

2003 Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

aardwolf

n
/ 'ärd.wulf /
Afrikaans
a striped hyenalike mammal of southern and eastern Africa that feeds chiefly on carrion and insects.
Termites are the favorite food of the aardwolf.

abacus

n
/ 'abəkəs /
Gk > L
a calculating instrument for performing arithmetical processes by sliding counters by hand on rods or in grooves.
The grocer used an abacus instead of a modern cash register.

abalienation

abalone

n
/ .abə'lōnē /
Sp
a gastropod mollusk that clings to rocks tenaciously with a broad muscular foot.
At the beach, Marta made a necklace from the shell of an abalone.

abandonment

abattoir

n
/ 'abə.twär /
F
slaughterhouse.
At the end of the day the battlefield at Hastings looked like an abattoir.

abbot

abbreviate

abbreviation

abdicate

v
/ 'abdəkāt /
L
relinquish formally, renounce.
The crown prince will abdicate his throne so that his brother may rule.

abdomen

n
/ 'abdəmən /
L > F
region of an insect's body.
The three main body parts of an insect are the head, the thorax, and the abdomen.

abdominal

abecedarium

abecedarius

n
/ .äbē(,)sē'da(r)ēəs /
L
a poem in which the lines or stanzas begin with the letters of the alphabet in regular order.
Geoffrey Chaucer wrote a famous abecedarius.

aberrant

aberration

n
/ .abə'rāshən /
L
deviation from the natural state or from a normal type.
Jane's outburst at the meeting was a shocking behavior aberration, for her manner is usually so reserved.

abeyance

n
/ ə'bāən(t)s /
L > F + Ecf
[has homonym: obedience]
cessation or suspension (as of a customary practice).
Use of the swimming pool was put in abeyance until a new lifeguard could be hired.

abhor

abhorrence

ability

abiogenist

abjuration

ablution

n
/ ə'blüshən /
L
the washing of one's body or part of it as a religious rite.
A common example of ablution in Judaism is washing the hands before a meal that includes bread.

abolition

abominable

adj
/ ə'bäm(ə)nəbəl /
L > F > E
worthy of or causing loathing or hatred.
Charlie's abominable pretense of being attracted to Jane was the result of a dare by his friends.

aborigine

n
/ .abə'rɪjə(,)nē /
L
[Note: Could be confused with aborigen.] one of the native people especially as contrasted with an invading or colonizing people.
Cathy Freeman, an Australian aborigine, carried the flame into the Olympic stadium.

abracadabra

n
/ .abrəkə'dabrə /
L
confused or unintelligible language
: nonsense.
Despite the abracadabra in the poem "Jabberwocky," its message is rather clear.

abrasion

n
/ ə'brāzhən /
L
wearing, grinding, or rubbing away by friction.
Moving glaciers caused abrasion on Earth's surface.

abrasive

abrogated

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abruptly

adv
/ ə'brʌp(t)l̩ /
L

in a manner that produces the effect of a sudden ending.

George's mom stopped abruptly at the door of his room when she saw his pet python on the floor.

abscess

abscissa

n
/ ab'sisə /
L

the horizontal coordinate of a point in a plane Cartesian coordinate system obtained by measuring parallel to the x-axis.

Bill was asked to mark the point on the graph at which the abscissa is 4 and the ordinate is 7.

abscond

abscondence

absence

abstemious

adj
/ abz'tēmēəs /
L

sparing in eating and drinking.

Evelyn is abstemious by nature and never orders dessert.

abstinence

abstractive

abstruse

adj
/ əbz'trūs /
L

[has obsolete variant with similar pronunciation: obtruse] difficult to comprehend or understand.

Mr. Thompson's abstruse calculations covered the blackboard.

absurdity

abundance

abysmal

adj
/ ə'bɪzməl /
Gk > L > E

having the characteristics of an abyss : bottomless.

Ahmet jumped his motorcycle over the abysmal gorge.

abysmally

academia

n
/ .akə'dēmyə /
Gk > L

life and interests associated with a school especially of higher learning.

Robert prefers academia to the business world.

academic

adj
/ .akə'demik /
Gk > L > F

relating to a school, especially an institution of higher education.

Claudia postponed her academic pursuits after learning of her father's serious illness.

acarology

accede

accelerate

v
/ ik'selə.rāt /
L

add to the speed of or quicken the motion of.

To qualify for the finals, the jogger had to accelerate his pace.

accelerator

accentuator

acceptance

accessible

adj
/ ik'sesəbəl /
L

capable of being reached or easily approached.

Wilbur made sure his restaurant was accessible to those in wheelchairs.

accessorial

accidental

acclimatization

n
/ ə.klɪməd-ə'zāshən /
L > F + Ecff
the process of adapting to a new temperature, altitude, environment, or situation.
The wild fern's acclimatization to Mrs. Bennett's rock garden amazed her.

acclivity

n
/ ə'klɪvədə /
L
an ascending slope (as of a hill).
The biker hoped that a downhill stretch would soon follow what seemed to be an endless acclivity.

accolade

n
/ 'akə.lād /
L > F
a bestowal of praise.
Martin received one accolade after another at the awards banquet.

accommodable

accomplice

n
/ ə'kæmpləs /
L > F > E
one that participates with another in a crime either as principal or accessory.
The juvenile was convicted as an accomplice in the robbery.

accordionist

accreditation

accrescent

adj
/ ə'kresənt /
L
growing continuously; specifically : growing larger after flowering.
After its flower had fallen away, the plant's accrescent calyx became noticeably larger.

accrual

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accrue

accrued

v
/ ə'krüd /
L > F > E
came by way of increase or addition.

Helen argued that many advantages have accrued to society from the freedom of the press.

accumulate

v
/ ə'kyümyə.lāt /
L
heap up in a mass : pile up.
The weather forecaster said that as much as two feet of snow might accumulate overnight.

accurate

adj
/ 'akyərət /
L
correct, exact, precise.
The detective prided himself on making accurate reports of crime scenes.

accusatory

acescent

adj
/ ə'ses'nt /
L
turning sour or tending to turn sour.
Natalie spit out the acescent milk.

acetate

acetylene

n
/ ə'sed'ələn /
L + Gk + Gk
a colorless gaseous hydrocarbon that is explosive when compressed but safe if diluted with nitrogen or acetone.
The welder ran out of acetylene while cutting through the ship's hull.

achromatism

acicular

adj
/ ə'sikyələr /
L + Ecf
like a needle in shape : slender and pointed.
Under the microscope, the crystals appear as single acicular structures.

acknowledge

acknowledging

acolyte

n
/ 'akəlīt /
Gk > L > F > E
one who attends or assists : follower.
Not one acolyte remained after the cult leader's fall from grace.

acorn

acoustician

acoustics

n pl
/ ə'küstiks /
Gk
the aggregate of qualities (as absence of echo or reverberation) of an enclosure (as an auditorium) or other area that affects production, control, transmission, reception, and perception of sound.
As a result of the renovation, the acoustics of the concert hall have improved dramatically.

acquaintance

n
/ ə'kwānt'ns /
F > E
familiarity, experience.
Ruth developed an acquaintance with Tibetan musical tradition.

acquiesce

acquiescence

acquittal

n
/ ə'kwid'əl /
L + L > F
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] release or discharge from debt or other liability.
Mr. Churchill was deeply involved in the game and was too much indebted to it for his acquittal.

acre

n
/ 'ākə(r) /
E
any of various units of land area.
Miriam had to cross a 10-acre field to get to her favorite swimming hole.

acrimonious

adj
/ ,akrə'mōnēəs /
L > F
caustic, biting, or rancorous, especially in feeling, language, or manner : bitter.
It was obvious that Marjorie's comments were acrimonious and complaining.

acrobat

n
/ 'akrəbat /
Gk > F
one who performs gymnastic feats or exercises.
Paul is developing the skills of a first-rate acrobat.

acronym

n
/ 'akrənim /
Gk + Gk
a word formed from the initial letter or letters of each of the successive parts or major parts of a compound term.
The word radar is an acronym of radio detection and ranging.

acropolis

acrostic

n
/ ə'krɒstɪk /
Gk

a composition usually in verse in which one or more sets of letters when taken in order form a word, a connected group of words, or the regular sequence of the letters of the alphabet.

