.
After the actor read the scenario, he decided that he was not right for the leading role.

scenewright

n
/ 'sēn.rīt /
Gk > L + E
a designer and maker of theatrical sets.
The scenewright worked closely with the playwright to create the appropriate backgrounds for each act.

scentless

adj
/ 'sentləs /
L > F > E + Ecf
emitting no odor.
Gerald prefers scentless soap.

scepter

n
/ 'septə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E
a staff or baton borne by a sovereign as a ceremonial emblem of authority.
When Ben played Henry VIII in the school play, his mother made him a scepter.

schadenfreude

n
/ 'shäd'n.frōidə /
G
enjoyment obtained from the mishaps of others.
Morgana claimed to be sympathetic, but the schadenfreude was all too obvious.

scheduling

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schefflera

n
/ 'sheflərə /
G name > L
any of several shrubby tropical plants that are cultivated for their showy foliage.
When frost was predicted, Demont covered the schefflera with a blanket.

scheme

v
/ 'skēm /
Gk
accomplish by clever contriving.
Walter resolved to scheme out a way to get a new bike.

schemer

n
/ 'skēmə(r) /
Gk
one that forms plots or intrigues.
Joe was a schemer who always had big plans to get rich.

scherzando

adj
/ skert'sän(ə)dō /
Gmc > It
playful, jesting—used as a direction in music indicating style and tempo.
The Flight of the Bumblebee was played with scherzando lightness.

scherzo

schiafone

schipperke

schism

schismatic

adj
/ siz'madik /
Gk > L
of, relating to, or characteristic of division, separation, or discord.
The book describes numerous schismatic movements in church history.

schizoid

schizophrenia

schnitzel

n
/ 'shnitsəl /
G
a veal cutlet variously seasoned and garnished.
The Bavarian restaurant's menu included sauerbraten, sausages, and schnitzel.

scholarly

adj
/ 'skälə(r)lē /
Gk > L
characteristic of one who is devoted to learning : studious.
Nathan's scholarly habits earned him a spot on the honor roll.

schooner

schottische

n
/ 'shäd-ish /
G
a round dance in duple time characterized by gliding and hopping steps and similar to but slower than the polka.
After an hour of dancing the schottische, Ed and Sarah wearily headed for the soda machine.

schuss

n
/ 'shüs /
G
a straightaway skiing course.
In a tucked position Kira followed the schuss all the way to the bottom.

schussboomer

n
/ 'shüs.bümər /
G + imit
one who skis usually straight downhill at high speed.
When the schussboomer lost control, he somersaulted and rolled to the foot of the slope.

scialytic

adj
/ sīə'lidik /
Gk > L
dispersing or dispelling shadows.
After a long night of ghost stories, Erma welcomed the scialytic dawn.

sciamachy

n
/ sī'aməkē /
Gk
a fighting with a shadow or an imaginary enemy.
Engaging in sciamachy helped the boxer prepare for his next match.

sciatica

n
/ sī'adəkə /
Gk > L
pain along the course of a sciatic nerve or its branches and especially in the leg.
As Alicia struggled out of bed, she complained of sciatica in her left leg.

scientific

adj
/ ,sīən'tifik /
L
concerned with or treating of a branch or department of systematized knowledge that is or can be made a specific object of study.
Alain's scientific training landed him a job at Dow Chemical.

scientist

scilicet

scintilla

scintillate

v
/ 'sint'lāt /
L
gleam or emit quick flashes as if throwing off sparks.
Mom's eyes scintillate whenever she is joyously excited.

scintillation

n
/ ,sint'l'āshən /
L
rapid changes in the brightness of a celestial body caused by turbulence in Earth's atmosphere.
The stars' scintillation is less pronounced at higher altitudes.

scintiscan

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sciolistic

adj
/ ˌsɪəˈlɪstɪk /
L

of or relating to superficial knowledge or to one whose knowledge is superficial.

The students' sciolistic conversation amused Professor Pickett.

sciosophy

scissors

sclerosis

n
/ skləˈrōsəs /
Gk

pathological hardening of tissue produced by overgrowth of fibrous tissue and other changes or by increase in interstitial tissue.
Sclerosis is often a consequence of old age.

scofflaw

n
/ ˈskäf.lə /
E + E

a contemptuous lawbreaker; especially : one who ignores parking tickets.

The scofflaw tore up his ticket in front of the police officer and was subsequently fined \$500.

sconce

n
/ ˈskän(t)s /
L > F > E

an ornamental electric light fixture for a wall that resembles a bracket candlestick or group of candlesticks.

Tamara bought an elaborate sconce for her hallway.

scopate

adj
/ ˈskō.pāt /
L + E

resembling a brush.

Some cacti have scopate flowers.

scotopia

n
/ skəˈtōpēə /
Gk + Gk > L

vision in dim light with dark-adapted eyes believed to be mediated by the rods of the retina.

Astronomers rely on scotopia to resolve detail in images.

scoundrel

n
/ ˈskaʊndrəl /
unknown

a bold selfish person who has very low ethical standards.

The treasurer of the company was fired when he was found out to be an opportunistic scoundrel.

scourge

n
/ ˈskərj /
L > F > E

a social evil.

Much of the city's crime is attributed to the scourge of recurrent unemployment.

scraggly

scramble

v
/ ˈskræmbəl /
D?

prepare (eggs) by stirring during frying.

After she burned the meatloaf, Arlene decided to scramble some eggs for dinner.

scrawny

adj
/ ˈskrɒnē /
unknown

marked by an appearance of undernourishment : skinny and bony.

The scrawny kitten mewed plaintively in the tree.

screenplay

n
/ ˈskrēn.plā /
D > F > E + E

the written form of a story prepared for motion-picture production including description of characters, details of scenes and settings, dialogue, and stage directions.

The director, with screenplay in hand, was ready for the day's filming.

scrimmage

n
/ ˈskrimij /
Gmc > E

practice play between a team's various squads.

Today's exciting scrimmage is a good indication that both squads are ready for the upcoming season.

scrimshaw

n
/ ˈskrim.shə /
unknown

any of various carved or engraved useful or decorative articles sometimes colored by brushing ink into the engraved lines and made especially by American whalers from whalebone or whale ivory.

The whaling museum has a large collection of scrimshaw.

script

n
/ ˈskript /
L

something written : text.

By the end of vacation, Mary had the entire script of the play memorized.

scriptural

adj
/ ˈskripchərəl /
L > E + Ecf

of, relating to, contained in, or according to a sacred writing.

Ivan spent five years translating the scriptural material.

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scrivener

n
/ 'skriv(ə)nə(r) /
L > F
a professional or public copyist or writer.
The critic dismissed the writer's novel as the uninspired work of a scrivener.

scroll

n
/ 'skrɔl /
Gmc > F > E
a long strip used as the body of a written document and often having a rod or rods for convenience in rolling and storing.
The writing on the magician's scroll erased itself after the spell was read aloud.

scrumptious

adj
/ 'skrəm(p)shəs /
L
delightful, excellent.
The bakery down the street makes a scrumptious almond coffee cake.

scruples

n pl
/ 'skrupəlz /
L
mental reservations : qualms.
Emma recommended the minced chicken and scalloped oysters with an urgency she knew would be acceptable to the civil scruples of her guests.

scrupulously

adv
/ 'skrupyələslē /
L
conscientiously, painstakingly.
Katie washes her hands so scrupulously that her friends wonder if she has a psychological disorder.

sculpin

n
/ 'skəlpən /
unknown
any of a family of spiny large-headed broad-mouthed often scaleless bony fishes.
A small sculpin was Van's only catch on the expensive charter-boat outing.

sculptor

n
/ 'skəlpʰə(r) /
L
one that carves, engraves, molds, welds, or constructs (materials) into a primarily three-dimensional work of art.
Pablo Picasso was equally influential as a painter, a sculptor, and a draftsman.

sculpture

scuppernong

n
/ 'skəpə(r).nɒŋ /
geog name
any of various cultivated muscadine grape varieties which have yellowish-green fruit suggesting a plum in flavor.
Molly picked and ate a scuppernong from her grandmother's grape arbor.

scurrilous

adj
/ 'skərələs /
L
containing low obscenities or coarse abuse.
The farmers hurled scurrilous accusations across the barbed-wire fence.

scurvy

n
/ 'skərvē /
Scan > E
a disease characterized by spongy gums, loosening of the teeth, and a tendency to bleed into the skin and mucous membranes and caused by a dietary deficiency of ascorbic acid.
Scurvy is easily preventable by eating fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C.

scutellate

adj
/ sk(y)ü'telät /
L
rather flat with a distinct rim and a rounded to oval outline.
Beryl opened the packet and examined the scutellate seeds.

scuttlebutt

scythe

scytodepsic

seabound

seafaring

searchlight

n
/ 'sərch.līt /
L > F > E + E
an apparatus for projecting a powerful beam of light of approximately parallel rays usually devised so that it can be swiveled about.
The festival hired a searchlight to sweep the sky and advertise its presence.

seasonably

sebaceous

adj
/ sə'bāshəs /
L
relating to, composed of, or secreting fatty matter.
Oily skin is usually the result of overactive sebaceous glands.

secco

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secede

v
/ sə'sēd /
L

withdraw from a federation.
About ten more deputies have opted to secede from the governing majority.

secernment

n
/ sə'sərnmənt /
L

[Note: Could be confused with secernent.] the act or process of distinguishing or discriminating in thought.
The thesaurus proved enlightening in its secernment of the subtle differences between synonyms.

secession

n
/ sə'seshən /
L

formal withdrawal from an organization (as a religious communion or political party or federation).
The history teacher explained that the South's secession from the United States was not solely an issue regarding slavery.

secessionist

secondariness

secularism

secund

sedens

sedentary

adj
/ 'sed'n.tərē /
L
characterized by or requiring sitting or slight activity.
Isabelle's sedentary job provided little opportunity for exercise.

Seder

n
/ 'sādə(r) /
Heb
[has homonym: satyr] a Jewish home or community service and ceremonial dinner held on the first evening of the Passover.
Jim had never been to a Seder before he met Julia.

sediment

n
/ 'sedəmənt /
L
material deposited (as by water, wind, or glaciers).
The layers of sediment were evident in the shades of color on the rocky hillside.

sedition

n
/ sə'dishən /
L > F > E
an insurrection against constituted authority.
Because Paul openly advocated the overthrow of the government, he was charged with sedition.

sedulous

seedling
n
/ 'sēdliŋ /
E + Ecf
a nursery plant (usually a tree) that has not been transplanted.
Karen bought a maple seedling at the tree farm.

seersucker

seethe

segue
v
/ 'sā(.)gwā /
L > It
make a transition from one activity, topic, scene, or part to another as or as if part of a natural progression.
Senator Ward used an anecdote to segue to a new topic in his speech.

seguidilla

n
/ ,sāgē'dē(y)ə /
L > Sp
a Spanish dance with many regional variations or the music for this dance performed with guitar and castanets.
In the second act of the opera, the Spanish gypsy performs a seguidilla.

seiche

n
/ 'sāsh /
F
an oscillation of the surface of a lake or landlocked sea.
A seiche can be almost as powerful as a tidal wave.

seine

v
/ 'sān /
E
[has homonym: sane] fish with or catch fish with a net that hangs vertically in the water.
David and Joel like to seine for perch.

seismism

n
/ 'sīz.mizəm /
Gk
earthquake phenomena.
Ralph gave a report about seismism in Chinese folklore.

seity

seizure

n
/ 'sēzhə(r) /
E
a sudden attack (as of a disease or sickness).
A seizure of hay fever ruined the picnic for Tom.

seldom

selectivity

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selenian

adj

/ sə'lēnēən /

Gk

of, relating to, or designating the Moon.

Jim's story tells the tale of an explorer going off to create a selenian colony.

selenologist

n

/ ,selə'näləjəst /

Gk

an astronomer who specializes in the study of the Moon.

The selenologist gave a description of the chief craters of the moonscape.

selenology

semanteme

n

/ sə'man.tēm /

Gk > F

a word or a base that expresses a definite image or idea—distinguished from morpheme.

The verb run is an example of a semanteme.

semaphore

semester

n

/ sə'mestə(r) /

L

either of the two periods of instruction commonly 18 weeks in length into which an academic year is usually divided.

Yolanda was delighted that her grades for the first semester were all A's.

semiautomatic

seminary

n

/ 'semə.nerē /

L

an institution for the training of candidates for the priesthood, ministry, or rabbinate.

The pulpit committee's first choice is a young person who has just completed seminary.

semolina

n

/ ,semə'lēnə /

L > It

the purified middlings of durum or other hard wheat used for macaroni and other alimentary pastes.

The best pasta is made from semolina.

senary

adj

/ 'sēnərē /

L

[has homonym: scenery] of, based upon, or characterized by six : compounded of six things : consisting of six parts.

Jethro experimented with music using a senary scale.

senectitude

senescent

adj

/ sə'nes'nt /

L

growing old.

The town's senescent infrastructure struggled under the burden of a growth spurt.

seneschal

n

/ 'senəshəl /

Gmc > F > E

a bailiff, steward, or majordomo of a great medieval lord.

The seneschal pounded his staff on the floor three times and announced the king's visitors.

senile

sensibilia

sensibility

sensible

sensory

adj

/ 'sen(t)s(ə)rē /

L + E

of or relating to the senses.

In some insects the sensory organs of taste, touch, smell, and hearing are located in the antennae.

sententious

adj

/ sen'tenchəs /

L

terse, aphoristic, or moralistic in expression : pithy.

The sitcom's drop in popularity was attributed to its growing tendency toward sententious sermonizing.

sentient

sentimental

sentinel

n

/ 'sent(ə)nəl /

L > It > F

one that watches or guards.

The sentinel peered into the distance through tiny binoculars.

sentry

n

/ 'sentrē /

E

[has near homonym: century] a soldier standing guard.

The sentry reported a suspicious vehicle parked down the street from the barracks.

separate

sepia

n

/ 'sepēə /

Gk > L

a pigment of rich brown color containing melanin, prepared from the ink of various cuttlefishes, and used in watercolor painting and in ink.

Black-and-white photographs can be stained with sepia to give them an old-fashioned look.

septennial

adj

/ sep'tenēəl /

L

continuing or lasting for seven years.

Since legislation in 1716 the British government has had septennial parliaments; previously they were triennial.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

septentrional

adj
/ sep'tentrēən'1 /

L
northern.
The septentrional seaports of Russia are frozen in the winter.

septuagenarian

n
/ .sep.t(y)üəjə'nerēən /

L
a person who is 70 or more but fewer than 80 years old.
Aunt Daisy is proud of the fact that she has lived to be a septuagenarian.

sepulchral

adj
/ sə'pəlkrəl /

L
having a funereal quality.
Dusk and a vase of gardenias gave the parlor a sepulchral air.

sequaciousness

n
/ sə'kwāshəsnes /

L > E
the quality or state of being imitative or obsequious.
Cal's sequaciousness failed to win him a promotion.

sequel

n
/ 'sɛkwəl /

L
continuation; especially : a literary work continuing the course of a narrative begun in a preceding one.
The film was so popular that the producer asked the screenwriter for a sequel.

sequela

n
/ sə'kwelə /

L
an aftereffect of disease or injury.
Peeling of the skin is a common sequela of sunburn.

sequester

v
/ sə'kwɛstə(r) /

L > F > E
hide from public view : seclude.
The judge wanted to sequester the jury to keep them from hearing news reports that might sway their opinions.

seraphic

adj
/ sə'rafik /

Heb > L
of, relating to, or befitting an angel of the highest order especially in beauty or ecstatic adoration.
The choir's hymn of praise sounded sublimely seraphic.

serenade

v
/ .serə'nād /

L > It > F
play or sing music in honor of.
The football team plans to serenade its coach during the pep rally.

serendipitous

adj
/ .serən'dipədəs /
Ar geog name + Ecf
obtained or characterized by unexpected but fortunate discovery.
Mickey's serendipitous discovery of five quarters and two dimes on the sidewalk made his day.

serge

seriatim

adv
/ .sirē'ādəm /

L
in sequence.
Although the classes meet seriatim, each day of the week starts with a different class in the series.

sericeous

adj
/ sə'rishəs /

Gk > L
having a fuzzy surface; specifically : covered with soft, silky hairs.
The plant's sericeous leaves felt almost like velvet.

serictery

n
/ sə'riktərə /

Gk > L
the silk-producing gland of a caterpillar or other insect larva.
As it spins its cocoon, the silkworm caterpillar secretes a gummy substance from each serictery.

serigraphy

sermonize

v
/ 'sərmə.nīz /

F > E
address at length in a didactic and solemn manner.
Everyone is hoping that Dad won't find something to sermonize about when he chaperones the school dance.

serotinal

adj
/ sə'rät'nəl /

L + Ecf
of or relating to the latter and usually drier part of summer.
Many small ponds dry up during the serotinal season.

serpiginous

serrated

adj
/ 'se.rādəd /

L
notched or toothed on the edge.
Under the microscope, dust mites appear to be hairy monsters with serrated claws.

serrefine

serried

adj
/ 'serēd /

F
crowded or pressed together.
The serried tenements of the big city soon gave way to rolling hills.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

serviceable

adj
/ 'sɜrvəsəbəl /
L > F

suited for a purpose.
Filene lamented that the poncho's design, though serviceable, is not very fashionable.

servile

adj
/ 'sɜrvəl /
L
[has homonym: serval] of, relating to, or appropriate to slaves.
Oscar was thankful to be freed from his servile status.

sesquicentennial

n
/ ,seskwəsen'tenēəl /
L
a 150th anniversary.
The state issued special license plates to commemorate its sesquicentennial.

sesquipedalian

adj
/ ,seskwəpə'dālyən /
L
given to or characterized by the use of long words.
Norbert dozed off halfway through the principal's sesquipedalian speech.

session

severance

sewage

n
/ 'süij /
L > F > E
waste matter that is carried away by a drain.
The smell of sewage permeated the dilapidated building.

shackle

v
/ 'shakəl /
E
[has homonym: shackle] confine the limbs of so as to prevent free motion.
The prisoner of war told the United Nations delegation that his guards had threatened to shackle him 24 hours a day.

shaddock

n
/ 'shadək /
E name
a very large thick-rinded typically pear-shaped citrus fruit.
The shaddock resembles the grapefruit but is larger, coarser, and drier.

shadiness

n
/ 'shādēnəs /
E + Ecff
the quality or state of comparative darkness.
On a hot day, the cool shadiness of a tree is very welcome.

shaganappi

shagreen

n
/ 'sha.grēn /
F > E
an untanned leather covered with small round granulations and dyed a bright color.
Chloe bought the bride and groom leather placemats made of shagreen.

shako

n
/ 'sha(,)kō /
G > Hung > F
a stiff military headdress with a metal plate in front, a high crown, and a plume.
Each member of the band wore a plumed shako in parades.

shale

n
/ 'shāl /
E
a fissile rock that is formed by the consolidation of clay, mud, or silt.
The petroleum refinery also markets by-products of shale.

shallot

n
/ shə'lät /
L > F
a perennial herb that resembles an onion and is used in cooking.
Ted didn't have time to go to the store again, so he substituted a white onion for a shallot in the recipe.

shanghai

v
/ 'shaŋ.hī /
Chinese geog name
to put by trickery into an undesirable position.
Winona won't allow the condominium board to shanghai her into serving as its president.

shanghaied

shears

shebang

sheepshearer

n
/ 'shēp.shirə(r) /
E + E
a person that cuts the wool from sheep by hand or machine.
At the county fair, the sheepshearer always draws the largest crowd.

shekel

n
/ 'shekəl /
Hebrew
a Hebrew unit of weight equal to about 252 grains troy.
In the Talmudist system, a shekel is 1/60 of a mina.

shenanigan

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shenanigans

n pl

/ shə'nanəgənz /

unknown

high-spirited, daring, or mischievous acts : pranks.

On the first day of school Mrs. Gibson warned the class that she would not put up with any shenanigans in her classroom.

shepherdess

n

/ 'shepə(r)dəs /

E

a woman or girl who tends sheep.
Alma painted a watercolor of a shepherdess and three lambs.

sheriff

n

/ 'sherəf /

E

a county officer who is usually elected by the people of the county and has the duty of preserving the peace.

The office of sheriff is a holdover from medieval English law.

shibboleth

n

/ 'shibələθ /

Heb

a custom or usage regarded as a criterion for distinguishing members of one group (as a social class) from those of another.
Table manners are sometimes used as a shibboleth of class distinction.

shillibeer

n

/ 'shilə.bi(ə)r /

E name

a horse-drawn hearse with seats for mourners.

The museum has acquired an ornate Victorian shillibeer.

shillyshallyer

shindig

n

/ 'shin.dig /

E

a jovial social affair that includes dancing.

Max hosted the shindig at the hotel.

shipwreck

n

/ 'shi.prek /

E + Scand > F > E

a large ruined or stranded seagoing boat or its parts.

The shipwreck was mottled with barnacles.

shivering

v

/ 'shiv(ə)riŋ /

E

trembling due to cold, fear, or physical pressure.

Norma was shivering because she did not dress in warm clothing.

shoal

n

/ 'shəl /

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: shale.] a great number thronged together or considered as a group.
The spelling bee champion received a shoal of congratulatory letters in the month following her win.

shrapnel

n

/ 'shrapnəl /

E name

bomb, mine, or shell fragments.

The surgeon found and removed all of the shrapnel in the soldier's leg, ensuring a swift recovery.

shrewdness

n

/ 'shrüdəs /

E

the quality or state of being discerning or astute.

Shrewdness is Janet's strong suit.

shriek

n

/ 'shrēk /

E

a shrill, usually wild or involuntary cry.

Nancy let out a shriek when her little brother dropped an ice cube down the back of her dress.

shubunkin

shuddering

v

/ 'shəd(ə)riŋ /

E

shaking with fear, aversion, horror, or cold.

