

Webster's American English Dictionary

Expanded Edition

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ai-le-ron \ˈālə,rən\ *n* : movable part of an airplane wing

ail-ment \ˈālmənt\ *n* : bodily disorder

aim \ˈām\ *vb* **1** : point or direct (as a weapon) **2** : direct one's efforts ~ *n* **1** : an aiming or the direction of aiming **2** : object or purpose — **aim-less** *adj* — **aim-less-ly** *adv* — **aim-less-ness** *n*

air \ˈar\ *n* **1** : mixture of gases surrounding the earth **2** : melody **3** : outward appearance **4** : artificial manner **5** : compressed air **6** : travel by or use of aircraft **7** : medium of transmission of radio waves ~ *vb* **1** : expose to the air **2** : broadcast — **air-borne** \-,börn\ *adj*

air-condition *vb* : equip with an apparatus (**air conditioner**) for filtering and cooling the air

air-craft *n, pl* **aircraft** : craft that flies

Air-dale terrier \ˈar,dāl-\ *n* : large terrier with a hard wiry coat

air-field *n* : airport or its landing field

air force *n* : military organization for conducting warfare by air

air-lift *n* : a transporting of esp. emergency supplies by aircraft — **airlift** *vb*

air-line *n* : air transportation system — **air-lin-er** *n*

air-mail *n* : system of transporting mail by airplane — **airmail** *vb*

air-man \-mən\ *n* **1** : aviator **2** : enlisted man in the air force in one of the 3 ranks below sergeant

airman basic *n* : enlisted man of the lowest rank in the air force

airman first class *n* : enlisted man in the air force ranking just below sergeant

air-plane *n* : fixed-wing aircraft heavier than air

air-port *n* : place for landing aircraft and usu. for receiving passengers

air-ship *n* : powered lighter-than-air aircraft

air-strip *n* : airfield runway

air-tight *adj* : tightly sealed to prevent flow of air

air-waves \ˈar,wāvz\ *n pl* : medium of transmission of radio waves

airy \ˈarē\ *adj* **air-i-er**; **-est** **1** : delicate **2** : breezy

aisle \ˈil\ *n* : passage between sections or rows

ajar \əˈjār\ *adj or adv* : partly open

akim-bo \əˈkimbō\ *adj or adv* : having

the hand on the hip and the elbow turned outward

akin \əˈkin\ *adj* **1** : related by blood **2** : similar in kind

-al \əl\ *adj suffix* : of, relating to, or characterized by

al-a-bas-ter \ˈalə,bastər\ *n* : white or translucent mineral

alac-ri-ty \əˈlakrətē\ *n* : cheerful readiness

alarm \əˈlārm\ *n* **1** : warning signal or device **2** : fear at sudden danger ~ *vb* **1** : warn **2** : frighten

alas \əˈlas\ *interj* — used to express unhappiness, pity, or concern

al-ba-tross \ˈalbə,trɔs, -,trās\ *n, pl* **-tross** or **-tross-es** : large seabird

al-be-it \ól'bēət, al-\ *conj* : even though

al-bi-no \alˈbīnō\ *n, pl* **-nos** : person or animal with abnormally white skin —

al-bi-nism \ˈalbə,nizəm\ *n*

al-bum \ˈalbəm\ *n* **1** : book for displaying a collection (as of photographs) **2** : collection of recordings

al-bu-men \alˈbyümən\ *n* **1** : white of an egg **2** : albumin

al-bu-min \-mən\ *n* : protein found in blood, milk, egg white, and tissues

al-che-my \ˈalkəmē\ *n* : medieval chemistry — **al-chem-ist** \ˈalkəmist\ *n*

al-co-hol \ˈalkə,hól\ *n* **1** : intoxicating agent in liquor **2** : liquor — **al-co-**

