

WEBSTER'S
Dictionary
for Students
Special Encyclopedic Edition

≡≡≡ FOURTH EDITION ≡≡≡

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Preface

This newly updated volume defines more than 37,000 words and phrases that reflect the vocabulary level, curriculum requirements, and personal interests of students. In addition to the dictionary, the back of the book has sections of up-to-date information on the U.S., Canada, and other countries of the world as well as information on the making of U.S. laws, on U.S. presidents, and on important events in American history. One feature of this new edition that we are particularly proud of is the addition of special Canadian and British spellings, when they differ from the usual spelling in the U.S., which we believe will give the book wide appeal

The features of this dictionary are similar to those of larger dictionaries. It is important to understand them to make best use of this valuable language tool. For this reason we urge you to become familiar with the information in the next section, Using the Dictionary

A

1^a *n, pl a's or as often cap* **1** : the first letter of the English alphabet **2** : a grade that shows a student's work is excellent **3** : a musical note referred to by the letter A

2^a *indefinite article* **1** : someone or something being mentioned for the first time **2** : the same **3** : ¹ANY **1** **4** : for or from each **5** : ²ONE **3** — used before words that do not begin with a vowel sound

a- *prefix* **1** : on : in : at **2** : in (such) a state, condition, or manner **3** : in the act or process of

aard-vark *n* : an African animal with a long snout and a long sticky tongue that feeds mostly on ants and termites and is active at night

AB *abbr* Alberta

ab- *prefix* : from : differing from

aback *adv* : by surprise

aba-cus *n, pl aba-ci or aba-cus-es* : an instrument for doing arithmetic by sliding counters along rods or in grooves

ab-a-lo-ne *n* : a shellfish that is a mollusk which has a flattened shell with a pearly lining

1^a **abandon** *vb* **aban-doned; aban-don-ing** **1** : to leave and never return to : give up completely **2** : to stop having or doing — **aban-don-ment** *n*

2^a **abandon** *n* : a feeling of complete freedom **abandon-ed** *adj* : given up : left empty or unused

abash *vb* **abashed; abash-ing** : EMBARRASS

abate *vb* **abat-ed; abat-ing** : to make or become less — **abate-ment** *n*

ab-bess *n* : the head of an abbey for women

ab-bey *n, pl abbeys* **1** : MONASTERY, CONVENT **2** : a church that is connected to buildings where nuns or monks live

ab-bot *n* : the head of an abbey for men

abbr *abbr* abbreviation

ab-bre-viate *vb* **ab-bre-vi-at-ed; ab-bre-vi-at-ing** : to make briefer : SHORTEN

ab-bre-via-tion *n* : a shortened form of a word or phrase

ab-di-cate *vb* **ab-di-cat-ed; ab-di-cat-ing** : to give up a position of power or authority — **ab-di-ca-tion** *n*

ab-do-men *n* **1** : the part of the body between the chest and the hips including the cavity containing the stomach and other digestive organs **2** : the hind part of the body of an arthropod (as an insect)

ab-dom-i-nal *adj* : relating to or located in the abdomen

ab-duct *vb* **ab-duct-ed; ab-duct-ing** : to take a person away by force : KIDNAP — **ab-duc-tion** *n*

abed *adv or adj* : in bed

ab-er-ra-tion *n* : an instance of being different from what is normal or usual

ab-hor *vb* **ab-hor-red; ab-hor-ring** : to dislike very much : LOATHE

ab-hor-rent *adj* : causing or deserving strong dislike

abide *vb* **abode or abid-ed; abid-ing** **1** : to put up with patiently : TOLERATE **2** : ¹LAST **1**, ENDURE **3** : to stay or live in a place — **abide by** : to accept the terms of : OBEY

abil-i-ty *n, pl abil-i-ties* **1** : power to do something **2** : natural talent or acquired skill

-abil-i-ty *also -ibil-i-ty* *n* *suffix, pl -abil-i-ties* *also -ibil-i-ties* : ability, fitness, or tendency to act or be acted upon in (such) a way

ab-ject *adj* **1** : very bad or severe **2** : low in spirit, strength, or hope — **ab-ject-ly** *adv*

ablaze *adj* **1** : on fire **2** : glowing with light, color, or emotion

able *adj* **abler; ablest** **1** : having enough power, resources, or skill to do something **2** : having the freedom or opportunity to do something **3** : having or showing much skill

