

Webster's American English Thesaurus

New Edition

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PREFACE

This thesaurus is an extremely concise guide for the understanding and selection of synonyms, near synonyms, and antonyms. It is intended to serve as a quick reference for those who want a compact and handy thesaurus. As is the case with any thesaurus, it is essential that this book be used in conjunction with an adequate dictionary.

This thesaurus shares many details of presentation with more comprehensive works, and like other thesauruses, it includes lists of related words (near synonyms) and antonyms at most entries to provide users with additional significant and pertinent assistance. It also provides at each main entry a concise statement of the meaning shared by the listed synonyms, and it includes an entry at its own alphabetical place for every synonym that appears at a main entry.

However, conciseness of presentation necessarily requires special treatment of entries, and this book has a number of special features uniquely its own. Users need to be familiar with the following major features of this thesaurus.

Entry Order: The body of the book consists of main and secondary entries introduced by alphabetically ordered boldface headwords.

Homographs: Words spelled the same but having different meanings are given separate entries and are identified with an italic part-of-speech label, as at **fair** *adj* and **fair** *n* for the adjective *fair* and the noun *fair*.

Headwords that are synonyms and alphabetically close to each other are sometimes listed together, as **finicky**, **finicking**, **finical**.

Headwords ordinarily conform to normal dictionary practice: nouns are styled as singulars; verbs as infinitives. Special situations, such as plural usage, are signaled by the use of boldface, as at the entry **wage**, **wages** or at sense 2 of **game**, where **games** is shown as the alternate form of the headword synonymous with *athletics*.

Main Entry and Its Basic Elements: Each main entry consists of a headword followed by a part-of-speech label when needed, a sense number when needed, a meaning core, and a list of synonyms. Lists of related words (near synonyms) and antonyms

follow the synonym list. The **meaning core** is marked by a small bullet and indicates the area of meaning shared by the synonyms. Two or more meanings (or senses) of a headword are separated and numbered with a boldface numeral (as **1**).

The italic abbreviation *syn* introduces a synonym list; the italic abbreviation *rel* introduces a list of related words (near synonyms); the italic abbreviation *ant* introduces a list of antonyms. More information about *rel* and *ant* lists is provided in the section on **Main and Secondary Entries: Elements Common to Both**, which appears below.

Secondary Entry and Its Basic Elements: A secondary entry has a boldface headword followed by a part-of-speech label when needed, a sense number when needed, and a list of synonyms. The first synonym in the list appears in small capitals and serves as a cross-reference to the main entry at which the meaning core appears. Lists of related words and antonyms may be included as well.

Main and Secondary Entries: Elements Common to Both: Lists of related words and antonyms may appear at both main entries and secondary entries.

The italic abbreviation *rel* introduces a list of related words. The related words—words that are almost but not quite synonymous with the headword—are included in the entry after the synonym list. A *rel* list is often composed of words separated into subgroups that each share a common likeness or relation with the headword and its synonyms. Subgroups within *rel* lists are separated by semicolons (see also the section on **Punctuation**, below).

Related words are chosen because they are distinctly related to the headword, and the list of related words will be slightly different at the entries for each word in the synonym list. Therefore, the user should check the list of related words at the entries for each synonym in the list for the most complete listing of related words.

The italic abbreviation *ant* introduces an antonym or list of antonyms. Within *ant* lists, commas are used between words that are synonyms of one another; semicolons are used to separate words that do not have such a relationship (see also the section on **Punctuation**, below).

In lists of antonyms, italic notations in parentheses indicate the limited use or application in which the word serves as an antonym to the headword.

At some entries users are directed to another entry at which the appropriate *rel* or *ant* list can be found, as at **mistreat**, where

the user is directed to the entry for *ill-treat* to find related words, or at **hefty**, where the user is directed to the entry for **heavy** to find antonyms. When the user is being directed to a multisense entry, the cross-reference includes the number of the sense that includes the relevant *syn* and/or *rel* list, as **resort** *n*, where users are directed to sense **2** at the entry for *resource*.

Punctuation: A comma links items (as synonyms or members of a single group or subgroup of related words or antonyms) that are alike in their relation to the headword. A semicolon signals a break in the continuity and is used in *rel* and *ant* lists to separate subgroups of words which differ in their relation to the headword, as in the *rel* list at **fabulous** and the *ant* list at **facile**.

Parentheses enclose a particle or particles usually associated with a word. They may accompany a headword, as **rely** (**on or upon**), or a word in a list, as *fail* (*in*) in the *ant* list at **fulfill** and *fall short* (*of*) at another *ant* list in the same entry.

Parentheses also enclose material indicating a typical or, occasionally, a sole object of reference, as in the meaning core at **money** or the *ant* list at **gaudy**, where the antonym *quiet* carries the parenthetical note (*in taste or style*).