Joan woke shuddering from a nightmare.

sibilant

adj

/ 'sibələnt /

L imit

having, containing, or producing the sound of or a sound resembling that of the s or the sh in sash.

"She sells sea shells. . . ." is a sibilant tongue twister.

siccative

adj

/ 'sikədɪv /

L

causing to dry : promoting the action of drying.

Zinc oxide is often used as a siccative agent for skin rashes.

sickle

sicklocyte

n

/ 'sik(ə)ləsīt /

E + Gk

an abnormal red blood cell of crescent shape.

The patient with sickle-cell anemia wanted to see a sicklocyte under the microscope.

sidereal

adj

/ sī'dirēəl /

L

[has near homonym: sideral] of or relating to stars or constellations.

Time-lapse photography was used by the observatory to detect sidereal motion.

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siege

n
/ 'sɛj /
L > F > E
the operations of an army around a fortified place for the purpose of compelling its surrender by assault or blockade.
The defenders were confident they could outlast the siege, since the castle had an underground source of fresh water.

siffilate

v
/ 'sɪfə.laɪt /
L > F
whisper.
The diners began to siffilate when the celebrity entered the restaurant.

sightseer

n
/ 'sɪt.sɛə(r) /
E
one that visits places of interest.
The unusual sightseer asked whether anyone had noticed any interesting manhole covers or drain grates in the area.

signature

silentary

n
/ sɪ'lenchə.erē /
L
one appointed to keep silence and order (as in a court of law or a public assembly).
One stern glance from the silentary was all it took to stop Karsten's insipid murmuring.

silhouette

n
/ .sɪlə'wet /
F name
a representation of the outlines of an object filled in with black or some other uniform color.
Mrs. Baldwin has a framed silhouette of each of her children on the wall of her foyer.

silhouettist

silica

n
/ 'sɪləkə /
L
the chemically resistant dioxide of a nonmetallic element that occurs in combined form as the most abundant element next to oxygen in Earth's crust.
Nora learned from her research that silica is used for making glass and ceramic products and is found naturally in quartz and sand.

siliciferous

adj
/ .sɪlə'sɪf(ə)rəs /
L
producing, containing, or united with silica.
When geologists analyzed the siliciferous rock, they found quartz and chlorite veins.

silicon

n
/ 'sɪləkən /
L
[Note: Could be confused with silicone.] a nonmetallic element that occurs abundantly in combined form and is used chiefly in the form of alloys.
The scientist was striving to devise a new method for purifying silicon for use in fabricating microchips.

sillar

n
/ sɛl'yär /
L > Sp
[has somewhat near homonym: sillier] building material consisting of large blocks cut from a natural deposit.
The hikers came upon a low structure made of sillar and nearly covered in vines.

sillographer

n
/ sə'lägrəfə(r) /
Gk
a writer of satires.
The marble bust of the ancient sillographer crashed to the library floor.

similarity

simile

n
/ 'sɪmə(,)lɪ /
L
a figure of speech comparing two essentially unlike things and often introduced by like or as.
Kermit has a pet chicken and knows firsthand what the simile "as scarce as hens' teeth" means.

simnel

n
/ 'sɪmnəl /
Semitic? > L > F > E
a rich fruit cake sometimes covered with almond paste.
Auntie Grace always serves simnel during the December holidays.

simpatico

adj
/ sɪm'pədə.kō /
L > It
possessing attractive qualities : appealing, likable.
The hero of the novel is a thoroughly simpatico character.

simulacrum

n
/ .sɪmyə'lākɾəm /
L
a representation of something : image, effigy.
A simulacrum of Elvis stood at the entrance to the wax museum.

simulcast

v
/ 'sɪməl.kast /
L + ON > E
broadcast by radio and television simultaneously.
Years ago, radio and television stations would sometimes simulcast operatic performances to provide listeners with quality stereophonic sound.

simultaneity

simultaneous

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simultaneously

adv

/ˌsɪməl'tænēəsle /

L

at the same time : concurrently.

Jason, who often types and talks simultaneously, calls himself a "master of multitasking."

sinciput

sinecure

n

/ˌsɪnəkʏ(ə)r /

L

an office or position that requires little or no work and that usually provides an income.

The mayor made the grave mistake of handing out a sinecure to a friend.

sinew

n

/ˌsɪ(,)nyü /

E

tendon; especially : one dressed for use as a cord or thread.

Ephraim wore a jade pendant in the shape of a bear on a sinew around his neck.

singeing

singular

adj

/ˌsɪŋgələ(r) /

L

extraordinary, exceptional.

The singular quality of Sean's voice was the envy of all the other choir members.

singularize

v

/ˌsɪŋgələˈrɪz /

L + Ecff

distinguish.

By practicing every day, Ben believed he could singularize himself in the school orchestra.

sinistral

adj

/ˌsɪnəstrəl /

L

of or relating to the left.

The sorcerer's mask was ripped away, revealing terrible scars on the sinistral side of his face.

sinuosity

n

/ˌsɪnyə'wəsədə /

L

the quality or state of bending in and out.

The sinuosity of the mountain road taxed Ken's driving skills.

sinusitis

n

/ˌsɪnə'sɪdəs /

L

inflammation of any of the several cavities in the skull.

The allergist explained that Alice's headaches and sneezing are due to sinusitis.

Sioux

adj

/ˌsü /

Dakota

[has homonyms: sault, sou, sue] of or relating to the Dakota people or their language.

Following a speech in Sioux language, the dancers began the Sun Dance.

sirloin

n

/ˌsər.lɔɪn /

L > F > E

a cut of meat and especially of beef taken from the hindquarters.

The butcher cut the sirloin into steaks for his customers.

sitology

n

/sɪ'täləjē /

Gk

[Word has homonym: cytology. In addition, an alternate pronunciation has near homonym: cetology.] the science of nutrition and dietetics.

Deirdre plans to major in sitology and write cookbooks for vegetarians.

skedaddle

v

/skə'dadl /

unknown

run away : leave hastily.

A sudden shower caused Karen to skedaddle from the bazaar.

skeleton

n

/ˈskelətˈn /

Gk

the bones of a human being or other vertebrate.

Dr. Symonds has a real human skeleton in his office.

skewbald

skewer

n

/ˈskyüə(r) /

unknown

[has near homonym: skua] a pin of wood or metal for fastening meat to keep in form while roasting or to hold small pieces of meat and vegetables for broiling.

Maggie put pieces of steak and vegetables on the skewer.

skillet

n

/ˈskɪlɪt /

E

frying pan.

A quality deep skillet has many uses in the kitchen.

skimeister

n

/ˈskē.mɪstə(r) /

G + L > G

[Note: Caution should be taken not to confuse second part of this compound word with master.] a professional skier or skiing instructor.

Diantha pretended to be a poor skier just to get close to the handsome skimeister.

skimpiness

n

/ˈskɪmpənəs /

Scand? > E? + Ecff

the quality or state of being deficient in supply or execution.

The skimpiness of Eunice's budget did not allow for many luxuries.

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skirmish

n
/ 'skərmish /
F > E
a minor dispute or contest between opposing parties.
Winston hopes that his skirmish with the neighbors over his dog does not foreshadow a lengthy feud.

skirret

n
/ 'skirət /
Ar? > F > E
an Asiatic herb cultivated in Europe for its sweet edible tuberous roots.
After foraging for an hour, Yang happened on a skirret, the roots of which he would boil and eat.

skittish

skoal

skookum

adj
/ 'skükəm /
Chinook
marked by excellent quality : first-rate.
Liz felt sure that the pail of blueberries would make a skookum pie.

slalom

n
/ 'släləm /
Norw
skiing in a zigzag or wavy course between upright obstacles.
Tully did the slalom down the mountainside.

slanderous

slantindicular

adj
/ ,slant'ndikyələ(r) /
E + L > F > E
somewhat oblique.
The main staircase of the new library rises at a slantindicular angle to the facade.

slapstick

n
/ 'slap.stik /
G imit + E
comedy that depends for its effect on fast, boisterous, and zany physical activity and horseplay often accompanied by broad rowdy verbal humor.
The Three Stooges were famous for their slapstick.

sleazily

sledgehammer

sleuth

v
/ 'slüth /
ON > E
act as a detective or investigator : search for information or facts.
There are several game programs that teach children how to sleuth out facts and figures on the Internet.

slobberhannes

sloganeer

n
/ ,slögə'ni(ə)r /
Gaelic
a coiner or user of brief striking phrases in advertising or promotion.
Without the sloganeer, most commercials would probably be deadily dull.

slovenly

adj
/ 'sləvənlē /
G or Flemish
negligent of neatness and order especially in dress or person.
He that is born under Capricorn shall incline to the slovenly.

sluice

n
/ 'slüs /
L > F > E
a body of water pent up behind a floodgate.
Ellen crossed the sluice in a canoe.

slumgullion

n
/ ,sləm'gəlyən /
unknown + (L > F > E)?
a meat stew.
The sailors protested when they were served yet another meal of slumgullion.

smectic

smoggy

adj
/ 'smägē /
(E + Scand?) > E
characterized by or abounding in a fog made heavier and darker by smoke and chemical fumes.
The smoggy atmosphere of Los Angeles aggravated Frank's allergies.

smorgasbord

n
/ 'smörgəs.börd /
Sw
a luncheon or supper buffet offering a variety of foods and dishes.
Nita's smorgasbord included turkey and smoked salmon.

snagrel

n
/ 'snagrəl /
unknown
an herb of the genus Aristolochia of the eastern United States.
Snagrel is also called Virginia snakeroot.

snood

n
/ 'snüd /
E
a net or fabric bag for confining a woman's hair pinned or tied on at the back of the head.
Kathryn auditioned for a part in the Noel Coward play wearing a tea-length gown and snood from the 1930s.

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soavemente

adv

/ sō'āvā'mentā /

L > It

with sweetness or smoothness : in a gentle manner—used as a direction in music.

The serenade was played soavemente by the strings.

sociable

adj

/ 'sōshəbəl /

L

enjoying companionship.

The dolphin is one of the most sociable creatures known to man.

sodality

sojourner

n

/ 'sō,jərnə(r) /

F > E

one that stays as a temporary resident.

Even though he had lived there for five years, Russell knew he was regarded as a sojourner by the neighbors.

solace

v

/ 'säləs /

L

[has near homonym: solus] console.

When Janie learned she had failed her swimming exam, she decided to solace herself by going out to a movie.

solation

n

/ sō'lāshēəm /

L

something that alleviates or compensates for suffering or loss; especially : an additional allowance (as for injured feelings).

The government offered a solatium to the families of those killed in the terrorist bombing.

solder

v

/ 'sädə(r) /

L > F > E

[has homonym: sodder] unite or make whole by means of a melted metallic alloy.

Jennifer's science class learned how to solder wires so they could experiment with electrical circuits.

soldier

solecism

solecistic

adj

/ ,sälə'sistik /

Gk > L

relating to, constituting, or involving an ungrammatical combination of words in a sentence.

Careful writers shun as solecistic the use of the word like as a conjunction.

solfatara

n

/ ,sälə'färə /

L > It

a volcanic area or vent that yields sulfur gases and hot vapors and represents a late stage of volcanic activity.

Harry noticed a rotten-egg odor coming from a solfatara on the north side of the previously inactive volcano.

solferino

solicitous

adj

/ sə'lisədəs /

L

manifesting or expressing concern.
Dr. Turner is especially solicitous toward his older patients.

soliloquy

n

/ sə'liləkwē /

L

a discourse made by one in solitude to oneself.

At the talent contest Angelo stepped into the spotlight and recited Hamlet's famous soliloquy "To be or not to be, . . ."

solipsism

n

/ 'sōləp,sizəm /

L

extreme indulgence of and concern with the self at the expense of social relationships especially as expressed in a failure of artistic communication.

Critics accused the popular actor of solipsism.

solitaire

n

/ 'sälə,tə(ə)r /

L

a card game designed for one person to play alone.

Shelley often relaxes by playing solitaire after everyone else has gone to bed.

soliterraneous

adj

/ ,sōlətə'rānēəs /

L

of or relating to Earth and the Sun.
Scientists attribute the recent drought to soliterraneous causes.

solivagant

adj

/ sō'livəgənt /

L

marked by solitary wandering.

During his first semester in college, Gerry took frequent solivagant walks around the campus.

solleret

n

/ ,sälə'ret /

L > F

a flexible steel shoe forming part of a medieval suit of armor.

The curator explained that the cumbersome solleret had to be removed to allow the knight to fight on foot.

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solmization

solon

n
/ 'sɒlən /
Gk name
a wise and skillful lawgiver or statesman.
Judge Kantz is revered throughout the county as a solon.

solstice

n
/ 'sɒltɪs /
L > F > E
one of two points on the ecliptic at which its distance from the celestial equator is greatest and which is reached by the Sun each year about June 22nd and December 23rd.
The North Pole is tilted directly toward the Sun at the summer solstice.

solstitial

adj
/ sɒl'zɪʃəl /
L
of or relating to the two points on the ecliptic at which its distance from the celestial equator is greatest and which is reached by the Sun each year about June 22nd and December 23rd.
Ancient myths about the eternal battle between light and dark are tied to equinoctial and solstitial moments in the year.

solvolysis

sombrero

n
/ sɒm'bre(ɪ)rō /
Sp
a high-crowned hat of felt or straw with a very wide brim worn especially in the Southwest and in Mexico.
Maria was dressed quite expensively, with leather boots covering her legs and a dark sombrero poised levelly on her head.

somnambulant

adj
/ sɒm'nambyələnt /
L + L
walking or addicted to walking while asleep.
Sheila could remember nothing of her somnambulant activities when she was told of them the next morning.

somniloquist

somnolence

sonorous

adj
/ 'sɒnərəs /
L
characterized by full or loud sound often with clear or rich tone, marked volume, or easy audibility.
Alex's sonorous voice made him the clear choice to perform the reading.

soothsaying

sophisticate

v
/ sə'fɪstəkāt /
Gk > L
alter deceptively: adulterate.
Lanny feared that someone would sophisticate the survey results.

sophistry

n
/ 'sɒfəstrē /
Gk > F
reasoning that is superficially plausible but actually fallacious.
Larry's masterful but irresponsible sophistry easily convinced naïve listeners.

Sophoclean

adj
/ ,sɒfə'klēən /
Gk name
of, relating to, or characteristic of the Athenian tragic poet Sophocles or his dramas.
Finding a new Sophoclean fragment in the museum's papyri was Gunther's claim to fame.

sophomore

n
/ 'sɒf(ə).mɒ(ə)r /
Gk
a student in his second year or with second-year standing at a college.
As a sophomore, Jason was expected to find a one-semester internship in his major subject.

soporific

adj
/ ,sɒpə'rɪfɪk /
L > F
causing or tending to cause sleep.
The students valiantly attempted to fight off the soporific effects of the lecture.

sorbet

n
/ 'sɒrbət /
Turkish > It > F
[Note: Could be confused with sherbet.] a frozen dessert made with a mixture of fruits.
Wylie ate sorbet between courses to cleanse his palate.

sorcerer

n
/ 'sɒ(r)s(ə)rə(r) /
L > F
magician.
Traveling alone in the dark, the sorcerer saw no harm in conjuring up a lamp for his convenience.

sorcery

sorghum

n
/ 'sɔrgəm /
L? > It
syrup produced by evaporating the juice from stems of certain tropical grasses.
Rachel likes sorghum on her oatmeal.

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sorrel

n
/ 'sɔrəl /
Gmc > F > E
[has homonyms: saurel, soral, sorel] a light bright chestnut horse often with white mane and tail.
Ken promised to take good care of the sorrel his dad had bought for him.

sortie

sortileger

n
/ 'sɔ(r)ɪljə(r) /
L
one that tells fortunes; especially : a person who for payment predicts what are claimed to be future events or influences in the life of another.
The sortileger predicted a radical change in Frank's lifestyle.

soubise

n
/ sü'bēz /
F geog name
a white or brown sauce containing onions or onion puree.
A sauceboat of soubise accompanied the roast.

soubresaut

n
/ ,sübrə'sɔ /
L > F
a ballet jump from and a landing on both feet in closed position.
Keith demonstrated his lack of ballet prowess with an awkward soubresaut.

soubrette

sourdough

sousaphone

n
/ 'süzəfɒn /
Amer name + Gk > E
a large circular tuba having a flaring adjustable bell.
The band director was looking for someone who could play the sousaphone.

soutane

souterrain

southpaw

n
/ 'saʊθ.pɔ /
E + F > E
left-hander; specifically : a left-handed baseball pitcher.
Some fans think Babe Ruth was the best southpaw ever to play major league baseball.

souvenir

n
/ ,süvə'ni(ə)r /
L > F
something that serves as a reminder : memento, remembrance.
Moirra kept a seashell as a souvenir of her trip to the ocean.

spacious

spacistor

n
/ 'spā.sistə(r) /
L
a high-frequency semiconductor amplifying device.
The spacistor has replaced the transistor because of its greater ability to amplify electrical energy.

spaghetti

n
/ spə'gedē /
It
a pasta made in solid strings of small diameter but larger than vermicelli.
The specialty of the restaurant was spaghetti with meat sauce.

spandex

spangle

n
/ 'spʌŋɡəl /
Scand > E
a small object that brightly reflects light.
The packrat ran out into the road to pick up the glittering spangle.

spaniel

spatiotemporal

adj
/ ,spāshē(,)ɒ'temp(ə)rəl /
L
having the quality of something that is at once extended and enduring.
The philosopher pointed out that two things cannot coexist in one spatiotemporal point.

spatterdock

spatula

n
/ 'spachələ /
L
a flat thin flexible dull-edged usually metal implement used especially for spreading or mixing soft substances, scooping, or lifting.
With batter on his face and a spatula in his fist, Casey smiled for his mom and her camera.

species

n pl
/ 'spē(,)shēz /
L
a category of biological classification ranking immediately below a genus or subgenus.
The housefly belongs to the genus Musca and the species domestica.

speciesism

n
/ 'spē(,)s(h)ē.zizəm /
L + Ec
prejudice or discrimination based on species; especially : discrimination against animals.
Some animal rights activists go so far as to claim that swatting a fly is an act of speciesism.

specimen

n
/ 'spesəmən /
L
a particular single item, part, aspect, or incident that is typical and indicative of the nature, character, or quality of others in the same class or group.
At the museum Ken and Allison saw an excellent specimen of a moon rock.

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specious

adj
/ 'spēshəs /
L

superficially fair, just, or correct, but not so in reality.
Only after the candidate was elected was the actual truth of her specious claims exposed.

spectral

adj
/ 'spektrəl /
L

of, like, or relating to a disembodied spirit, apparition, or ghost.
Gallop toward him was a spectral rider on horseback.

spectrum

n
/ 'spektrəm /
L

a series of images formed when a beam of light is subjected to dispersion.
The specialty store carried a spectrum of ties to suit any man's taste.

speleologist

n
/ ,spēlē'äləjəst /
Gk > L > ISV

a specialist in the scientific study or systematic exploration of caves.
Dale's work as a speleologist takes him to spectacular natural features around the world.

speleothem

n
/ 'spēlēə.thəm /
Gk > L > ISV + Gk

a cave deposit or formation.
Receding waters have left a speleothem of carbonate on the cavern floor.

spelunking

n
/ spə'ləŋkiŋ /
E

the hobby or practice of exploring caves.
Spelunking is a popular activity in eastern Kentucky.

sphagnum

n
/ 'sfagnəm /
Gk > L

any plant of a large genus of atypical mosses that grow only in very wet acid areas where their accumulated remains become compacted with other plant debris to form peat.
A large patch of sphagnum grew in the bog by the police station.

spherical

adj
/ 'sfirəkəl /
Gk > L + Ecf

like a sphere : globular.
Linda suspected that the spherical rock she found was a geode.

spheterize

v
/ 'sfedə.rīz /
Gk

take for one's own : appropriate.
The invading army proceeded to spheterize the villagers' private property.

sphinx

n
/ 'sfɪŋ(k)s /
Gk > L

a monster in Greek mythology having typically a lion's body, wings, and the head and bust of a woman.
According to Greek legend, the sphinx of Thebes would pose a riddle to a passerby and then kill that person if he or she could not answer it.

spiedino

n
/ ,spēə'dē(,)nō /
Gmc > F > It

a dish of meat rolled around a filling or minced and formed into balls, then usually batter-dipped and cooked on a skewer.
The chef grilled a spiedino of beef on a charcoal grill.

spinescent

adj
/ spī'nes'nt /
L

tapering to a sharp rigid point.
The fish Homer caught had two spinescent fins.

spinet

n
/ 'spɪnət /
L > It

a compactly built upright piano of reduced height and usually reduced keyboard suitable for limited space.
Percival didn't have room for a full-size piano in his studio apartment, so he bought a spinet.

spinnaker

n
/ 'spɪnəkə(r) /
unknown
a large triangular sail set on a long light pole and used when running before the wind.
The spinnaker on Diane's boat is cardinal red.

spiracle

n
/ 'spɪrəkəl /
L

one of the breathing pores found on the thorax and abdomen of an insect.
The muscular valve of a spiracle opens only to allow the uptake of oxygen and the escape of carbon dioxide.

spiritual

splendent

splenectomize

splenetic

adj
/ splə'nedɪk /
Gk > L
marked by morose bad temper, sullen malevolence, or spiteful, peevish anger.
The splenetic critic gave the musical a scathing review.

spoliation

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spondylitis

n
/ ˌspændəˈlɪdʰəs /
Gk > L
inflammation of the vertebrae.
Jewel's back pain was caused by spondylitis.

spongicolous

sponson

spontaneity

n
/ ˌspäntəˈnēədē /
L
the quality or state of being unconstrained or impulsive.
Brian has always liked to stick to a schedule, but lately he has shown more spontaneity than usual.

spontaneous

adj
/ spänˈtānēəs /
L
proceeding from natural feeling or native tendency without external constraint.
His employee's spontaneous obedience made Tim's job pleasant.

spoonerism

n
/ ˈspünəˌrɪzəm /
E name
a transposition of usually initial sounds of two or more words that generally creates a comic effect.
Vivian was afraid that she would utter a spoonerism in her recitation.

sporadically

sporogenous

adj
/ spəˈrājənəs /
Gk > L
producing or adapted to the production of minute unicellular reproductive bodies.
The botany class studied the development of the fern's sporogenous tissue.

sporran

n
/ ˈspärən /
ScotGael
a large pouch of skin with the hair or fur on that is worn in front of the kilt by Highlanders in full dress and used as a purse.
Angus picked up a quarter and put it in his sporran.

springerle

n
/ ˈs(h)prɪŋərlə /
G
a thick hard cookie usually flavored with anise and impressed with a relief design and traditionally eaten at Christmas in German-speaking countries.
Klaus broke his tooth on a stale springerle.

spur

spurious

squadron

squalid

adj
/ ˈskwäləd /
L
marked by filthiness and degradation usually from neglect.
The squalid tenement building was condemned and scheduled for demolition.

squaliform

adj
/ ˈskwāləˌförm /
L > E
resembling a shark or dogfish in form.
While scuba diving, Mike encountered a group of curious squaliform fish.

squeamish

adj
/ ˈskwēmish /
AF > E
inclined to become nauseated : queasy.
Pat is squeamish when it comes to rides at the fair.

squelch

v
/ ˈskwelch /
imit
move with water or mud in one's shoes and produce a sucking or splashing sound.
After playing in mud puddles all the way home, Frances tried to squelch quietly to her room without getting caught by her mother.

squirrel

n
/ ˈskwər(ə)l /
Gk > L > F > E
any of various widely distributed small to medium-sized rodents that have a bushy tail and long strong hind limbs.
On the trunk of the tree, a brown squirrel was clinging and watching the boy below.

stabilimeter

stable

staccato

adj
/ stəkād(ə)l /
F > It
marked by short clear-cut playing or singing of tones or chords.
Marcia's piano teacher told her to practice the etude's staccato passage several minutes each day.

stagnant

adj
/ ˈstagnənt /
L
having undergone physical changes while standing; especially : impaired in flavor, odor, or texture by such changes.
Josh stood still in disbelief after Kevin pushed him into the stagnant water of the ditch.

stalactite

n
/ stəlˈak.tīt /
Gk
a deposit of calcium carbonate resembling an icicle hanging from the roof or sides of a cavern.
It takes hundreds of years for a stalactite to form.

