# Oxford School Dictionary

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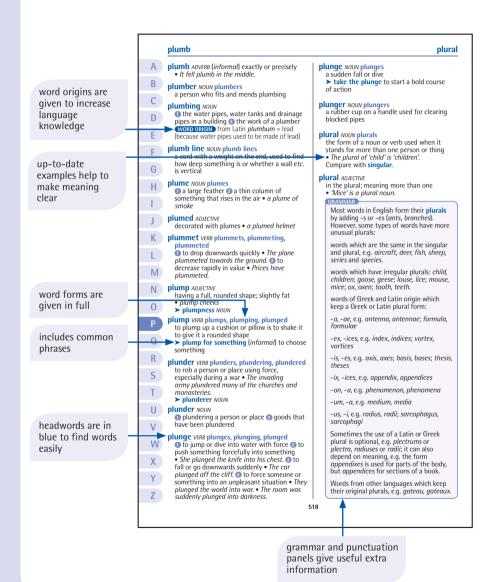
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## How to use this dictionary



the 'try also' tips guide you to other possible spellings if you cannot find the word you are looking for

scherzo try also ce-, ci-, cy-, ps- or scscoop science NOUN sciences scherzo (say skairts-oh) NOUN scherzos a a lively piece of music WORD ORIGIN Italian, 1 the study of the physical world by means of observation and experiment 2 a branch b of this, such as chemistry, physics or biology schism (say skizm or sizm) NOUN schisms WORD ORIGIN from Latin scientia = knowledge C the splitting of a group into two opposing sections because they disagree about science fiction NOUN stories about imaginary scientific discoveries or space travel and life on other planets, something important d schizophrenia (sav skid-zo-free-nee-a) NOUN often set in the future e definitions are clear a kind of mental illness in which people science park NOUN science parks cannot relate their thoughts and feelings to and accurate an area set up for industries using science or reality for organizations doing scientific research > schizophrenic ADJECTIVE & NOUN scientific ADJECTIVE g scholar NOUN scholars 1 to do with science or scientists • scientific a person who has studied a subject instruments a studying things in an organized, logical way and testing ideas carefully • a scientific study of the way we word classes are thoroughly a person who has been given to build awarded a scholarship WORD ORIGIN from Latin scholaris = to do with a school grammatical skills use language ➤ scientifically ADVERB scholarly ADJECTIVE showing knowledge and learning scientist NOUN scientists an expert in science someone who uses scholarship NOUN scholarships scientific methods pronunciations are 1 a grant of money given to someone to help to pay for their education @ serious study of scimitar (say sim-it-ar) NOUN scimitars given for difficult an academic subject and the knowledge you a curved oriental sword words scintillating ADJECTIVE m n sparkling lively and witty • The scholastic ADJECTIVE conversation was scintillating. to do with schools or education; academic n WORD ORIGIN from Latin scintilla = spark school NOUN schools scion (say sy-on) NOUN scions a place where teaching is done, especially 0 a descendant, especially of a noble family of pupils aged 5-18 @ the pupils in a school 1 the time when teaching takes place in a SCISSORS PLUBAL MOUN p school • School ends at 4.30 p.m. @ a group a cutting instrument used with one hand, spelling and usage of people who have the same beliefs or style with two blades joined so that they can close q of work 6 a large group of fish, whales or against each other notes help to dolphins improve spelling school VERB schools, schooling, schooled There is a tricky bit in scissors-it begins and show how to teach or train a person or animal . She was with sc. schooling her horse for the competition. words are used in scoff VERB scoffs, scoffing, scoffed schoolchild NOUN schoolchildren English 1 to laugh or speak in a mocking way about a child who goes to school something you think is silly • She scoffed ➤ schoolboy NOUN
➤ schoolgirl NOUN at my superstitions. 2 (informal) to eat u something greedily or to eat it all up schooling NOUN > scoffer NOUN education at a school scold VERB scolds, scolding, scolded to speak angrily to someone because they W schoolteacher NOUN schoolteachers have done wrong; to tell someone off a person who teaches in a school > scolding NOUN ➤ schoolmaster NOUN scone (sy skon or skohn) NOUN scones
a soft flat cake, usually eaten with butter ➤ schoolmistress NOUN schooner (say skoon-er) NOUN schooners a sailing ship with two or more masts a a scoop NGUN scoops

a kind of deep spoon for serving ice cream tall glass for serving sherry 611

related words show how groups of words are connected with one another

abhorrence above

A much (WORD ORIGIN) from Latin abhorrere = shrink away in horror

B abhorrence NOUN

hatred or strong dislike • *She could not disguise her abhorrence of the man.* 

➤ abhorrent ADJECTIVE

abide VERB abides, abiding, abided

• you can't abide something when you detest it or can't bear it • I really can't abide garlic. ② to abide by a promise or agreement is to keep it and do what you said you would • He promised to abide by the rules.