A

abaft · toward or at the stern (of a vessel) *syn* aft, astern *rel* after, rear, back, posterior, hind, hinder *ant* afore

abandon *vb* **1** · to quit absolutely *syn* desert, forsake *rel* discard, cast, scrap, junk; reject, repudiate, decline *ant* reclaim **2** *syn* RELINQUISH, surrender, yield, resign, leave *ant* cherish (*hopes, opinions*); restrain (*oneself*)

abandon *n*, *syn* UNCONSTRAINT, spontaneity *rel* license, freedom, liberty; relaxation, laxity, laxness, looseness *ant* self-restraint

abandoned · utterly depraved *syn* reprobate, profligate, dissolute *rel* depraved, debauched, perverted, debased; degenerate, corrupt, vicious; wanton, lewd, lascivious, libidinous, lecherous, licentious *ant* redeemed, regenerate

abase · to lower in one's own estimation or in that of others *syn* demean, debase, degrade, humble, humiliate *rel* cringe, truckle, cower, fawn, toady; grovel, wallow; abash, discomfit, disconcert, embarrass; mortify *ant* exalt; extol (*especially oneself*)

abash *syn* EMBARRASS, discomfit, disconcert, faze, rattle *rel* fluster, flurry, discompose, perturb, disturb, agitate; chagrin, mortify; confound, dumbfound, nonplus, puzzle *ant* embolden; reassure

abate **1** *syn* ABOLISH, extinguish, annihilate *rel* end, terminate, close; annul, void, abrogate; cancel, obliterate, erase; nullify, invalidate *ant* perpetuate **2** *syn* DECREASE, reduce, diminish, lessen *rel* retard, slow, slacken, delay; moderate, temper; mitigate, lighten, alleviate; relieve *ant* augment;

accelerate (*pace, speed*); intensify (*hopes, fears, a fever*) **3** · to die down in force or intensity *syn* subside, wane, ebb *rel* dwindle, diminish, decrease *ant* rise; revive

abatement *syn* DEDUCTION, rebate, discount *ant* addition

abbey *syn* CLOISTER, convent, nunnery, monastery, priory

abbreviate *syn* SHORTEN, abridge, curtail *rel* reduce, decrease, lessen; contract, compress, shrink, condense; attenuate, extenuate, thin *ant* elongate, lengthen

abdicate · to give up formally or definitely a position of trust, honor, or glory *syn* renounce, resign *rel* relinquish, surrender, abandon, leave *ant* assume; usurp

abdomen · the part of the body between the chest and the pelvis *syn* belly, stomach, paunch, gut

abduct · to carry off (a person) surreptitiously for an illegal purpose *syn* kidnap *rel* seduce, entice, lure, inveigle

aberrant *syn* ABNORMAL, atypical *rel* divergent, different, disparate; irregular, anomalous, unnatural; exceptional; singular, peculiar, odd, strange, eccentric *ant* true (*to a type*)

aberration **1** *syn* DEVIATION, deflection *rel* abnormality, aberrancy; error, blunder, mistake, slip, lapse; fault, failing; anomaly *ant* conformity; regularity **2** · mental disorder *syn* derangement, alienation *rel* insanity, lunacy, dementia; delusion, hallucination, illusion; mania, delirium, hysteria, frenzy *ant* soundness (*of mind*)

abet *syn* INCITE, foment, instigate *rel* aid, assist, help; back, support, uphold; cooperate, concur; for-

ward, further, promote, advance
ant deter (*with a personal subject*)

abettor *syn* CONFEDERATE, accessory, accomplice, conspirator

abeyant *syn* LATENT, dormant, quiescent, potential *rel* deferred, suspended, postponed, stayed, intermitted; suppressed, repressed *ant* operative; active; revived

abhor *syn* HATE, abominate, loathe, detest *rel* despise, contempt, scorn; shun, avoid, eschew *ant* admire

abhorrence • a feeling of extreme disgust or dislike *syn* detestation, loathing, abomination, hatred, hate *rel* distaste, repugnance, repellency; horror, dismay *ant* admiration; enjoyment

abhorrent **1** *syn* HATEFUL, abominable, detestable, odious *rel* contemptible, despicable, scurvy; execrable, damnable *ant* admirable; enjoyable **2** *syn* REPUGNANT, repellent, obnoxious, distasteful, invidious *rel* antipathetic; uncongenial, unsympathetic; foreign, alien *ant* congenial

abide **1** *syn* STAY, wait, remain, tarry, linger *rel* dwell, reside, live, sojourn, lodge; stick, cleave, cling, adhere *ant* depart **2** *syn* CONTINUE, endure, last, persist *rel* stay, remain, linger; subsist, exist, live *ant* pass **3** *syn* BEAR, endure, suffer, tolerate, stand, brook *rel* submit, yield, bow, defer; acquiesce, accede, consent, assent; accept, receive, take

ability • physical, mental, or legal power to perform *syn* capacity, capability *rel* power, strength, might, force, energy; proficiency, skill, adeptness; aptitude, talent, genius, faculty, gift; competence, qualification *ant* inability, incapacity

abject *syn* MEAN, ignoble, sordid *rel* servile, slavish, menial, subservient; miserable, wretched; cringing, truckling, cowering; groveling; abased, demeaned, humbled,

humiliated *ant* exalted (*in rank, state, condition, mood, behavior*); imperious (*in manner, speech, attitude*)