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stalagmite

n
/ stə'lag.mīt /
Gk

a deposit of crystalline calcium carbonate more or less like an inverted stalactite formed on the floor of a cave.

A gigantic stalagmite blocked the spelunker's path.

stalwart

adj
/ 'stɒlwə(r)t /
E

brave, valiant, resolute.

The new musical comedy is based on the story of Robin Hood and his stalwart companions.

stamina

n
/ 'stamənə /
L

strength or courage of conviction : staying power.

The elderly senator doubted that he had the stamina to last through another election campaign.

stamnos

stampede

n
/ stəm'pēd /
Gmc > Sp

a wild headlong rush or flight of a number of animals usually due to fright.

The lightning strike caused a cattle stampede.

stanchion

n
/ 'stanchən /
L > F

an upright bar, post, prop, brace, or support.

When Oliver lost control of his car, it swerved and hit a traffic-light stanchion.

stanniferous

adj
/ stə'nɪf(ə)rəs /
Celt > L

containing tin.

In Spain, Italy, and the Middle East pottery is sometimes covered with a white stanniferous glaze as a base for other decoration.

stannous

adj
/ 'stanəs /
L

of, relating to, or containing tin—used especially of compounds in which this element is bivalent.

In geology class Syadi was surprised to learn that cassiterite, the principal ore of tin, is not considered stannous.

stanzaical

adj
/ ,stən'zāɪkəl /
L > It

relating to or consisting of groups of lines arranged together in a recurring pattern of metrical lengths and usually a sequence of rhymes.

Kerri prefers poetry with a more stanzaical form.

stapes

statically

adv
/ 'stədə'k(ə)lē /
Gk > L

in stable or unchanging terms.

Alan's problem was that he always viewed problems statically.

stationary

adj
/ 'stāshə.nerē /
L

[has homonym: stationery] fixed in a place, position, course, or mode.
The clerk calmly remained in a stationary position.

stationery

n
/ 'stāshə.nerē /
L > F > E

[has homonym: stationary] materials (as paper, pens, pencils, ink, blankbooks, ledgers, and cards) for writing or typing.
Claudia complained that just before the beginning of every school year the office stationery began to disappear.

statistician

n
/ ,stədə'stɪʃən /
L > G

one versed in or engaged in compiling masses of numerical data.

Jamie's career as a statistician began with following baseball scores.

statistics

n pl
/ stə'tɪstɪks /
L

a science dealing with the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of masses of numerical data.

Our state has lost some of its voting clout because of statistics reported by the U.S. Census Bureau.

statuesque

adj
/ ,stachə'wesk /
L > F > E + F > Ecf

having a massive dignity or impressiveness : majestic.

A statuesque sculpture stood in the town square.

steadily

stearic

steatogenous

steeple

stegosaur

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steinkern

n
/ 's(h)tɪŋkərn /
G

a fossil consisting of a stony mass that entered a hollow natural object (as a bivalve shell) in the form of mud or sediment, was consolidated, and remained as a cast after dissolution of the mold.
For show-and-tell, Rose brought in a steinkern she had found at the beach.

stellar

adj
/ 'stelə(r) /
L

of, relating to, or derived from the stars.
Rapid stellar rotation can modify the structure of a star's atmosphere.

stenographer

n
/ stə'nəgrəfə(r) /
Gk + Gk

one who is employed chiefly to take and transcribe dictation.
Sergeant Fitzpatrick called in a stenographer to record the suspect's confession.

stentorophonic

steppe

n
/ 'step /
Russ

[has homonym: step] one of the vast tracts in southeastern Europe or Asia that are usually level and without forests.
The tourists explored the steppe in search of exotic wildlife.

stereotype

sternutation

n
/ ,stərnɪə'təʃən /
L

the act, fact, or noise of sneezing.
Pat's sternutation was so frequent and loud that his office mate asked to be transferred to another department.

stertorous

adj
/ 'stərdərəs /
L

characterized by a harsh snoring or gasping sound.
While asleep in his easy chair, Uncle Max would give a start every few minutes, briefly awakened by his own stertorous breathing.

stethoscope

n
/ 'stethə.skōp /
Gk > F

an instrument used for the detection and study of sounds within the body.
Heard through a stethoscope, the rumbling of the stomach can sound like a storm at sea.

stevedore

n
/ 'stēvə.dō(ə)r /
L > Sp

one who works at or is responsible for the loading or unloading of a ship in port.
The stevedore returned to the ship after dining at his favorite dockside restaurant.

stewardess

n
/ 'st(y)üə(r)dəs /
E

a woman who attends to the needs of passengers (as on an airplane, ship, or train).
When addressed as stewardess, Emily requested that she be called a flight attendant.

sthenic

adj
/ 'sthenik /
Gk

marked by excessive vitality or nervous energy.
Fido's sthenic symptoms finally subsided.

stifle

v
/ 'stɪfəl /
F > E

kill by smothering : asphyxiate.
Smoke can stifle a person in a short period of time.

stimulus

stipend

n
/ 'stɪ.pend /
L

a fixed sum of money typically modest in amount that is paid periodically in compensation for services.
The university gave Professor Barrett a stipend for his lecture series.

stirrup

stochastic

adj
/ stə'kastik /
Gk

lacking or seeming to lack a regular plan, purpose, or pattern.
Vince programmed the computer to create a stochastic series of numbers.

stoically

stolkjaerre

stollen

n
/ 's(h)tölən /
G

[has homonym: stolen] a sweet yeast bread containing fruits and nuts, usually made in a long oval loaf.
Henrietta found a recipe for stollen in her German cookbook.

strabismus

n
/ strə'bɪzməs /
Gk > L

inability of one eye to attain binocular vision with the other because of imbalance of the extrinsic eye muscles.
Corrective surgery was performed to remedy Herman's strabismus.

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straiten

v
/ 'strātˈn /
L > F > E
[has homonym: straighten] cause to suffer or ebb by reason of insufficient funds : reduce (as oneself) to poverty.
With the generous university grant, Joanne's family would not have to straiten itself to provide the education she desired.

strangulate

v
/ 'strangyə.lāt /
L
compress the windpipe of until death results from stoppage of respiration.
Many nonvenomous snakes strangulate their prey.

stratagem

n
/ 'strad̩əjəm /
Gk
a cleverly contrived trick or scheme for gaining an end.
Barb was disappointed that her mother saw through her stratagem for staying out past curfew.

strategist

strathspey

n
/ 'strath.spā /
Scot geog name
a Scottish dance similar to but slower than the reel.
The highland fling is one example of a dance in the manner of the strathspey.

stratocirrus

n
/ .strad̩ō'sirəs /
L
a low dense fairly uniform cloud formation.
The meteorologist predicted a heavy cover of stratocirrus for the weekend.

strength

strephosymbolia

n
/ .stre(,)fō.sim'bōlēə /
Gk
reversal or transposition of phrases, words, or letters or of any symbols especially in reading.
Because of his strephosymbolia, Ryan was diagnosed as having a learning disorder.

strepituous

adj
/ 'strepədəs /
L
characterized or accompanied by much noise.
The playoff game was a strepitous event.

streptomycin

n
/ .streptō'mīsˈn /
Gk
an antibiotic organic base active against many bacteria and used especially in the treatment of infections (as tuberculosis) by gram-negative bacteria.
Streptomycin was the first drug to prove effective against tuberculosis.

streusel

streuselkuchen

n
/ 'strüsəl.kükən /
G
coffee cake that is baked with a topping of a crumbly mixture of butter, sugar, and flour and sometimes nuts and spices.
Mrs. Messer, our neighbor, always bakes her family a streuselkuchen for the holidays.

stricture

n
/ 'strikchə(r) /
L
an abnormal narrowing of a tubular organ : constriction.
The stricture of Lucy's throat was caused by an allergic reaction to a bee sting.

strident

adj
/ 'stridˈnt /
L
marked by insistent, discordant, harsh, shrill, or grating noise or sound.
Mary-Allen's fingernails produced a strident sound as she drew them across the blackboard.

strigil

n
/ 'strijəl /
L
an instrument usually of metal or ivory used by the ancient Greeks and Romans for scraping the skin especially after athletic exercises.
Damocles appreciated receiving a strigil personalized with his initials.

stringent

adj
/ 'strinjənt /
L
marked by rigor, strictness, or severity.
Stringent regulations have helped curb environmental pollution.

stroganoff

adj
/ 'strōgə.nōf /
Russ name
sliced thin and cooked in a sauce of meat stock, sour cream, onion, and condiments.
Erica prepared beef stroganoff for the mayor's visit.

strongylid

strophulus

n
/ 'sträfyələs /
Gk
a rash in infants popularly associated with teething distress.
The pediatrician prescribed an ointment for our baby's strophulus.

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strudel

n
/ 's(h)trüd°l /
G

a sheet of paper-thin dough rolled up with any of various fillings and baked.

The flight attendant served the coach passengers a light breakfast of coffee, juice, and strudel.

strychnine

n
/ 'stri:k.nīn /
Gk

a very poisonous bitter crystalline alkaloid obtained from various plants.

Strychnine is a popular poison in murder mystery novels.

stubborn

studious

adj
/ 'st(y)üdēās /
L

of, relating to, or concerned with the application of the mental faculties to the acquisition of knowledge.

Pam is the most studious pupil in Mr. Ramsey's class.

stultiloquence

n
/ ,stəl'tiləkwn(t)s /
L + L

senseless or silly talk : babble.

Myra soon broke her vow never to resort to stultiloquence when communicating with her baby.

stupefy

v
/ 'st(y)üpəfī /
L

blunt or deaden the faculties of perception and understanding of.
Bright headlights will often stupefy a deer and cause it to stand motionless in the path of an oncoming vehicle.

stupendous

adj
/ st(y)ü'pendəs /
L

of amazing size or greatness.

The construction of Khufu's pyramid was a stupendous accomplishment for the ancient Egyptians.

sturgeon

stygian

adj
/ 'stij(ē)ən /
Gk name

characteristic of death.

A black robe, a papier-mâché sickle, and some grayish makeup completed Sean's stygian Halloween costume.

stylebook

styptic

adj
/ 'stiptik /
Gk

tending to arrest bleeding.

Kenneth had to apply a styptic agent to his chin where he cut himself while shaving.

suable

suasible

adj
/ 'swāsəbəl /
L

capable of being induced into some mental position : easily brought to belief, certainty, or conviction.

When it comes to trying new foods, Ming is the least suasible member of her family.

suavity

subaltern

adj
/ sə'böltə(r)n /
L

inferior in status or quality : subordinate.

Julia is disappointed with her subaltern role in the school play.

subaqueous

adj
/ ,səb'ākwcēs /
L

being or found under water or beneath the surface of water.

Bartley rented a glass-bottomed boat to get a better look at the subaqueous fauna.

subbasement

subboreal

adj
/ səb'bōrēəl /
L

very cold : approaching the frigid.

Hope grew up in Florida and finds it very difficult to live in what she calls the "subboreal climate" of Minnesota.

subfulgent

adj
/ ,səb'fŭljənt /
L

moderately lustrous.

The silver platter in Mary's antique shop was battered but still had a subfulgent gleam.

subfuscous

subjugate

v
/ 'səbjəgāt /
L

bring under the yoke of power or dominion.

The love of acquisition and conquest are powers of destruction when used to subjugate one person to another.

submersible

adj
/ səb'mərsəbəl /
L + Ecf

capable of functioning under water.

The earliest designs for submersible vehicles date to antiquity.

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suborn

v
/ sə'bò(ə)rŋ /
L > F

induce (as a person) by underhanded means to do some improper or unlawful thing.
The sting operation exposed Mr. Underwood's attempts to suborn the city treasurer.

subrident

adj
/ ˌsə'brīd'nt /
L

wearing or offered with a smile.
Eilene's subrident answer belied the furious feelings she had toward the questioner.

subscriber

subservient

adj
/ (ˌ)səb'sərvənt /
L

subordinate.
In ancient Rome, wives were legally subservient.

subsidiary

adj
/ (ˌ)səb'sīdē,erē /
L

of secondary importance or prominence.
Marge's role was subsidiary, but her first-rate performance stole the show.

subsistence

n
/ səb'sistən(t)s /
L
a mode of obtaining the necessities of life : livelihood.
Mr. Ellis preaches to his students that a good education goes far to ensure a respectable subsistence.

substitute

n
/ 'səbzətət /
L

a person who takes the place of or acts for another.
When Donald fouled out of the basketball game, the coach decided to send in a substitute who had been warming the bench for weeks.

subterfuge

n
/ 'səbtə(r),fyūj /
L

deception by trickery or stratagem to conceal, escape, avoid, or evade.
George's experience in subterfuge is mostly in cryptography.

subterranean

subtleness

n
/ 'səd'lnəs /
L > F > E + Ecf
the quality or state of being delicate or elusive.
The subtleness of the almond custard eluded Mr. Denson.

succedent

successor

succinct

adj
/ sək'siŋ(k)t /
L
marked by brief and compact expression or by lack of unnecessary words and details.
Sandy's succinct answers do not satisfy those who question him.

succorance

n
/ 'səkə(r)rən(t)s /
L > F > E
dependence.
Harold took measures to reduce his succorance on nasal decongestants.

succotash

n
/ 'səkətəʃ /
Algonquian
a mixture of lima beans or shell beans and kernels of corn cooked together.
Even though Thelma likes both corn and lima beans, she isn't fond of succotash.

succulence

succulent

adj
/ 'səkyələnt /
L
full of juice : juicy.
Perry wiped his mouth with his sleeve after he bit into the succulent peach.

succumb

v
/ sə'kəm /
L
yield and cease to resist or contend before a superior strength, overpowering appeal or desire, or inexorable force.
Joanie found it impossible not to succumb to her drowsiness.

succumbence

sudadero

n
/ ˌsüdə'de(ɪ)rō /
L > Sp
a broad piece (as of leather) attached to a stirrup strap to protect a rider's leg from sweat.
Before mounting his horse, the cowboy checked to see that each sudadero was properly attached.

suddenness

sudoriferous

adj
/ ˌsüdə'rif(ə)rəs /
L
producing or conveying sweat.
Cycling and running are sudoriferous forms of exercise.

suede

s

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uerte

n
/ 'swer()tā /
L > Sp

a skilled movement or pass in a bullfight.

The crowd cheered as the toreador demonstrated a dangerous suerte.

suffice

v
/ sə'fīs /
L

be enough : meet or satisfy a need.

One teaspoonful of salt will suffice for the stew.

sufficiently

adv
/ sə'fishəntlē /
L + Ecf

in a manner marked by quantity, scope, power, or quality to meet with the demands, wants, or needs of a situation.

The number of books printed sufficiently filled the back orders.

sufflamine

v
/ sə'flamə.nāt /
L

obstruct, impede.

Because Tim said not having a computer would sufflamine his progress, his parents relented and bought him one.

suffocate

v
/ 'səfə.kāt /
L

die from being unable to breathe.

It was so hot and stuffy in the classroom that Mark thought he would suffocate.

suffrage

n
/ 'səfriʒ /
L > F

the right or power to participate in electing public officials and adopting or rejecting legislation in a representative form of government.

The 19th Amendment to the Constitution gives women suffrage.

suffrutescent

adj
/ ˌsəfrü'tes'nt /
L

having a base that is somewhat woody and does not die down each year—used of a plant or stem.

Eunice prunes her suffrutescent shrubs in the fall.

suffumigate

v
/ sə'fyümə.gāt /
L

apply smoke, vapor, or gas to from below, as to treat (as a house or room) with a gas for the purpose of disinfecting or of destroying pests.

Clayton joked that his downstairs neighbor was trying to suffumigate him with his incessant grilling on his deck.

suffuse

v
/ sə'fyüz /
L

spread over or through in the manner of fluid or light.

The fixtures were intended to suffuse the patio in warm light.

suggestible

suitable

sukiyaki

n
/ ˌsükē'(y)äkē /
Jpn

meat, soybean curd, onions, bamboo shoots, and other vegetables cooked in soy sauce, sake, and sugar.

Joyce watched with fascination as the Japanese cook prepared sukiyaki right at the table.

sulkily

adv
/ 'səlkəlē /
E?

in a moodily silent manner.

When asked to explain why he had been fighting, Tim looked sulkily down at the floor.

sultanate

n
/ 'səlt'nət /
Ar > F

a state or country governed by a sultan.

Arhat's ancestors ruled a small sultanate on the Arabian Peninsula.

sultriness

n
/ 'səltrēnəs /
E

the quality or state of being oppressively hot and humid.

Marge's air-conditioned car provided welcome relief from July's sultriness.

summarily

summary

sumpter

n
/ 'səm(p)tər /
L > F > E

a saddlebag.

Grandpa's sumpter is embossed with his initials.

sumptuous

adj
/ 'səm(p)chəwəs /
L

involving large outlay or expense : costly, lavish.

Our grandparents treated the whole family to a sumptuous brunch on Saturday.

sundae

superannuated

adj
/ ˌsüpə'ranyə.wādəd /
L

rated no longer fully or passably efficient in one's job because of age : incapacitated or disqualified for active duty by advanced age.

The superannuated file clerk held little hope of finding a job in the near future.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

supercilious

adj

/ˌsüpə(r)'silēəs /

L

arrogantly superior : haughty, disdainful.

The supercilious senior ignored the first-year student.

superficies

superfluous

adj

/ˌsü'pərləwəs /

L

exceeding what is sufficient, necessary, normal, or desirable.

Alex's teacher told him to eliminate superfluous words from his essay.

superintendent

n

/ˌsüp(ə)rən'tendənt /

L

one who has the oversight and charge of a place, institution, department, organization, or operation with the power of direction.

Frustrated residents petitioned the superintendent to improve the building's electrical service.

supernatural

adj

/ˌsüpə(r)'nach(ə)rəl /

L

attributable to or liable to be attributed to the action or presence of a ghost, spirit, or other invisible agent.

The book was filled with tales of supernatural occurrences.

supernumerary

n

/ˌsüpə(r)'n(y)ümə.rerē /

L

an actor employed to play a walk-on (as in a mob scene or spectacle).
The casting director wanted a supernumerary to play one of the bank's customers.

supersonic

adj

/ˌsüpə(r)'sänik /

L

moving or capable of moving at speeds from one to five times the speed of sound in air.

Myrna says that when she grows up, she wants to fly supersonic aircraft.

superstitious

adj

/ˌsüpə(r)'stishəs /

L > F > E

having or based on a belief, conception, act, or practice resulting from ignorance, unreasoning fear of the unknown, or a false conception of causation.

The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe.

supination

n

/ˌsüpə'nāshən /

L

a rotation of the hand and radius around the ulna so that the palm is turned up.

Supination aggravated Henri's tennis elbow.

supine

adj

/sə'pīn /

L

lying on the back or with the face upward.

Greg's dog stayed supine while getting her belly rubbed.

suppedaneum

supplicate

v

/ˌsəplə.kāt /

L

ask earnestly and humbly of.

The defendant's only hope was to supplicate the court for mercy.

surcease

suretyship

n

/ˌshür(ə)dē.ship /

L > E + Ecf

the obligation of a person to answer for the debt, default, or failure in duty of another.

When Sally's father co-signed her first automobile loan, he accepted the suretyship that it represented.

surfactant

n

/ˌsər'faktənt /

L

a substance useful for its cleansing, wetting, dispersing, or similar powers.

The surfactant in a detergent lowers the water's surface tension, enabling faster wetting of the fabric being washed.

surfeit

n

/ˌsərfət /

L > F > E

an overabundant supply, yield, or amount of something : excess.

