

# WEBSTER'S Dictionary for Students

≡≡≡ FIFTH EDITION ≡≡≡

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# Preface

This dictionary defines more than 37,000 words and phrases that reflect the vocabulary level, curriculum requirements, and personal interests of students. This newly updated version adds dozens of new words students are likely to encounter in their everyday life, including *aha moment*, *BFF*, *carbon footprint*, *chat room*, *e-book*, *FAQ*, *google*, *hashtag*, *ringtone*, *selfie*, and *unfriend*. We have also included special Canadian and British spellings, such as *colour* and *endeavour* when they differ from the usual spelling in the U.S.

We are proud of this dictionary, and we think it will be a great help to young students. 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.

# Using the Dictionary

The **bold** word that begins an entry is known as the main entry word. All of the material in the entry is related to the main entry word or to derived words or phrases that also appear in the entry.

**co-la** *n, pl co-las* : a sweet brown carbonated soft drink that contains flavoring from the nut of a tropical tree

**icon** *n . . . 4* : a small picture or symbol on a computer screen that represents a function that the computer can perform

Centered dots in the bold forms show where the words may be hyphenated at the end of a line on a page, and they may serve as an aid in sounding out the words.

Other bold forms may appear in this entry, such as **variant spellings** and **inflected forms** of the main entry word. Inflected forms are the plurals of nouns, the principal parts of verbs, or the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives.

**<sup>1</sup>down-ward or down-wards** *adv* : from a higher place, amount, or level to a lower one

**anx-i-ety** *n, pl anx-i-eties* : fear or nervousness about what might happen

**<sup>2</sup>witness** *vb* **wit-nessed; wit-ness-ing 1** : to see or gain personal knowledge of something . . .

**<sup>1</sup>free** *adj* **fre-er; fre-est 1** : given without charge

Other bold items in the entry may be defined **run-on phrases** that have the main entry word in the phrase, and **run-in entries** that are being explained in the definition itself.

**<sup>1</sup>stand** *vb* **stood; stand-ing 1** : to be in or take an upright position . . . — **stand by 1** : to be or remain loyal or true to . . . — **stand for 1** : to be a symbol for : REPRESENT . . .

**ol-ive** *n . . .* : the oily fruit of an evergreen tree that is eaten both ripe and unripe and is the source of an edible oil (**olive oil**) . . .

One of the more common bold forms appearing at an entry is the **undefined run-on entry**. This is a word at the end of an entry that is derived from the main entry by the addition of a common word ending (suffix).

**af-fa-ble** *adj* : friendly and easy to talk to — **af-fa-bly** *adv*

Since you know the meaning of the main entry word and the meaning of the suffix, the meaning of the run-on entry is self-explanatory.

The way a word is used in a sentence, its *function*, sometimes called its *part of speech*, is indicated by any of several *italic* abbreviations: *n* for *noun* (**cat, dog, mother**), *vb* for *verb* (**run, jump, cry**), *adj* for *adjective* (**blue, tall, happy**), *adv* for *adverb* (**easily, fast**),

**nearby**), *pron* for *pronoun* (**who, them, none**), *conj* for *conjunction* (**and, but, if**), *prep* for *preposition* (**about, for, to**), and *interj* for *interjection* (**hello, ahoy**). Others include *helping verb* (**may, can**), *prefix* (**anti-, bio-**), and *suffix* (**-age, -er, -graph**).

When there are two or more words that have the same spelling but are different in their meanings or how they function in a sentence, these are distinguished by a small superscript numeral in front of the spelling. The numeral is not part of the spelling; it is there in this dictionary to distinguish these identically spelled words (called **homographs**).

- <sup>1</sup>**calf** *n, pl calves* **1** : a young cow . . .  
<sup>2</sup>**calf** *n, pl calves* : the muscular back part of the leg . . .  
<sup>1</sup>**dai-ly** *adj* **1** : occurring, done, produced, appearing, or used every day . . .  
<sup>2</sup>**daily** *adv* : every day  
<sup>3</sup>**daily** *n, pl dai-lies* : a newspaper published every weekday

One very important way a dictionary saves space when two or more words have the same meaning is by putting the definition at the more common word and linking to that entry by means of a cross-reference in SMALL CAPITALS. Look at the following.