Mrs. Taylor was not at all pleased with the acrostic her students made using her name.

acrylic

actinic

adj
/ ək'tɪnɪk /
Gk > L + Ecf
having photochemical properties or effects.
The stars emit actinic rays as well as light and heat.

actuary

n
/ 'ækʃə.werē /
L
one trained in mathematics and statistics whose business it is to calculate insurance and annuity premiums, reserves, and dividends.
An actuary uses such factors as age and health status to determine a person's life insurance premiums.

aculeate

adj
/ ə'kyülēət /
L
marked by incisiveness : stinging, pointed.
No actor was spared in the reviewer's aculeate criticisms.

acumen

n
/ ə'kyümən /
L
acuteness of mind : keenness of perception, discernment, or discrimination : shrewdness especially in practical matters.
Della's business acumen helped her amass a fortune of over \$50 million.

acuminate

adj
/ ə'kyümənət /
L
tapering to a slender point : pointed.
Steve found one of his parakeet's acuminate tail feathers on the floor.

acupuncture

adactylous

adage

adagio

n
/ ə'dä(j)ō /
(L + L > OProv) > It
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a series of sustained and perfectly controlled dance movements displaying balance and grace.
The wicked fairy performed a perfect adagio just before Sleeping Beauty appeared.

adamantine

adj
/ .ədə'man.tɪn /
Gk > L > E
rigidly firm : unyielding.
Debra's adamantine chain of logic bedazzled her philosophy professor.

addepleted

adenoidal

adj
/ .əd'n'oid'ɪl /
Gk
typical or suggestive of one affected with abnormally enlarged glands in the back of the throat.
The critics panned the tenor, whose voice was terribly adenoidal and breathy.

adequate

adequation

adhere

adherence

adherent

n
/ .əd'hɪrənt /
L
a believer in or advocate of a particular thing, idea, or religion.
Julia has been an adherent of Buddhism since 1985.

adhesional

adiaphorism

adipose

adjacency

adjacent

adj
/ ə'jās'nt /
L
living nearby or sitting or standing relatively near or close together.
Citizens of Centerville and its adjacent communities banded together to form a volunteer fire department.

adjourn

adjudicate

adjunct

n
/ 'a.jəŋ(k)t /
L
something joined or added to another thing but not essentially a part of it.
Exercise is an adjunct to a long and healthy life.

adjuvant

admeasure

adminicle

n
/ ad'mɪnəkəl /
L
support, auxiliary.
Shelly enjoyed serving as an adminicle of the local Girl Scout troop.

admiral

n
/ 'adm(ə)rəl /
Ar > L

a naval officer of high rank.
Petty Officer Pritchard saluted the admiral and continued to her post.

admire

admonitory

adolescence

Adonis

n
/ ə'dānəs /

Gk name
an exceptionally handsome young man.

Nearly all the eighth-grade girls think that Leonardo is an Adonis.

adsmith

adumbrate

v
/ 'adəm.brāt /
L

give a sketchy representation of : outline broadly, omitting details.
There was time to only adumbrate the escape plan.

advantageous

adverb

adversary

adverse

advisory

n
/ əd'vīz(ə)rē /
L > F

a report giving information (as one issued by a weather bureau on the progress of a hurricane).
The weather advisory warned small craft that winds would be in excess of 34 knots today.

advocaat

advocate

n
/ 'advəkət /
L

one that argues for, defends, maintains, or recommends a cause or proposal.
Isabella was sure nobody ought to be, or could be, a greater advocate for matrimony than she.

aerial

aerodynamic

adj
/ ,a(ə)rō(,)dī'namik /
Gk

of or relating to the science that treats of the motion of air and other gaseous fluids.
The aerodynamic design of race cars helps them achieve great speeds.

aeronautics

affable

affianced

v
/ ə'fiən(t)st /
L > F > E

solemnly promised (oneself or another) in marriage : betrothed.
The ruler of Austria affianced his daughter to the king of France.

affidavit

n
/ ,afə'dāvət /
L

a sworn statement in writing made especially under oath or before an authorized officer.
The police asked Heather to prepare an affidavit regarding what she saw when she surprised a burglar in her house.

affiliate

v
/ ə'filē.āt /
L

attach as a member or branch : bring or receive into close connection.
The university assists in trying to affiliate local high schools.

affiliation

n
/ ə'filē'āshən /
L

the state or relation of being attached as a member or branch.
Professor Bruner retired after a 30-year affiliation with Harvard University.

affirmative

afflatus

n
/ ə'flādəs /
L

a divine imparting of knowledge or power : inspiration.
Most art students are familiar with Michelangelo's painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel depicting the afflatus from God to Adam.

affluence

aforementioned

afterwale

agate

adj
/ 'agət /
Gk > L > F

of or resembling a fine-grained chalcedony frequently mixed with opal and having various colors arranged in stripes or bands; especially : of the color of agate.
Rachel's brown agate eyes are extremely unusual and beautiful.

agelicism

agenda

agglomeration

agglutinate

aggrandizement

n
/ ə'grændəzmənt /
L > F

the act, action, or result of making great or greater (as in power, honor, or wealth).

Because she was a commoner, Ruth was accused of marrying the prince for her own personal aggrandizement.

aggravate

v
/ 'agrəvāt /
L

make worse, more serious, or more severe.

Shane worried that a game of one-on-one would aggravate his ankle injury.

aggregate

n
/ 'agrəgət /
L

a body of units or parts somewhat loosely associated with one another.

The protesters straggled toward the muddy park in a dispirited aggregate as the organizers set up tents and microphones.

aghost

agiotage

agitated

adj
/ 'ajə.tədɪd /
L

troubled in mind : disturbed, excited.

The crowd became agitated when the candidate failed to appear.

agnostic

n
/ ag'nästik /
Gk

one who maintains a continuing doubt about the existence or knowability of a god or any ultimates.

Raymond and Olive have been happily married for ten years, even though she is an agnostic and he never misses Sunday morning mass.

agoraphobia

agrarian

agriology

agronomy

n
/ ə'gränəmē /
L + Gk

the branch of agriculture that deals with field crop production and soil management.

Vince earned a degree in agronomy at the state university's school of agriculture.

aikido

aileron

n
/ 'āl.rän /
L > F

a movable portion of an airplane wing or a movable airfoil external to the wing for imparting a rolling motion and thus providing lateral control.

An aileron is usually situated at the trailing edge of an airplane's wing near the wing tip.

airborne

airedale

n
/ 'a(a)(ə)r.dāl /
E geog name

a large terrier with a wiry black and tan coat.

Shantha's airedale is registered with the American Kennel Club.

akropodion

n
/ .akrə'pōdēən /
Gk

the most prominent point on the back of the heel.

After the hike, Eli had a nasty blister on his left akropodion.

aktograph

alabaster

adj
/ 'alə.bastə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E

of or resembling alabaster; specifically : having a nearly white color and a light-diffusing surface.

Patsy's alabaster skin gives her a spectral appearance.

alacrity

n
/ ə'lakrədē /
L

cheerful readiness : eagerness.

Dr. Cameron's students always enter his class with alacrity and depart with reluctance.

alar

albatross

n
/ 'albə.tròs /
Ar? > Pg or Sp

any of a number of large web-footed seabirds that are capable of long-continued flight.

The wingspan of an albatross can exceed ten feet.

albedo

n
/ al'bē(.i)dō /
L

reflective power.

Arno researched the effects of soil albedo on vegetation.

albeit

conj
/ ol'bēət /
E

although.

Sonia had a simple, albeit expensive, wedding.

albino

alchemy

n
/ 'alkəmē /
Gk > Ar > L > F
the medieval chemical science and speculative philosophy whose aims were the transmutation of base metals into gold.
The wizard's apprentice was determined to learn enough alchemy to turn lead into gold.

alcohol

alcoholature

alcoholism

aleatory

alegar

n
/ 'aligə(r) /
E + L > F
sour ale or vinegar made of ale.
While studying in England as an exchange student, Judith developed a taste for fried potatoes with salt and alegar.

alfalfa

n
/ al'falfə /
Ar > Sp
an important European leguminous forage plant.
The farmer alternated his crops, growing alfalfa one season and corn the next.

alfresco

adj
/ al'fre(,)skō /
It
open-air.
Everyone looks forward to the alfresco party that the Smiths hold every Derby Day.

algorithm

alibi

n
/ 'aləbī /
L
the plea of having been elsewhere at the time an act was committed.
To support his alibi, Jake showed his lawyer a video made during his Hawaii trip.

alienation

aliferous

alimentary

adj
/ .alə'mentərə /
L
[Note: Could be confused with elementary.] of, concerned with, or relating to nourishment or to the function of nutrition.
Pasta is sometimes called an "alimentary paste."

aliquot

alkali

allargando

adv
/ .älär'gän(,)dō /
L
in a manner becoming gradually broader with the same or greater volume.
David's piano teacher indicated that the piece was to be played allargando.

allayment

allege

v
/ ə'lej /
L
assert, affirm, state without proof or before proving.
Residents of the area allege that the lake water has curative properties.

allegiance

n
/ ə'lējən(t)s /
F > E
the duty of fidelity owed by a subject or citizen to his sovereign or government.
The new citizens pledged allegiance to their adopted country.

allegory

n
/ 'alə.gōrē /
Gk
a story in which people, things, and happenings have a hidden or symbolic meaning.
Gail disliked the moralistic tone of the allegory.

allegro

n
/ ə'le(,)grō /
It > L
ballet steps performed in a lively, fast tempo.
After the allegro, Madame Delacroix instructed the dancers to cool down slowly.

allemande

v
/ 'alə.mand /
Gmc > L > F
perform a step with arms interlaced.
The caller told the square dancers to allemande left and swing their partners.

allergy

n
/ 'alə(r)jē /
Gk > G
exaggerated or pathological reaction (as by sneezing, itching, or skin rashes) to substances, situations, or physical states that are without comparable effect on the average individual.
Because of her allergy, Mrs. Griffin discouraged her students from bringing in any furry pets for show-and-tell.