abiding ADJECTIVE

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lasting or permanent • The idea soon became an abiding passion.

ability NOUN abilities

ability is being able to do something
 Tiredness affects your ability to concentrate. 2 an ability is a special skill or talent • students of mixed abilities

abject (say ab-jekt) ADJECTIVE

hopeless or pitiful • They were living in abject poverty.
 grovelling or humiliating
 an abject apology

ablaze ADJECTIVE

① on fire and burning fiercely • The whole building was soon ablaze. ② full of bright light or colours • The hall was ablaze with candlelight.

able ADJECTIVE

 having the power or skill or opportunity to do something • I was not able to move.
 skilful or clever • John is a very able musician.

➤ ably ADVERB

able-bodied ADJECTIVE

fit and healthy; not disabled

abnormal ADJECTIVE

not normal; unusual • abnormal weather conditions

➤ abnormally ADVERB

➤ abnormality NOUN

**aboard** ADVERB & PREPOSITION on or into a ship or aircraft or train

abode NOUN abodes (formal)

the place where someone lives • Welcome to my humble abode.

abolish VERB abolishes, abolishing, abolished to put an end to a law or custom • Slavery was abolished in Britain in 1807.

abolition (say ab-ol-ish-on) NOUN
 getting rid of a law or custom • the abolition
 of slavery

abominable ADJECTIVE

very bad or unpleasant • an abominable crime

> abominably ADVERB

**abomination** *NOUN* **abominations** something that disgusts you

**aborigine** (say ab-er-ij-in-ee) *NOUN* **aborigines** one of the original inhabitants of a country

➤ aboriginal ADJECTIVE & NOUN

➤ Aborigine a member of the people who were living in Australia before European settlers arrived

**WORD ORIGIN** from Latin *ab origine* = from the beginning

abort VERB aborts, aborting, aborted

to put an end to something before it has been completed • They had to abort the space flight because of technical problems.

abortion NOUN abortions

an operation to remove an unborn child from the womb before it has developed enough to survive

**abortive** ADJECTIVE

unsuccessful • an abortive attempt

abound **VERB** abounds, abounding, abounded

1 things abound when there are a lot of them • Fish abound in the river. 2 a place abounds in things when there are a lot of them there • The river abounds in fish.

about PREPOSITION

near in amount or size or time;
approximately • She's about five feet tall.
Come about two o'clock.
on the subject of; in connection with • I don't want to talk

about it. 3 all round; in various parts ofA dog was running about the yard.

about ADVERB

• in various directions • They were running about. ② not far away • There were wild animals about.

**be about to** to be going to do something

We were just about to leave.

above PREPOSITION

 higher than • There was a window above the door. ② more than • The temperature was just above freezing.

above ADVERB

at or to a higher place or point • Look at the stars above.

access accord

access (say ak-sess) NOUN

a way to enter or reach something

2 the right to use or look at something

access VERB accesses, accessing, accessed to read and use the information that has been stored in a computer

#### accessible ADJECTIVE

able to be reached or understood easily

- The style is accessible and easy to read.
- > accessibility NOUN

#### accession NOUN accessions

reaching a rank or position; becoming king or queen • The monarchy was restored with the accession of Charles II.

## accessory (say ak-sess-er-ee) NOUN accessories

- 1 an extra thing that goes with something
- ② a person who helps someone else to commit a crime

#### accident NOUN accidents

something unexpected that happens, especially when something is broken or someone is hurt or killed

**by accident** by chance; without meaning to

#### SPELLING -

Accidentally = accident + ally. Don't forget the a and the double I before the y.

#### accidental ADJECTIVE

happening or done by accident • accidental damage

#### accidentally ADVERB

to do something accidentally is to do it by mistake or without meaning to • Hal had accidentally pressed the wrong button.

acclaim VERB acclaims, acclaiming, acclaimed to praise someone or something enthusiastically • Her plays are highly acclaimed.

#### acclaim NOUN

enthusiastic praise • The book was published to huge acclaim.

#### acclamation NOUN

loud and enthusiastic approval

- acclimatize (also acclimatise) VERB acclimatizes, acclimatizing, acclimatized to become used to a new climate or new surroundings
- accolade (say ak-ol-ayd) NOUN accolades praise or a prize given to someone for something they have done

**WORD ORIGIN** from Latin *collum* = neck (because in the past, when a man was knighted, the king put his arms round the man's shoulders)

## accommodate VERB accommodates, accommodating, accommodated

① to provide someone with a place to live, work or sleep overnight ② to help someone by providing what they need • We were able to accommodate everyone with skis.

#### accommodating ADJECTIVE

willing to help or cooperate • Thank you for being so accommodating.