**abash** *vb* . . . : EMBARRASS

The treatment here tells you to look at the entry **embarrass** for a definition of both *abash* and *embarrass*. And this treatment tells you also that *abash* and *embarrass* are **synonyms**.

Sometimes the synonym cross-reference is used in place of a definition and sometimes following a definition.

**lightning bug** *n* : FIREFLY  
**om-nip-o-tent** *adj* : having power or authority without limit : ALMIGHTY . . .

When the synonym cross-reference has a following sense number or has a superscript homograph number attached, it tells you which specific sense number and which homograph to look to for the shared meaning.

**prince** *n* **1** : MONARCH **1** . . .  
**con-fi-den-tial** *adj* **1** : <sup>1</sup>SECRET **1** . . .

There is a special treatment for Canadian (*Can*) and British (*Brit*) spelling variants. These variants are usually listed along with the U.S. spelling.

**cal-i-ber** or *Can and Brit* **cal-i-bre** *n* **1** : level of excellence, skill, or importance . . .  
**the-ater** or *chiefly Can and Brit* **the-atre** *n* **1** : a building in which plays, motion pictures, or shows are presented . . .

The *or Can and Brit* at **caliber** indicates that the following spelling is the typical spelling in Canada and Britain and is relatively uncommon in the U.S.; the *or chiefly Can and Brit* at **theater** indicates that the following spelling, while typical in Canada and Britain, has some currency in the U.S.

## Using the Dictionary

x

When the Canadian or British spelling would fall more than five entries away, it is also reentered with a cross-reference to the main entry.

**cheque** *Can and Brit spelling of* CHECK n, sense 4  
**plough, ploughshare** *chiefly Brit spelling of*  
PLOW, PLOWSHARE

Your dictionary also guides you in the way a particular word is used. **Usage notes** may follow a definition or be used in place of a definition.

**ath·let·ics** *n pl* : games, sports, and exercises requiring strength, endurance, and skill — used as singular or plural  
**³why** *interj* — used to express surprise, uncertainty, approval, disapproval, or impatience

Guidance on capitalization for entries where the main entry word is not shown capitalized is usually shown by an italic note at the beginning of the definition.

**french fry** *n, often cap 1st F* : a strip of potato fried in deep fat  
**cpu** *n often cap C&P&U* : the part of a computer that does most of the processing of data

# A

- 1<sup>a</sup> 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<sup>a</sup> indefinite article** **1** : someone or something being mentioned for the first time **2** : the same **3** : <sup>1</sup>ANY **1** **4** : for or from each **5** : <sup>2</sup>ONE **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<sup>a</sup>aban-don 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<sup>a</sup>abandon n** : a feeling of complete freedom
- aban-doned** *adj* : given up : left empty or unused
- abash vb abashed; abash-ing** : EMBARRASS
- abate vb abated; 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-vi-ate vb ab-bre-vi-ated; ab-bre-vi-at-ing** : to make briefer : SHORTEN
- ab-bre-vi-a-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** : <sup>1</sup>LAST **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-bodied** *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<sup>a</sup>aboard** *adv* : on, onto, or within a ship, train, bus, or airplane
- 2<sup>a</sup>aboard** *prep* : on or into especially for passage
- 1<sup>a</sup>abode** *past of* ABIDE
- 2<sup>a</sup>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*
- abominable snow-man n, often cap A&S** : a creature somewhat resembling a human



being or ape that is reported to exist in the Himalaya mountains

**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**: <sup>1</sup>STEEP **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**: <sup>2</sup>LACK, 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**: <sup>1</sup>TOTAL **1**, 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 complete attention of **3**: to receive without giving back

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

**ab-sor-bent** *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-tract** *adj* **1**: hard to understand **2**: relating to general ideas or qualities rather than specific people, things, or actions — **ab-tract-ly** *adv*

**2****ab-tract** *n*: <sup>2</sup>SUMMARY

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

**ab-trac-tion** *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-sur-d** *adj*: completely foolish, unreasonable, or untrue: RIDICULOUS — **ab-sur-d-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* **abused**; **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

**aby-s-mal** *adj*: extremely bad

**aby-ss** *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