alliance

n
/ ə'liən(t)s /
L > F > E
union or connection especially between families, states, parties, or individuals.
The alliance between the two nations has been strong for nearly 50 years.

alligator

n
/ 'alə,gədə(r) /
L > Sp
a reptile having a head not tapering to the snout and being in general much more sluggish than the typical crocodiles.
Jason's favorite sight at the fair was a woman wrestling an alligator.

allision

alliteration

n
/ ə'lidə'rāshən /
L + Ecf
the repetition usually initially of a sound that is usually a consonant in two or more neighboring words or syllables (as in "daring deed").
Poor writers rely on alliteration when lacking ideas.

allocation

n
/ ə'ləkāshən /
L
the act of apportioning.
The allocation of powers in the United States Constitution is clearly defined.

alluded

alluviation

n
/ ə'lüvē'āshən /
L
the process that results in deposits of clay, silt, sand, or gravel at places in rivers or estuaries where stream velocity is decreased.
The effects of alluviation can be seen along the banks of a large river.

almond

n
/ 'ä(1)mənd /
Gk > L > F > E
the fruit of a small tree; especially : the nutlike stone or kernel of this tree.
The almond is a nut that is easy to crack.

aloof

adj
/ ə'lüf /
E + D? > F > E
removed or distant either physically or spiritually and usually by choice and with indifference to the feelings, opinions, or interests of others.
Greg's aloof personality discouraged his gregarious colleagues.

alopecia

n
/ ə'lə'pēsh(ē)ə /
Gk
loss of hair, wool, or feathers : baldness.
Prescription drugs such as minoxidil have had limited success in treating alopecia.

alpaca

n
/ ə'l'pəkə /
Aymara > Sp
an animal like a llama with fine long woolly hair and domesticated in Peru and adjacent countries.
The petting zoo featured four goats, an alpaca, a pony, and three lambs.

alpenglow

n
/ 'əlpənglō /
G + E
a reddish glow or sometimes the entire series of light phenomena seen near sunset or sunrise on the summits of mountains.
Jocelyn and Ruth enjoyed the rich alpenglow from the balcony of their cabin.

alphabet

altazimuth

n
/ ə'l'təzəməθ /
L + Ar > L
an instrument consisting of a telescope mounted so that it can swing horizontally and vertically.
Josh saw an antique altazimuth in the maritime museum.

altercation

n
/ ,əltə(r)'kāshən /
L
dispute carried on with feeling (as anger).
Police broke up a minor altercation between two street vendors.

altiplano

n
/ ,əltə'plä(,)nō /
L > Sp
a high plateau or plain : tableland.
A cold northerly wind over the altiplano heralded the arrival of winter.

altitude

n
/ 'əltətüd /
L > E
position at a height.
When the plane suddenly lost altitude, the pilot told the passengers to fasten their seat belts.

altogether

adv
/ ,əltə'gethə(r) /
E
wholly, completely, thoroughly.
The suffragettes argued that it was altogether fit and proper that women have the right to vote.

altruism

altruistically

alveolate

adj
/ ə'l'vēələt /
L + Ecf
pitted like a honeycomb.
The porous sandstone had an alveolate surface.

amadelphous

amalgam

n
/ ə'malgəm /
Ar? > L > F
an alloy of mercury with another metal.

Because mercury will form an amalgam with most other metals, it can be used to extract them from ore.

amanuensis

n
/ ə.manyə'wen(t)səs /
L
one who is employed to write from dictation or to copy what another has written.

During the six weeks that Chrissie's arm was in a cast, she completed her homework with her mother as her amanuensis.

amateur

ambidextrous

ambiguity

n
/ ambə'gyüədē /
L
the condition of admitting of two or more meanings, of being understood in more than one way, or of referring to two or more things at the same time.

The ambiguity of Mr. Mitchell's essay questions encouraged creative interpretations.

ambivalent

adj
/ am'bivələnt /
L
characterized by, suggestive of, motivated by, or exhibiting contradictory emotional or psychological attitude.
Because Tad has a grueling job lined up, he is ambivalent about the upcoming summer vacation.

amblyopia

n
/ .amblē'öpēə /
Gk
dimness of sight without apparent change in the eye structures associated especially with the toxic effects of certain drugs or chemicals or with dietary deficiencies.
The doctor told Henry to quit smoking if he wanted his amblyopia to improve.

ambrosia

n
/ am'brōzh(ē)ə /
Gk > F
a dessert of a fruit or of mixed fruits topped with shredded coconut.
Cyrus's favorite dessert is his grandmother's ambrosia.

ambulation

ambuscade

ambush

ameliorate

v
/ ə'mēlyə.rāt /
L
make better : improve.
Activists lobbied to ameliorate prison conditions.

amelioration

n
/ ə.mēlyə'rāshən /
L
the act of making better or the state of being made better : improvement.
The committee submitted its recommendations for the amelioration of the undesirable conditions at the overcrowded school.

amenable

adj
/ ə'mēnəbəl /
L > F
readily brought to yield or submit : responsive, tractable.
Horst is amenable to any ideas for the prom's theme.

amendment

n
/ ə'men(d)mənt /
L + Ecf
the process of changing or modifying in any way for the better (as a motion, bill, act, or constitution).
A well-drafted constitution will provide for its own amendment.

amertoy

n
/ 'amə(r).tōi /
E geog name + E
a small terrierlike dog having a short sleek satiny coat and weighing between six and ten pounds.
Ricky was forever chasing Trixie, the family amertoy, out of the flower beds.

amethyst

amiable

amicable

adj
/ 'aməkəbəl /
L
characterized by or as if by friendship and goodwill.
Carla and Jeanine have had an amicable relationship since they settled their initial dispute.

amice

n
/ 'aməs /
L
[has near homonyms: amas, amiss]
a liturgical vestment consisting of an oblong piece of cloth usually of white linen, worn about the neck and shoulders and partly under the alb.
Father Patrick put on a fresh white amice before serving mass.

amiss

amity

n
/ 'amədē /
L

friendship and goodwill, especially as characterized by mutual acceptance and tolerance of potentially antagonistic standpoints or aims.

The natural amity between Avital and her sister has helped them maintain strong ties through many family disagreements.

ammeter

n
/ 'a(m).medə(r) /
F + Gk

[has near homonym: amateur] an instrument for measuring electric current.

Perry and Ayrton's ammeter helped measure the efficiency of the battery.

ammonia

amnesia

n
/ am'nēzhə /
Gk

loss of memory : forgetfulness.

Alice suffered from amnesia as the result of a head injury.

amole

n
/ ə'mōlē /
Nahuatl > Sp

any of a number of plants utilized as a source of soap.

The discovery of an amole created much excitement among the castaways.

amortization

amphibian

n
/ am'fībēən /
Gk

[has homonym: amphibion] an animal or plant accustomed or adapted to life both on land and in the water.

The frog is perhaps the best-known amphibian.

amphibious

amphora

n
/ 'amfərə /
Gk > L

a Greek unit of capacity equal to 10.3 gallons or 39 liters.

The group ordered 1 amphora of punch for the Antiquity Party.

ampicillin

n
/ ,ampə'silən /
ISV

a penicillin that is effective against gram-negative and gram-positive bacteria and is used to treat various infections of the urinary, respiratory, and intestinal tracts.

Pneumonia has been successfully treated with ampicillin.

amulet

n
/ 'amyələt /
L

an inscribed charm believed to protect or aid the wearer.

The archaeologist discovered an amulet in the tomb of an ancient Egyptian ruler.

anabibazon

n
/ ,anə'bibə.zən /
Gk

the ascending node of the Moon's orbit with the ecliptic.

Lars waited for the Moon to reach its anabibazon so he could confirm his findings.

anabolic

adj
/ ,anə'bälík /
Gk + Gk

relating to, characterized by, or promoting constructive metabolism.

The weightlifter was disqualified after it was discovered he had used anabolic steroids.

anachronism

anachronous

anaconda

n
/ ,anə'kändə /
Singhalese

a large arboreal snake of the boa family of tropical South America.
The anaconda has been known to forage in trees for birds.

anaglyph

n
/ 'anə'glif /
Gk

a stereoscopic still or moving picture producing a three-dimensional effect when viewed through colored filters.

Troy begged his parents to take him to the newest anaglyph at the IMAX theater.

anagogic

adj
/ ,anə'gäjík /
Gk > L

having a spiritual meaning or a sense referring to the heavenly life.
Terrance recited anagogic poems by a Greek mystic.

analects

analemma

n
/ ,anə'lemə /
Gk

a graduated scale shaped like a figure 8 and showing the Sun's declination for each day of the year usually constituting part of a sundial and often shown on globes.

Katrina consulted the sundial's analemma to calculate the correct time.

analgesic

analogy

n
/ ə'naləjē /
Gk

a figure of speech involving an extended or elaborate comparison between two things or situations.