The reviewer commented that the novel was burdened with a surfeit of details.

surgeon

surly

adj

/ˌsərlē /

E

ill-natured, abrupt, and rude : churlishly cross.

Marie complained to the manager about the surly, uncooperative clerk.

surplus

surrealism

n

/sə'reälizəm /

F

the principles, ideals, or practice of producing fantastic or incongruous imagery in art or literature by means of unnatural juxtapositions and combinations.

David Lynch is a modern master of cinematic surrealism.

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surreptitious

adj
/ ˌsərəp'tishəs /

L
done, made, or acquired in secret or by stealth.

Denise was embarrassed when her surreptitious note to Steve was intercepted by the teacher.

surrey

surrogate

n
/ 'sərə,gāt /

L
something that replaces or substitutes for another.
In formulating new laws, the legislature acts as a surrogate for the entire population.

surtout

n
/ ˌsər'tü /
L > F + L > F

a man's fitted coat or overcoat; especially : frock coat.
Gerald rented a surtout to complete his Abraham Lincoln costume for the party.

surveillance

n
/ sə(r)'vālən(t)s /
L > F

close watch kept over one or more persons (as to detect movements or activities).
The suspects in the bombing investigation were kept under police surveillance.

surviving

adj
/ sə(r)'vīvɪŋ /
L > F

remaining alive or in existence.
Uncle Leonard is the oldest surviving graduate of Milburn College.

susceptible

adj
/ sə'septəbəl /

L
easily influenced or affected through some trait.
People who smoke are very susceptible to chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

suspicion

n
/ sə'spɪʃən /
L
mistrust, doubt.
President Kennedy called for cooperation with our adversaries to "push back the jungle of suspicion" and allow the preservation of peace.

suspicious

sustain

sustenance

n
/ 'səstənən(t)s /
L > F
something that gives support, endurance, or strength.
Tyrone drew sustenance from the letters his girlfriend wrote him while he was overseas.

susurrant

susurration

n
/ ˌsüsə'rāʃən /
L
a whispering sound : murmur.
A mild susurration could be heard in the study hall despite the teacher's "no talking" mandate.

suture

v
/ 'süchə(r) /
L&F
unite the parts of by using a strand or fiber.
The doctor estimated that it would take about 45 minutes to suture the gash in Tim's leg.

suzerain

n
/ 'süzərən /
F
a superior lord to whom allegiance is due : a feudal lord.
The suzerain gave the vassal the use of his land and agreed to protect him when necessary.

suzerainty

Svengali

n
/ 'sfen'gälē /
Brit literary name
one who attempts usually with evil intentions to persuade or force another to do his bidding.
Many fans thought that the rock star's wife was a Svengali who engineered the group's breakup.

swallow

sweltering

adj
/ 'sweltərɪŋ /
E
oppressively hot : causing or marked by excessive sweating or faintness.
Despite the sweltering heat, thousands of people lined the streets to watch the Fourth of July parade.

swill

swindleable

adj
/ 'swɪnd(ə)ləbəl /
G + EcF
capable of being deprived of money or property by fraud or deceit.
The circus owner maintained that the majority of people are gullible and swindleable.

swineherd

n
/ 'swɪn.hərd /
E
a person who looks after hogs.
Ian loathed his job as a swineherd.

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swivel

v
/ 'swivəl /
E

turn or pivot freely.
Frank chose an office chair that could swivel and tilt.

sybaritic

adj
/ ,sibə'ridik /
Gk geog name
marked by or given to luxury or voluptuous living.
The duke's sybaritic bathroom had marble sinks with gold fixtures, floor-to-ceiling mirrors, and a whirlpool bath.

sybaritically

adv
/ ,sibə'ridək(ə)lē /
Gk > L > E
in a luxurious or voluptuous manner.
Dana reclined sybaritically on the velvet sofa.

sycamine

sychnocarpous

adj
/ ,siknəkə'pəs /
Gk + Gk > L > E
able to produce fruit repeatedly.
The apple and pear are sychnocarpous trees.

sycophant

syllable

syllabus

n
/ 'siləbəs /
Gk > L
a compendium or summary outline of a discourse, course of study, or examination requirements.
After reading the syllabus for the seminar, Brad realized he had made a terrible mistake by enrolling.

syllogism

n
/ 'siləjizəm /
Gk
a brief form of argument that consists of two statements and a conclusion that must be true if these two statements are true.
The following argument is a syllogism: All lawbreakers deserve punishment. This person is a lawbreaker. Therefore, this person deserves punishment.

syllogize

v
/ 'siləjīz /
GK > L > E
deduce something by analysis of a formal argument that consists of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion.
To teach logical thinking, Mr. Canby had the class syllogize the philosopher's argument.

sylph

n
/ 'silf /
unknown > L
a slender woman or girl of light and graceful carriage.
One sylph after another joined the growing circle of ballerinas on the stage.

symbolophone

symbiosis

n
/ ,simbē'ōsəs /
Gk + Gk
the intimate living together of two dissimilar organisms in any of various mutually beneficial relationships.
Some insects depend on symbiosis with bacteria to supplement otherwise nutrient-poor diets.

symbol

symmetry

symminct

sympathy

symphony

n
/ 'sim(p)fənē /
Gk + Gk
an elaborate instrumental composition usually in sonata form for full orchestra.
The concert program featured a symphony by Gustav Mahler.

symposiarch

synchronicity

n
/ ,sɪŋkrən'nēədē /
Gk + Ec
the state of happening, existing, or arising at the same time.
The fireworks display was a spectacle of synchronicity.

syncopation

n
/ ,sɪŋkə'pāshən /
Gk > L
a temporary displacement or shifting of the regular metrical accent in a musical composition.
Syncopation is typical of much Eastern European folk dance music.

syncope

n
/ 'sɪŋkə(ɪ)pē /
Gk
a partial or complete temporary suspension of respiration and circulation : faint, swoon.
Unexplained dizziness and syncope occasionally occur on arrival at high altitude.

syndicate

n
/ 'sɪndəkāt /
L
a loose association of racketeers in control of organized crime.
The police have spent years trying to get evidence to convict the head of the local crime syndicate.

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synecdoche

n
/ sə'nekdə(,)kē /

Gk
a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole or vice versa.
Fifty sail is a synecdoche for fifty ships.

synod

n
/ 'sinəd /

Gk > L > E
an ecclesiastical council : a formal meeting to consult and decide on church matters.
Karl is an active participant in the regional Presbyterian synod.

synopsis

n
/ sə'näpsəs /

Gk
a brief orderly outline affording a general view.
Marvin read a plot synopsis before he saw Macbeth.

synoptophore

n
/ sə'näptə.fō(ə)r /

Gk
an instrument for diagnosing imbalance of eye muscles.
The ophthalmologist prescribed eye exercises to correct the muscular imbalance detected by the synoptophore.

syntax

synthesis

n
/ 'sin(t)θəsəs /

Gk
composition or combination of parts or elements so as to form a whole.
Language arts is a synthesis of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

syringe

n
/ sə'rinj /
Gk > L > E

a device used to inject fluids into or withdraw them from the body or its cavities.
Cameron let the toddler use an old ear syringe as a bathtub toy.

syzygy

n
/ 'sizəjē /
Gk

the nearly straight-line configuration of three celestial bodies in a gravitational system.
Tides are highest when the Sun, Moon, and Earth are in syzygy.

tabby

tabernacle

n
/ 'tabə(r).nakəl /
L > F > E

a meetinghouse with a large assembly hall.
The town meeting will be held at the tabernacle.

tabetisol

n
/ tə'bedə.səl /
L + EcF
unfrozen ground above, within, or below the permanently frozen ground.
Arctic wildflowers are able to survive in areas of tabetisol.

tableau

n
/ 'ta.blō /
F

[Note: Plural form can be pronounced similarly.] a static depiction usually presented on a stage with participants in appropriate costume.
The final scene is a tableau in which the family is gathered at the gravesite.

tabloidism

tabulable

tachometer

n
/ ta'kämədə(r) /
Gk

a device for indicating the speed of rotation.
By watching the tachometer, Mr. Henderson was able to keep the engine running above 3000 rpm.

tachygraphy

n
/ ta'kigrəfē /
Gk > F

the art or practice of rapid writing.
Professor Jespersen lectures so quickly that students who practice tachygraphy have an advantage.

taciturn

adj
/ 'tasə.tərn /
L > F

habitually silent : temperamentally disinclined or reluctant to talk or converse.
Mrs. Gibbons found it challenging to draw the taciturn boy into class discussions.

taciturnity

n
/ ,tasə'tərnədē /

L
the quality or state of being disinclined or reluctant to talk or converse.
Gene and Leo's taciturnity about the cause of the scuffle resulted in a trip to the principal's office.

tackline

tactful

tactician

tadpole

tagraggery

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taiga

n
/ 'tīgə /
Turkish > Russ
[has near homonym: tiger]
swampy coniferous forest of
Siberia beginning where the tundra
ends.
*Olga's great-grandfather was born
in a cabin on the edge of the taiga
and grew up playing among spruce
and fir trees.*

tailgate

takkanah

talcum

talebearer

talipes

n
/ 'taləpēz /
L
a congenital deformity of the foot
in which the forepart is twisted into
one of several directions : clubfoot.
*Gordon's talipes was so severe that
surgery was needed to adjust the
tendons and bones of his foot.*

talisman

n
/ 'taləsmən /
Gk > Ar > It > Sp > F
an object thought to act as a charm
to avert evil and bring good
fortune.
*Vern showed us his rabbit's foot,
which he claimed was an effective
talisman.*

talkathon

tallow

n
/ 'ta(,)lə /
E
the rendered fat of cattle and sheep
that is used chiefly in making soap,
glycerol, margarine, candles, and
lubricants.
*Inside of her little tent, the fortune
teller began to shuffle her cards by
the light of a candle made from
tallow.*

tallowy

Talmudic

adj
/ tal'm(y)üdik /
Heb
of, relating to, or characteristic of
the authoritative body of Jewish
law and custom developed on the
basis of the scriptural law.
*The novel was full of Talmudic
lore.*

taloned

tamale

n
/ tə'mälē /
Nahuatl > Sp
ground meat seasoned with chili or
other filling, rolled up in cornmeal
dough, wrapped in corn husks, and
steamed.
*Rosita ordered a tamale, two tacos,
and a burrito from the street
vendor.*

tamarack

tambourine

tamburello

tandem

tangerine

n
/ .tanjə'rēn /
Moroccan geog name
a variable color ranging from
moderate reddish orange to vivid or
strong orange.
*To Petra, the most beautiful color
of mum is tangerine.*

tangible

adj
/ 'tanjəbəl /
L
capable of being touched.
*The black darkness of the night
seemed to have a tangible quality.*

tangy

adj
/ 'təŋē /
Scand > E + Ecf
having a particularly pungent odor.
*The burning pile of old tires will
leave the air tangy for several days.*

tantalize

v
/ 'tant'līz /
Gk name
tease or torment by presenting
something to the view and exciting
desire but continually frustrating
the expectations by keeping it out
of reach.
*Philip used a rod and reel to
tantalize the kitten with a toy mouse
tied to the fishing line.*

tantamount

adj
/ 'tantə.maunt /
L > F > AF > E
equivalent in value, significance, or
effect.
*Because of inflation, Jamie's
meager raise was tantamount to a
pay reduction.*

tantivy

adv
/ tan'tivē /
unknown
in a headlong dash.
*Patsy ran tantivy toward second
base after the bunt.*

tapestry

n
/ 'tapəstrē /
Gk > F > E + Ecf
a heavy handwoven textile for
hangings, curtains, and upholstery.
*Teresa admired the vivid colors of
the tapestry hanging in the
corridor.*

taphephobia

n
/ .tafē'fōbēə /
Gk
fear of being buried alive.
*After reading Edgar Allan Poe's
"The Cask of Amontillado," Mr.
Gallo developed a bad case of
taphephobia.*

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tapir

n
/ 'tāpə(r) /
Tupi

[has homonym: taper] any of a genus of chiefly nocturnal hoofed mammals of tropical America and Myanmar to Sumatra that have the snout and upper lip prolonged into a short flexible proboscis.

The tapir is both a browser and a grazer, feeding on leaves, twigs, and fruits, as well as on grasses.

tarantula

n
/ tə'ranch(ə)lə /

It geog name
any of a family of large hairy spiders that are capable of biting but are not significantly poisonous to humans.

Alexander's friend tried in vain to convince him to get a pet tarantula.

tardigrade

adj
/ 'tārdə,grād /
L

moving or stepping slowly.
The sloth is a well-known tardigrade animal.

tariff

n
/ 'tarəf /
Ar > It
the duty or rate of duty imposed by a government on imported or exported goods.
A high tariff protects the home industries from foreign competition.

tarmac

n
/ 'tār.mak /
(E + Brit name) > trademark
a road, apron, or runway made of asphalt.
Neil's suitcase fell out of the airplane and its contents spilled out onto the tarmac.

tarpaulin

n
/ tār'pōlən /
E + E
a piece of material (as durable plastic) used for protecting exposed objects or areas.
When rain began during the second inning of the baseball game, the ground crew rolled out the tarpaulin to protect the field.

tarragon

n
/ 'tarə,gän /
Ar > L > F
a small European perennial wormwood grown for its aromatic foliage that is used in cooking.
Paul planted tarragon in his herb garden.

tartar

n
/ 'tārdər /
L
[has homonym and near homonyms: tarter and tartare, Tatar] an incrustation on the teeth consisting of salivary secretion, food residue, and various salts.
The hygienist carefully removed the tartar from Rekha's teeth.

tassel

tatami
n
/ tə'tāmē /
Jpn
a straw matting used as a floor covering in a Japanese home.
The Japanese restaurant had a special room in which patrons could sit on a tatami while dining.

tatterdemalion

adj
/ ,tadə(r)də'mālyən /
Scand > E + unknown
ragged or disreputable in dress or appearance.
No one would have guessed that the tatterdemalion fellow is a millionaire.

tattersall

n
/ 'tadə(r),səl /
E name
a fabric having a pattern of colored lines forming squares of solid background.
Jeanne bought a blue-and-white tattersall to make into a skirt.

tattletale

n
/ 'tadəl,tāl /
D + E
one that blabs or tells secrets.
Erica's official title is "social reporter," but Will considers her a plain old tattletale.

taught

taunt
v
/ 'tònt /
F? > E
reproach in a mocking or insulting manner : jeer at.
Spectators on the sidewalk began to taunt the suspect as he exited the van.

tauntingly

taupe
n
/ 'tōp /
L > F
[has homonym: tope] a light brownish gray.
It took some time, but Pam finally matched the taupe of her dress to a pair of shoes.

tauromachy

n
/ tò'rāməkē /
Gk + Gk
the art or practice of bullfighting.
The toreador is well known for his slow, dignified style of tauromachy.

taut

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tautology

n
/ tō'täləjē /

Gk
an instance of needless or meaningless repetition in close succession of an idea, statement, or word.
The phrase a beginner who has just started is a tautology.

tautophony

n
/ tō'täfənē /

Gk
repetition of the same sound.
The insistent tautophony of Josh's alarm clock finally woke him up.

tawdrily

adv
/ 'tōdrəlē /

name > E
in a cheap and gaudy manner.
The tawdrily dressed actress signed autographs outside her hotel.

tawdry

taxation

tazza

technetronic

technical

tedious

tektite

telamon

n
/ 'telə.män /

Gk > L
a male figure used as a supporting column or pilaster.
While in Athens, Anita had her picture taken beside a telamon.

telecine

telegnosis

n
/ .telə'nōsəs /

Gk + Gk
knowledge of distant happenings obtained by occult or unknown means : clairvoyance.
The psychic claimed to have telegnosis of events happening on the other side of the Atlantic.

telephone

n
/ 'telə.fōn /

Gk + Gk
a device for reproducing sounds, especially articulate speech, at a distance.
Ginger's parents asked her to limit her time on the telephone to three 15-minute conversations per night.

telesis

n
/ 'teləsəs /

Gk
progress intelligently planned and directed.
The mayor revealed the city council's ten-year plan for telesis at the press conference.

telltale

temerarious

adj
/ .temə'ra(a)rēəs /

L
rashly or presumptuously daring : reckless.
Mrs. Jasper punished Tim for his temerarious behavior by withholding certain privileges.

temerity

n
/ tə'merədē /

L
unreasonable or foolhardy contempt of danger or opposition.
The private with the temerity to speak up against the sergeant's bullying was assigned to KP indefinitely.

temperament

temperate

adj
/ 'temp(ə)rət /

L > E
having a moderate climate.
All of the United States, except for Hawaii and parts of Alaska and Florida, lies within the temperate zone.

tempest

tempestuous

adj
/ tem'pes(h)chəwəs /

L
of, involving, or resembling a furious storm.
The tempestuous action of wind and waves imperiled the ships.

tempura

n
/ .tempə'rä /

Jpn
[has near homonym: tempera]
fritters of seafood and vegetables fried in deep fat.
The waiter brought a small dish of vegetable tempura as an appetizer.

tenacious

adj
/ tənāshəs /

L > E
holding fast or tending to hold fast.
Marjorie is tenacious in her belief that her cousin was abducted by aliens and replaced by an impostor.

tenacity

n
/ tənəsədē /

L
the quality or state of holding fast : determination, firmness, persistence.
Randy's tenacity often made him seem stubborn.

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tenaculum

n
/ tən'akyləm /
L

a slender sharp-pointed hook attached to a handle and used mainly in surgery for seizing and holding parts (as arteries).
Connie slipped the tenaculum under the patient's carotid artery.

tendency

n
/ 'tendənsē /
L

a proneness to or readiness for a particular kind of thought or action.
Tom's tendency to say exactly what he feels has gotten him into trouble several times.

tenderloin

tendon

n
/ 'tendən /
L

a tough cord of specialized fibrous connective tissue that unites a muscle with some other part and transmits the force which the muscle exerts.
The team doctor said that Larry's Achilles tendon was inflamed and that he shouldn't run in Saturday's race.

tendresse

n
/ tã'dres /
F

tender feeling : fondness.
Sarah portrayed the sister who, in maidenly fashion, conceals her tendresse for the hero.

tenebrific

adj
/ .tenə'brifik /
L + Ecf + L > Ecf
causing gloom or darkness.
Tenebrific rain clouds overshadowed the entire region.

tenebrosity

n
/ .tenə'bräsədē /
L
darkness.
Nocturnal animals moved silently through the tenebrosity of the forest.

tenement

tenet

n
/ 'tenət /
L
[has near homonym: tenant] a principle, dogma, belief, or doctrine generally held to be true; especially : one held in common by members of a group or profession.
The basic tenet of Central High's Key Club is that community service benefits everyone.

tennis

n
/ 'tenəs /
L > AF > E
[has homonym: tenace] a typically outdoor game that is played with rackets and a light elastic ball by two players or pairs of players on a level court divided by a low net.
Jeannine is so eager to learn to play tennis that she is willing to pay for lessons out of her allowance.

tenon

n
/ 'tenən /
L > F > E
a projecting member in a piece of wood or other material for insertion into a mortise to make a joint.
Curtis used his jigsaw to cut a tenon on each board of the box he was making.

tensile

adj
/ 'ten(t)səbəl /
L
capable of being extended.
The old rubber band was not very tensile.

tensile

tension

tentacle

n
/ 'tentəkəl /
L
one of the arms of a cephalopod.
In the horror movie the giant octopus tried to grab the heroine with a long tentacle.

tentative

tentatively

adv
/ 'tentəd-əvle /
L
in a hesitant or uncertain manner.
Janna smiled tentatively, not knowing if she should show her happiness.

tenuous

adj
/ 'tenyəwəs /
L
having little substance or strength : flimsy, weak.
The prosecutor's case was so tenuous that the judge dismissed the charge against the defendant.

tepid

adj
/ 'tepəd /
L
marked by an absence of enthusiasm or conviction.
The debate drew a tepid response from the audience.

teratism

n
/ 'terətizəm /
Gk + Ecf
fascination with monsters.
Monster movies appeal to the teratism of the viewing public.

teratogenic

adj
/ .terətō'jenik /
Gk
tending to cause developmental malformations.
Sylvia carefully avoided any potentially teratogenic drugs during her pregnancy.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

teratological

adj

/ˌtɛrətəˈlädʒəkəl/

Gk

relating to abnormality of organic growth or structure.

Because of his several deformities, the so-called “elephant man” was the subject of teratological study.

teratology

n

/ˌtɛrəˈtäləjē/

Gk

the study of malformations, monstrosities, or serious deviations from the normal type in growing organisms.

Because of his several deformities, the so-called “elephant man” is often featured in textbooks for courses in teratology.

tercentenary

n

/ˌtɜrsənˈtɛnərə/

L

a 300th anniversary or its celebration.

Next year Possumville will celebrate the tercentenary of its founding.

terdiurnal

adj

/ˌtɜrdiˈɜrnəl/

L

occurring three times per day.

The meteorologist set his instrument to take terdiurnal measurements of the air pressure.

tergiversate

v

/ˌtɜrjəvərˌsāt/

L

evade straightforward action or clearcut statement of position.

While political leaders tergiversate, petty tyrants are taking over the country.

tergiversation

n

/ˌtɜrjə(ɪ)vərˈsāshən/

L

evasion of straightforward action or clear-cut statement of position.

The ambassador explained that in diplomacy there is sometimes defensible tergiversation in communication.

termagancy

n

/ˈtɜrməgənsē/

E name

habitual bad temper : scolding disposition.

Lillian’s abusive termagancy alienated her husband and children.

termitarium

terrace

n

/ˈtɛrəs/

L > OProv > F

a colonnaded porch or promenade.

The marketplace consisted of a row of shops along a terrace.

terraceous

adj

/ˌtɛˈrāshəs/

L

made of earth : earthen.