hol-ic *adj*

al-co-hol-ic \,alkəˈhòlik, -ˈhāl-\ *n* : person affected with alcoholism

al-co-hol-ism \ˈalkə,hól,izəm\ *n* : addiction to alcoholic beverages

al-cove \ˈal,kòv\ *n* : recess in a room or wall

al-der-man \ˈöldərmən\ *n* : city official

ale \ˈäl\ *n* : beerlike beverage — **ale-house** *n*

alert \əˈlært\ *adj* **1** : watchful **2** : quick to perceive and act ~ *n* : alarm ~

vb : warn — **alert-ly** *adv* — **alert-ness** *n*

ale-wife *n* : fish of the herring family

al-fal-fa \alˈfalfə\ *n* : cloverlike forage plant

al-ga \ˈalgə\ *n, pl* **-gae** \ˈal,jē\ : any of a group of lower plants that includes seaweed — **al-gal** \-gəl\ *adj*

al-ge-bra \ˈaljəbrə\ *n* : branch of mathematics — **al-ge-bra-ic** \,aljəˈbräik\

adj — **al-ge-bra-i-cal-ly** \-,bräəkɪlē\ *adv*

alias \ˈālēs, ˈālyəs\ *adv* : otherwise called ~ *n* : assumed name
al-i-bi \ˈalə,bī\ *n* **1** : defense of having been elsewhere when a crime was committed **2** : justification ~ *vb*
-bied; **-bi-ing** : offer an excuse
alien \ˈālēən, ˈālyən\ *adj* : foreign ~ *n* **1** : foreign-born resident **2** : extra-terrestrial
alien-ate \ˈālēə,nāt, ˈālyə-\ *vb* **-at-ed**; **-at-ing** : cause to be no longer friendly — **alien-ation** \ˌālēəˈnā-shən, ˌālyə-\ *n*
alight \əˈlīt\ *vb* : dismount
align \əˈlīn\ *vb* : bring into line — **align-er** *n* — **align-ment** *n*
alike \əˈlīk\ *adj* : identical or very similar ~ *adv* : equally
al-i-men-ta-ry \ˌaləˈmentərē\ *adj* : relating to or functioning in nutrition
al-i-mo-ny \ˈalə,mōnē\ *n, pl* **-nies** : money paid to a separated or divorced spouse
alive \əˈlīv\ *adj* **1** : having life **2** : lively or animated
al-ka-li \ˈalkə,lī\ *n, pl* **-lies or -lis** : strong chemical base — **al-ka-line** \-kələn, -līn\ *adj* — **al-ka-lin-i-ty** \ˌalkəˈlīnətē\ *n*
all \ˈɔl\ *adj* **1** : the whole of **2** : greatest possible **3** : every one of ~ *adv* **1** : wholly **2** : so much **3** : for each side ~ *pron* **1** : whole number or amount **2** : everything or everyone
Al-lah \ˈələ, ˈal-\ *n* : God of Islam
all-around *adj* : versatile
al-lay \əˈlā\ *vb* **1** : alleviate **2** : calm
al-lege \əˈlej\ *vb* **-leged**; **-leg-ing** : assert without proof — **al-le-ga-tion** \ˌaliˈgāshən\ *n* — **al-leg-ed-ly** \əˈle-jədlē\ *adv*
al-le-giance \əˈlējəns\ *n* : loyalty
al-le-go-ry \ˈaləgōrē\ *n, pl* **-ries** : story in which figures and actions are symbols of general truths — **al-le-gor-i-cal** \ˌaləˈgōrikəl\ *adj*
al-le-lu-ia \ˌaləˈlūyə\ *interj* : hallelujah
al-ler-gen \ˈalərjən\ *n* : something that causes allergy — **al-ler-gen-ic** \ˌalər-ˈjenik\ *adj*
al-ler-gy \ˈalərjē\ *n, pl* **-gies** : abnormal reaction to a substance — **al-ler-gic** \əˈlərjɪk\ *adj* — **al-ler-gist** \ˈalərjɪst\ *n*
al-le-vi-ate \əˈlīvēˈāt\ *vb* **-at-ed**; **-at-ing** : relieve or lessen — **al-le-vi-a-tion** \əˌlīvēˈāshən\ *n*
al-ley \ˈalē\ *n, pl* **-leys** **1** : place for