Hugo used an analogy to illustrate his point, but no one understood the analogy either.

analysand

n
/ ə'nalə.sənd /
Gk + L > Ecf
one that is analyzed; specifically :
one who is undergoing
psychoanalysis.
*The psychotherapist encouraged
the analysand to unburden herself
of her anxieties.*

anastomosis

n
/ ə.nəstə'mōsəs /
Gk
a joining of the parts of a branched
system.
*Hal pointed out the anastomosis in
the veined mulberry leaf.*

anautia

n
/ a'nòdēə /
Gk
loss of voice : inability to
articulate.
*A blow to the throat can cause
temporary anautia.*

anaulogenous

ancestor

anchovy

n
/ 'an.chōvē /
Gk > L? > It > Sp
any of a number of small
herringlike fishes; especially : a
common Mediterranean form
esteemed for its rich and peculiar
flavor.
*Joshua informed his mother that
one anchovy had rendered the
entire pizza inedible.*

ancillary

adj
/ 'ansə.lerē /
L
serving to aid or assist : auxiliary :
supplementary.
*Electronic media usually include
radio, film, and television, as well
as the ancillary industries of audio
and video recording.*

anecdote

n
/ 'anik.dōt /
F&Gk
a usually short narrative of an
interesting, amusing, or curious
incident.
*The speaker's presentation ended
with a touching anecdote.*

anemochore

n
/ ə'neməkō(ə)r /
Gk > F + Gk
a plant that has seeds or spores
adapted to distribution by wind.
*The dandelion is a familiar
anemochore.*

anemometer

n
/ .anə'mämədə(ə)r /
Gk > F + Gk > Ecf
an instrument for measuring and
indicating the force or speed of the
wind.
*The anemometer spun furiously as
the hurricane approached.*

anglaise

adj
/ än'glāz /
Gmc > F
boiled and served without sauce.
Carrots anglaise are not very tasty.

anguish

anhydride

anise

n
/ 'anəs /
Gk
an herb cultivated for its aromatic
seeds.
*The flavor of anise is similar to that
of licorice.*

anissette

ankh

n
/ 'aŋk /
Egypt
a cross having a loop instead of an
upper vertical arm used especially
in ancient Egypt.
*Roger's first discovery as an
Egyptian archeologist was a gold
ankh.*

anklet

anneal

annihilate

v
/ ə'nīə.lāt /
L
destroy a considerable part of.
*Armyworms can annihilate a
beautiful lawn in just a few days.*

anniversary

n
/ .anə'vərs(ə)rē /
L
the annual recurrence of a date
marking an event or occurrence of
notable importance.
*Next Thursday will be the 23rd
anniversary of our family grocery
store's first day of operation.*

annotation

annoyance

n
/ ə'nōiən(t)s /
F > E
a source of vexation or irritation :
bothersome disturbance.
*Vera enjoyed raking leaves on the
warm autumn day, but the loud
music from the neighbor's yard
was an annoyance.*

annual

annuity

n
/ ə'n(y)üədē /
L

an amount payable yearly or at other regular intervals (as quarterly) for a certain or uncertain period.

Carl's grandparents set up a trust fund that will provide him with an annuity for the next 20 years.

annul

v
/ ə'nəl /
L > F > E

cause to cease to exist : reduce to nothing.

The legislator's motion to annul the out-of-date law met with the approval of his colleagues.

anodyne

adj
/ 'anə,dīn /
Gk

serving to assuage pain : soothing.

Before aspirin was developed, certain spirits and herbs were valued for their anodyne properties.

anomalous

anomaly
n
/ ə'näməlē /
Gk > L

the angular distance of a planet from its perihelion as seen from the Sun.

The anomaly in a planet's orbit is caused by the gravitational influence of other planets.

anonymous

adj
/ ə'nänəməs /
Gk > L

of unknown or unnamed source or origin (as authorship, donorship, workmanship).

An anonymous 18th-century painting recently sold for two million dollars.

anorthopia

n
/ a(,)nór'thōpēə /
Gk

distorted vision in which straight lines appear bent.

When Liz put on Jan's glasses, she was overcome with anorthopia.

anserous

antecedent

n
/ .antə'sēd'nt /
L

a substantive word, phrase, or clause referred to by a pronoun, typically by a following pronoun.

In the sentence "I saw John and spoke to him," John is the antecedent of him.

antecessor

n
/ 'antəsəsə(r) /
L > E

one that goes before.

Phoebe's antecessor in the presidency served six terms.

antediluvian

antelope

n
/ 'ant'l,ōp /
Gk > L > F > E

any of various ruminant mammals of Africa and southwest Asia that differ from the true oxen especially in lighter racier build and horns directed upward and backward.

The bounding antelope managed to outdistance the pursuing lion.

antenna

anteroom

anthography

n
/ an'thäggräfē /
Gk + Gk + Ecf

the description of flowers.

A botanist, Wilbur excelled in anthography.

anthology

n
/ an'thäləjē /
Gk

a usually representative collection of selected literary pieces or passages.

John hopes to find "The Raven" in his mom's anthology of American literature.

anthroponymy

antimacassar

n
/ antēmə'kasə(r) /
Gk + Celebes island geog name
a cover to protect the back or arms of furniture from Macassar oil or other hair preparations.
Fran found the missing antimacassar under one of the sofa cushions.

antimony

n
/ 'antə,mōnē /
Ar? > L > E
a metalloid element that is commonly metallic silvery white, crystalline, and brittle and is used especially as a constituent of alloys.
Pewter is an alloy of antimony and tin.

antipasto

n
/ .antē'pastō /
L > It
any of various savory foods usually served as appetizers : hors d'oeuvre.
Herbert ordered antipasto for the table.

antiquarian

adj
/ .antə'kwērēən /
L
dealing in old and rare books or in secondhand books.
Pamela went to an antiquarian bookseller to have her first edition of Oliver Twist appraised.

antique

antiquity

antiseptic

antithesis

n
/ an'tithəsəs /
Gk
the rhetorical opposing or contrasting of ideas by means of grammatically parallel arrangements of words, clauses, or sentences.
A Tale of Two Cities opens with the famous antithesis: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

antonomasia

n
/ (.)an.tənə'māzh(ē)ə /
Gk
the making of a common noun or verb from a proper name.
The formation of the verb pasteurize from the name Pasteur is an example of antonomasia.

antonym

anxiety

apartheid

n
/ ə'pär.tāt /
D > Afrikaans
a policy of segregation and political and economic discrimination against certain population groups.
The end of apartheid in South Africa was one of the great world events of the decade.

apathetic

apathy

n
/ 'apəthē /
Gk
absence or lack of interest or concern : listlessness, indifference.
The active interest women are taking in today's issues strongly contrasts with the apathy many women had a century ago.

aperitif

aperture

n
/ 'apə(r).chù(ə)r /
L
an opening that restricts a beam of radiation or a stream of particles; specifically : the opening in a photographic lens that admits the light passing through.
A photographer typically has to adjust the shutter speed and set the aperture.

aphasia

n
/ ə'fāzh(ē)ə /
Gk
[has near homonym: aphagia] the loss or impairment of the power to use words as symbols of ideas that results from a brain lesion.
As a speech therapist, Tonya takes a particular interest in patients struggling with aphasia.

aphelion

n
/ a'fēlyən /
Gk
the point of a planet's or comet's orbit most distant from the Sun.
Earth generally reaches aphelion around July 4.

aphid

n
/ 'āfəd /
Gk > L
any of numerous small sluggish insects that suck the juices from plants, causing damage to the plants.
An aphid can cause wilting, distorted growth, or gall formation in plants.

aphorism

n
/ 'afə.rizəm /
Gk > L > F
a terse and often ingenious formulation of a truth or sentiment usually in a single sentence.
Clark lives his life by the aphorism "Clothes make the man."

apiarian

apiary

apiculus

aplomb

n
/ ə'pläm /
L > F
complete confidence or assurance in oneself : poise.
A seasoned public relations officer, Karen handles difficult situations with aplomb.

apocalypse

apocope

n
/ ə'pākə.pē /
Gk
the loss of one or more sounds or letters from the end of a word.
The song title "Singin' in the Rain" exemplifies apocope.

apocryphal

adj
/ ə'pāk.rə.fəl /
Gk
of doubtful authenticity : fictitious, spurious, untrustworthy.
The historian thought the story about the cemetery apocryphal.

apogee

n
/ 'apə(.)jē /
Gk
the point in the orbit of a satellite of Earth (as the Moon or an artificial body) at the greatest distance from the center of Earth.
The transmission delay was longest when the spacecraft reached apogee.

apolaustic

adj
/ .apə'löstik /
Gk
devoted to enjoyment.
The students spent the vacation in apolaustic pursuits.

apologue

n
/ 'apələʒ /
Gk

an allegorical narrative (as a beast fable) usually intended to convey a moral.

Most schoolchildren are familiar with the apologue of the tortoise and the hare.

apology

n
/ ə'päləʒ /
Gk > L > F

an admission to another of a wrong or discourtesy done him or her accompanied by an expression of regret.

The teacher received an apology from the tardy student.

apoplexy

n
/ 'apəpleksē /
Gk

a sudden loss of consciousness followed by paralysis caused by hemorrhage within the brain—called also “stroke.”