-able *also -ible* *adj* *suffix* **1** : capable of, fit for, or worthy of being **2** : tending or likely to — **ably** *also -ibly* *adv* *suffix*

able-bod-ied *adj* : physically fit

ably *adv* : in a skillful way

ab-nor-mal *adj* : differing from the normal usually in a noticeable way — **ab-nor-mal-ly** *adv*

ab-nor-mal-i-ty *n, pl ab-nor-mal-i-ties* : something that is not usual, expected, or normal

1^a **aboard** *adv* : on, onto, or within a ship, train, bus, or airplane

2^a **aboard** *prep* : on or into especially for passage

1^a **abode** *past of* ABIDE

2^a **abode** *n* : the place where someone stays or lives

abol-ish *vb* **abol-ish-ed; abol-ish-ing** : to do away with : put an end to

ab-o-li-tion *n* : a complete elimination of

ab-o-li-tion-ist *n* : a person favoring the abolition of slavery

A-bomb *n* : ATOMIC BOMB

abom-i-na-ble *adj* **1** : deserving or causing disgust **2** : very disagreeable or unpleasant — **abom-i-na-bly** *adv*

abom-i-na-tion *n* : something that causes disgust

ab-orig-i-nal *adj* **1** : being the first of its kind in a region **2** : of or relating to the original people living in a region

ab-orig-i-ne *n, pl ab-orig-i-nes* : a member of the original people living in a region : NATIVE

abound *vb* **abounded**; **abound-ing** **1** : to be plentiful : TEEM **2** : to be fully supplied

1**about** *adv* **1** : ALMOST, NEARLY **2** : on all sides : AROUND **3** : in the opposite direction **4** : on the verge of

2**about** *prep* **1** : having to do with **2** : on every side of : AROUND **3** : over or in different parts of **4** : near or not far from in time

1**above** *adv* : in or to a higher place

2**above** *prep* **1** : higher than : OVER **2** : too good for **3** : more than **4** : to a greater degree than **5** : having more power or importance than

3**above** *adj* : said or written earlier

1**above-board** *adv* : in an honest open way

2**aboveboard** *adj* : free from tricks and secrecy

ab-ra-ca-dab-ra *n* : a magical charm or word

abrade *vb* **abraded**; **abrad-ing** : to wear away or irritate by rubbing

1**abra-sive** *n* : a substance for grinding, smoothing, or polishing

2**abrasive** *adj* **1** : causing damage or wear by rubbing **2** : very unpleasant or irritating

abreast *adv or adj* **1** : right beside one another **2** : up to a certain level of knowledge

abridge *vb* **abridged**; **abridg-ing** : to shorten by leaving out some parts

abridg-ment or abridge-ment *n* : a shortened form of a written work

abroad *adv or adj* **1** : over a wide area **2** : in the open : OUTDOORS **3** : in or to a foreign country **4** : known to many people

abrupt *adj* **1** : happening without warning : SUDDEN **2** : ¹STEEP **1** **3** : rudely brief —

abrupt-ly *adv* — **abrupt-ness** *n*

ab-scess *n* : a collection of pus with swollen and red tissue around it — **ab-scessed** *adj*

ab-sence *n* **1** : a failure to be present at a usual or expected place **2** : ²LACK, WANT

ab-sent *adj* **1** : not present **2** : not existing **3** : showing a lack of attention

ab-sen-tee *n* : a person who is not present

ab-sent-mind-ed *adj* : tending to forget or not pay attention — **ab-sent-mind-ed-ly** *adv* —

ab-sent-mind-ed-ness *n*

ab-so-lute *adj* **1** : ¹TOTAL, COMPLETE **2** : not limited in any way **3** : free from doubt : CERTAIN — **ab-so-lute-ly** *adv*

ab-solve *vb* **ab-solved**; **ab-solv-ing** : to make free from guilt or responsibility

ab-sorb *vb* **ab-sorbed**; **ab-sorb-ing** **1** : to take in or swallow up **2** : to hold the com-

plete attention of **3** : to receive without giving back

ab-sorb-en-cy *n* : the quality or state of being able to draw in or soak up

ab-sorb-ent *adj* : able to draw in or soak up

ab-sorp-tion *n* **1** : the process of drawing in or soaking up : absorbing or being absorbed

2 : complete attention

ab-stain *vb* **ab-stained**; **ab-stain-ing** : to choose not to do or have something —

ab-stain-er *n*

ab-sti-nence *n* : an avoidance by choice especially of certain foods or of liquor