bowling **2** : narrow passage between buildings
al-li-ance \əˈlīəns\ *n* : association
al-li-ga-tor \ˈalə,gātər\ *n* : large aquatic reptile related to the crocodiles
al-lit-er-a-tion \ə,litəˈrāshən\ *n* : repetition of initial sounds of words — **al-lit-er-a-tive** \-ˈlitə,rätiv\ *adj*
al-lo-cate \ˈalə,kāt\ *vb* **-cat-ed**; **-cat-ing** : assign — **al-lo-ca-tion** \ˌaləˈkā-shən\ *n*
al-lot \əˈlāt\ *vb* **-tt-** : distribute as a share — **al-lot-ment** *n*
al-low \əˈlau\ *vb* **1** : admit or concede **2** : permit — **al-low-able** *adj*
al-low-ance \-əns\ *n* **1** : allotted share **2** : money given regularly for expenses
al-loy \ˈal,oi\ *n* : metals melted together — **al-loy** \əˈlɔi\ *vb*
all right *adv or adj* **1** : satisfactorily **2** : yes **3** : certainly
all-spice \ˈɔlspɪs\ *n* : berry of a West Indian tree made into a spice
al-lude \əˈlūd\ *vb* **-lud-ed**; **-lud-ing** : refer indirectly — **al-lu-sion** \-ˈlū-zhən\ *n* — **al-lu-sive** \-ˈlūsiv\ *adj*
al-lure \əˈlūr\ *vb* **-lured**; **-lur-ing** : entice ~ *n* : attractive power
al-ly \əˈli, ˈal,l\ *vb* **-lied**; **-ly-ing** : enter into an alliance — **al-ly** \ˈal,l, əˈlɪ\ *n*
-al-ly \əˈlē\ *adv* *suffix* : -ly
al-ma-nac \ˈɔlmə,nak, ˈal-\ *n* : annual information book
al-mighty \ɔlˈmɪtē\ *adj* : having absolute power
al-mond \ˈæmənd, ˈam-, ˈalm-\ *n* : tree with nutlike fruit kernels
al-most \ˈɔl,mōst, ɔlˈ-\ *adv* : very nearly
alms \ˈæmz, ˈælmz, ˈalmz\ *n, pl* **alms** : charitable gift
aloft \əˈlɔft\ *adv* : high in the air
alo-ha \äˈlohä\ *interj* — used to greet or bid farewell
alone \əˈlɔn\ *adj* **1** : separated from others **2** : not including anyone or anything else — **alone** *adv*
along \əˈlɔn\ *prep* **1** : in line with the direction of **2** : at a point on or during ~ *adv* **1** : forward **2** : as a companion
along-side *adv or prep* : along or by the side
alongside of *prep* : alongside
aloof \əˈlɔf\ *adj* : indifferent and reserved — **aloof-ness** *n*
aloud \əˈlaud\ *adv* : so as to be heard

BIOGRAPHICAL NAMES

This section gives basic information on many notable figures from contemporary culture, history, legend, mythology, and biblical tradition. Figures from the Bible, myth, and legend are clearly identified as such.

In cases where individuals have alternate names, they are entered under the name by which they are best known. Names are generally alphabetized by the main element of the surname, without regard for connectives such as *da*, *de*, *van*, or *von* (as **Gama** . . . Vasco da). Names appearing in the entry in italics are original names, maiden names, or nicknames.

The first dates given in the entry are birth/death dates; other dates refer to terms in office, reigns, achievements, or honors. Abbreviations used here are listed in the front section Abbreviations in This Work.