When Ray regained consciousness, his doctor told him he was recovering from severe apoplexy.

aposiopesis

n
/ ,apəsiə'pēsəs /
Gk

the leaving of a thought explicitly incomplete in writing or speaking often by a sudden breaking off and shifting of grammatical construction.

Gail answered with an aposiopesis when she replied, “His problem is—how shall I say?”

apostrophe

apothecary

n
/ ə'pəthəkərē /
Gk > L > E

one who prepares and sells drugs or compounds for medicinal purposes : pharmacist.

The visits of Mr. Perry, the apothecary, were one of the few comforts of Mr. Woodhouse's life.

Appaloosa

n
/ ,apə'lüsə /
American Indian

one of a breed of rugged saddle horses distinguished by a mottled skin and a patch of white hair over the rump and loins that is blotched or dotted with darker color.

Sherry begged her father to buy her an Appaloosa for her birthday, but to no avail.

apparatus

n
/ ,apə'rədəs /
L

any compound instrument or appliance designed for a specific mechanical or chemical action or operation.

The trainer went into much detail about which apparatus is better for a cardiovascular workout.

apparel

apparition

n
/ ,apə'rishən /
L > E

ghost, phantom, specter.

The apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head, haunts this enchanted region.

appealed

appease

appellation

appellative

appendant

appendicitis

n
/ əpendə'sidəs /
L + Ecf

an inflammation of the appendix characterized usually by abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting.

The doctor diagnosed Sharon's illness as appendicitis.

appetite

n
/ 'apə'tīt /
L > F > E

the immediate desire to eat when food is present.

George went back to his meal with a good appetite.

apprentice

n
/ ə'prentəs /
L > F > E

one who learns a trade, art, or craft by practical experience under skilled workers.

Jake hopes to become an apprentice in the stained-glass studio.

approbation

n
/ ,aprə'bāshən /
L

an act of approving formally or authoritatively : sanction.

The mayor's actions have the approbation of none of the other members of the city council.

appropriate

adj
/ ə'prəprēət /
L

specially suitable : fit, proper.

Calvin had orange hair and the appropriate freckles to go with it.

appurtenance

appurtenant

adj
/ ə'pərt(ə)nənt /
F

annexed or belonging legally to some more important thing.

The property insurance covers any additions to the building and to private structures appurtenant to the building.

apricot

apropos

adj
/ ˌɑprəˈpō /
F

pertinent, relevant.
Rachel wondered if Herman had understood her question, for his answer was not very apropos.

apsidal

adj
/ ˈapsədɪl /
Gk > L

of or relating to the point of a celestial body's orbit at which it is farthest from the center of attraction.
Laura researched apsidal ocean tidal levels.

aquatic

adj
/ əˈkwədɪk /
L

living wholly or chiefly in or on water.
Porpoises and seals are aquatic mammals.

aqueduct

n
/ ˈakwədɛkt /
L

an artificial channel for conveying water.
The ancient Romans used the aqueduct to provide water to the city's residents.

aquiline

adj
/ ˈakwəlɪn /
L

curving or hooked like an eagle's beak.
The senator was easily recognizable by his aquiline nose.

arabesque

n
/ ˌɑrəˈbesk /
Ar > It > F

a posture (as in ballet dancing) in ballet in which the body is bent forward from the hip on one leg with one arm extended forward and the other arm and leg backward in a line parallel to the floor.
The painting depicts a ballerina in a flawless arabesque.

arachnid

arbiter

arboreal
adj
/ ərˈbōreəl /
L

inhabiting or frequenting trees.
The arboreal fauna of Madagascar are endangered by logging.

arbuscle

n
/ ərˈbəsəl /
L

a dwarf tree or treelike shrub.
The gardener recommended that Michah purchase an arbuscle to plant next to the house.

arcanum

n
/ ərˈkɑnəm /
L

a secret or mysterious knowledge or information known only to the initiate.
Ralph developed a secret handshake as an arcanum for his club.

archaic

archangel

n
/ ˈɑrkənʒəl /
Gk + Gk

a being in the heavenly hierarchy ranking above an angel.
Joan of Arc had visions of the archangel Michael and saints Catherine and Margaret telling her to raise an army.

archelogy

archery

n
/ ˈɑrch(ə)rē /
F > E

the art, practice, or skill of shooting with bow and arrow.
Joe chose archery as one of his physical education electives.

archipelago

n
/ ˈɑrkəˈpeləɡō /
Gk > It

a group or cluster of islands.
The country of Indonesia is an enormous archipelago.

architecture

n
/ ˈɑrkəˌtektʃər /
Gk > L

the art or science of building; specifically : the art or practice of designing and building structures in accordance with principles determined by aesthetic and practical or material considerations.
The building that housed the department of architecture was, to many students, the most hideous-looking edifice on campus.

archivalia

n pl
/ ˈɑrkəˈvālēə /
Gk > L

material preserved in or suitable for preservation in rooms for the exhibition of a collection.
Included in the library's archivalia is a copy of the first edition of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.

arctic

ardency

ardent
adj
/ ˈɑrdənt /
L

extremely loyal : devoted, faithful.
Bickford was an ardent supporter of environmental causes.

arduous

adj
/ 'ɑːrdʒwəs /
L

hard to accomplish or achieve : difficult.

Alan was not prepared for the arduous demands of his construction job.

arenaceous

adj
/ ,ɑːrə'nāshəs /
L

growing in sandy places.

Arenaceous plants develop blossoms after the first spring rain.

areology

n
/ ,ɑːrē'äləjē /
Gk

the scientific study of the planet Mars.

Todd's interest in areology was spurred by the discovery of possible life forms on Mars.

aretalogy

n
/ ,ɑːrə'taləjē /
Gk

a narrative of the miraculous deeds of a god or hero.

Owen was fascinated by the aretalogy of Hercules' labors.

argillaceous

adj
/ ,ɑːrdʒə'lāshəs /
L

of, relating to, or containing clay or clay minerals.

The geologist determined that a large part of the mountain consisted of argillaceous limestone.

argosy

n
/ 'ɑːrgəsē /
It

a fleet of ships or of anything likened to ships.

The lone schooner had gotten separated from the argosy in the inclement weather.

aristoi

n pl
/ 'ɑːrəstɔɪ /
Gk

citizens of high rank making up a governing body.

When the aristoi ignore the needs of the common people, they are sowing the seeds of rebellion.

Armageddon

n
/ ,ɑːrmə'gedʒn /
Gk > L

final and conclusive conflict between the forces of good and evil.

In the Bible, the book of Revelation mentions Armageddon.

armaments

armistice

n
/ 'ɑːrməstəs /
L > F

temporary suspension of hostilities as agreed upon by those engaged in the hostilities.

Fortunately, the armistice that ended World War I turned out to be permanent.

arpeggio

n
/ ɑːr'pejēō /
Gmc > It
production of the tones of a chord in succession and not simultaneously.

The opening measure of Ryan's piano recital piece featured a difficult arpeggio.

arraignment

n
/ ə'rānmənt /
F > E

an act of finding fault with : denunciation.

It seems that every few years there is a wholesale arraignment of existing educational standards.

arrasene

arrive

arrogance

n
/ 'ɑːrəɡən(t)s /
L

a genuine or assumed feeling of superiority that shows itself in an overbearing manner.

After Sam won the contest, he displayed an annoying arrogance.

arrogant

adj
/ 'ɑːrəɡənt /
L

exhibiting a level of superiority that is inconsistent with one's position.

Jack's arrogant attitude annoyed his more qualified colleagues.

arsenal

n
/ 'ɑːrs(ə)nəl /
Ar > It

a storehouse or source of supply for arms, ammunition, or other military equipment.

In early 1941 Franklin Roosevelt believed that America's most immediate role was to act as an arsenal for democratic nations.

artesian

adj
/ ɑːr'tēzhən /
F

involving, relating to, or supplied by the upward movement of water under hydrostatic pressure in rocks or unconsolidated material beneath Earth's surface.

The water bubbling up in the pasture was coming from an artesian spring.

arthritis

n
/ ɑːr'thrɪdəs /
Gk

inflammation of one or more joints due to infectious, metabolic, or constitutional causes.

Theo's arthritis kept him from playing tennis.

arthrosopy

2003 Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee Consolidated Word List: Words Appearing Frequently

artichoke

n
/ 'ɑ:rdə.chōk /
Ar > It

the flower head of a tall herb that resembles a thistle and is cooked as a vegetable.

Norm demonstrated the proper way to eat an artichoke.

article

articulacy

artifice

n
/ 'ɑ:rdəfəs /
L

a wily or artful stratagem.

Emma saw the artifice of Jane's reserved response, and she returned to her first surmises.

artificial

artillerist

artillery

n
/ ɑ:'til(ə)rē /
F > E

the missiles discharged by the weapons of war.

The May Day parade in Red Square was widely known for its display of artillery.

arviculture

ascend

asceticism

ascribable

adj
/ ə'skrībəbəl /
L

capable of being attributed to a supposed cause, source, or author.