1**ab-stract** *adj* **1** : hard to understand **2** : relating to general ideas or qualities rather than specific people, things, or actions —

ab-stract-ly *adv*

2**ab-tract** *n* : ²SUMMARY

3**ab-tract** *vb* **ab-stract-ed**; **ab-stract-ing** **1** : to take away : SEPARATE **2** : SUMMARIZE

ab-tract-ion *n* **1** : the act of summarizing : the state of being summarized **2** : a thought or thoughts about general qualities or ideas rather than people or things

ab-surd *adj* : completely foolish, unreasonable, or untrue : RIDICULOUS — **ab-surd-ly** *adv*

ab-sur-di-ty *n, pl ab-sur-di-ties* **1** : the fact of being ridiculous **2** : something that is ridiculous

ab-un-dance *n* : a large quantity : PLENTY

ab-un-dant *adj* : more than enough : PLENTIFUL — **ab-un-dant-ly** *adv*

1**ab-use** *n* **1** : wrong or unfair treatment or use **2** : the act or practice of improperly using or of using in harmful amounts **3** : harmful treatment of a person or an animal **4** : harsh insulting language **5** : a dishonest practice

2**ab-use** *vb* **ab-used**; **abus-ing** **1** : to treat in a cruel or harmful way **2** : to use wrongly : MISUSE **3** : to use improperly or in harmful amounts **4** : to blame or scold rudely

abu-sive *adj* **1** : using or involving harmful treatment **2** : using harsh insulting language

abut *vb* **abutted**; **abut-ting** : to touch along an edge

abys-mal *adj* : extremely bad

abys-s *n* : a gulf so deep or space so great that it cannot be measured

AC *abbr* **1** air-conditioning **2** alternating current **3** area code

ac-a-dem-ic *adj* **1** : of or relating to schools and education **2** : having no practical importance — **ac-a-dem-i-cal-ly** *adv*

acad-e-my *n, pl acad-e-mies* **1** : a private high school **2** : a high school or college where special subjects are taught **3** : an organization which supports art, science, or literature

ac-cede *vb* **ac-ced-ed**; **ac-ced-ing** : to agree to

ac-cel-er-ate *vb* **ac-cel-er-at-ed**; **ac-cel-er-at-ing** **1** : to move or cause to move faster **2** : to cause to happen more quickly

ac-cel-er-a-tion *n* : the act or process of speeding up

ac-cel-er-a-tor *n* : a pedal in an automobile for controlling the speed of the motor

¹ac-cent *vb* **ac-cent-ed**; **ac-cent-ing** **1** : to give a greater force or stress **2** : to mark with a written or printed accent

²ac-cent *n* **1** : a way of pronouncing words shared by the people of a particular country or region **2** : greater stress or force given to a syllable of a word in speaking or to a beat in music **3** : a mark (as ¹ or ²) used in writing or printing to show the place of greater stress on a syllable

ac-cen-tu-ate *vb* **ac-cen-tu-at-ed**; **ac-cen-tu-at-ing** : to make more noticeable

ac-cept *vb* **ac-cept-ed**; **ac-cept-ing** **1** : to receive or take willingly **2** : to agree to **3** : to stop resisting **4** : to admit deserving

ac-ceptable *adj* **1** : worthy of being accepted **2** : ADEQUATE **2** — **ac-cept-ably** *adv*

ac-cep-tance *n* **1** : the act of accepting **2** : the quality or state of being accepted or acceptable

¹ac-cess *n* **1** : the right or ability to approach, enter, or use **2** : a way or means of approaching

²access *vb* **ac-cess-ed**; **ac-cess-ing** : to get at : get access to

ac-ces-sible *adj* **1** : able to be reached **2** : able to be used or obtained

ac-ces-sion *n* : the rise to a position of power

ac-ces-so-ry *n*, *pl* **ac-ces-so-ries** **1** : a person who helps another in doing wrong **2** : an object or device not necessary in itself but adding to the beauty or usefulness of something else

ac-ci-dent *n* **1** : something that happens by chance or from unknown causes and that often causes injury or damage : MISHAP **2** : CHANCE **1**

ac-ci-den-tal *adj* **1** : happening by chance or unexpectedly **2** : not happening or done on purpose — **ac-ci-den-tal-ly** *adv*