Bulldozers hurriedly built up a terraceous dam to prevent further flooding.

terrapin

n

/ˈtɛrəpən/

Algonquian

any of various North American turtles living in fresh or brackish water.

Murray awoke from his lakeside nap to find a terrapin sunning on the blanket.

terraqueous

adj

/tɛˈākweəs/

L

consisting of land and water.

Global pollution threatens Earth’s terraqueous environment.

terrarium

n

/təˈrɛrēəm/

L

a fully enclosed wholly or predominantly glass container for the indoor cultivation of moisture-loving plants.

Mosses and other small woodland plants thrive in a terrarium.

terrazzo

n

/təˈrät(ɪ)sō/

OProv > It

a mosaic flooring made by embedding small pieces of marble or granite in freshly placed mortar and after hardening grinding and polishing the surface.

The contractor explained that if Travis wanted a hard, shiny floor at a reasonable price, terrazzo was an excellent option.

terrestrial

terrible

adj

/ˈtɛrəbəl/

L > F > E

requiring extreme effort or fortitude.

Donating blood may be a terrible ordeal for those people who do not like needles.

terricolous

adj

/tɛˈrikələs/

L + L

living on or in or growing from the land.

The heath was rich in terricolous lichens.

terrific

adj

/tɛˈrɪfɪk/

L

of an extraordinary nature : astounding, tremendous.

Terrific, serrated outcrops of bare rock stood on either side of the lush valley.

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terrigenous

adj
/ tər'ijənəs /
L

formed by the erosive action of rivers, tides, and currents—used of an ocean bottom.

At the brink of the continental shelf, terrigenous deposits build up and are swept away.

tertiary

tessitura

n
/ .tesə'türə /
L > It

the general range of a melody or voice part; specifically : the part of the register in which most of the tones of a melody or voice part lie.

Soprano parts in Bellini's operas call for a very high tessitura.

testaceous

adj
/ te'stāshəs /
L

having a shell.

The oyster is a testaceous marine animal.

testimony

n
/ 'testə.mōnē /
L

a solemn declaration usually made orally by a witness under oath in response to interrogation by a lawyer or authorized public official.

According to Victoria's testimony, she had just returned from vacation when she discovered that the statue was missing.

tetanus

n
/ 'tet'nəs /
Gk

an acute infectious disease characterized by tonic spasm of voluntary muscles and especially of the jaw muscles.

Puncture wounds are dangerous because they allow the bacteria that cause tetanus to enter the body.

tetracycline

textuary

thalassic

adj
/ thə'lasik /
Gk

of or relating to the sea or ocean.

Some thalassic currents travel for thousands of miles.

thanatophobia

n
/ .thanətə'fōbēə /
Gk

fear of death.

Michael had such a strong belief in an afterlife that he was not troubled by thanatophobia.

thaumatology

n
/ .thōmə'täləjē /
Gk

doctrine, discussion, or study of the performing of miracles.

Although he had never successfully performed any miracles, the young priest was nonetheless an expert in thaumatology.

thaumaturgy

n
/ 'thōmə.tərjē /
Gk > L > F

the performance of miracles.

The sacred writings of many religions contain stories of thaumaturgy.

theatrical

adj
/ thē'atrəkəl /
Gk

marked by extravagant display or exhibitionism : showy, spectacular.

The performer took a theatrical bow, but the audience's applause was lukewarm.

theftproof

theocracy

theodicy

n
/ thē'ädəsē /
Gk > F

an area of philosophy that treats of the nature and government of God and the destiny of the soul.

One hotly contested question in theodicy is whether the existence of evil precludes the existence of an omnipotent and perfect God.

theodolite

n
/ thē'äd'līt /
Ar? > L > E

a surveyor's instrument for measuring horizontal and vertical angles.

The theodolite invented by Digges in the 16th century consisted of a horizontal graduated circular plate with an index bearing sights.

theosophize

therapeutant

n
/ .therə'pyüt'nt /
Gk > E

a healing or curative agent or medicine.

The diseased elm trees were sprayed with a chemical therapeutant.

therapeutic

adj
/ .therə'pyüdik /
Gk

of or relating to the treatment of disease or disorders by remedial agents or methods.

Changes in diet can have a therapeutic effect on obesity, hypertension, peptic ulcer, and osteoporosis.

therblig

n
/ 'thər(ɪ)blig /

anagram of Amer name

one of the manual, visual, or mental elements into which an industrial manual operation may be analyzed in time and motion study.

The supervisor's goal was to eliminate one therblig at each station in the assembly line.

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theretofore

adv

/ 'θɛrdəˌfɔ(ə)r /

E

up to that time : until then.

The public parks committee created a playground where theretofore there had been a weedy vacant lot.

therianthropic

adj

/ ˌθɪrᵻˌənˈθræpɪk /

Gk + Gk

combining human and animal form.

The falcon-headed Horus was a therianthropic god of ancient Egypt.

thermometer

n

/ θə(r)'mämədər /

Gk + Gk

an instrument for determining temperature.

The thermometer that takes a temperature reading from one's ear is now used widely.

thermostat

n

/ 'θərməˌstat /

Gk + Gk

an automatic device for regulating temperature (as by controlling the supply of gas or electricity to a heating apparatus).

The repair person found that our heating problem was caused by a defective thermostat.

thesaurus

n

/ θə'sɔrəs /

Gk > L

a book containing a store of words or of information about a particular field or set of concepts; specifically : a dictionary of synonyms.

Caleb's paper read as if he had consulted a thesaurus frequently while writing it.

thesmothete

n

/ 'θɛzməˌθɛt /

Gk

lawgiver, legislator.

Joseph has in his office a marble bust of a famous Athenian thesmothete.

thespian

n

/ 'θɛspᵻən /

Gk name

an actor.

Fiona became stagestruck at an early age and was determined to become a thespian.

thirsty

thistle

n

/ 'θɪsəl /

E

a plant with prickly leaves having a head with white, purple, pink, or yellow flowers.

Dean plucked a thistle from the lawn of the middle school.

tholepin

thoracic

adj

/ θəˈrasɪk /

Gk

of, relating to, located within, or involving the part of the body of humans and other mammals located between the neck and the abdomen.

The thoracic nerve controls the muscles in the walls of the thorax.

thoracodynia

n

/ ˌθɔrəkə'dɪnᵻə /

Gk

pain in the chest.

When Grandpa complained of thoracodynia, Dolly immediately took him to the hospital.

thorax

n

/ 'θɔrˌaks /

Gk > L > E

the portion of an insect body that is the middle of the three chief divisions.

The thorax of an insect consists of three segments, each having a pair of legs.

thoroughbred

n

/ 'θərəˌbred /

E

purebred or pedigreed animal.

Alex's thoroughbred comes from a line of Kentucky Derby winners.

thoroughfare

threaten

threnody

n

/ 'θrenədᵻ /

Gk

a song, poem, composition, or speech of lamentation especially for someone dead or something regarded as dead.

Asked to write a threnody for English class, Libby composed a song about the death of a robin.

threshold

n

/ 'θresh(h)ɔld /

E

place or point of entering or beginning : entrance, outset.

Now at the threshold of adulthood, James wonders if he will miss the carefree days of his previous years.

thrombosis

n

/ θräm'bōsəs /

Gk

the formation or presence of a blood clot within a blood vessel.

The severe pain in Greg's leg was found to have been caused by a thrombosis in one of the veins.

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throstle

n
/ 'thräsəl /
E
a largely olive-brown Old World perching bird noted for its song.
While on a walking tour in London, Madeline spotted a throstle in a sycamore tree.

thule

thumb

thurible

n
/ 'th(y)ürəbəl /
Gk > L > F > E
a vessel used in religious services for burning incense.
When a thurible is used in the procession, the odor of incense suffuses the church.

thylacine

n
/ 'thīləsīn /
Gk > L
a now-extinct somewhat doglike carnivorous marsupial that formerly inhabited Tasmania—called also “Tasmanian wolf.”
The female thylacine had a rearward-opening pouch in which two to four young were carried.

thyme

n
/ 'tīm /
Gk
[has homonym: time] a common garden herb used in seasoning and formerly in medicine.
The chicken recipe called for a teaspoon of dried thyme.

thymiaterion

n
/ .thīmēə'tirēən /
Gk
a vessel used by the ancient Greeks for burning incense.
Cecil found a bronze thymiaterion in an antique shop.

tibia

n
/ 'tibēə /
L
the fourth joint counting from the base of the leg of an insect that lies between the femur and tarsus.
A cricket's ear is located on the tibia of its foreleg.

tichorrhine

n
/ 'tikərīn /
Gk > L
an extinct two-horned woolly rhinoceros.
The remains of a tichorrhine were found frozen in the ice of Siberia with the flesh and hair well preserved.

tickicidal

adj
/ .tikə'sidəl /
E + L + Ecf
destroying or controlling any of several wingless parasitic insects.
The exterminator used a tickicidal agent to eliminate the pests.

tickled

v
/ 'tikəld /
E
excited or stirred up agreeably.
The young actor was tickled to be offered the leading role in his next movie.

tightrope

tilak

n
/ 'tilək /
Skt
an ornamental spot worn on the forehead chiefly by Hindus as a sectarian mark.
After three months of travel Lana returned home clad in a sari and wearing a tilak.

tilapia

n
/ tə'lāpēə /
L
any of a genus of African freshwater food fishes that resemble the American sunfishes.
Some American fish farms have been raising tilapia for stocking in ponds and lakes.

tilde

n
/ 'tildə /
L > Sp
a mark ~ placed especially over the letter n to denote the /ny/ sound or over vowels to indicate nasality.
Marcia could not find the tilde on the computer keyboard.

tilth

timorous

timorously

adv
/ 'tim(ə)rəslē /
L
in a manner showing fear or apprehension.
Pam timorously responded to her name and said that she had not finished her book report.

tinctorial

tincture

n
/ 'tɪŋ(k)chə(r) /
L
hue, tint.
The main difference between American and Irish glass is in tincture.

tinnient

adj
/ 'tinēənt /
L
having a clear or ringing quality.
Grandmother's old silver knives made a tinnient sound in the sink as we rinsed them after Thanksgiving dinner.

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tinnitus

n
/ tə'nɪdəs /
L

a ringing, roaring, or hissing in the ears that is purely subjective.

It's hard to understand how annoying tinnitus is unless you have experienced it yourself.

tinselry

tintinnabulation

tirade

n
/ 'tɪrəd /
F

a protracted speech usually marked by abusive language.

The grumpy woman screamed a tirade of protest whenever children made joyful noises outside her window.

tiralee

n
/ .tɪrəlē /
imit

[has homonym: tearily] a succession of musical notes (as in a bugle call).

Daniel managed a tiralee on the saxophone, but there was no recognizable melody.

titian

n
/ 'tɪʃən /

Ital name

one having hair that is brownish orange.

Mr. Rodman decided that he would be a titian for awhile.

tnesis

toastmaster

n
/ 'tōst.mastə(r) /
E+L > F > E

one that presides (as at a banquet) and introduces the after-dinner speakers.

Eric will serve as toastmaster at the Golden Lamp banquet.

tobacco

n
/ tə'ba(ɪ)kō /
Taino > Sp
the leaves of a plant of the genus Nicotiana prepared and processed for use in smoking or chewing or as snuff.
At an early age, Amy vowed never to use tobacco.

toboggan

n
/ tə'bägən /
Algonquian
a long flat-bottomed light sled made of thin boards curved up at one end with usually low handrails at the sides and used for coasting on snow or ice.
Bart's new toboggan is the fastest one on the hill.

tobogganer

n
/ tə'bägənər /
Algonquian > F
one that coasts on a long flat-bottomed light sled.
On hitting the unexpected bump, the tobogganer was thrown off his sled.

tobogganing

toccata

n
/ təkādə /
It
a brilliant musical composition usually for pipe organ or harpischord, in free fantasia style, and usually with many equal-timed notes in rapid movement.
Jamila sat down at the church organ and played a fast Bach toccata.

tocsin

n
/ 'täksən /
L > OProv > F
[has homonym: toxin] an alarm bell or the ringing of a bell for the purpose of alarm.
In the event of a natural disaster or a civil alert, the fire stations would set off a tocsin that could be heard for two miles in any direction.

toggery

tome

n
/ 'tōm /
Gk
a volume forming part of a larger work.
Fiona bought an old copy of The Messages of the Presidents that was missing the first tome.

tongue

tonitruous

adj
/ tənɪtrəwəs /
L + Ecf
thundering, fulminating.
The tonitruous artillery guns had been shelling the enemy positions for several hours.

tonsillectomy

tonsillitis

n
/ .tän(t)səlɪd-əs /
L
inflammation of the tonsils.
Dr. Graham treated Erica's tonsillitis with antibiotics.

tonsillotomy

tonsorial

tonsure

n
/ 'tänchə(r) /
L > E
the shaven crown or patch worn by monks or various clerics.
The actor who played Brother Cadfael had a hairpiece to cover his tonsure when he was off camera.

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tontine

n
/ 'tän.tēn /
It name > F
a financial arrangement whereby the participants share benefits equally on such terms that when one dies or defaults the others equally share the portion until all but one remains to own the entirety.
In the days before a central bank or common currency, villagers often used a tontine to share ownership of property.

toolach

toothache

n
/ 'tüth.āk /
E
pain in one of the teeth.
Nelson thought an abscess might be the cause of his toothache.

topaz

n
/ 'tō.paz /
Gk > L > F > E
a usually yellow, reddish, or pink transparent mineral used as a gem.
Leslie received a yellow topaz for her birthday.

topiary

n
/ 'tōpē.erē /
Gk > L + Lcf
the practice or art of training, cutting, and trimming trees or shrubs into odd or ornamental shapes.
Edward Scissorhands was skilled in topiary.

topography

n
/ tə'pägrəfē /
Gk
the art or practice of graphic delineation in detail usually on maps or charts of selected natural and man-made features of a region especially in a way to show their relative positions and elevations.
Identifying the enemy's rocket sites will require an expert in topography.

toreador

n
/ 'tōrē.ədō(ə)r /
L > Sp
bullfighter.
The toreador posed for the crowd in his suit of lights.

toroidal

adj
/ tōr'oidəl /
L
doughnut-shaped.
For the life of her, Bridget couldn't identify the toroidal object she found in her purse.

torpor

torrential

torrentially

adv
/ tō'renchəlē /
L
in a manner resembling a rushing stream of water.
Patricia wept torrentially when she found out about her pet dog's injury.

tortellini

n
/ .tò(r)dʰɪ'ēnē /
L > It
noodle dough cut in rounds, filled with savory fillings, and boiled.
Vic's favorite Italian meal was tortellini stuffed with meat and cheese.

tortilla

n
/ tò(r)'tē(y)ə /
Sp
a round thin unleavened cake usually eaten hot with a savory topping or filling.
Theron covered his tortilla with beans and cheese.

tortoise

n
/ 'tòrdəs /
F? > E
any of a family of terrestrial turtles.
The park ranger told the children that a tortoise takes five hours to walk just one mile.

tortoni

n
/ tò(r)'tōnē /
It name
an ice cream made of heavy cream, minced almonds, chopped maraschino cherries, or other flavorings.
Tortoni is definitely not the dessert for someone on a low-fat, low-calorie diet.

totality

n
/ tō'talədē /
L
the phase of an eclipse during which it is total : state of total eclipse.
An eerie silence crept over the crowd as the eclipse reached totality.

totemism

n
/ 'tōdə.mizəm /
Ojibwa + Ecf
belief in kinship with or a mystical relationship between a group or individual and an emblematic plant, animal, or other object.
Powerful animals are common objects of totemism.

toucan

tourelle

touristry

tournedos

n
/ .tūrnə'dō /
L > F
a small fillet of beef usually cut from the tip of the tenderloin.
Diane usually prepares a tournedos in wine sauce with mushrooms.

towhee

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toxicosis

n
/ ˌtɒksəˈkōsəs /
Gk

a pathological condition caused by the action of a poison or toxin.

The chihuahua exhibited no symptoms of toxicosis after eating the soap.

toxophilite

n
/ tɒkˈsɒfəˌlɪt /
Gk + Gk + Ecf

one fond of or expert at archery.

The legendary toxophilite William Tell successfully shot an apple from the head of his own son.

toxophily

trachea

tracheostomy

n
/ ˌtrækēˈästəmē /
Gk + Gk

the surgical formation of an opening into the trachea through the skin.

When Chris developed throat cancer, a tracheostomy had to be performed to facilitate his breathing.

tracheotomy

tractable

adj
/ ˈtraktəbəl /
L

capable of being easily led, taught, or controlled.

Maybe Fatima's work would improve if she were more tractable.

tractile

adj
/ ˈtraktl /
L > Ecf

capable of being drawn out in length.

With laboratory equipment, Dr. Abrams was able to extend the tractile material to a great length.

trafficking

v
/ ˈtrafɪkɪŋ /
It > F

engaging in commercial activity.

The townspeople were shocked when they learned that Mr. Bailey had been trafficking in drugs.

tragedian

tragedienne

n
/ trəˌjɛdēˈen /
F

[Note: Could be confused with tragedian.] an actress who specializes in tragic roles.

On Thursday night, Ms Siddons, the granddaughter of the tragedienne, made her first appearance.

tragedy

trajectory

tralatitious

trammel

tramontana

n
/ ˌträ(ɪ)mōnˈtäna /
L > It

the north wind; especially : a dry cold strong northerly wind of the west coast of Italy.

Each winter the tramontana swoops piercingly through the streets of Rome.

transcend

transcendental

adj
/ ˌtran.senˈdentl /
L

extending or being beyond the limits of ordinary experience.

Edward's transcendental meditation guru also instructs him in yoga.

transducer

n
/ tran(t)sˈd(y)üsə(r) /
L + Ecf

a device actuated by power from one system and supplying power in the same or any other form to a second system.

A common transducer is a microphone, which converts sound waves into electrical signals.

transference

n
/ tranzˈfərən(t)s /
L

an act, process, or instance of carrying or taking something from one person or place to another.

Ralph's dad was in charge of the transference of fish from the fishery to the lake being restocked.

transience

n
/ ˈtranzēənts /
L

[has homonym: transients] the quality or state of passing through or by only briefly.

The photographer is able to capture transience by being ready to click the shutter at the crucial moment.

transient

transit

n
/ ˈtran(t)sət /
L

the passage of a smaller body across the disk of a larger (as of Venus or Mercury across the Sun's disk).

Barrie used sensitive equipment to photograph the transit of Venus.

translucent

transmissible

adj
/ tran(t)ˈsmisəbəl /
L

capable of being sent or conveyed to another person or place.

Poison ivy is transmissible through the air to those who are very sensitive to it.

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transmit

transmogrify

v
/ tran(t)'smägrə.fī /
unknown
change or alter in form,
appearance, or structure often with
grotesque or humorous effect.
*Buford set out to transmogrify the
hearse into a hot rod.*

trattoria

n
/ ,trädə'rēə /
F > It
an eating house : restaurant.
*It seems to Fran that any trattoria
located next to the golf course fails,
regardless of the cuisine.*

traulism

trauma

n
/ 'traümə /
Gk
an injury or wound caused by the
application of external force or
violence.
*The football player suffered the
trauma of a broken leg.*

traumatize

traumatropism

n
/ trə'matrə.pizəm /
Gk
a modification of the orientation of
an organ (as a plant root) as a result
of wounding.
*Traumatropism of the roots does
not usually affect plant growth.*

traversed

v
/ trə'værst /
L > F > E
moved to and fro over or along.
*Zane serenely traversed the frozen
pond.*

travesty

treacherous

adj
/ 'trech(ə)rəs /
F > E
characterized by usually hidden
dangers, hazards, or perils.
*Throughout the winter, frigid
temperatures and the damp sea air
cause treacherous black ice to form
on streets.*

treachery

treacly

adj
/ 'trēk(ə)lē /
Gk > F > L > E
heavily sweet and cloying.
*Sarah's treacly voice warned her
mother that a big request was
forthcoming.*

treadmill

n
/ 'tred.mil /
E + E
a device operated by walking on an
endless belt for the purpose of
exercise.
*Walking on a treadmill in his
apartment was convenient, but Sam
preferred to get his exercise
outside, weather permitting.*

treason

n
/ 'trēzən /
L > F > E
the offense of attempting by overt
acts to overthrow the government
of the state to which the offender
owes allegiance or to kill or
personally injure the sovereign or
the sovereign's family.
*All persons involved in the
attempted coup were charged with
treason.*

treasure

treatise

n
/ 'trēdəs /
F? > AF > E
a writing that provides in a
systematic matter and for an
expository or argumentative
purpose a methodical discussion of
the facts and principles involved
and conclusions reached.
*Victor's treatise on international
relations was well received by his
colleagues.*

treble

adj
/ 'trebəl /
F > E
threefold.
*Whatever might be their motive or
motives—whether single, double,
or treble—their actions were
unjustified.*

trefoil

n
/ 'trē.fōil /
L > F > E
any of the common clovers.
*The hunter came upon several
rabbits feeding on a patch of
trefoil.*

treillage

trekked

trellis

trellised

tremendous

adj
/ trə'mendəs /
L
astounding by reason of extreme
size, power, greatness, or
excellence.
*Computers have had a tremendous
impact on modern business
practices.*

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

tremulous

adj
/ 'tremjələs /
L

quivering, shaking.
Uncle Edgar's tremulous handwriting is one sign of his Parkinson's disease.

trenchant

trenchantly

adv
/ 'trenchəntlē /
F > E
in a sharply perceptive manner.
The commentator trenchantly analyzed the pros and cons of legalized gambling.

trepidation

trespass

v
/ 'trespəs /
F > E
make an unwarranted or uninvited incursion.
The rock salt from farmer Brown's shotgun taught Wally a painful lesson: Don't trespass.

tressed

trey

n
/ 'trā /
L > F > E
[has homonym: tray] the side of a die or domino that has three spots.
If Ian draws either a trey or an ace from the boneyard, he believes he will win the game of dominoes.

triage

n
/ trē'āzh /
F
the sorting of and allocation of treatment to patients and especially battle and disaster victims according to a system of priorities designed to maximize the number of survivors.
Once the system of triage was implemented, medics were better able to decide which soldiers should receive immediate treatment.

trianon

n
/ 'trēənān /
F architecture
a small elegant villa.
Albert wrote his latest thriller in a rented trianon on the Riviera.

tribunal

n
/ trī'byün¹l /
L
a court or forum of justice.
The people have wisely provided, in the constitution itself, a tribunal for settling questions of constitutional law.

tributary

n
/ 'tribyətərē /
L
a stream feeding a larger stream or a lake.
The Ohio River is a tributary of the Mississippi River.

tricenary

adj
/ 'trīsⁿnərē /
L
having or lasting 30 days.
Cameron never can remember which months are tricenary.

tricephalous

adj
/ trī'sefələs /
Gk
having or depicted with three heads.
Orpheus managed to lull the tricephalous watchdog to sleep by playing his lyre.

trichinosis

n
/ .trikə'nōsəs /
Gk
infestation with or disease caused by certain nematode worms contracted by eating raw or undercooked infested food and especially pork.
Madeline cooked the pork chops well so there would be no danger of trichinosis.

trichogenous

adj
/ .trə'kājənəs /
Gk
producing hair.
Trichogenous cells produce the tiny hairs on insect bodies and limbs.

trichotomy

n
/ trī'kädə.mē /
Gk
a system divided or divisible into three constituents or elements.
Golda's civics teacher explained how the United States government is a trichotomy, divided into the legislative, judicial, and executive branches.

trickle

trigonometry

n
/ .trigə'nämətrē /
Gk
a branch of mathematics dealing with the relations holding among the sides and angles of triangles and among closely related magnitudes and especially with methods of deducing from given parts other required parts.
Rachel enjoyed her course in trigonometry much more than she enjoys her calculus class.

trihedral

trillion

Trinity

n
/ 'trinədē /
L > F > E
the union of three persons or personified concepts (as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) in one godhead so that all the three are one God as to substance but three persons or concepts as to individuality.
The Catholic Church once excommunicated believers in the false Trinity of God, Mary, and Jesus.

tripeleppamine

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tripod

triquetra

n
/ trī'kwētrə /
L

a triangle-shaped figure or decoration.