Dad explained that the two books were ascribable to the same author under different pen names.

asinine

asparagus

n
/ ə'spærəgəs /
Gk > L

a plant widely cultivated for its tender edible young shoots.

Jack didn't touch the asparagus his mother served him.

aspartame

n
/ 'aspə(r).tām /
L > ISV

a noncarbohydrate crystalline compound that is formed from the amino acids phenylalanine and aspartic acid and is used as a low-calorie sweetener.

Since Bertha began her diet, she prefers foods that are sweetened with aspartame.

aspersion

n
/ ə'spə:zhən /
L

a calumnious or defamatory expression or reflection.

Questions about Tom's handling of the club's petty cash cast an aspersion on his honesty.

asphalt

asphodel

n
/ 'ɑ:sfədel /
Gk

any of various Old World usually perennial herbs that bear their flowers in long erect racemes.

Bernice thought that an asphodel would complete the bouquet nicely.

asphyxiant

asphyxiate

assailant

assassin

assassinate

v
/ ə'sasən.āt /
L > F

murder (usually a prominent person).

The newspapers carried gripping accounts of an attempt to assassinate the prime minister.

assemblage

asseveration

n
/ ə.sevə'rāshən /
L

positive or emphatic affirmation or assertion : solemn declaration.

The jury did not believe the defendant's asseveration of innocence.

assiduously

adv
/ ə'sijəwəslē /
L + Ecf

in a diligent, attentive, or solicitous manner.

Lucinda questioned her brother assiduously before his interview.

assimilate

v
/ ə'simə.lāt /
L

receive into the mind and consider and thoroughly comprehend.

Sandy needs time to sort things out and assimilate them properly.

assimilation

assonance

n
/ 'asənən(t)s /
L + Fcf

relatively close juxtaposition of similar sounds especially of vowels.

"Zip your lips" was the teacher's favorite example of assonance.

assuage

v
/ ə'swāj /
L > F > E

reduce to a state of peace, calm, or quiet : mollify, pacify.

No one could assuage Bertina after she dropped her ice-cream cone.

assuagement

asthmatic

adj
/ əz'mad-ik /
Gk > L

caused by or affected with labored breathing.

Because of Pam's asthmatic condition, her mother had to dust and vacuum the house every day.

astigmatism

n
/ ə'stigmət-izəm /
Gk + Ecf

a defect of an optical system (as of the eye) that prevents light from focusing accurately and results in a blurred image.

Amy's new eyeglasses correct her astigmatism.

astringe

v
/ ə'strinj /
L

cause (tissue) to draw together : constrict.

Larry uses witch hazel to astringe his facial pores.

astrogator

asylum

asymmetry

atelier

n
/ ,ad'lyā /
L > F

an artist's studio or workroom.

Ken hoped to find some affordable loft space downtown for his atelier.

athletic

atmosphere

n
/ 'atməsfi(ə)r /
Gk

the air of a given place especially as affected by a particular characteristic (as heat, moisture, wholesomeness, or unwholesomeness).

Christy could barely tolerate the close atmosphere of her one-room schoolhouse.

atmospheric

adj
/ ,atmə'sfirik /
Gk + Gk > L > F

of or relating to the whole mass of air surrounding Earth.

Only two elements are known to be liquid under atmospheric conditions: mercury and bromine.

atomic

atrabilious

atrichia

n
/ ā'trikēə /
Gk

congenital or acquired baldness.

Some dogs are afflicted with atrichia from birth.

atrium

atrocious

adj
/ ə'trōshəs /
L

markedly inferior in quality.

Mrs. Diamond vowed to do something about her grandson's atrocious table manners.

atrophy

v
/ 'atrəfē /
Gk > L

undergo a wasting away or progressive decline.

Jay knows that his muscles will atrophy while he recuperates from surgery.

attenuate

adj
/ ə'tenyə,wət /
L

tapering gradually often into a long slender point.

The locust tree has narrow attenuate leaves.

attitudinal

attrition

n
/ ə'trishən /
L

a usually gradual loss of personnel from causes normal or peculiar to a given situation (as death, retirement, and resignation in a labor force) often without filling the vacancies.

The CEO promised that all of the cuts would come from attrition; no employees would be laid off.

aubade

auctioneer

n
/ ,ökshə'ni(ə)r /
L + Ecf

one who conducts the sale of goods at public auction usually as an agent on commission.

The auctioneer at the antique sale had a booming voice.

audacious

adj
/ ɔ'dāshəs /
L

recklessly venturesome : presumptuously bold.

Tom's audacious disregard for physical limitations will catch up with him sooner or later.

audacity

audience

n
/ 'ödēən(t)s /
L

[has homonym: audients] those attending a stage or film production or viewing a televised program.

The audience erupted with thunderous applause at the act's conclusion.

auger

augment

augur

v
/ 'ɔgə(r) /
L

[has homonym and near homonym: auger and agar] give indirect evidence of : portend.

The club members' enthusiasm and dedication augur success for the club's projects.

augury

auk

n
/ 'ɔk /

ON > Norw or Icelandic
any of several black and white short-necked diving seabirds that nest in colder parts of the Northern Hemisphere.

In one of her books, Laura Ingalls Wilder writes of a strange midwinter encounter with a stray bird resembling an auk.

aurelian

n
/ ɔ'relyən /
L + Ecf

a collector and breeder of moths and butterflies.

Sarah admired the beautiful butterflies pictured in the book by Mr. Jacobson, a well-known aurelian.

auricle

n
/ 'ɔrəkəl /
L

[has homonym: oracle] a chamber of the heart that receives blood from the veins and forces it into the ventricle or ventricles.

The heart of a fish has one auricle and one ventricle.

auricular

adj
/ ɔ'rikyələ(r) /
L

of, relating to, or using the ear or the sense of hearing.

George's understanding of unfamiliar words is auricular; that is, he must hear out loud the words he reads before he can comprehend them.

auscultation

n
/ ɔ'skəl'təʃən /
L

the act of listening to sounds arising within organs (as the lungs or heart) as an aid to diagnosis and treatment.

Warming her stethoscope with her hands before performing auscultation has become second nature to Dr. Harris.

auslander

n pl
/ 'ɔspəsəz /
L

patronage and kindly guidance : protection.

The medical team entered the country under the auspices of the International Red Cross.

austere

adj
/ ɔ'sti(ə)r /
GK > L > F > E

stern and unyielding in appearance and manner.

The substitute teacher was austere and humorless.

authentic

adj
/ ɔ'stəntik /
Gk > L > F > E

worthy of acceptance or belief by reason of conforming to fact or reality.

The restoration society aims to provide an authentic reproduction of the colonial village.

author

autodidact

autonomous

autonomy
n
/ ɔ'tänəmə /
Gk

the quality or state of being independent, free, and self-directing.

After years of fighting the colonial government, the island was finally granted autonomy.

autumn

auxiliary

adj
/ ɔg'zilyərə /
L

offering or providing help, assistance, or support especially by interaction.

Roland volunteers as an auxiliary guide for the local Youth Mountaineers Club.

available

avalanche
n
/ 'avələntʃ /
F

a large mass of snow, ice, earth, rock, or other material in swift motion down a mountainside.

The tiny Swiss village was destroyed by an avalanche.

avalement

avarice

n
/ 'avərəs /
L > F > E

excessive desire for wealth or gain.

Pride, avarice, and gluttony are among the seven deadly sins.

avaricious

averred

aviator

avionics

avocado

n
/ ,avə'kæ()dō /
Nahuatl > Sp

the pulpy green or purple somewhat pear-shaped edible fruit of various tropical American trees.
Tanisha's first taste of sushi was a roll containing avocado, crab, and cucumber.

avocet

n
/ 'avə'set /
F&It

any of several rather large long-legged shore birds having webbed feet and a slender upwardly curved bill.
Making their way through the marsh, the birds happened on a foraging avocet.

avoirdupois

avuncular

adj
/ ə'vʌŋkjələ(r) /
L

acting or speaking with the familiarity, kindness, or indulgence of an uncle.
Morris took an avuncular tone with Susan when he advised her on her college plans, even though he was her elder by only three years.

awestruck

awl

awry

adv
/ ə'rī /
E

wrong, amiss.
Gayle's plans for the victory parade went hopelessly awry.

axiology

axiom

n
/ 'aksēəm /
Gk

a proposition, rule, or maxim that has found general acceptance or is thought worthy thereof.
"Early to bed, early to rise" is Uncle Abdul's favorite axiom.

axunge

n
/ 'aks.ənʃ /
L

fat or grease usually of pigs or of geese.
Suzanne's cookbook of home remedies recommended axunge to soothe minor burns.

ayatollah

n
/ iə'tɔlə /
Ar > Per

a religious leader among Shiite Muslims—used as a title of respect especially for one who is not an imam.
When Ayatollah Khomeini gained political control of Iran in 1979, he re-created it as a religious Islamic republic.

azimuth

n
/ 'azəməθ /
Ar

an arc of the horizon measured between a fixed point and the vertical circle passing through the center of an object.
Using a compass, the navigator estimated the azimuth of the star.