¹ac-claim *vb* **ac-claim-ed**; **ac-claim-ing** : ¹PRAISE **1**

²acclaim *n* : ²PRAISE **1**

ac-cli-mate *vb* **ac-cli-mat-ed**; **ac-cli-mat-ing** : to adjust or change to fit a new climate or new surroundings

ac-cli-ma-tize *vb* **ac-cli-ma-tized**; **ac-cli-ma-tiz-ing** : ACCLIMATE

ac-com-mo-date *vb* **ac-com-mo-dat-ed**; **ac-com-mo-dat-ing** **1** : to provide with a place

to stay or sleep **2** : to provide with something needed : help out **3** : to have room for

ac-com-mo-dat-ing *adj* : ready to help

ac-com-mo-da-tion *n* **1** **accommodations** *pl* : a place where travelers can sleep and find other services **2** : something supplied that is useful or handy

ac-com-pa-ni-ment *n* : music played in support of someone singing or playing an instrument

ac-com-pa-nist *n* : a musician who plays in support of someone else who is singing or playing an instrument

ac-com-pa-ny *vb* **ac-com-pa-nied**; **ac-com-pa-ny-ing** **1** : to go with as a companion **2** : to play a musical accompaniment for **3** : to go or occur with

ac-com-plice *n* : a partner in wrongdoing
ac-com-plish *vb* **ac-com-plished**; **ac-com-plish-ing** : to succeed in doing or reaching
ac-com-plish-ed *adj* : skilled through practice or training : EXPERT

ac-com-plish-ment *n* **1** : the act of successfully doing or reaching **2** : something successfully done or reached especially through effort **3** : an ability or skill gained by practice or training

¹ac-cord *vb* **ac-cord-ed**; **ac-cord-ing** **1** : ¹GIVE **3** **2** : to be in harmony : AGREE

²accord *n* **1** : AGREEMENT **1**, HARMONY **2** : willingness to act or to do something

ac-cord-dance *n* : AGREEMENT **1**

ac-cord-ing-ly *adv* **1** : in the necessary way : in the way called for **2** : as a result : CONSEQUENTLY, SO

ac-cord-ing-to *prep* **1** : in agreement with **2** : as stated by

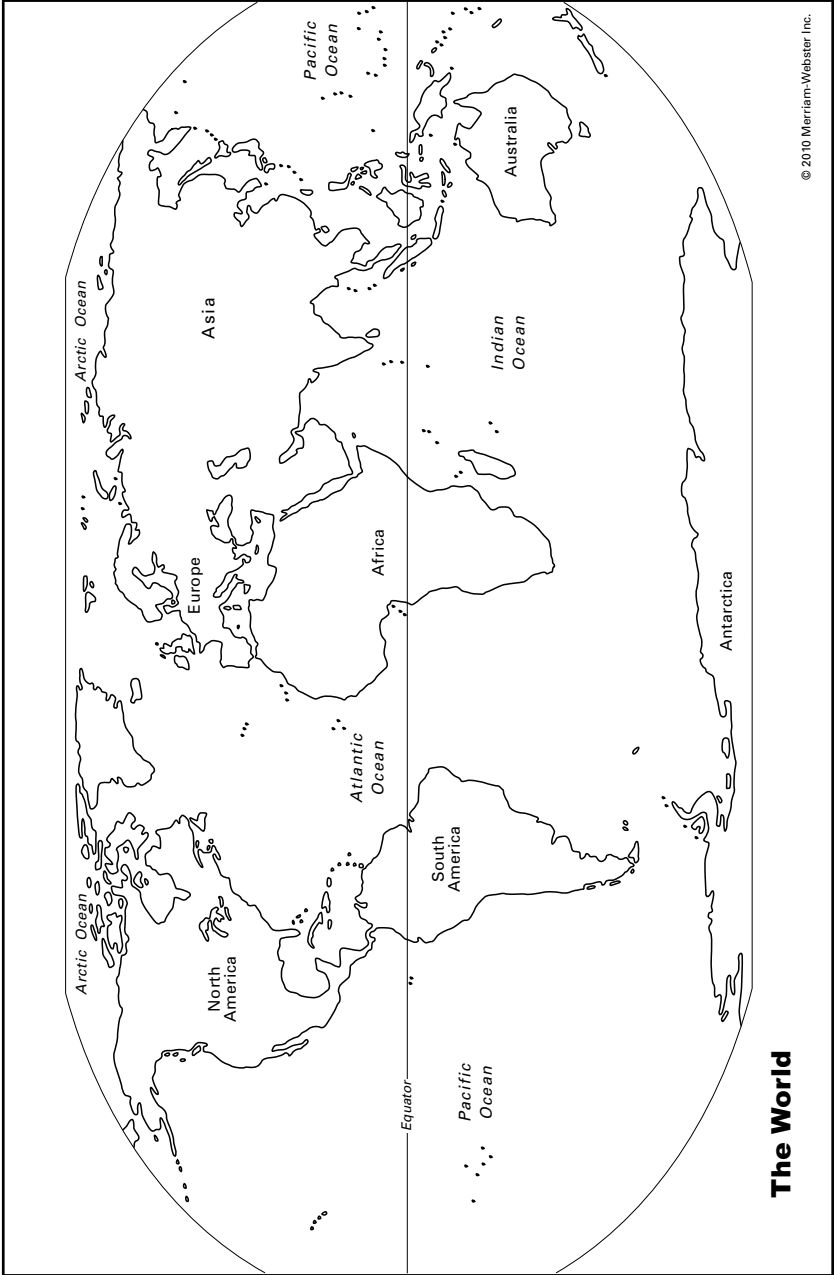
ac-cord-i-on *n* : a portable keyboard musical instrument played by forcing air from a bellows past metal reeds