abjure • to abandon irrevocably and, usu., with solemnity or publicity *syn* renounce, forswear, recant, retract *rel* forgo, forbear, eschew; abstain, refrain; reject, repudiate, spurn, decline; abandon, relinquish *ant* pledge (*allegiance, a vow*); elect (*a way of life, a means to an end, an end*)

able • having marked power or fitness for work *syn* capable, competent, qualified *rel* skilled, skillful, proficient, expert; efficient, effective; clever, brilliant, intelligent, smart *ant* inept; unable

abnegate *syn* FORGO, sacrifice, eschew, forbear *rel* renounce, abdicate; surrender, abandon, relinquish, waive; abstain, refrain *ant* indulge (*in*)

abnegation *syn* RENUNCIATION, self-abnegation, self-denial *rel* forgoing, forbearance, eschewal; abstinence, abstemiousness, continence, temperance; restraining, curbing, bridling *ant* indulgence, self-indulgence

abnormal • deviating markedly from the rule or standard of its kind *syn* atypical, aberrant *rel* irregular, unnatural, anomalous; unusual, unwonted, uncustomary, unaccustomed; monstrous, prodigious *ant* normal

abode *syn* HABITATION, dwelling, residence, domicile, home, house

abolish • to make nonexistent *syn* annihilate, extinguish, abate *rel* extirpate, eradicate, wipe, exterminate; obliterate, efface, blot out, expunge, erase; negate, nullify, annul, abrogate *ant* establish

abominable *syn* HATEFUL, detestable, odious, abhorrent *rel* execrable, damnable, accursed, cursed; scurvy, despicable, contemptible,

sorry; loathsome, repulsive, revolting, repugnant, offensive; horrid, horrible *ant* laudable; enjoyable, delightful

abominate *syn* HATE, loathe, detest, abhor *rel* despise, contemn, scorn, disdain; execrate, objugate, curse, damn *ant* esteem; enjoy

abomination **1** *syn* ABHORRENCE, detestation, loathing, hatred, hate *rel* scorn, despite, contempt, disdain; execration, objugation *ant* esteem; enjoyment **2** · a person or thing from which one shrinks with intense dislike *syn* anathema, bugbear, bête noire *rel* plague, pest, annoyance; aversion, antipathy *ant* joy

aboriginal *syn* NATIVE, indigenous, autochthonous *rel* primitive, primordial, primeval, pristine; savage, barbaric, barbarian, barbarous

abortive *syn* FUTILE, fruitless, vain, bootless *rel* immature, unmatured, unripe; unformed, formless; ineffectual, ineffective, inefficacious; unfortunate, unlucky *ant* consummated

abound *syn* TEEM, overflow, swarm *rel* predominate, preponderate *ant* fail, fall short

about · in reference to *syn* concerning, regarding, respecting

above · at a higher level *syn* over *ant* below

aboveboard *syn* STRAIGHTFORWARD, forthright *rel* open, frank, candid; honest, upright, scrupulous; fair, impartial, just; ingenuous, unsophisticated, artless, natural *ant* underhand, underhanded

abracadabra *syn* GIBBERISH, hocus-pocus, mummary *rel* magic, sorcery, thaumaturgy; amulet, charm, fetish

abrade · to affect a surface by rubbing, scraping, or wearing away *syn* excoriate, chafe, fret, gall *rel* scrape, scratch, grate, grind, rasp;

injure, damage, impair, mar; irritate, exasperate

abridge *syn* SHORTEN, curtail, abbreviate, retrench *rel* condense, contract, compress, shrink; cut, slash; limit, restrict; reduce, diminish, decrease *ant* expand; extend

abridgment · a condensation of a larger work *syn* abstract, epitome, brief, synopsis, conspectus *rel* digest, précis, compendium, sketch, syllabus *ant* expansion

abrogate **1** *syn* ANNUL, vacate, quash, void *rel* abolish, extinguish, abate *ant* institute (*by enacting, decreeing*) **2** *syn* NULLIFY, annul, negate, invalidate *rel* abolish, annihilate, extinguish; destroy, demolish; ruin, wreck; cancel, obliterate, blot out, erase *ant* establish, fix (*a right, a character, a quality, a custom*)

abrupt **1** *syn* STEEP, precipitous, sheer *rel* perpendicular, vertical, plumb *ant* sloping **2** *syn* PRECIPITATE, sudden, headlong, impetuous, hasty *rel* quick, speedy, fast; hurried, hastened; unceremonious; curt, brusque, bluff *ant* deliberate, leisurely

abscess · a localized swollen area of infection containing pus *syn* boil, furuncle, carbuncle, pimple, pustule

abscond *syn* ESCAPE, decamp, flee, fly *rel* depart, leave, quit, go *ant* give (*oneself*) up

absence *syn* LACK, want, dearth, defect, privation *rel* need, necessity, exigency; deficiency; destitution; void, vacuum, *ant* presence

absent *syn* ABSTRACTED, preoccupied, absentminded, distraught *rel* engrossed, absorbed, intent, rapt; heedless, inadvertent; careless; oblivious, unmindful, forgetful *ant* attentive

absentminded *syn* ABSTRACTED, absent, preoccupied, distraught *rel* inattentive, thoughtless, in-