azotea

azure

adj
/ 'azhə(r) /
Per > Ar > Sp > F

resembling the color of the unclouded sky.
Sarah prefers to call her eyes "azure" instead of "blue."

babblative

adj
/ 'bæblədɪv /
E imitative?

given to excessive talking : garrulous.
The babblative waitress called everyone at our table "sweetheart."

baboon

n
/ bæ'būn /
F > E

a large primate with a short tail and a doglike snout.
The children at the zoo were entertained by the strange sounds of the baboon.

babushka

n
/ bæ'bʊʃkə /
Russ

a triangularly folded kerchief worn over the head and usually tied under the chin.
Emma's Ukrainian doll wears a red babushka and an elaborately embroidered apron.

baccalaureate

n
/ ,bakə'lɔrēət /
L

the degree of bachelor conferred by universities and colleges.
Marika earned a baccalaureate at the age of 12.

bacchanalian

bacciferous

adj
/ bak'sɪf(ə)rəs /
L + Ecf

bearing berries.
Sylvia took care not to park her car under any bacciferous trees.

bachelor

n
/ 'bæç(ə)lə(r) /
Celt > L > F > E

an unmarried man of marriageable age.
Kendrick was the only bachelor living in the apartment building.

bacillus

n
/ bə'siləs /
L

a disease-producing bacterium.
Kendra will use a powerful disinfectant to kill any bacillus that might be lurking on the counter top.

backfisch

backgammon

n
/ 'bək.gəmən /
E

a game played with dice and counters on a board divided into two tables each marked with 12 points in which each player tries to move his own counters from point to point and off the board.
Ed explained to Tim that the game board edged with tall, thin triangles was used to play backgammon.

badgeringly

badinage

n
/ 'bɑd'n'əz /
L > OProv > F
light and playful repartee or wit : banter.
Mrs. Lopez, our bus driver, frequently engages in badinage with her lively passengers.

badminton

n
/ 'bɑd.mɪnt'n /
E geog name
a court game played by two or four persons with light long-handled rackets and a shuttlecock volleyed over a net.
After lunch John suggested a leisurely game of badminton.

bagatelle

n
/ bəgə'tel /
L > It > F
a game played with a cue and usually nine balls on an oblong table having cups or both cups and arches at one end.
Aaron is an excellent snooker player but is unfamiliar with the rules of bagatelle.

bagel

bailiff

n
/ 'bālɪf /
F > E
a court officer who seats witnesses and spectators, announces the entrance of the judge, and keeps order in the court.
Judge Cantor asked the bailiff to remove Mr. Sims from the courtroom.

bailiwick

n
/ 'bālē.wɪk /
E
field of activity : sphere of operations.
Only when the topic was birdwatching, his particular bailiwick, did Robin feel at ease talking to strangers.

baize

balaclava

n
/ .bələ'klävə /
Crimean geog name
a hoodlike knitted cap covering the head, neck, and part of the shoulders and worn especially by soldiers and mountaineers.
Every climber wore a balaclava for protection from the cold air.

balalaika

n
/ .bələ'likə /
Russ
an instrument of the guitar kind having a triangular wooden body and from two to four strings.
Vladimir strummed the balalaika and sang a Ukrainian folk song.

balbriggan

n
/ bəl'brɪgən /
Ir geog name
a plain-stitch knitted often tubular usually cotton fabric used especially for underwear, hosiery, or sweaters.
Moir's imported Irish sweater was made of balbriggan.

balcony

n
/ 'balkənē /
Gmc > It
an interior projecting gallery in a public building (as a theater); specifically : such a gallery immediately above the main floor.
Tickets for seats in the balcony sold out before those in the orchestra.

balestra

ballast

ballerina

n
/ .bələ'rēnə /
L > It
a female ballet dancer.
Although the ballerina seemed a bit nervous before her performance, her dancing was faultless.

balletomane

n
/ bə'ledə.mān /
L > It > F + Ecff + Gk > L > E
one who takes extraordinary delight in artistic dance performances.
The well-known balletomane took roses to every performance.

ballistic

adj
/ bə'listɪk /
Gk > L
of or belonging to the hurling of missiles.
Simon used ballistic laws to determine where the arrow would land.

ballistics

n pl
/ bə'listiks /
Gk > L

the science of the motion of powder-propelled projectiles in flight.

An expert in ballistics testified that the fatal bullet had been fired from the defendant's gun.

balloon

balminess

n
/ 'bämēnəs /
Semitic? > Gk > L > F > E + Ecff
the quality or state of being mild or soothing.

The balminess of the evening breeze helped Kate forget the accident.

balneation

n
/ 'balnē'āshən /
L

the act or action of bathing.

Alicia uses a sponge to assist in her daily balneation.

balustrade

n
/ 'baləstrād /
It > F

a row of short supports topped by a rail to serve as an open parapet.

Juliet leaned on the balustrade and gazed down at Romeo with adoring eyes.

bamboo

bamboozle

v
/ bam'büzəl /
unknown

conceal one's true motives from someone, especially by elaborately feigning good intentions so as to gain an end or achieve an advantage : mislead, hoodwink.

Gavin tried to bamboozle his neighbor into offering her garage for his party by saying how much it needed a good airing out.

banality

n
/ bā'nalədē /
F

the quality of lacking originality, freshness, or novelty.

Pearl's English teacher commented on the banality of much of the class's poetry.

banana

n
/ bə'nanə /
African > Sp or Pg

the elongated often curved and usually tapering fruit of the banana plant having soft pulpy flesh and a rind that is usually yellow when ripe.

To introduce fractions, the teacher showed her students how a banana can be divided lengthwise into thirds.

banausic

adj
/ bə'nəusik /
Gk

money-making, breadwinning : vocational.

Brandon showed no inclination toward banausic pursuits.

bandage

n
/ 'bandij /
F

a narrow length of fabric used to cover a wound, hold a dressing in place, immobilize an injured part, or apply pressure.

Mom immediately cleaned and put a bandage on Ted's scraped knee.

bandalore

n
/ 'bandə,lō(ə)r /
unknown

a toy with an automatically winding cord by which it is brought back to the hand when thrown.

Jeffrey brought a bandalore to school for show-and-tell.

bandicoot

n
/ 'bandē.küt /
Telugu

any of certain small active insectivorous and herbivorous marsupial mammals found in Oceania.

Some species of bandicoot are endangered.

banishment

banjo

banjorine

bankruptcy

banquet

baobab

baptismal

adj
/ bap'tizməl /
Gk > L > F
of or relating to the ceremony of admitting one into membership in a Christian church with the use of water by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling.

The church's new baptismal font is made of Italian marble.

barbaric

adj
/ bār'barik /
Gk > L
of, relating to, or characteristic of one who lacks refinement, gentleness, learning, or artistic or literary culture.

Harold was embarrassed by his little brother's barbaric table manners.

barbarism

barbarous

barbican

n
/ 'bärbəkən /
L > F > E
an outer defensive work of a city or castle.

The invaders aimed their catapult at the castle's barbican.

barbiturate

n
/ bär'bichərət /
Gk
any of a large group of acids or their salts that are used as sedatives, hypnotics, and antispasmodics.
Even a mild barbiturate can be habit-forming if used incorrectly.

bardiglio

n
/ bär'dēl(,)yō /
L? > Sp > It
an Italian marble commonly having a dark gray or bluish ground traversed by veins.
The most exquisite mantel in the country estate was made of bardiglio.

bargain

bargello

barker

barnacle

n
/ 'bärnəkəl /
E
any of numerous marine crustaceans that are free-swimming as larvae but fixed to rocks or floating objects as adults.
The sailors scraped many a barnacle from the sides of the ship.

barnacled

barnstorm

v
/ 'bärnz.tōrm /
E + E
tour through rural districts staging theatrical performances in large farm buildings or makeshift theaters.
The troupe set off in buses to barnstorm the Midwest with their version of The Music Man.

barognosis

n
/ ,bäräg'nōsəs /
Gk > L
the perception of weight by the cutaneous and muscle senses.
The loss of barognosis is a symptom of some muscle diseases.

barometer

n
/ bə'rämədə(r) /
Gk + Gk
an instrument for determining the pressure of the atmosphere.
Erica predicts the weather by using the barometer located on her kitchen wall.

baronet

n
/ ,bärə'net /
Gmc > F > E
the holder of a dignity or degree of honor ranking immediately below a baron and above a knight.
The baronet swaggered among the knights but quailed before the baron.

baronial

adj
/ bə'rōnēəl /
F > E
splendid, stately, spacious, ample.
The baronial fireplace had enough room to hold six-foot logs.

baroque

adj
/ bə'rōk /
It name? > F
of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a style of artistic expression prevalent especially in the 17th century, marked by elaborate and sometimes grotesque ornamentation.
The baroque style in art and architecture was marked by the use of curved figures.

barouche

n
/ bə'rūsh /
L > It > G
a four-wheeled shallow carriage with a driver's seat high in front, two double seats inside, one facing back and the other front, and a folding top over the back seat.
Michelle and Phil rode to the prom in a barouche.

barracks

n pl
/ 'bærəks /
Catal > F
an often permanent building or set of buildings used especially for lodging soldiers.
Each new recruit was assigned a bunk in the barracks.

barrage

n
/ bə'rāzh /
F
a massive concentrated and usually continuous discharge or shower (as of missiles or blows).
In Puritan New England, those who broke the law were sometimes put to death by a barrage of stones.

barratry

n
/ 'bærətrē /
F > E
the persistent incitement of litigation.
Barratry has overloaded our country's courts.

barrel

n
/ 'bærəl /
F > E
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a unit of measure for petroleum equal to 42 gallons.
Sheiks wept as the price of oil dropped below 17 dollars per barrel.

barren

adj
/ 'barən /
F > E

[has homonym: baron] deficient in producing vegetation : bare, desolate.