ac-cost *vb* **ac-cost-ed**; **ac-cost-ing** : to approach and speak to in a demanding or aggressive way

¹ac-count *n* **1** : a record of money received and money paid out **2** : an arrangement with a bank to hold money and keep records of transactions **3** : an arrangement for regular dealings with a business **4** : a statement of explanation or of reasons or causes **5** : a statement of facts or events : REPORT **6** : ²WORTH **1**, IMPORTANCE — **on account of** : for the sake of : because of — **on someone's account** : because of someone

²account *vb* **ac-count-ed**; **ac-count-ing** **1** : to think of as : CONSIDER **2** : to take into consideration **3** : to give an explanation **4** : to be the only or chief reason

ac-count-ant *n* : someone whose job is keeping the financial records of a person or a business



The World



Countries of the World

Country Name	Capital	Area	Population (2010 estimate)
Afghanistan (W. Asia)	Kabul	250,775 sq. mi.	29,121,000
Albania (S. Europe)	Tiranë	11,100 sq. mi.	2,987,000
Algeria (N.W. Africa)	Algiers	918,497 sq. mi.	34,586,000
Andorra (S.W. Europe)	Andorra la Vella	180 sq. mi.	84,000
Angola (S.W. Africa)	Luanda	481,351 sq. mi.	13,068,000
Antigua and Barbuda (Caribbean)	St. John's	171 sq. mi.	87,000
Argentina (S. South America)	Buenos Aires	1,072,156 sq. mi.	41,343,000
Armenia (W. Asia)	Yerevan	11,506 sq. mi.	2,967,000
Australia (Pacific/Indian oceans)	Canberra	2,967,909 sq. mi.	21,516,000
Austria (Europe)	Vienna	32,375 sq. mi.	8,214,000
Azerbaijan (W. Asia)	Baku	33,436 sq. mi.	8,304,000
Bahamas (W. Atlantic)	Nassau	4,404 sq. mi.	310,000
Bahrain (Asia-Persian Gulf)	Manama	255 sq. mi.	738,000
Bangladesh (S. Asia)	Dhaka	55,126 sq. mi.	156,118,000
Barbados (Caribbean)	Bridgetown	166 sq. mi.	286,000
Belarus (E. Europe)	Minsk	80,154 sq. mi.	9,613,000
Belgium (W. Europe)	Brussels	11,781 sq. mi.	10,423,000
Belize (Central America)	Belmopan	8,867 sq. mi.	314,000
Benin (W. Africa)	Porto-Novo, Cotonou	43,483 sq. mi.	9,056,000
Bhutan (Asia)	Thimphu	14,824 sq. mi.	700,000
Bolivia (South America)	La Paz, Sucre	424,162 sq. mi.	9,947,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina (S. Europe)	Sarajevo	19,904 sq. mi.	4,622,000
Botswana (S. Africa)	Gaborone	224,606 sq. mi.	2,029,000
Brazil (South America)	Brasília	3,284,426 sq. mi.	201,103,000
Brunei (S.E. Asia)	Bandar Seri Begawan	2,226 sq. mi.	395,000
Bulgaria (E. Europe)	Sofia	42,823 sq. mi.	7,149,000
Burkina Faso (W. Africa)	Ouagadougou	105,869 sq. mi.	16,242,000
Burundi (Africa)	Bujumbura	10,740 sq. mi.	9,863,000
Cambodia (S.E. Asia)	Phnom Penh	69,898 sq. mi.	14,454,000
Cameroon (W. Africa)	Yaoundé	183,569 sq. mi.	19,294,000
Canada (North America)	Ottawa	3,851,809 sq. mi.	34,238,000
Cape Verde (Atlantic Ocean-off Africa)	Praia	1,557 sq. mi.	509,000
Central African Republic (Africa)	Bangui	240,376 sq. mi.	4,845,000
Chad (Africa)	N'Djamena	495,752 sq. mi.	10,543,000
Chile (South America)	Santiago	292,257 sq. mi.	16,746,000
China (Asia)	Beijing	3,696,100 sq. mi.	1,330,141,000
Colombia (N.W. South America)	Bogotá	439,735 sq. mi.	44,205,000
Comoros (Indian Ocean-off Africa)	Moroni	719 sq. mi.	773,000