- Aar-on** \ˈer-ən\ brother of Moses and 1st high priest of the Hebrews in the Bible
- Aaron** Hank 1934– *Henry Louis Aaron* Amer. baseball player
- Abel** \ˈā-bəl\ son of Adam and Eve and brother of Cain in the Bible
- Abra-ham** \ˈā-brə-ˈhām\ patriarch and founder of the Hebrew people in the Bible; also revered by Muslims
- Achil-les** \ə-ˈki-lēz\ hero of the Trojan War in Greek mythology
- Ad-am** \ˈā-dəm\ the 1st man in biblical tradition
- Ad-ams** \ˈā-dəmz\ Abigail 1744–1818 née *Smith* Amer. writer; wife of John Adams
- Adams** Ansel Easton 1902–1984 Amer. photographer
- Adams** John 1735–1826 2d pres. of the U.S. (1797–1801)
- Adams** John Quin-cy \ˈkwin-zē, -sē\ 1767–1848 6th pres. of the U.S. (1825–29); son of John and Abigail Adams
- Adams** Samuel 1722–1803 patriot in the Amer. Revolution
- Ad-dams** \ˈā-dəmz\ Jane 1860–1935 Amer. social worker; Nobel Prize winner (1931)
- Ado-nis** \ə-ˈdā-nəs, -ˈdō-\ youth in Greek mythology loved by Aphrodite
- Ae-ne-as** \i-ˈnē-əs\ Trojan hero in Greek and Roman mythology
- Ae-o-lus** \ˈē-ə-ləs\ god of the winds in Greek mythology
- Aes-chy-lus** \ˈes-kə-ləs, ˈēs-\ 525–456 B.C. Greek dramatist
- Aes-cu-la-pi-us** \es-k(y)ə-ˈlā-pē-əs\ god of medicine in Roman mythology — compare ASCLEPIUS
- Ae-sop** \ˈē-sāp, -səp\ legendary Greek writer of fables
- Ag-a-mem-non** \ə-gə-ˈmem-nən, -nən\ leader of the Greeks during the Trojan War in Greek mythology
- Ag-nes** \ˈag-nəs\ Saint *died* 304 A.D. Christian martyr
- Ahab** \ˈā-hab\ king of Israel in the 9th cent. B.C. and husband of Jezebel
- Ajax** \ˈā-jaks\ hero in Greek mythology who kills himself because the armor of Achilles is awarded to Odysseus during the Trojan War
- Alad-din** \ə-ˈlā-dɪn\ youth in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* who acquires a magic lamp
- Al-bright** \ˈɔl-brɪt\ Madeleine 1937–née *Korbel* Amer. (Czech-born) diplomat; U.S. secretary of state (1997–2001)
- Al-cott** \ˈɔl-kət, ˈal-, -ˌkət\ Louisa May 1832–1888 Amer. author
- Al-ex-an-der** \ə-lig-ˈzæn-dər, ˌe-\ name of eight popes: esp. **VI** 1431–1503 (pope 1492–1503)
- Alexander the Great** 356–323 B.C. *Alexander III* king of Macedonia (336–323)
- Al-fred** \ˈal-frəd, -fɔrd\ 849–899 *Alfred the Great* king of the West Saxons (871–899)
- Ali** \ä-ˈlē\ Muhammad 1942– orig. *Cassius Clay* Amer. boxer
- Ali Ba-ba** \ə-lē-ˈbā-bā, ä-lē-\ woodcutter in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* who enters the cave of the Forty Thieves by using the password *Sesame*
- Al-len** \ˈa-lən\ Ethan 1738–1789 Amer. Revolutionary soldier
- Amerigo Vespucci** — see VESPUCCI
- Am-herst** \ˈa-(j)mərst\ Jeffery 1717–1797 Baron *Amherst* Brit. general in America
- Amund-sen** \ˈä-mən-sən\ Roald 1872–1928 Norwegian explorer
- An-a-ni-as** \ə-nə-ˈni-əs\ early Christian in the Bible struck dead for lying
- An-der-sen** \ˈan-dər-sən\ Hans Christian 1805–1875 Danish writer of fairy tales
- An-der-son** \ˈan-dər-sən\ Marian 1897–1993 Amer. contralto
- An-ge-lou** \ˈan-jə-(j)lō, *commonly* -ˌlū\ Maya 1928– orig. *Marguerite Johnson* Amer. author
- Anne** \ˈan\ 1665–1714 queen of Great Britain (1702–14)
- An-tho-ny** \ˈan(t)-thə-nē\ Susan Brownell 1820–1906 Amer. suffragist
- An-tig-o-ne** \an-ˈti-gə-(j)nē\ daughter of Oedipus and Jocasta in Greek mythology
- An-to-ny** \ˈan-tə-nē\ Mark *ca* 82–30 B.C.

GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

This section gives basic information about the world's countries, regions, cities, and major physical features. The latest population figures are given for nations, cities, and some regions. For many of these entries, derived nouns and adjectives are also listed (as **Iceland** . . . **Icelander** . . . *n*). Other derived words not shown here have been separately entered in the main A-Z section, because of the presence of additional senses (as **Chinese**).

Abbreviations used here are listed in the front section Abbreviations in This Work. The capital letters N, E, S, and W, used singly or in combination and without a period, indicate direction. For example, "N India" means "northern India." Where direction is a part of the name, the word is spelled out.

The symbol * denotes a capital. Sizes are given in conventional U.S. units, with metric equivalents following.

- Ab-er-deen** \ə-bər-'dēn\ city NE Scotland; *pop* 211,080 — **Ab-er-do-ni-an** \ə-bər-'dō-nē-ən\ *adj* or *n*
- Ab-i-djan** \ä-bē-'jān, ä-bi-\ city, seat of government of Ivory Coast; *pop* 1,934,342
- Abilene** \ə-bə-'lēn\ city NW *cen* Texas; *pop* 115,930
- Abu Dha-bi** \ä-bü-'dä-bē, -'thä-\ city, * of United Arab Emirates; *pop* 347,000
- Abu-ja** \ä-'bü-jä\ city *cen* Nigeria; its *; *pop* 423,391
- Ab-ys-sin-ia** \ä-bə-'si-nē-ə, -nyə\ — see ETHIOPIA — **Ab-ys-sin-i-an** \-nē-ən, -nyən\ *adj* or *n*
- Aca-dia** \ə-'kă-dē-ə\ or French **Aca-die** \ä-kă-'dē\ NOVA SCOTIA — an early name — **Aca-di-an** \-ē-ən\ *adj* or *n*
- Aca-pul-co** \ä-kă-'pül-(ç)kō, ä-\ city & port S Mexico on the Pacific; *pop* 687,292
- Ac-cra** \ä-'krə, 'ä; ə-'krä\ city & port, * of Ghana; *pop* 867,459
- Acon-ca-gua** \ä-kōn-'kă-gwä\ mountain 22,834 ft. (6960 m.) W Argentina; highest in the Andes & in Western Hemisphere
- Ad-dis Aba-ba** \ä-dis-'ä-bä-'bä, ä-dəs-'ä-bə-bə\ city, * of Ethiopia; *pop* 2,646,000
- Ad-e-laide** \ä-də-'läd\ city S Australia, * of South Australia; *pop* 917,000
- Aden** \ä-'d'n, 'ä-\ city & port S Yemen; *pop* 240,370
- Aden, Gulf of** arm of Indian Ocean between Yemen (Arabia) & Somalia (Africa)
- Ad-i-ron-dack** \ä-də-'răn-'dak\ mountains NE New York; highest Mount Marcy 5344 ft. (1629 m.)
- Admiralty** \əd-m(ə)-rəl-'tē\ 1 island SE Alaska 2 islands W Pacific N of New Guinea; part of Papua New Guinea
- Adri-at-ic Sea** \ä-drē-'ä-tik, ä-\ arm of Mediterranean between Italy & Balkan Peninsula
- Ae-ge-an Sea** \i-'jē-ən\ arm of Mediterranean between Asia Minor & Greece
- Af-ghan-i-stan** \af-'gä-nə-'stan, -'gä-nə-'stän\ country W Asia E of Iran; *, Kabul; *pop* (est.) 28,717,000
- Af-ri-ca** \ə-'fri-kə\ continent S of the Mediterranean
- Aga-na** — see HAGĀTNA
- Agra** \ä-'grə, 'ə-\ city N India SSE of Delhi; *pop* 1,259,979
- Aguas-ca-lien-tes** \ä-gwäs-'käl-'yen-təs\ city *cen* Mexico NE of Guadalajara; metropolitan area *pop* 637,303
- Agul-has, Cape** \ə-'gə-ləs\ cape Republic of South Africa; most southerly point of Africa, at 34° 52' S latitude
- Ahag-gar** \ə-'hă-gər, 'ä-hə-'gär\ mountains S Algeria in W *cen* Sahara
- Ah-mad-abad** \ä-mə-də-'bäd, -'bad\ city W India N of Bombay; *pop* 3,515,361
- Ak-ron** \ä-'krən\ city NE Ohio; *pop* 217,074
- Al-a-bama** \ä-lə-'bä-mə\ state SE U.S.; *, Montgomery; *pop* 4,447,100 — **Al-a-bam-i-an** \-bä-mē-ən\ or **Al-a-bam-an** \-bä-mən\ *adj* or *n*
- Alas-ka** \ə-'las-kə\ 1 peninsula SW Alaska SW of Cook Inlet 2 state of U.S. in NW North America; *, Juneau; *pop* 626,932 3 mountain range S Alaska extending from Alaska Peninsula to Yukon boundary — **Alas-kan** \-kən\ *adj* or *n*
- Alaska, Gulf of** inlet of Pacific off S Alaska between Alaska Peninsula on W & Alexander Archipelago on E
- Al-ba-nia** \əl-'bä-nē-ə, -nyə\ country S Europe in Balkan Peninsula on Adriatic; *, Tirane; *pop* 3,069,275
- Al-ba-ny** \əl-bə-nē\ city, * of New York; *pop* 95,658
- Albemarle Sound** \əl-bə-'mārl\ inlet of the Atlantic in NE North Carolina
- Albert, Lake** \əl-'bɔrt\ lake E Africa between Uganda & Democratic Republic of the Congo in course of the Nile
- Al-ber-ta** \əl-'bɔr-tə\ province W Canada;