Murray stenciled a leafy triquetra in each corner of the kitchen ceiling.

triskelion

n
/ trī'skelēən /
Gk

a figure composed of three usually curved or bent branches radiating from a center.

A triskelion has been the emblem of the Isle of Man since the 13th century, when the Vikings were ousted.

triste

adj
/ 'trēst /
L > F > E

sad, dismal, dull, depressing.

A triste quartet could be heard from the window.

triturate

triumph

triumphal

triumvirate

n
/ trī'əmvərət /
L

a group, party, or association of three.

Vince, Steve, and Phil jokingly refer to themselves as the "terrible triumvirate."

trivet

n
/ 'trivət /
L > E

a usually ornamental metal stand with short feet especially for use under a hot dish at a table.

A brass trivet featuring the local college's insignia is the best-selling item in the gift shop.

trochaic

trochanter

n
/ trō'kantə(r) /
Gk > L

the second segment counting from the base of the leg of an insect.
A trochanter is one of the five parts of an insect's leg.

trocheameter

n
/ ,trākē'amədə(r) /
Gk? + Gk > E

an instrument used to count the revolutions of a wheel.

According to the trocheameter attached to one of the wagon wheels, the wagon train had traveled 30 miles.

trochiline

trodden

v
/ 'träd'n /
E

walked or trampled upon something.

The cattle had trodden over the field, flattening the tall grass and weeds.

troglo-dyte

n
/ 'trāglə,dīt /
Gk > L

a member of a primitive people dwelling in caves or pits.

While spelunking, Zan and Patrick stumbled on the bones of a troglodyte.

troglo-dytic

troika

n
/ 'trōikə /
Russ

a group of three.

Astrology, yoga, and poetry are the troika of humanities that most interest Bryce.

trophallaxis

n
/ ,träfə'laksəs /
Gk > L

exchange of food between organisms (as the social insects).
Bees, ants, and wasps practice trophallaxis.

tropicopolitan

adj
/ ,trāpəkō'pälət'n /
Gk

inhabiting all countries near the equator.

Today the coconut palm is a tropicopolitan species.

trophilous

adj
/ trō'päfələs /
Gk + Gk

thriving in an environment that undergoes marked periodic changes (as in temperature, soil moisture, or available light).

Deciduous trees of the temperate regions are examples of trophilous plants.

trough

n
/ 'trōf /
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an elongated area of low barometric pressure usually with a minimum pressure at each end and between two areas of higher pressure.

Eric listened to the weather forecaster explain how the local weather was being influenced by the trough that was present.

trousseau

n
/ 'trü(,)sō /
F

[Note: Plural form can be pronounced similarly.] the personal possessions of a bride usually including clothes, accessories, and household linens and wares.

Felicity kept her trousseau in a hope chest at the foot of her bed.

trove

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

trowel

truculent

adj
/ 'trʌkyələnt /
L

feeling or evincing savage ferocity
: fierce.

Hunger makes the tiger a truculent hunter.

trumpet

truncated

adj
/ 'trʌŋ.kədəd /
L

abbreviated by or as if by lopping.
Cindy's cat has a truncated tail.

trunccheon

trunnioned

adj
/ 'trʌnyənd /
F

having a pin or pivot usually
mounted on bearings for rotating or
tilting.

*Dave attached a trunnioned
compass to the deck of his sailboat.*

truttaceous

adj
/ 'trʌ'tāshəs /
L

of, relating to, or resembling a
trout.

*Truttaceous fish are highly
esteemed as sport fish because of
their spiritedness.*

trypanosome

tsetse

tsunami

n
/ (t)sü'nämē /
Jpn

a great sea wave produced by
submarine earth movements or
volcanic eruption.

*The dock workers were alerted in
time to evacuate the harbor area
before the tsunami hit.*

tuberculosis

n
/ təbərkyə'lōsəs /
L

a communicable disease caused by
the tubercle bacillus and
characterized by toxic symptoms or
allergic manifestations which in
humans primarily affect the lungs.
*The antibiotic drug streptomycin
has been successfully used to treat
tuberculosis.*

tufaceous

adj
/ t(y)ü'fāshəs /
Osc-Umbrian > L > It
of or resembling a rock composed
of the finer kinds of volcanic
debris.

*Many buildings in Italy were
constructed of tufaceous rock.*

tuffet

n
/ 'təfət /
Gmc? > F? > E

a low seat : stool.

*Katie stood on the tuffet to reach
the book on the top shelf.*

tularemia

n
/ .tülə'rēmēə /
Calif geog name + Lcf
a bacterial disease of rodents, man,
and some domestic animals.
*Jerry's temperature reached a
dangerously high level during his
bout with tularemia.*

tulle

tumefaction

tumultuous

adj
/ t(y)ü'məlch(ə)wəs /
L

full of commotion and uproar :
boisterous.

*As the basketball star entered, he
received tumultuous applause from
his schoolmates.*

tumulus

n
/ 't(y)ümyələs /
L

[has homonym: tumulous] an
artificial hillock or mound (as over
a grave).

*In the center of the cemetery is a
large tumulus where one of the
town's founders is buried.*

tundra

n
/ 'təndrə /
Finno-Ugric > Russ

a treeless plain characteristic of
arctic and subarctic regions with a
permanently frozen subsoil.

*Do reindeer graze on the moss of
the tundra?*

tungsten

n
/ 'təŋstən /
Sw

a gray-white high-melting hard
metallic element that is used in the
pure form chiefly for electrical
purposes (as for filaments for
incandescent lamps).

*The filament in many light bulbs is
a thin wire of tungsten.*

turban

n
/ 'tərbən /
Per > Turk > F
a headdress worn chiefly in
countries of the eastern
Mediterranean and southern Asia
especially by Muslims and made of
a cap around which is wound a
long cloth.

*A camel driver wearing a blue
turban asked Rebecca if she would
like a short ride.*

turbid

turbine

n
/ 'tərbən /
L > F

[has homonym: turban] a rotary
engine.

*The plane could not take off until
the damaged turbine was repaired.*

turbot

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

turbulence

n
/ 'tərbɪələn(t)s /

L
highly irregular atmospheric motion characterized by rapid changes in wind speed and direction and the presence of up and down currents.
The captain warned the plane's passengers to brace themselves for a patch of turbulence.

turgescence

turgescent

turgid

turmoil

n
/ 'tər.mɔɪl /
unknown
an utterly confused, extremely agitated, or tumultuous state or condition.
Jacob experienced unrelenting turmoil after his parents informed him that the family might move.

turnstile

n
/ 'tɜrn.stɪ(ə)l /
E + E
a post with four arms pivoted on the top set in a gateway to regulate or monitor passage.
Contrary to the prominently posted warning sign, Calvin hopped over the turnstile.

turnverein

turophile

n
/ 't(y)ʊrə.fil /
Gk
a gourmet of cheese : a cheese fancier.
The turophile warned us not to be beguiled by the low cost of inferior processed cheese.

turpentine

n
/ 'tɜrpən.tɪn /
Gk > L > F > E
any of various oleoresins that are derived from coniferous trees and are obtained in crude form as yellowish viscous exudates of characteristic odor and taste from incisions in the tree trunks and that usually thicken and solidify in the air.
The most common use of turpentine is in paint and lacquer thinners.

turpitude

n
/ 'tɜrpətɪd /
L
inherent baseness or vileness of principle, words, or actions : depravity.
Sean accused Amitab of moral turpitude for teasing the cat.

turret

n
/ 'tɜrət /
F > E
a little tower.
The princess escaped from the turret by sliding down a rope of knotted bedsheets.

turricular

adj
/ .tə'rikyələ(r) /
L
shaped like or resembling a tower.
Shauna's birthday cake was turricular and decorated to look like the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

turriferous

tutania

tutelage

n
/ 't(y)üd-əlɪj /
L
instruction; especially : individual instruction accompanied by close personal attention and a conscious attempt at guidance.
Evan made astounding progress under the tutelage of his new trumpet teacher.

tutulary

adj
/ 't(y)üd-əl.ərē /
L
having the guardianship or charge of protecting a person or a thing.
The young princesses were surrounded by tutelary employees.

tutoyer

tuyere

n
/ tü'ye(ə)r /
F
a nozzle through which an air blast is delivered to a forge.
Dan checked the tuyere for an obstruction.

tweezers

n pl
/ 'twēzə(r)z /
F > E
any of various small pincer-shaped tools used for plucking, holding, or manipulating.
The jeweler used a pair of fine tweezers to extract the broken spring from inside Jeff's pocket watch.

twelfth

twinkle

v
/ 'twɪŋkəl /
E
shine with a flickering, sparkling, or intermittent light.
Atmospheric conditions affect how a star will twinkle in the night sky.

tycoon

tympanum

n
/ 'tɪmpənəm /
Gk > L
a thin tense membrane covering an organ of hearing (as in the leg of an insect).
The tympanum, which is sometimes hidden beneath the base of an insect's wing cover, is activated by the pressure of sound waves.

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typhology

n
/ ti'fläləjē /
Gk

the scientific study of blindness, its causes, effects, and control.
Researchers in typhology have found that certain nutritional deficiencies can result in the clouding and softening of the cornea.

typhoon

n
/ ti'fün /
Gk&Chinese

a tropical cyclone occurring in the region of the Philippines or the China Sea.
A typhoon of unimaginable fury swung across the coastal plains of Bangladesh, swallowing up villages and sweeping away food crops.

typify

v
/ 'tipə.fi /
L + Ecf

embody the essential or salient characteristics of.
Dickens's characters typify the Victorian era.

typothetae

tyrannical

adj
/ tə'ranəkəl /
Gk

exhibiting imperious and usually oppressive exercise of absolute power : despotic.
Patrick Henry spoke fervently about the urgent need to arrest the tyrannical hands of the British ministry and Parliament.

tyrannize

tyrannous

tyranny

n
/ 'tirənē /
L > F > E

absolute government in which power is vested in a single ruler.
The tyranny of many medieval kingdoms was eventually supplanted by democracy.

ubiquitous

adj
/ yü'bikwədəs /
L

existing or being everywhere at the same time : omnipresent.
The drum is a ubiquitous instrument in world music.

udometer

n
/ yü'dämədə(r) /
L + Gk

an instrument for measuring the quantity of precipitation that falls at a given place and time.
The local television station asked Karen to put a udometer in her backyard.

udomograph

uglify

ulcerous

ullage

ulotrichous

adj
/ yü'lätrəkəs /
Gk + Gk

having woolly or crisp hair.
The ulotrichous aborigines crafted wide-toothed combs for their hair.

ulterior

adj
/ əl'tirēə(r) /
L

not apparent : hidden.
When Sherman volunteered to walk the dog, his ulterior motive was to escape the boring conversation in the house.

ultimacy

ultimatum

n
/ əltə'mādəm /
L

a final proposition, condition, or demand; especially : one whose rejection will end negotiations and cause a resort to force or other direct action.
If the striking workers refused its ultimatum, the company threatened to close the factory permanently.

ultraviolet

adj
/ əltrə'vīələt /
L + L > F > E

situated beyond the visible spectrum at the violet end and having a wavelength shorter than visible light and longer than X rays.
Arthur purchased sunglasses that provide some protection against ultraviolet radiation.

ululant

ululation

n
/ əlyə'lāshən /
L

a loud mournful usually protracted and rhythmical sound : howl.
An ululation from deep in the woods gave Jesse goosebumps.

umbilical

adj
/ əm'bīləkəl /
L

attached by or as if by a cord arising at the navel that connects a fetus with the placenta.
Important medical research is being done with stem cells obtained from umbilical cords.

umbra

n
/ 'əmbərə /
L

a shaded area : darkness.
Trent saw something flicker in the umbra beneath the side porch.

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umbrage

n
/ 'əmbrij /
L > F > E
displeasure, resentment,
annoyance.
*Hatred between nations disposes
each more readily to offer insult
and injury and lay hold of slight
causes of umbrage.*

umbrageous

adj
/ ,ə'm'brājəs /
L > F > E
providing protection from heat and
light : shady.
*Sherwood Forest was the
umbrageous domain of the
legendary Robin Hood and his
outlaw band.*

umbrella

umlaut

n
/ 'üm.läüt /
G
a diacritical mark composed of two
adjacent dots placed especially over
a German vowel to indicate a
vowel shift.
*Gary never knew how to pronounce
words with an umlaut until he
studied German.*

umpire

n
/ 'əmp.ī(ə)r /
L > F > E
one having authority to arbitrate
and make a final decision, as an
official in a sport who rules on the
plays.
*The coach vehemently objected
when the umpire ejected the player
for unsportsmanlike conduct.*

unabridged

unaccompanied

unanimous

adj
/ yü'nanəməs /
L
being of one mind : agreeing in
opinion, design, or determination.
*The advice given the candidate by
those in his confidence was
unanimous.*

unau

n
/ yü'nó /
Tupi > F
a two-toed sloth of Central and
South America.
*The unau seldom descends to the
ground because its slow movements
make it easy prey for jaguars and
other predators.*

unciferous

adj
/ ,ən'sif(ə)rəs /
L
bearing a hook or hooklike
structure.
*Weaving and other fiber arts
involve the use of several
unciferous tools.*

uncinate

adj
/ 'ən(t)sənət /
L
bent at the tip like a hook.
*Using a magnifying glass, Chad
was able to examine the insect's
uncinate antennae.*

unconscionable

adj
/ ,ən'känch(ə)nəbəl /
Ecf + L + Ecf
not guided or controlled by an
internal sense of right or wrong :
unscrupulous.
*The governor was denounced for
his unconscionable indifference to
the plight of the homeless.*

uncouth

adj
/ ,ən'küth /
Ecf + E
lacking in polish and grace.
*Last night we watched a movie
about turning an uncouth high
school student into a princess.*

unctuosity

unctuous

underrate

underread

undisciplinable

undulance

undulate

v
/ 'ənjə.lāt /
L
form or move in waves.
*Terry stood on the shore and
watched the ocean undulate in the
moonlight.*

undulation

unencrypted

unexceptionable

adj
/ ,ənik'sepsh(ə)nəbəl /
Ecf + L
not open or liable to objection,
criticism, or reproach :
unimpeachable.
*Mr. Weston was a man of
unexceptionable character, easy
fortune, suitable age, and pleasant
manners.*

unfeigned

unforgettable

unfurl

v
/ ,ən'fərl /
Ecf + L > F
release or open out from a rolled-up
state.
*Kendra embroidered her school's
motto on the new flag she will
unfurl during tomorrow's
assembly.*

unguent

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unguligrade

adj

/ 'əŋgyləgrād /

L

walking on hoofs.

Unguligrade mammals include horses, cows, swine, camels, deer, elephants, rhinoceroses, and tapirs.

unhygienic

unicameral

unicorn

n

/ 'yünəkórn /

L > F > E

a fabulous animal possibly based on faulty old descriptions of the rhinoceros and generally depicted with the body and head of a horse, the hind legs of a stag, the tail of a lion, and in the middle of the forehead a single long straight horn.

Sarah has a poster of a beautiful white unicorn on her wall.

unilateral

unintelligible

adj

/ ənən'teləjəbəl /

Ecf + E + L

difficult to comprehend.

Dave readily admitted that he found the article unintelligible.

unique

adj

/ yū'nēk /

L

being without a like or equal : single in kind or excellence : unequaled.

The class agreed that Martin Luther King Jr. had a unique impact on civil rights in the 20th century.

unison

adj

/ 'yünəsən /

L > F

identical in musical pitch.

The choir was well trained in unison singing; every member could hit the same note perfectly.

unisonous

universally

unparalleled

unprecedented

adj

/ ən'presədəntəd /

Ecf + L + Ecff

new, unexampled.

Last year the city experienced an unprecedented expansion in population and industry.

unpredictable

adj

/ ənprē'diktəbəl /

Ecf + L

not to be foretold.

The raging forest fire was difficult to contain because of the unpredictable weather patterns of that area.

unprincipled

adj

/ ən'prin(t)səpəld /

E + L

lacking or exhibiting a lack of a moral code of conduct.

The detective described the arsonist as "unprincipled and conscienceless."

unpronounceable

unrequited

adj

/ ən'rə'kwīdəd /

Ecf + L > E

not returned in kind.

Several passages in the novel were devoted to Harriet's unrequited love for Mr. Elton.

unscrupulous

adj

/ ən'skrüpyələs /

E + L

unprincipled.

Desmond was not so unscrupulous as to betray his comrades.

unsullied

untenantable

adj

/ ən'tenəntəbəl /

Ecf + L + Lcf

[Note: Could be confused with untenable.] incapable of being occupied or lived in.

The hurricane left thousands of homes untenantable.

unveiled

unyielding

adj

/ ən'yēldɪŋ /

Ecf + E

refusing to give way : resolute, obstinate.

Jake's unyielding opposition to the proposed surprise party is becoming tiresome.

upbraid

upeygan

n

/ ü'pāgən /

Shona

a black rhinoceros.

The front horn of the upeygan can reach a length of over 30 inches.

upheaval

upholstery

uppity

adj

/ 'əpədə /

E + Ecf

marked by airs of superiority.

Nicole forgave Amanda for her uppity behavior at the party.

upright

adj

/ 'əp.rɪt /

E

standing up straight on the feet or on one end.

When Mom's old upright vacuum cleaner finally broke down, she went out and bought a new canister model.

uproarious

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urbanity

n
/ ˌərˈbʌnədē /

L
the quality or state of evincing the polish and suavity characteristic of social life in larger cities.

Melissa's easy urbanity belied her discomfort at the pie-eating contest.

urbiculture

n
/ ˈərbəkəlchər /

L
the practices and problems peculiar to cities.

The congressman proposed a new federal department of urbiculture to deal with the problems of city dwellers.

urceolate

adj
/ ˈərˌsēələt /

L
shaped like an urn.

At the end of the drive stood a pair of urceolate boxwoods.

urchin

urgency

ursine

adj
/ ˈərˌsīn /

L
[has near homonym: hircine] of, relating to, or characteristic of a bear.

Some children are particularly fascinated by ursine hibernation.

urticant

adj
/ ˈərdəkənt /

L
producing itching or stinging.
Strawberry nettles are notorious for their urticant effect on human skin.

usher

n
/ ˈəʃə(r) /
L > F > E

one who escorts persons to seats at an assemblage (as in a theater, church, or hall).

The usher informed the latecomers that they would not be seated until the end of the first act.

ustion

n
/ ˈəs(h)chən /
L > F

the action of burning.

Finding the paper too thick to tear or cut easily, Richard resorted to ustion to destroy it without a trace.

ustulation

n
/ ˌəs(h)chəˈlāshən /

L
the action of burning or searing.

By ustulation the metallurgist separated the sulfur from the ore.

usufruct

n
/ ˈyüzəfrəkt /

L
the right to use or enjoy something.

The homeowners in Eleanor's neighborhood have a usufruct to a large fenced park.

usurious

adj
/ yūˈzhürēəs /

L + Ecƒ
involving or taking illegal or exorbitant interest for the use of money.

The officers of the bank were charged with usurious practices.

usurpative

adj
/ yūˈsərpədɪv /

L
characterized by or constituting the unauthorized arbitrary assumption and exercise of power especially as infringing on others' rights.

The king banished the prince for his traitorous usurpative acts.

usurper

n
/ yūˈsərpər /
L

one that infringes or encroaches upon the rights or property of another.

By the end of his term, the mayor had become known as a usurper of authority.

usury

utensil

utilitarian

adj
/ (ˌ)yü.tiləˈterēən /
L > F > E

characterized by or aiming at usefulness as distinguished from beauty or ornament.