U.S. Capital

Name/ Abbreviation	Capital	Area	Population (2009 estimate)
District of Columbia (DC)	Washington	69 sq. mi.	599,700

U.S. Territories

Name/Abbreviation	Capital	Area	Population
American Samoa (AS)	Pago Pago	76 sq. mi.	66,400 (2010 estimate)
Guam (GU)	Hagåtña	209 sq. mi.	187,000 (2010 estimate)
Northern Mariana Islands (MP)	Saipan	184 sq. mi.	65,900 (2005 estimate)
Puerto Rico (PR)	San Juan	3435 sq. mi.	3,967,300 (2009 estimate)
Virgin Islands of the U.S. (VI)	Charlotte Amalie	133 sq. mi.	118,000 (2010 estimate)

Sources: population—U.S. Census Bureau (DC, PR), CIA (AS), Encyclopaedia Britannica (GU, VI), U.S. Dept. of the Interior (MP)

Canadian Capital

Name	Capital	Area	Population (2006 census)
Ottawa, Ontario		1,072 sq. mi.	812,129

Provinces and Territories of Canada

Name/ Abbreviation	Capital	Area	Population (2009 estimate)
Alberta (AB)	Edmonton	247,999 sq. mi.	3,670,700
British Columbia (BC)	Victoria	357,215 sq. mi.	4,460,300
Manitoba (MB)	Winnipeg	213,728 sq. mi.	1,219,600
New Brunswick (NB)	Fredericton	27,587 sq. mi.	749,300
Newfoundland and Labrador (NL)	St. John's	144,352 sq. mi.	508,100
Northwest Territories (NT)	Yellowknife	456,790 sq. mi.	43,700
Nova Scotia (NS)	Halifax	20,594 sq. mi.	939,100
Nunavut (Territory) (NU)	Iqaluit	747,534 sq. mi.	32,200
Ontario (ON)	Toronto	354,340 sq. mi.	13,064,900
Prince Edward Island (PE)	Charlottetown	2,185 sq. mi.	141,100
Quebec (QC)	Quebec	527,076 sq. mi.	7,828,400
Saskatchewan (SK)	Regina	228,444 sq. mi.	1,029,100
Yukon Territory (YT)	Whitehorse	183,162 sq. mi.	33,700

Source: Statistics Canada

Laws and How They Are Made

We have had laws ever since people started living together in societies. Laws are rules for people to live by so as to maintain order and peace, and they either require citizens to do something or prohibit them from doing something.

Since the early American colonies were made up mostly of people from England, it is natural that laws in the United States are based on English law. And English law has two distinct forms. In the early days of England, different communities had their own laws, and whenever disputes arose the King would send out judges to the various communities to interpret the local laws. Gradually, the judges' decisions in one community came to be like those decisions in similar cases in other communities, and eventually the interpretations became the same throughout the country. These interpretations were based on earlier court decisions, those that preceded—were based on “precedent”—and on common practices, and the body of these decisions came to be called “common law.”

Common law did not cover all situations, and the king and Parliament passed other laws that applied to the whole country. This group of laws, passed by the legislature, came to be known as “statute law.” In the United States, much of English common law and statute law was adopted by the federal government and by the states, and many current court interpretations are based on precedent as well as on specific laws passed by the Congress.

How Congress Makes Laws

Any member of either the House of Representatives or the Senate may submit a document (a “bill”) for consideration to be a law. A member may even “sponsor” a bill proposed by the President.

The procedures are essentially the same in the House of Representatives and the Senate, so a look at what might happen in the House can be used as an example.