ENGLISH WORD ROOTS

The capitalized word elements here are the ancient roots of the derived modern English words that appear in italics in the discussion and following in bold-face.

AB/ABS comes to us from Latin, and means “from,” “away,” or “off.” *Abuse* is the use of something in the wrong way. To *abduct* is to “lead away from” or kidnap. *Aberrant* behavior is behavior that “wanders away from” what is usually acceptable. But there are so many words that include these roots, it would be *absurd* to try to list them all here. **abscond, abstemious, abstraction, abstruse**

AM/IM comes from the Latin word *amor*, “love.” *Amiable* means “friendly or good-natured,” and *amigo* is Spanish for “friend.” **amicable, enamored, inimical, paramour**

AMBI/AMPHI means “on both sides” or “around”; *ambi-* comes from Latin and *amphi-* from Greek. An *ambidextrous* person can use the right and the left hand equally well. An *amphibian*, such as a frog or salamander, is able to live both on land and in the water. **ambient, ambiguous, ambivalent, amphitheater**

ANIM comes from Latin *anima*, meaning “breath” or “soul,” and it generally describes something that is alive or lively. An *animal* is a living, breathing thing. *Animism* is the belief that all things have a spirit and an awareness. **animated, animosity, inanimate, magnanimous**

ANN/ENN comes from Latin *annus* and means “year.” An *annual* event occurs yearly. A wedding or birthday *anniversary* is an example, although the older you get the more frequent they seem to be. **annuity, millennium, perennial, superannuated**

ANT/ANTI is opposite to or opposes something else. An *antiseptic* or an *antibiotic* fights germs; an *anticyclone* is the opposite of a cyclone; an *antidote* is given against a poison; and an *antacid* fights acid in the stomach. Be careful not to confuse *anti-* with *ante-*, meaning “before”: *antebellum* means “before a war,” not “opposed to war.” **antagonist, antigen, antipathy, antithesis**

ANTE is Latin for “before” or “in front of.” *Antediluvian*, a word describing something very old or outdated, literally means “before the flood”—that is,

the flood described in the Bible. *Antebellum* literally means “before the war,” usually the American Civil War. **antechamber, antedate, ante meridiem, anterior**