#### accommodation NOUN

somewhere to live, work or sleep overnight

#### SPELLING -

There is a double **c** and double **m** in **accommodation**.

# accompanist NOUN accompanists a pianist or other musician who plays to support a singer or another musician

## accompany VERB accompanies, accompanying, accompanied

- 1 to go somewhere with somebody
- 2 to happen or appear with something else
   The cheers were accompanied by a few boos.
   3 to play music, especially on a piano, that supports a singer or another musician
- > accompaniment NOUN

## accomplice (say a-kum-pliss) NOUN accomplices

a person who helps another in a crime or bad

#### accomplish VERB accomplishes, accomplishing, accomplished to do something successfully • He

to do something successfully • He hoped to accomplish the journey in six days.

#### accomplished ADJECTIVE

skilled or talented • She was an accomplished painter.

#### accomplishment NOUN accomplishments something you have achieved or are good at

#### accord NOUN

agreement or consent

- ➤ of your own accord without being asked or told to do it
- ➤ with one accord (formal) doing the same thing at the same time • With one accord they sprang to their feet.

#### accord VERB accords, according, accorded

1 to be consistent with something • *This theory does not accord with the facts.* 

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acrylics acute

#### A acrylics PLURAL NOUN

a type of paint used by artists

#### act NOUN acts

1 something someone does 2 a pretence

• She is only putting on an act. 3 one of the main divisions of a play or opera 4 each of a series of short performances in a programme of entertainment • a juggling act 5 a law passed by a parliament

#### act **VERB** acts, acting, acted

● to do something; to behave in a certain way • *Try to act normally.* ② to perform a part in a play or film etc. ③ to function or have an effect • *He stuck out his feet to act as brakes.* 

#### action NOUN actions

① doing something • Now is the time for action. ② something you do • Can you explain your actions that night? ③ a battle; fighting • He was killed in action. ④ a lawsuit

- > out of action not working or functioning
- ➤ take action to decide to do something

#### action replay NOUN action replays

(British) playing back a piece of sports action on television, especially in slow motion

# activate VERB activates, activating, activated to activate a machine or process is to start it working • The alarm is activated by movement.

➤ activation NOUN

#### active ADJECTIVE

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1 taking part in many activities; energetic

② functioning or working; in operation • an active volcano ③ (in grammar) describing the form of a verb when the subject of the verb is performing the action. In 'The shop sells DVDs' the verb is active; in 'DVDs are sold by the shop' the verb is passive.

> actively ADVERB

#### GRAMMAR

Verbs can be either active or passive; these two choices are sometimes called active voice and passive voice.

A verb is active when the subject of the verb performs the action: *The sun rises in the East; My father wrote these words.* In these sentences, the verbs (*rises* and *wrote*) are active because their subjects (*the sun* and *my father*) are performing the actions. But when the verb takes an object (*these words* in the second sentence), you can turn the sentence round and say *These words were written* 

by my father. Now, the verb (were written) is passive, because the subject of the sentence is these words, and the subject and object are the other way round. You use the passive voice when you want the object to be the main topic of the sentence (i.e. in the previous example, when you want to focus on the words, and not your father).

If a verb does not take an object (like *rises* in the first example), it can only be active; you cannot turn *The sun rises in the East* into a passive sentence because there is no object to make into the subject.

In passive sentences, the performer of the action often comes after the word by: The mystery was solved by our neighbour; The penalty will be taken by the Welsh captain. But sometimes the performer is unknown, or is not identified: All the tickets have been sold; That file has been deleted.

#### activist NOUN activists

a person who takes action to try to bring about change, especially in politics

#### activity NOUN activities

an activity is an action or occupation
outdoor activities 2 activity is doing things or being busy
The streets were full of activity.

#### actor NOUN actors

a person who acts a part in a play or film etc.

#### actress NOUN actresses

a woman who acts a part in a play or film etc.

#### actual ADJECTIVE

really happening or existing

#### actually ADVERB

really; in fact • Actually, I think you are wrong.

#### acumen (say ak-yoo-men) NOUN

the ability to make good judgements and take quick decisions

**acupuncture** (say **ak**-yoo-punk-cher) *NOUN* pricking parts of the body with needles to relieve pain or cure disease

➤ acupuncturist NOUN

#### **acute** ADJECTIVE

sharp or strong • acute pain ② having a sharp mind

> acuteness NOUN

acute accent adequate

#### acute accent NOUN acute accents

a mark over a vowel, as over é in *résum*é

#### acute angle NOUN acute angles an angle of less than 90°

#### acutely ADVERB

very or very strongly • He was acutely embarrassed.