Dean chose a utilitarian briefcase over the fancy leather model.

utility

utilizable

adj
/ ˈyüdˌlīzəbəl /

L > F > E

capable of being made use of.

It took three months, but eventually Leon was able to convert the prototype into a utilizable product.

utterance

n
/ ˈədərən(t)s /

F > E

something that is spoken.

Smoke and clamor accompanied every utterance of the Great Oz.

uxorial

adj
/ ˌækˈsōrēəl /

L > E

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a wife.

The new bride's conduct defied Mrs. Ketchum's notions of proper uxorial behavior.

uxorious

vacation

vacationland

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

vacatur

n
/ vā'kād-ər /
L

an order of court making void a legal proceeding.
The court issued a vacatur when it found that the defendant's rights had not been upheld.

vaccary

n
/ 'vakərē /
L

a place where cows or cattle are kept : dairy farm.
The teacher plans to take her students to a vaccary during their study of the dairy food group.

vaccinate

v
/ 'vaksə.nāt /
L > F

administer a preparation of microorganisms in order to produce or increase immunity to a particular disease.
Doctors no longer vaccinate American children against smallpox, as that disease was eradicated during the 1970s.

vaccine

vaccinoid

vacillate

v
/ 'vasə.lāt /
L

waver in mind, will, or feeling : hesitate in choice of opinions or courses.
Theresa must allow more time to choose what she will wear if she cannot stop her tendency to vacillate.

vacuity

vacuous

adj
/ 'vakyəwəs /
L

emptied of or lacking content (as of air or gas).
Vacuous spaces within the meteorite made it easy to split in half.

vacuum

vagabond

adj
/ 'vagə.bänd /
L > F > E
moving from place to place without a fixed home.
Orson wanted to buy a motor home and lead a vagabond life, but Eileen refused to sell their house.

vagary

n
/ 'vāgərē /
L

a whimsical, fanciful, or extravagant idea or notion.
George's idea that he would be spending his spring break in Paris was sheer vagary.

vagrancy

n
/ 'vāgrənsē /
L?

the state or offense of being a person who has no established residence and wanders idly from place to place without lawful or visible means of support.
To clear the downtown area of homeless people, the mayor instructed the police to arrest them for vagrancy.

vaguely

vainness

valedictory

n
/ ,valə'dikt(ə)rē /
L

a speech or farewell usually given at the commencement exercises of a school or college.
Alice's valedictory at graduation brought the entire senior class to its feet.

valet

valetudinarian

n
/ ,valə.tüd'n'erēən /
L
a person of a weak or sickly constitution; especially : one whose chief concern is his invalidism.
Grandpa hopes that he will never be a valetudinarian.

valiant

valiantly

adv
/ 'valyəntlē /
L > F > E
in a brave or bold manner : courageously.
Deidre tried valiantly to swim the English Channel.

validity

n
/ və'lidədē /
L
the quality or state of being well grounded or justifiable.
Some people question the validity of Darwin's theory of evolution.

valley

valorous

adj
/ 'valərəs /
L
brave, courageous.
Carrie's valorous behavior during the flood earned her a medal.

valve

vampire

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

vandalism

n
/ 'vand°lizəm /
L > E

willful or malicious destruction or defacement of things of beauty or of public or private property.
The boys who knocked over the gravestones were eventually caught and charged with vandalism.

vandalize

v
/ 'vand°līz /
Gk > L > F

destroy or deface property, usually with malicious intent.
The gang planned to vandalize the tombstones at the cemetery with spray paint on Halloween.

vanguard

vanilla

n
/ və'nīlə /
L > Sp
a flavoring extract made by soaking comminuted vanilla pods in a mixture of water and grain alcohol.
The chef specified that real vanilla be used when making the cake.

vanquish

vapidity

vaporetto

vargueno

variable

n
/ 'verēəbəl /
L
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a star whose brightness changes in more or less regular periods.
Clement spent six months tracking changes in the variable.

variation

n
/ ,verē'āshən /
L
a solo dance in ballet.
Erik choreographed a variation to be performed by the stars of his ballet company.

varicelliform

adj
/ ,varə'selə.fòrm /
L + L
resembling chicken pox.
A virus was responsible for Lloyd's varicelliform rash.

varicose

adj
/ 'varəkōs /
L
abnormally swollen or dilated.
Extreme cases of varicose veins can require surgical treatment.

variegated

adj
/ 'ver(ē)ə.gāḍəd /
L
marked with different colors or tints in spots, streaks, or stripes.
A shady corner of the garden was brightened by a clump of variegated coleus plants.

variolous

vasodilator

n
/ ,vā(,)zō'dī.lādə(r) /
L
an agent (as a parasympathetic nerve fiber or a drug) that induces or initiates widening of the lumen of blood vessels.
Red wine contains tyramine, a vasodilator that can cause flushing and headaches.

vassal

n
/ 'vasəl /
Celt > L > F > E
a feudal tenant.
The lord of the estate rewarded the vassal for years of faithful service.

vaticinator

vaudeville

n
/ 'vòd(ə)vəl /
F geog name
a stage entertainment especially popular in the early decades of the 20th century that consisted of various unrelated acts following one another in succession and that might include performing animals, acrobats, comedians, dancers, singers, or magicians.
Some of the stars of vaudeville went on to become movie actors.

vaudevillian

n
/ vòd'vilyən /
F geog name&L
a writer or performer of stage entertainments especially popular in theaters in the early decades of the 20th century.
In his days as a vaudevillian, Mr. Kramer was a comedian's sidekick.

vault

vaward

n
/ 'vaü.(w)òrd /
F > E
the foremost part : forefront.
The vaward of the column stopped to allow stragglers to catch up.

veal

vealskin

vegetable

vegetarian

adj
/ ,vejə'terēən /
L > E + Ecf
consisting wholly of edible plants.
After spending two years in Japan, Annabelle followed a vegetarian diet.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

vehemence

n
/ 'vēəmən(t)s /
L > F

the quality or state of being expressive of strong emotion or conviction.

Norm's impetuosity and vehemence of temper made him his own worst enemy.

vehicle

vein

velitation

n
/ ,velə'tāshən /
L

[Note: Could be confused with vellication.] a dispute or slight contest : skirmish.

Police used every means to keep the velitation from exploding into a riot.

velleity

n
/ və'lēədē /
L

a slight wish : a faint desire.

Mr. and Mrs. Newton found that the hotel staff had anticipated their every velleity.

vellication

n
/ ,velə'kāshən /
L

the act of twitching or of causing to twitch.

While dissecting a frog in biology class, Sam noticed vellication of the legs.

vellum

n
/ 'veləm /
F > E

a thin calfskin specially prepared as a surface for writing.

Sanford carefully turned the rare vellum over to see if there was any writing on the back.

velocious

velocity

n
/ və'lāsədē /
L > F

quickness of motion : swiftness, speed.

George estimated the velocity of the wind at 22 miles per hour.

velodrome

n
/ 'vēlə.drōm /
L > F + Gk > F

a building containing a track designed for cycling.

The university's new velodrome was funded by an alumnus who was an ardent bicyclist.

vendaval

n
/ ,vendə'val /
F > Sp

an autumnal thundersquall on the coast of Mexico.

A recent vendaval damaged the banana grove.

vendetta

n
/ ven'dedə /
L > It

a prolonged feud marked by bitter hostility.

Chloe's all-night party exacerbated the vendetta with her neighbor.

veneer

n
/ və'ni(ə)r /
G

a thin sheet of wood cut or sawed from a log and adapted for adherence to a smooth surface (as of wood).

The maple veneer really spruced up the old pine table.

veneniferous

adj
/ ,venə'nif(ə)rəs /
L + Ecf

bearing or transmitting poison and especially a natural venom.

Ellen couldn't believe that anyone would want to work with veneniferous snakes for a living.

venerable

adj
/ 'venər(ə)bəl /
L

deserving to be regarded with profound respect and affection.

The venerable teacher's retirement saddened students who had hoped to benefit from her instruction.

vengeance

n
/ 'venjən(t)s /
L > F > E

infliction of punishment in return for an injury or offense.

The defeated team howled with rage and fury and swore bloody vengeance.

venireman

venison

n
/ 'venəsən /
L > F > E

the flesh of a deer.

Mandy roasted a leg of venison with prunes and chestnuts.

venom

n
/ 'venəm /
L > F > E

poisonous matter normally secreted by some animals (as snakes, scorpions, or bees).

The snake's venom paralyzed its prey.

ventilate

v
/ 'vent'lāt /
L

cause fresh air to circulate through and contaminated air to be simultaneously withdrawn from.

To ventilate her kitchen, Margo set a fan in the doorway and opened the windows.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

ventriloquist

n
/ ven'triləkwəst /
L

one who is skilled in the art of speaking in such a manner that the voice appears to come from some source other than the vocal organs of the speaker.

A ventriloquist entertained at Rebecca's birthday party.

venue

n
/ 'ven(.)yü /
L > F

a place designated to be the scene of a gathering, such as for a sports event.

The Georgia Dome in Atlanta was the venue for Super Bowl XXXIV.

veracious

adj
/ və'rāshəs /
L + Ecf

[has homonym: voracious]
observant of the truth : habitually speaking the truth.

It was up to the jury to decide which of the two witnesses was the more veracious.

veracity

n
/ və'rasədē /
L

devotion to the truth : truthfulness.
The prosecutor questioned the veracity of the witness.

verbally

adv
/ 'vərbəlē /
L + Ecff

in a manner involving the use of words rather than action or performance.

Johann couldn't describe the shape verbally, so he drew it.

verbatim

adv
/ və(r)'bādəm /
L

word for word : in the same words.
Marcelle can recite the entire Gettysburg Address verbatim.

verbena

n
/ və(r)'bēnə /
L

any of numerous garden plants that are widely cultivated for their showy spikes of white, pink, red, or blue flowers which are borne in profusion over a long season.

Marcy noticed tiny flower buds on her verbena in early April and anxiously awaited its full bloom.

verbigerate

v
/ (.)vər'bijərāt /
L

repeat a word or sentence endlessly and meaninglessly.

The psychiatrist explained that some schizophrenic patients often verbigerate.

verbomania

n
/ .vərbə'mānēə /
L + Gk

excessive use of or obsession with words.

Frances was accused of verbomania by her classmates, who didn't understand why she liked to study spelling.

verboten

adj
/ və(r)'bōt'n /
G

forbidden; especially : prohibited by dictate.

Speaking English in the German language-immersion program is verboten.

verdant

verdigris

n
/ 'vərdəgrēs /
L > F > E

a green or greenish blue poisonous pigment obtained by the action of acetic acid on copper.

The verdigris on the church steeple has aged beautifully.

verdolaga

n
/ .vərdə'lägə /
L > Ar > Sp

an annual herb with fleshy leaves.
Latin American cooks use verdolaga in soups and salads.

verdure

n
/ 'vərjər /
F > E

[has homonym: verger] fresh and green growing vegetation.

Joe walked back into the soft thick verdure of the hills and tramped until he was tired.

verglas

n
/ ver'glä /
F

a thin film of ice on rock.

On her way to the stream for some fresh water, Connie slipped on the nearly invisible verglas.

verisimilitude

n
/ .verəsə'milətüd /
L + L

the quality or state of having the appearance of truth.

The artist's scrupulous attention to detail provided an impressive degree of verisimilitude.

verjuice

n
/ 'vərjüs /
F > E

the sour juice of crab apples or other unripe fruit.

Scrooge was the kind of person who looked as though he drank verjuice every morning.

vermeil

vermicelli

n
/ .vərmə'selē /
L > It

alimentary paste made in long thin solid strings smaller in diameter than spaghetti.

The restaurant's five-way chili started with a base of vermicelli.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

vermiculate

adj
/ və(r)'mikyələt /
L

wormlike in shape.

When Tom's two-year-old brother tried to draw something, he could manage only a few vermiculate lines.

vernacular

adj
/ və(r)'nakyələr /
L

belonging to or being a language or dialect developed in and spoken and used by the people of a particular place, region, or country in a form considered nonstandard.
Mr. Hillis could not understand the vernacular language of the rappers.

vernal

adj
/ 'vərnəl /
L

of, relating to, or characteristic of the spring.
Cherry trees produce some of the prettiest vernal blossoms.

vernissage

verricule

versatile

adj
/ 'vərsədəl /
L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] marked by a tendency to change : fluctuating readily.
Tricia's versatile temperament made it impossible to predict her reactions.

vertebrate

adj
/ 'vərdəbrət /
L

having a spinal column.
Vertebrate animals include fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

vertex

n
/ 'vɜːteks /
L

the point on the limb of a celestial body nearest the zenith.
The tiny dark spot near the Moon's vertex is a huge crater.

vertical

adj
/ 'vɜːdɪkəl /
L > F

perpendicular to the plane of the horizon or to a primary axis : upright.
Blythe preferred the fabric with broad vertical stripes.

vertiginate

v
/ 'vɜːtɪjənāt /
L

whirl dizzily around : twirl.
Young children love to vertiginate until they fall down.

vertiginous

vertigo

n
/ 'vɜːdɪgō /
L

a disordered state in which the individual or the individual's surroundings seem to whirl dizzily.
The constant rocking of the boat produced feelings of vertigo and nausea in many of the passengers.

vesicant

n
/ 'vesɪkənt /
L + E

an agent (as a drug or a plant substance) that induces blistering.
Brittany wore thick gloves in order to avoid contact with the vesicant.

vespacide

n
/ 'vespəsɪd /
L

one that kills wasps.
Mindy waved the can of vespacide threateningly at the nest of yellow jackets.

vespertilian

vespertine

adj
/ 'vespə(r)tɪn /
L

setting with or just after the Sun.
Venus is the most prominent vespertine planet.

vessel

vestibule

n
/ 'vestəbyül /
L > F

a passage, hall, or chamber between the outer door and the interior of a building.
The elevators were located at the end of the vestibule.

vestige

n
/ 'vestij /
L > F

a remaining bit that constitutes a memorial or trace of something formerly present.
Dmitri thought he detected a vestige of natural gas odor in the kitchen.

veterinary

vexation

vexatious

adj
/ vek'səʃəs /
L

causing or likely to cause mental suffering.
A lame carriage horse threw everything into sad uncertainty and created a situation Emma found most vexatious.

vexillology

viable

vibraphone

vibrato

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

vicarage

n
/ 'vikəriːdʒ /
L > E

the house of a priest of a parish.
About a quarter of a mile down the road rose the vicarage, an old and not very good house.

vicegerency

vicegerent

n
/ vɪs'jɪrənt /
L

an administrative deputy appointed to perform functions of a king or magistrate.
The emperor claimed that he was ruling as God's vicegerent.

vicereine

vichyssoise

n
/ ˌvɪʃə'swäz /
F geog name

a soup made of pureed leeks and potatoes and usually served cold.
When vichyssoise is well made, it's heavenly; when it's badly made, it's inedible.

vicinage

viciously

adv
/ 'vɪʃəsli /
L > F > E

in a manner marked by violence or ferocity.
The puppy attempted to shake the old sock viciously.

vicissitude

n
/ vɪ'sɪs.ɪ.təd /
L

an accident of fortune : a shift of luck.
By the vicissitude of winning the lottery, Helen was able to buy the dream house she always wanted.

vicontiel

adj
/ vɪ'kɒntēəl /
F > AF

of or relating to a viscount or sheriff.
Robin Hood was wanted by the vicontiel authorities of several counties.

victorious

viduity

n
/ vɪ'd(y)üədē /
L

widowhood.
Wendy's first husband was killed in the Gulf War, but her viduity ended when she remarried in 1994.

vigennial

adj
/ ˌvɪjən'tenēəl /
L

occurring once every 20 years : relating to a 20th anniversary.
The store celebrated its vigennial anniversary with a big sale.

vigesimal

vigilance

vigilante

n
/ ˌvɪjə'lantē /
L > Sp

a member of a volunteer committee organized to protect an interest, especially to suppress and punish crime.
The cowboy movie was about a rancher who became a vigilante and joined in the search for a criminal.

vigneron

n
/ ˌvɛnyə'rɒn /
F

one who cultivates a vineyard and makes wine from the grapes.
The American vigneron was delighted that the French judges chose his wine as being among the world's best.

vignette

vilayet

vilify

v
/ 'vɪləfi /
L

utter slanderous and abusive statements against : defame.
Wouldn't it be refreshing if the candidates vying for the office did not vilify each other?

vilipend

v
/ 'vɪləpend /
L

speak of slightly or disparagingly : depreciate.
The candidate decided to vilipend her opponent instead of discussing the issues.

villain

n
/ 'vɪlən /
L > F > E

[has homonyms: villein, villan]
one who deliberately plots and does serious harm to others.
The police were seeking the villain who conned several senior citizens out of their savings.

villainous

villainy

vinaceous

adj
/ vɪ'nāshəs /
L

of the color wine red.
The vinaceous liquid in the three-foot-high bottle at the restaurant is not really wine.

vinaigrette

n
/ ˌvɪnə'gret /
F

a sauce made typically of vinegar, oil, onions, parsley, and herbs.
The salad was dressed with a tomato-flavored vinaigrette.

vincible

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

vinculum

n
/ 'vɪŋkʏələm /

L

a unifying bond.

Their mutual love of dolls is the vinculum between Delia and Christine, who are otherwise very different.

vindicate

v
/ 'vɪndəˌkāt /

L

free from any question of error, dishonor, guilt, or negligence.

Oliver felt the judge's decision would vindicate him completely.

vinegar

n
/ 'vɪnə(r) /

L > F > E

a sour liquid used as a condiment or a preservative that is obtained by acetic fermentation of dilute alcoholic liquids (as fermented cider, malt beer, or wine) and is often seasoned especially with herbs.

Pete used a special aged balsamic vinegar in the salad dressing.

vineyard

n
/ 'vɪnə(r)d /

E

a field of grapevines.

While touring a Napa Valley winery, Jamie wandered through the vineyard.

vintner

n
/ 'vɪntnə(r) /

L > F > E

a person who sells wine : a wine merchant.

The vintner assured Babette that the wine she was considering would go well with veal.

violated

violin

n
/ ˌvɪə'lin /

OProv > It

a bowed stringed instrument having four strings, a shallow body, a fingerboard without frets, and a curved bridge.

Reuben demonstrated his technical virtuosity on the violin when he auditioned for the string ensemble.

violoncello

n
/ ˌvɪələn'che(ɪ)lō /

It

the bass member of the violin family that is tuned an octave below the viola and held vertically on the floor between the player's knees while in a sitting position.

The violoncello played plaintively in the prelude to the last act of the opera.

virago

n
/ və'rä,gō /

L

[has near homonym: vorago] a loud overbearing woman.

The manager at the Department of Motor Vehicles was, unfortunately, a virago.

viridescent

adj
/ ˌvɪrə'desːnt /

L

greenish.

Gideon removed the viridescent scum from the bottom of the horse trough and added fresh water.

virtue

virtuoso

n
/ ˌvɜrchə'wō(ɪ)sō /

L > It

one who excels in the technique of an art; especially : a musical performer.

The virtuoso took 12 curtain calls, setting a new record for the concert hall.

virulent

adj
/ 'vɪr(y)ələnt /

L

characterized by rapid course, severity, and malignancy—used especially of a disease or infection.

The virulent strain of flu spread rapidly through the community.

visage

visceroptosis

n
/ ˌvɪsərəp'tōsəs /

L + Gk

downward displacement of the abdominal organs.

The growth of the tumor had caused visceroptosis.

viscount

n
/ 'vɪˌkaʊnt /

L > F > E

a noble ranking below an earl and above a baron.

The viscount had no children and was becoming desperate to have an heir.

viscous

adj
/ 'vɪskəs /

L

[Note: Could be confused with viscose.] having the physical property of a fluid or semifluid that enables it to develop a certain amount of shearing stress dependent upon the velocity of flow and then to offer continued resistance to the flow.

Joe was surprised to learn that glass is viscous, as evidenced by the fact that a windowpane, over time, becomes thicker at its lower edge and thinner at its upper edge.

visibility

n
/ ˌvɪzə'bɪlədē /

L

the degree or extent to which something is capable of being seen.

The captain announced that visibility was approximately five miles.

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vitiate

v
/ 'vishē.āt /
L

make incomplete, faulty, or defective : injure the substance or quality of.

Freddie argued that Clark's poor acting abilities would vitiate the school play.

vitreous

adj
/ 'vitrē.əs /
L

of, relating to, derived from, or consisting of glass.

The huge vitreous wall of skyscrapers reflected the mountains and the sunset.

vitrescible

adj
/ və'tresəbəl /
L

of a kind that can be changed into glass or a glassy substance by heat and fusion.

The ceramics shop owner used only the most vitrescible materials in his work.

vitrine

n
/ və'trēn /
L > F

a glass showcase for display (as of fine wares or specimens).

Allegra has a large vitrine that houses her collection of porcelain figurines.

vitriolic

adj
/ .vitrē'ālik /
L > F > E

marked by a caustic biting quality.

Howard had to be reprimanded for his vitriolic outbursts against the referees and opposing players.

vituperative

adj
/ (.)vī'tüpə.rəd.iv /
L

containing or characterized by wordy abuse.

Josh's dad gave him a vituperative lecture after the accident.

vivace

adv
/ vē'vä(.)chā /
L > It

in a brisk spirited manner—used as a direction in music.

To her teacher's frustration, Marcie plays every piece as if it were marked vivace.

vivacity

vixenish

adj
/ 'viksənish /
E

resembling a shrewish ill-tempered woman.

Elena could become vixenish when she felt slighted.

vizierial

vocabulary

vocation

n
/ vō'kāshən /
L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a summons from God to an individual to undertake the obligations and perform the duties of a particular task or function in life.

The parents of Thomas Aquinas entreated him to abandon his religious vocation and return home.

vociferate

vociferous

adj
/ vō'sif(ə)rəs /
L

marked by or given to ready vehement insistent outcry.