When a member wishes to propose a bill, the bill is dropped into a container (called a “hopper”) near the desk of the presiding officer, and the clerk assigns a number to the bill. The bill will then generally be referred to hereafter by this number. Then the bill is assigned to an appropriate committee for consideration. There are many committees in each house of the Congress that have responsibility for various areas of government, and the bill will be assigned to the committee that has jurisdiction over the area that is affected by the bill. For example, if the bill deals with agriculture, it will be assigned to the Agriculture Committee; if it involves relations with foreign governments, it will be assigned to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

The bill may be considered by the committee as a whole or assigned to a subcommittee, and it may be sent for consideration by more than one committee. A committee or subcommittee does not have to do anything with the bill; it may reject it, in which case it is said to “die in committee.” When considering a bill, the committee will listen to arguments for and against the proposal (often from experts on the subject) and may make changes or additions to the bill. When finished, and the committee has approved the bill, it will send the bill back to the full House for debate with a report of why it is supported; this is known as “reporting” the bill. Each house has its own rules governing debate.

If the House passes the bill, it sends it to the Senate for consideration and the process continues there. In the Senate the bill may be voted on as is, or changed or rejected. If the Senate changes the bill, then it must be sent to a conference committee made up of members of both houses who seek a compromise version, which then must be voted on by both houses.

When a majority of members of both houses have approved the same version of the bill, the bill is sent to the President for signing into law. The President then has several options. The bill may be signed; it may be rejected (by a “veto”) and sent back to Congress; it may be allowed to become law without a signature; or, if Congress adjourns before the President has had the bill for 10 days, it may be allowed to die without a signature (known as a “pocket veto”). A bill that has been vetoed may still become law if each house of Congress approves it with a two-thirds majority vote.

Important Events in American History

- 1565** • First permanent European settlement in what is now the United States established by the Spanish at St. Augustine (Fla.).
- 1598** • Spanish begin settlements in what is now New Mexico.
- 1607** • First permanent English settlement established at Jamestown (Va.).
- 1620** • Pilgrims land *Mayflower* and establish a colony at Plymouth (Mass.).
- 1626** • Dutch establish settlement on what is now Manhattan Island (N.Y.).
- 1629–36** • Colonies established in Massachusetts, Maryland, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.
- 1643** • New England Confederation, a union of colonies, is governed by the first written constitution in America.
- 1660** • Parliament introduces Navigation Acts that restrict the shipment of goods to and from the colonies.
- 1663** • Carolina colony established.
- 1664** • Duke of York acquires land between the Connecticut and Delaware rivers, naming it New York; later separates a portion for New Jersey colony.
- 1679–81** • New Hampshire and Pennsylvania colonies established.
- 1682** • French from Canada explore Mississippi River, claiming entire valley for France and naming the area Louisiana.
- 1692–93** • Salem witchcraft trials held in Massachusetts.
- 1704** • Delaware becomes a colony.
- 1729** • North and South Carolina become colonies.
- 1732** • Charter granted for Georgia colony.
- 1749** • Ohio Company organized for colonizing Ohio River Valley, west of the Appalachian Mountains, challenging French dominance in the area.
- 1754** • Georgia becomes a royal colony.
- 1763** • After a seven-year war in Europe, France gives to Great Britain all of Canada and Louisiana east of the Mississippi River.
- 1764** • Parliament passes Sugar Act to raise money in the colonies to pay off war debt; limits much of colonies' independent trade.
- 1765** • Parliament passes Stamp Act, which is first direct tax on the colonies.
- 1767** • Townshend Acts: duties imposed on imports to colonies from Britain; colonies resist by boycotting British goods.
- 1769** • Spanish begin settlements in California.
- 1770** • Boston Massacre: several colonists shot in clash with British troops at the Customs House.
- 1773** • Tea Act gives British East India Company a virtual monopoly on tea sales to colonies; Bostonians rebel with Boston Tea Party.
- 1774** • First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia to outline grievances with Britain.
- 1775** • Parliament declares Massachusetts in rebellion; troops sent to restore order. • Minutemen repel British troops at Concord (Mass.); the clash begins the American Revolution. • Second Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia, and serves as the first federal government. • George Washington assumes command of Continental Army. • Kentucky settlements established.
- 1776** • Continental Congress adopts Declaration of Independence (on July 4th).
- 1777** • Continental Congress adopts Articles of Confederation; ratified by the states by 1781. • Continental Congress adopts "Stars and Stripes" as national flag.
- 1781** • Continental Army, with help from French fleet, defeats British at Yorktown (Va.).
- 1783** • Revolutionary War ends with Treaty of Paris; America given unlimited independence.
- 1784** • Russians establish settlements in Alaska.
- 1787** • Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia drafts a federal Constitution. • Delaware becomes first of the original 13 states to ratify new Constitution.
- 1789** • George Washington unanimously elected first President.
- 1789** • Congress submits to the states 12 Amendments to the Constitution for ratification; 10 of the 12 are ratified and become the "Bill of Rights" in 1791.
- 1790** • First United States census taken.
- 1791** • Vermont becomes 14th state.
- 1792** • Kentucky becomes 15th state.
- 1796** • Tennessee becomes 16th state.
- 1798** • Mississippi organized as a Territory.
- 1800** • Washington (D.C.) becomes the seat of government.
- 1803** • Ohio becomes 17th state. • Louisiana Purchase: President Thomas Jefferson purchases from France all of Louisiana Territory (most of the land between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains) for \$11,250,000 plus the payment of debts of U.S. citizens to France; U.S. claims western part of Florida as part of purchase.
- 1804–1806** • Lewis and Clark expedition explores Louisiana Territory.
- 1805** • Michigan organized as a Territory.
- 1808** • Congress outlaws African slave trade.
- 1809** • Illinois organized as a Territory.
- 1812** • Louisiana becomes 18th state.
- 1814** • "Star Spangled Banner" written by Francis Scott Key during "War of 1812."
- 1816** • Indiana becomes 19th state.
- 1817** • Alabama organized as a Territory. • Mississippi becomes 20th state. • Work begins on Erie Canal, 363-mile waterway from Hudson River (in N.Y.) to Lake Erie.
- 1818** • Illinois becomes 21st state.
- 1819** • U.S. purchases eastern part of Florida from Spain for \$5,000,000. • Arkansas organized as a Territory. • Alabama becomes 22nd state.
- 1820** • Missouri Compromise: Congressional compromise between the forces for and against slavery to balance the number of free and slave states admitted to the Union. • Maine (a free state) and Missouri (a slave state) become 23rd and 24th states.
- 1821–80** • Santa Fe Trail, from Missouri to New Mexico, becomes a major route to the Southwest.