#### **AD** ABBREVIATION

Anno Domini (Latin = in the year of Our Lord), used in dates counted from the birth of Jesus Christ

## adamant (say ad-am-ant) ADJECTIVE determined not to change your mind

#### Adam's apple NOUN Adam's apples

the lump at the front of a man's neck

WORD ORIGIN from the story that when Adam
(the first man, according to the Bible) ate an
apple, which God had forbidden him to do, a
piece of it stuck in his throat

#### adapt VERB adapts, adapting, adapted

• to change something so that it is suitable for a new purpose ② to become used to a new situation • She gradually adapted to her new life.

#### adaptable ADJECTIVE

able to adapt to or become suitable for different situations • *The red fox is one of the most adaptable animals.* 

#### adaptation NOUN adaptations

① a play or film that is based on a novel etc.② changing to suit a new situation • New species come about because of adaptation.

#### adaptor NOUN adaptors

a device that connects pieces of electrical or other equipment

#### add VERB adds, adding, added

- 1 to put one thing with another 2 to make another remark 'And get back soon,' he added.
- ➤ add up ① to make or work out a total ② (informal) to make sense; to seem reasonable The things they said just don't add up.

## addenda PLURAL NOUN things added at the end of a book

#### adder NOUN adders

a small poisonous snake **(WORD ORIGIN)** from Old English; originally called *a nadder*, which later became *an adder* 

#### addict NOUN addicts

a person who does or uses something that

they cannot give up

> addiction NOUN

#### addicted ADJECTIVE

not able to give up a habit or drug • He is addicted to computer games.

#### addictive ADJECTIVE

causing a habit that people cannot give up
• an addictive drug

#### addition NOUN additions

- 1) the process of adding 2 something added
- You are a welcome addition to our team.
- ➤ in addition also; as an extra thing

#### additional ADJECTIVE

extra; as an extra thing • There is a small additional charge for using of the swimming pool.

➤ additionally ADVERB

#### additive NOUN additives

a substance added to another in small amounts for a special purpose, e.g. as a flavouring

#### addled ADJECTIVE

muddled or confused • *His brain was addled with all the questions.* 

#### address NOUN addresses

the details of the place where someone lives or of where letters or parcels should be delivered to a person or firm ② (in computing) a string of characters which shows a destination for email messages or the location of a website • What's your email address? ③ a speech to an audience

## address VERB addresses, addressing, addressed

- 1 to write an address on a letter or parcel 2 to make a remark or speech to somebody
- He stood up to address the crowd.

#### SPELLING

There is a double **d** and double **s** in **address**.

#### adenoids PLURAL NOUN

thick spongy flesh at the back of the nose and throat, which can make breathing difficult

#### adept (say a-dept) ADJECTIVE

very good or skilful at something • He was adept at sign language.

#### adequate ADJECTIVE

enough or good enough

- ➤ adequately ADVERB
- ➤ adequacy NOUN

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# **Vocabulary Toolkit**

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# **Prefixes and suffixes**

#### **Common prefixes**

A **prefix** is a group of letters joined to the beginning of a word to change its meaning, e.g.

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re- recapture = to capture again
un- unknown = not known
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Some prefixes already form part of the word, e.g.

```
com- communicate = to make contact with
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Once you know how **prefixes** work, you can use them to give existing words new meanings. Because there are so many possible combinations, not all words that begin with prefixes can be included in this dictionary.

Here are some examples of the more common English prefixes:

prefix	meaning	example
an-	not, without	anarchy
anti-	against	anti-British
arch-	chief	archbishop
auto-	self	automatic
co-	together	coeducation
com-, con-	together, with	communicate
contra-	against	contradict
cyber-	to do with electronic communication	cyberspace, cybercafe
de-	undoing or taking away	derail
dis-	not	dishonest
dis-	taking away	disconnect
eco-	to do with ecology and the environment	ecosystem
em-, en-	in, into	embark, entrust

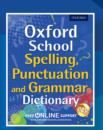
prefix	meaning	example
ex-	that used to be, former	ex-president
extra-	beyond, outside	extraordinary, extraterrestrial
fore-	before, in front of	forefinger, foregoing
giga-	times 109 or (in ICT) 230	gigabyte
in- il- im- ir-	not not not not	incorrect illegal impossible irrelevant
inter-	between	international
mega-	times 10 <sup>6</sup> or (in ICT) 2 <sup>20</sup>	megabyte
mis-	wrong	misbehave
mono-	one, single	monotone
multi-	many	multimedia
non-	not	non-existent
over-	too much	overdo
poly-	many	polygon
post-	after	post-war
pre-	before	prehistoric
pro-	supporting	pro-British
re-	again	recapture
semi-	half	semicircle
sub-	below	submarine
super-	over, beyond	superstore
tele-	at a distance	telecommunications
trans-	across	transport, transatlantic
ultra-	beyond	ultrasonic
un-	not, the opposite of	unknown, undo

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