ANTHROP comes from the Greek word for “human being.” An *anthropomorphic* god, such as Zeus or Athena, basically looks and acts like a human. **anthropoid, anthropology, misanthropic, philanthropy**

ART comes from the Latin word for “skill.” Until a few centuries ago, almost no one made a strong distinction between skilled craftsmanship and what we would call “art.” *Art* could also mean simply “cleverness.” The result is that this root appears in some words where we might not expect it. **artful, artifact, artifice, artisan**

AUD, from the Latin verb *audire*, is the root that has to do with hearing. What is *audible* is hearable, and an *audience* is a group of people that listen, sometimes in an *auditorium*. **audition, auditor, auditory, inaudible**

BELL comes from a Latin word meaning “war.” Bellona was the little-known Roman goddess of war; her husband, Mars, was the god of war. **antebellum, bellicose, belligerence, rebellion**

BI means “two” or “double.” A *bicycle* has two wheels; *binoculars* consist of two little telescopes; *bigamy* is marriage to two people at once. A road through the middle of a neighborhood *bisects* it into two pieces. **biennial, binary, bipartisan, bipolar**

BIO comes from the Greek word for “life.” It forms the base for many English words: a *biosphere* is a body of life forms in an environment; *biology* is the study of all living forms and life processes; and *biotechnology* uses the knowledge acquired through biology. **biodegradable, bionic, biopsy, symbiosis**

CAD/CID/CAS all come from the same Latin verb, *cadere*, meaning “to fall, fall down, drop,” or from the related noun *casus*, “fall or chance.” An *accident* happens to you out of the blue. By *coincidence*, things fall together in a pattern. *Casual* dress is what you put on

BASIC ENGLISH GRAMMAR

The essence of the English language is the sentence. A sentence is a grammatically self-contained group of words that expresses a statement, a question, a command, a wish, or an exclamation. It is composed of a *subject*, about which something is said, and a *predicate*, which expresses what is said about the subject. The subject can be a single noun, a noun phrase, such as “*the strong wind*,” or a noun clause, such as “*what he decides* is important to all of us.” The predicate can be a single verb, a verb phrase, such as “*will be going*,” a verb and all its modifiers, such as “*will be going as soon as the bus arrives*,” or a verb and its complements, such as “*gave his client the bad news*.”

In English, word order is important. The subject usually comes first, but not necessarily:

An amusement park is across the river.

Across the river is *an amusement park*.

Is *an amusement park* across the river?

The grammar of English is concerned with the structure of these elements that make up a sentence. Every word in a sentence can be classified as a particular part of speech (*noun, verb, adjective, etc.*), according to its function in the sentence. The major parts of speech are briefly discussed in the following guide to basic English grammar.

THE ADJECTIVE

The adjective gives information about a noun or pronoun, such as what kind

the **black** cat a **joyful** occasion

or which one

a **first** draft **that** suggestion

or how many

ten players **few** new ideas

The adjective usually precedes the noun it modifies, but some adjectives can also follow certain verbs:

the house is **white** (→ **white** house)

the speeches seemed **long** (→ **long** speeches)

the chair felt **comfortable** (→ **comfortable** chair)

the tree grew **tall** (→ **tall** tree)

A few adjectives will follow their nouns, but usually only in set phrases:

court-martial secretary-general

POSITIVE, COMPARATIVE, AND SUPERLATIVE DEGREES OF ADJECTIVES

The positive degree is the basic form of the adjective. It gives basic information about the noun without reference to anything else (a *white* house). The comparative degree relates a noun to another—as having more or less of some quality (this house is *whiter* than that); the superlative degree relates the noun to all others of its class (this is the *whitest* house in the neighborhood).

When the adjective consists of a single syllable, the suffix *-er* is added to form the comparative degree, and the suffix *-est* is added to form the superlative degree. When the adjective consists of two syllables, the suffixes are often used to form the comparative (as *gentler*) and superlative (as *gentlest*), but the adverbs *more/less* can also be used to form the comparative (as *more skillful* and *less skillful*), and likewise,