Weights and Measures

U.S. system

Length

UNIT (abbreviation)	SAME SYSTEM EQUIVALENT	METRIC EQUIVALENT
mile (mi)	5,280 feet, 1,760 yards	1.609 kilometers
rod (rd)	5½ yards, 16½ feet	5.029 meters
yard (yd)	3 feet, 36 inches	0.914 meter
foot (ft or ')	12 inches, ⅓ yard	30.48 centimeters
inch (in or ")		2.54 centimeters

Area

UNIT (abbreviation)	SAME SYSTEM EQUIVALENT	METRIC EQUIVALENT
square mile (sq mi or mi ²)	640 acres	2.59 sq. kilometers
acre	4,840 square yards, 43,560 square feet	4,047 square meters
square rod (sq rd or rd ²)	30.25 square yards	25.293 square meters
square yard (sq yd or yd ²)	9 square feet, 1,296 square inches	0.836 square meter
square foot (sq ft or ft ²)	144 square inches	0.093 square meter
square inch (sq in or in ²)		6.452 square centimeters

Volume

UNIT (abbreviation)	SAME SYSTEM EQUIVALENT	METRIC EQUIVALENT
cubic yard (cu yd or yd ³)	27 cubic feet, 46,656 cubic inches	0.765 cubic meter
cubic foot (cu ft or ft ³)	1,728 cubic inches, 0.037 cubic yard	0.028 cubic meter
cubic inch (cu in or in ³)		16.387 cubic centimeters

Weight

Avoirdupois

UNIT (abbreviation)	SAME SYSTEM EQUIVALENT	METRIC EQUIVALENT
short ton	2,000 pounds	0.907 metric ton
long ton	2,240 pounds	1.016 metric tons
hundredweight (cwt)		
short hundredweight	100 pounds	45.359 kilograms
long hundredweight	112 pounds	50.802 kilograms
pound (lb also #)	16 ounces, 7,000 grains	0.454 kilogram
ounce (oz or oz av)	16 drams, 437.5 grains	28.350 grams
dram (dr or dr av)	27.343 grains	1.772 grams
grain (gr)		0.0648 gram