A vociferous couple in the back row ruined our evening at the poetry reading.

vogue

volante

volatile

adj
/ 'väləd'1 /
L > F

easily passing off by evaporation. *The fact that gasoline is highly volatile produces an advantage in starting engines.*

volition

n
/ vō'lishən /
L

the act of willing or choosing : the act of deciding.

The notary public asked Nigel to state that he was signing the contract of his own volition.

volubility

n
/ .väl'yə'bilədē /
L

talkativeness.

The cheerful volubility at Mrs. King's luncheon is largely due to the fact that she is a great hostess.

voracious

vorago

n
/ və'rā.gō /
L

[has near homonym: virago] an engulfing chasm : abyss.

Before he knew it, Beck had crossed the bridge over the vorago.

vorlage

n
/ 'fōr.lägə /
G

the position of a skier leaning forward from the ankles usually without lifting the heels from the skis.

The object of the vorlage is to keep the body of the skier perpendicular to the slope.

vorspiel

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vortex

n
/ 'vɔːrteks /
L

a rapidly spinning current of water.
The toy sailboat got caught in the vortex and spun wildly as the bathtub drained.

vowel

voyage

n
/ 'vɔɪ(i)j /
L > E

an act or instance of traveling : excursion, tour.
Bill and Gail went on a sea voyage for their honeymoon.

vulgar

adj
/ 'vʌlgə(r) /
L

lacking in cultivation, perception, or taste.
Harriet vowed that she would not visit Mr. Martin's wife if he married an ignorant vulgar woman.

vulnerable

adj
/ 'vʌlnərə(ə)bəl /
L

capable of being wounded : defenseless against injury.
Maggie's sensitive nature made her vulnerable to cross remarks.

vulnery

adj
/ 'vʌlnərəre /
L

promoting the healing of wounds : curative.
There was a section in the old medical book about vulnerary herbs.

vulpine

vulture

n
/ 'vʌlchə(r) /
L > E

any of various large raptorial birds related to the hawks, eagles, and falcons but having weaker claws and a usually naked head and that subsist chiefly or entirely on the decaying flesh of dead animals.
The turkey vulture rarely gets credit for its help in removing unfortunate opossums and skunks from our roadways.

waffle

n
/ 'wäfəl /
D

a crisp cake made of pancake batter baked in a specialized appliance.
For breakfast, Mary ordered a waffle topped with blueberry compote.

waggish

wagonload

waif

wainscot

n
/ 'wānzkat /
D > E

the lower three or four feet of an interior wall when finished differently from the remainder of the wall (as with wood panels, tile, or marble slabs).
Michelle chose a striped wallpaper for the wainscot in the dining room.

wainwright

waldmeister

n
/ 'wɔld.mīstə(r) /
G + L > G

a small European sweet-scented herb.
The Germans use waldmeister to flavor May wine.

wallaby

n
/ 'wāləbē /
Australian name
any of various small or medium-sized kangaroos.
The wallaby usually feeds in the safety of dusk or darkness.

wallet

walleyed

adj
/ 'wɔːlɪd /
E
having very light gray or whitish eyes.
The Appaloosa foaled a walleyed filly last spring.

wallop

v
/ 'wālɒp /
F
gain a decisive victory over : beat by a wide margin : trounce.
Coach Garrett predicts that the Cougars will soundly wallop the Buccaneers.

waltz

n
/ 'wɔlts /
G
a moderately fast dance in three-quarter time with a strong accent on the first beat of the measure and characterized by one step per beat.
When the band started playing a waltz, Marilyn hoped that someone would ask her to dance.

wander

wanderlust

n
/ 'wändə(r).ləst /
G
strong or unconquerable longing for or impulse toward traveling.
Cayte's wanderlust caused her to postpone college so that she could tour Europe.

2004 Scripps National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

wantonness

n
/ 'wɒnt̩n(n)əs /

E
the quality or state of being without check or limitation.

The wantonness of comfort Georgetta experienced as a young child caused her to become a spoiled brat.

wapiti

n
/ 'wäpədē /

Algonquian
a North American deer similar to the European red deer but considerably larger.

The older male wapiti is often hunted for its antlers.

warden

n
/ 'wɔrd̩n /
Gmc > F > E

an official in charge of the operation of a prison.

The warden recommended that the disruptive prisoner be denied parole.

warehouse

warison

warmonger

warmth

warrior

n
/ 'wɔryər /

E
a human engaged or experienced in warfare and especially in primitive warfare or the close combat typical of ancient or medieval times.

The warrior attended a council before battle in the morning.

wasabi

n
/ 'wäsəbē /

Jpn
an Asiatic herb whose greenish root is grated and eaten with fish or other food.

In Japan, Pam had raw fish seasoned with wasabi, which tasted like horseradish.

washtrough

wasp

n
/ 'wäsp /
E

any of numerous winged hymenopterous insects that have well-developed wings and biting mouthparts, and a more or less formidable sting.

The well-known yellow jacket is a wasp with a hurtful sting.

wasteweir

n
/ 'wäst.wi(ə)r /
L > F > E + E

a notch in a levee or other barrier across a stream for the escape of superfluous water.

A wasteweir was constructed in the dam to prevent flooding along the banks of the stream.

wastrel

n
/ 'wästrəl /

L > F > E
something rejected or discarded as useless or imperfect.

Hardly any item is wastrel to the ardent recycler.

watercress

n
/ 'wɒd̩ə(r).kres /
E

a white-flowered plant growing in water with leaves that are used in salads.

Jesse added some watercress and carrots to the tossed salad.

waxen

wearisome

adj
/ 'wirēsəm /

E
tiresome, tedious.
Gondolph found hearing accounts of other people's dreams wearisome.

weasel

n
/ 'wēzəl /
E

any of various small slender active carnivorous mammals that are mostly reddish brown with white or yellowish underparts and in northern forms turn white in winter.
In the snow the white fur of the weasel camouflages it against attacks by hawks or owls.

weather

webelos

n
/ 'wēbə.lɔz /
E acronym

a Cub Scout of the fifth rank who is at least 10½ years old and is preparing for entrance into Boy Scouts.

Noah spent his second year as a webelos working on his fitness, geologist, and handyman activity badges.

weddellite

wedge

weevil

n
/ 'wēvəl /
E

any of numerous snout beetles in which the head is elongated and usually curved downward to form a snout bearing the jaws at the tip.
The boll weevil is a serious pest to the cotton crop in North America.

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weigh

v
/ 'wā /
E
[has homonym: way] evaluate : ponder.
Mrs. Avery asked Sam to weigh the potential consequences of his decision.

weir

n
/ 'wi(ə)r /
E
[has homonyms: weer, we're] a fence or enclosure set in a stream to catch fish.
Bored by fishing, the boys set up a weir and went off to play basketball.

weird

adj
/ 'wi(ə)rd /
E
[has homonym: weired] curious in nature or appearance : of strange or extraordinary character.
Most episodes of The X-Files begin with a weird or puzzling event.

welfare

welfarism

n
/ 'wel.fa(a).rizəm /
E + Ecf
the complex of policies, attitudes, and beliefs associated with a welfare state.
Free health care was touted as one of the benefits of welfarism.

welkin

n
/ 'wel.kən /
E
the celestial regions as the abode of God or the gods : the heavens.
The hymn that begins "Hark! The herald angels sing" was originally written as "Hark how all the welkin rings."

wellaway

welterweight

wharf

wharfinger

n
/ '(h)wò(r)fən.jə(r) /
E
a person or company operating a marine terminal with facilities for the berthing of ships and the loading, unloading, and storage of goods.
The wharfinger keeps a parrot in his office.

wheedle

v
/ 'hwēd'l /
unknown
get or take something from by using soft words or flattery.
Ginger's attempt to wheedle ten dollars out of her father was unsuccessful.

wheelbarrow

wheelwright

n
/ '(h)wēl.rīt /
E
a person whose occupation is to make or repair circular frames of metal, wood, or other hard material.
In the days of the horse and buggy, the wheelwright had an essential job to do.

whelk

whelp

n
/ 'hwelp /
E
one of the young of various carnivorous mammals.
Wendy was delighted when the eyes of the cocker spaniel whelp finally opened.

wherewithal

n
/ '(h)we(ə)rwə.θəl /
E + E + E
financial resources : money.
Everyone was surprised that Jake had the wherewithal to buy a sailboat.

wherry

whetstone

whilom

adj
/ 'hwīləm /
E
having been at an earlier time : former.
Mother frowned when Edgar said the food was probably too hot to eat, a whilom excuse for being late for lunch.

whimper

v
/ 'hwimpə(r) /
imit
make a low whining plaintive or broken sound.
Laura's dog starts to whimper whenever he wants to be fed.

whimsical

adj
/ 'hwimzəkəl /
unknown
resulting from or determined by sudden unpredictable impulses.
Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Brom and his gang of rough riders.

whimsicality

whininess

n
/ 'hwīnənəs /
E
the quality or state of complaining or lamenting with or as if with a prolonged high-pitched sound.
Allen's habitual whininess when asked to do something he didn't like annoyed both his teacher and his classmates.

whinyard

whippersnapper

whippet

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whippoorwill

n
/ 'h(w)pə(r).wɪl /
imit
a nocturnal bird of the eastern United States and Canada that is seldom seen although its call is often heard at nightfall or just before dawn.
At camp Nick recorded the call of a whippoorwill.

whirligig

n
/ 'hwɜrlə.gɪɡ /
E
a child's toy having a whirling or spinning motion.
Sandy bought a whirligig at the dime store.

whirlwind

n
/ 'hwɜrl.wɪnd /
Scand > E + E
a small rotating windstorm of limited extent.
A whirlwind is sometimes called a "dust devil."

whisk

n
/ 'hwɪsk /
Scand > E
a small usually wire kitchen implement used for hand beating of food (as eggs, cream, or potatoes).
Rose used a whisk to beat the egg whites into a stiff froth.

whisperer

n
/ 'hwɪspərə(r) /
E
one that speaks softly with the aim of preserving secrecy.
Reverend Loomis scanned the congregation in vain, searching for the whisperer.

whist

n
/ 'hwɪst /
imit E
a four-player card game from which bridge evolved.
In learning to play whist, Carole found it helpful to make a chart of its similarities to bridge.

whistleable

adj
/ 'hwɪsələbəl /
E + EcF
capable of being whistled.
Rufus could botch up even the most whistleable tune.

whodunit

n
/ hū'dənət /
E
a detective story or a mystery story presented as a novel, a play, or a motion picture.
The whodunit proved to be the most popular play at the summer theater.

wholesale

adv
/ 'hōl.səl /
E
in a manner of, relating to, or engaged in the sale of goods or commodities in quantity for resale.
Juliana purchased several store fixtures wholesale.

wholesome

adj
/ 'hōlsəm /
E
promoting health of body : health-giving.
Ellie sometimes ate junk food rather than the wholesome lunch her mother had made for her.

whorlywort

n
/ 'hwɔ(ə)rl̩.wɜrt /
E
a tall perennial herb—called also "Culver's root."
Darnell bought a hand-colored engraving of a whorlywort at the auction.

whortleberry

n
/ 'hwɜrt̩'l̩.ber̩ /
E
a sweet edible European blueberry.
The unripe whortleberry was too sour for Vernon to eat.

wickiup

n
/ 'wɪk̩əp /
Sac, Fox, & Kickapoo
a hut used by Native Americans that is typically elliptical in form and has a rough frame covered by reed mats or grass.
As they constructed the wickiup, the campers were careful to leave a hole in the top for campfire smoke to escape.

widget

n
/ 'wɪdʒət /
E
an unnamed article considered for purposes of hypothetical example as the typical product of a company.
On Trudy's graph, each star represents one widget.

width

wince

winsome

adj
/ 'wɪn(t)səm /
E
pleasant because of cheer, childlike nature, and open candor.
The little tyke's winsome smile won him many friends.

wintriness

wirrah

wiseacre

wisent

n
/ 'vɛ.zənt /
G
a European bison.
The advance of European civilization drove the wisent to the brink of extinction; it survived mainly by breeding in zoos.

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withernam

n
/ 'wɪðə(r)nəm /
E > F > E

the action of taking by way of reprisal : a second or reciprocal distress of other goods in lieu of goods taken by a first distress.
Jeff discouraged Larry from going through with the planned withernam by saying "Two wrongs don't make a right."

witloof

n
/ 'wɪtlɒf /

D
chicory; also : its crown of foliage as a salad green.
Emily decided to vary her salad by using witloof instead of lettuce.

witticism

n
/ 'wɪdəsɪzəm /
E

a clever or amusing expression.
The careful use of a witticism in Kevin's speech helped hold the attention of his listeners.

wizardry

n
/ 'wɪzə(r)drɪ /
E

magic skill : sorcery, witchcraft.
Merlin practiced his wizardry at the court of King Arthur.

wizen

wobbulator

n
/ 'wɒbyələdə(r) /
G + Ecf

a testing device for radio sets in which the frequency is varied periodically and automatically over a predetermined range.
The primary function of a wobbulator is broadcast receiver testing.

woebegone

adj
/ 'wɒbəˌɡɒn /
E

exhibiting a condition of suffering, sorrow, or misery.
The teacher looked up at 20 woebegone faces staring at the essay question.

woebegoneness

wok

n
/ 'wɒk /
Chin
[has near homonym: walk] a bowl-shaped cooking utensil used especially in the preparation of Chinese food.
Lydia received an electric wok as a housewarming gift.

wolveboon

womp

wondrous

worrisome

wraith

n
/ 'ræθ /
unknown
an apparition of the exact likeness of a living person seen usually just before that person's death.
The wraith of a person shortly to die is a firm article in the creed of Scottish superstition.

wrangler

wrasse

wreak

wreath

n
/ 'rɛθ /
E
a coronet, band, or fillet of intertwined flowers or leaves worn or bestowed as a mark of honor or victory or symbol of esteem.
The figure on the vase wearing a laurel wreath is identified as Apollo.

wreckage

n
/ 'rekɪj /
Scand > AF > E
something that has been reduced to a ruinous state by violence : the remains of a wreck.
Cleaning up the wreckage from the tornado would take money as well as time.

wren

wrestle

v
/ 'resəl /
E
[has near homonym: rustle]
contend by grappling with and striving to trip or throw down an opponent.
Inspired by the championship match they saw on television, Bobby and Alan began to wrestle on the living room floor.

wretched

adj
/ 'rechəd /
E
squalid, dismal, foul.
After the flood, the whole neighborhood looked wretched.

wriggle

v
/ 'rɪɡəl /
G? > E
move the body or a bodily part to and fro with short writhing motions like a worm.
Zakia was startled when she saw a snake wriggle through the tall grass.

writhe

v
/ 'rɪθ /
E
move or proceed with twists and turns.
Silently, we watched a seven-foot boa constrictor writhe through the trees.

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wunderkind

n
/ 'vündə(r).kint /

G
a child prodigy : one who succeeds in a competitive or highly difficult field or profession at an early age.
Mozart, a famous wunderkind, wrote complicated sonatas at the age of five.

xanthic

adj
/ 'zan(t)thik /

Gk
of a flower : colored with some tint of yellow.
The forsythia rivals the daffodil for being the loveliest xanthic bloom in Cynthia's garden.

xanthism

xanthoma

n
/ zan'thōmə /

Gk
a condition that is marked by the development (as on the eyelids, neck, or back) of irregular yellow patches or nodules.
High cholesterol or triglyceride levels can be factors in causing xanthoma.

xenocentric

xenogamy

n
/ zə'nägəmə /

Gk
fertilization by cross-pollination; especially : cross-pollination between flowers on different plants.
Xenogamy may occur by wind or by bees carrying pollen from plant to plant while feeding on nectar.

xenophobia

xerocolous

adj
/ zə'rākələs /

Gk > L + L + Ecf
thriving in a relatively dry environment.
The xerocolous plants of the desert generally have roots that penetrate deeply into the soil to obtain moisture.

xerosis

n
/ zə'rōsəs /

Gk
abnormal dryness of the skin.
Xerosis can be an indication of an underlying health problem.

xerostomia

n
/ ,zirə'stōmēə /

Gk
abnormal dryness of the mouth due to insufficient secretions.
Xerostomia was one of the drug's side effects.

xylem

n
/ 'zīləm /

Gk
a complex tissue in the vascular system of higher plants.
The xylem of a tree functions chiefly in conduction of sap but also performs a structural and storage role.

xyloglyphy

xylograph

n
/ 'zīlə.graf /

Gk
an engraving on wood.
A Chinese xylograph of a bull decorated the restaurant wall.

xylography

xylophagous

xylophilous

xylophone

n
/ 'zīlə.fōn /

Gk + Gk
a musical instrument consisting of a series of wooden bars graduated in length and sounded by striking with two small wooden hammers.
Many African musical instruments are variations of the xylophone.

xylophonist

xylotomy

xystus

yacht

yachtsman

n
/ 'yātsmən /

G > D + E
[Note: Plural form is pronounced identically.] a person who owns or sails a boat used for pleasure, as for racing or cruising.
Mike fancied himself a true yachtsman after one week at sea.

yammer

yannigan

Yarborough

n
/ 'yär(,)bəərə /

E name
a hand in bridge or whist containing no card higher than a nine.
Gene was not sure how to signal to his bridge partner that he held a Yarborough.

yardage

yarrow

yawl

yearn

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yeast

n
/ 'yēst /
E

a substance used in baking and the fermentation of alcoholic beverages
: leaven.

The sourdough bread recipe called for two packages of yeast.

yeasty

yenta

n
/ 'yentə /

Yiddish
one that meddles.

Evelyn's children laughingly refer to her as a yenta when she tries to set them up on blind dates.

yeoman

yeomanry

n
/ 'yōmənɹē /

E
the whole body of small farmers who cultivate their own land; specifically : the body of small landed proprietors of the middle class.

Among the legal privileges of the yeomanry was the right to serve as a juror.

yewberry

yield

v
/ 'yēld /
E

agree to accept or comply with something : exhibit willingness rather than opposition.

Sarah looks forward to the day when she will not have to yield to her parents' wishes.

ylem

yoga

n
/ 'yōgə /
Skt

union of the individual self with the universal spirit.

The teacher explained that through years of mental and physical exercise, she had been able to attain a complete yoga.

yokel

n
/ 'yōkəl /

imit E
an unpolished, naïve, or gullible inhabitant of a rural area or of a small town.

The pool hustler disguised himself as a yokel to lure unsuspecting victims.

yore

n
/ 'yō(ə)r /
E

[has homonym: your] time past and especially long since past.

Adam's favorite books contain stories about knights of yore.

youngster

youthfully

yowl

ytterbium

yttrium

n
/ 'itrēəm /

Sw geog name
a trivalent metallic element usually included among the rare-earth metals.

Yttrium is one of the elements used in making lasers.

yule

yuletide

zaguan

zaibatsu

n pl
/ zī'bät(,)sü /
Jpn

the powerful financial and industrial conglomerates of Japan.
Keiko intended that her electronics company become one of the zaibatsu.

zapateado

n
/ ,zäpätē'ä(,)dō /
Sp

a rhythmic stamping or tapping step characteristic of Spanish dancing.

Juliana needs practice in zapateado before she can take advanced flamenco classes.

zeal

n
/ 'zēl /

Gk > L > E

impassioned eagerness.

Russell entered into his new job with great zeal.

zealot

zealous

zebra

zeitgeber

n
/ 'tsīt.gäbər /
G

an environmental agent or event that provides the stimulus for setting or resetting the biological clock of an organism.

Frederick used a zeitgeber consisting of his bedroom lamp hooked to a timer prior to his trip and was able to avoid severe jetlag.

zenith

n
/ 'zēnəth /

Ar > Sp > L > F > E

the point of culmination : peak, summit.

Winning the Faculty Award was the zenith of Stephanie's college career.

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zephyr

n
/ 'zefə(r) /
Gk
a soft warm breeze from the west.
The gentle zephyr was not sufficient to keep Renee's kite airborne.

zeppelin

n
/ 'zɛp(ə)lən /
G name
a rigid airship.
Olga's dream was to ride in a zeppelin one day.

zeugma

n
/ 'zügmə /
Gk
the use of a word in the same construction with two adjacent words in the context with only one of which it is appropriate in sense.
The statement "John upset the table and his mother" is, one would hope, a zeugma.

zigzaggedness

n
/ zig'zagədnəs /
G? > F + Ecff
the quality or state of having short sharp turns or angles.
An aerial photograph revealed the zigzaggedness of the mountain road.

zircon

n
/ 'zɜːrkən /
It > F > G
a mineral occurring in brown or grayish square prisms or sometimes in transparent forms which are used as gems.
The zircon in Wendy's ring looks very much like a diamond.

zoanthropy

zodiac

zodiacal

adj
/ zō'diəkəl /
Gk
of, relating to, or within the zodiac.
Jessica has a pendant in the shape of Pisces, her zodiacal symbol.

zoning

zoological

zoophilist

n
/ zō'äfələst /
Gk + Gk + Ec f
a lover of animals; especially : a person concerned with the rights of lower animals and their protection from abuse.
The noted zoophilist explained how deforestation is endangering several species of mammals and birds.

zootechny

zucchetto

n
/ zü'ked(,)ō /
L > It
a small round skullcap worn by Roman Catholic ecclesiastics in colors that vary according to the rank of the wearer.
In public appearances, the pope usually wears a white cassock and zucchetto.

zucchini

n
/ zü'kēnē /
It
a slender green summer squash.
Tim picked a large zucchini from his garden.

zugzwang

n
/ 'tsük.tsfäj /
G
the necessity of moving in chess when it is to one's disadvantage.
Valerie forced the grandmaster into zugzwang.

zwieback

n
/ 'swē.bak /
G
a usually sweetened bread enriched with eggs that is first prepared and baked and then sliced and toasted until dry and crisp.
Liza placed a slice of zwieback on the baby's tray.

zygosis

zymology