The overcultivated land, once fertile, was now barren.

barricade

n
/ 'barəkād /
F

a barrier or obstacle that prevents passage.

A police barricade kept the crowds at a safe distance from the burning building.

barrio

n
/ 'bärēō /
Ar > Sp

a Spanish-speaking neighborhood or quarter in a city or town in the United States especially in the Southwest.

The politician continually reminded the public of his roots in the barrio.

bartizan

n
/ 'bärdəzən /
E

a small structure overhanging or projecting from a building for lookout or defense.

The guard posted at the bartizan was the first to spot the approaching army.

bascule

n
/ 'baskyül /
F

an apparatus or structure in which one end is counterbalanced by the other on the principle of the seesaw or by weights (as in a bascule bridge).

The castle architect proposed building a bascule over the moat.

bashful

basilica

basilisk

n
/ 'basə.lisk /
Gk > L > E

a legendary reptile that has a fatal breath and glance.

Jessie debated whether to incorporate a basilisk or a poisonous snake into her fable.

basin

bassoon

bastion

n
/ 'baschən /
Gmc > Prov > F

a projecting part of a fortification.

Matthew paused at the castle bastion to look out over the countryside.

bathymeter

n
/ bə'thimədə(r) /
Gk > ISV + Gk > F

a device for the sounding of depths.

Proper use of the bathymeter was crucial as Captain Byron navigated through the shallows in the fog.

bathymetry

bathyscaphe

batik

n
/ bə'tək /
Javanese > Malay

an Indonesian method of hand-printing textiles by coating parts of the fabric with wax to resist dye and dipping in a cold dye solution.

Sheila used both batik and tie-dye in her T-shirt creations.

batiste

batrachoid

battalion

n
/ bə'talyən /
L > It > F

a considerable body of troops organized to act together : army.

The commander advanced the battalion confidently when he saw the pitifully few defenders remaining at the castle walls.

bauble

bavardage

n
/ ,bavə(r)'däzh /
L > F

small talk, chitchat.

After a stressful math class, Cora welcomed the opportunity for bavardage with her friends in the cafeteria.

bayonet

bayou

n
/ 'bi(y)ü /

Choctaw > Louisiana F

a creek, secondary watercourse, or minor river that is tributary to another river or other body of water.

Dale's grandfather lives near a bayou in southern Alabama.

bazooka

n
/ bə'zükə /
Amer E

a light portable usually crew-served shoulder weapon used especially to launch armor-piercing rockets.

Lenny begged his mother for the tank, bazooka, and toy soldiers that he had seen in a commercial.

beachcomber

beacon

n
/ 'bēkən /
E

a signal fire or lighthouse commonly on a hill, tower, or pole.

That lighthouse once served as a beacon for ships nearing the shore.

beatitude

beaujolais

beaumontage

n
/ bō'māntij /
unknown > French
a composition used by artisans to fill and conceal holes or cracks in wood or metal.
Bart asked the conservator to replace all the old beaumontage in the statuette.

beauteous

bedizenment

bedstead

beflustered

beforehand

beggar

beguile

v
/ bə'gīl /
E
gain the notice of by the use of wiles : charm.
The teenager tried to beguile her teacher into giving her a good grade.

beguiling

adj
/ bə'gīliŋ /
E
provoking pleased interest and diverting from concern or vexation.
Todd blamed the beguiling influence of TV for his low grades.

beguine

n
/ bə'gēn /
F
a vigorous popular dance of the islands of Saint Lucia and Martinique somewhat like the rumba.
Cole Porter's song "Begin the Beguine" started the beguine on the road to popularity in this country.

behemoth

n
/ bə'hēmōth /
Heb > L > E
something of oppressive or monstrous size or power.
Anwar's wrestling opponent was a behemoth of a man.

beige

adj
/ 'bāzh /
Per? > Gk? > L? > It? > F
of a variable color averaging light grayish yellowish brown.
Tired of the beige walls in her home, Ellen decided to repaint all the rooms with bold colors.

beleaguer

v
/ bə'lēgə(r) /
D
subject to oppressive or grievous forces.
In June the black flies will invade the campsite and beleaguer the unsuspecting campers.

belemnoid

adj
/ 'bəlɛm.nɔid /
Gk
shaped like a dart.
The museum's collection included belemnoid carvings of unknown origin.

believe

bellicose

belligerent

adj
/ bə'lij(ə)rənt /
L
waging war.
The victorious faction is setting up an interim government and purging its belligerent enemies.

bellipotent

adj
/ be'lipədənt /
L + L
mighty in war.
The nation's desire to become a bellipotent power resulted in a drastic increase in its defense budget.

bellwether

n
/ 'bel.wethə(r) /
E
one that takes the lead or initiative : leader.
Brooke's firm has long been considered a bellwether in the industry.

bellwort

belomancy

belton

benediction

n
/ .benə'dikshən /
L
an expression or utterance of blessing or good wishes.
Alta's mother orated an impressive benediction at her wedding reception.

beneficence

benevolent

adj
/ bə'nevələnt /
L > E
marked by a kindly disposition to promote the happiness and prosperity of others.
Elmer received a commendation for his benevolent actions.

benignant

adj
/ bə'nignənt /
L
kindly, mild, gentle.
The department store always chose a Santa Claus with a benignant countenance.

benison

n
/ 'benəsən /
L > F > E

[Note: Could be confused with venison.] the pronouncing of a blessing : benediction.
Tim's favorite vocal benison is his youth choir's rendition of the Irish Blessing.

bequeath

bereave

bereavement

n
/ bə'revmənt /
E
deprivation; especially : loss of a loved one by death.
Some scientific studies have shown that bereavement, such as the loss of a spouse, can affect one's immunity to illness.

beret

n
/ bə'rā /
Prov > F
a soft flat visorless cap of woolen material originally worn by Basque peasants.
The painter's beret was a bit tattered and moth-eaten.

beriberi

n
/ berē'berē /
Sinhalese
a disease caused by a lack of or inability to assimilate vitamin B-1.
The symptoms of beriberi usually respond well to dietary improvements.

berouged

besmirched

besom

n
/ 'bēzəm /
E
a broom made with a bundle of twigs.
Milena pretended she was a pioneer, sweeping out the garage with a crudely constructed besom.

bestial

betacism

bevy

n
/ 'bevē /
E
a usually large group or collection.
A bevy of reporters crowded around the gold medal winner.

bewilder

bialys

bibelot

n
/ 'bēbəlō /
Gk > L > F
a small household ornament or decorative object : trinket.
Mrs. Carnes gave her toddler a bibelot to play with while the women discussed plans for the rally.

biblioclast

bibliography

biblioklept

bibliopegy

n
/ .biblē'äpājē /
Gk + Gk
the art of binding books.
A local bookbinder visited the class and explained how bibliopegy is both a craft and an art.

bicameral

adj
/ bī'kam(ə)rəl /
L
having or made up of two distinct legislative bodies.
The U.S. Congress is bicameral, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

bicentennial

n
/ .bīsen'tenēəl /
Lcf + L + L > E
a 200th anniversary or its celebration.
Bargersville will celebrate the bicentennial of its founding next year.

biceps

biennial

bifurcation

n
/ bī.fər'kāshən /
L > F
the point at which separation or branching into two parts, areas, aspects, or connected segments occurs.
Satish pulled his car over and studied the map when he reached a bifurcation in the road.

bijou

bijouterie

n
/ bē'zhütərə /
F
jewelry in which delicate or intricate metalwork contributes more to the value than do the constituent materials.
Marge scoured the display case in the antique shop for an addition to her collection of bijouterie.

bikini

n
/ bə'kēnē /
Pacific geog name
a woman's abbreviated two-piece bathing suit.
Joan's father does not approve of the bikini she would like to purchase.

bilateral

adj
/ bī'lādərəl /
L > Ecf + L
of or relating to the right and left sides of a central area.
The maple leaf exhibits bilateral symmetry.

bilge

n
/ 'bilj /
unknown
water that collects by seepage or leakage in the bottom of a ship or other vessel.

Jeannie awoke to find bilge sloshing against her bunk.

bilharzia

bilingual

billiards

n pl
/ 'bilyə(r)dz /
Celt > F
any of several games played on an oblong table in which small balls are driven against one another or into pockets by means of a cue.
Honorita supplemented her scholarship money by playing billiards for pocket change.

billionaire

biloculine

bimестrial

bimillenary

n
/ bɪ'milə.nerē /
L
a 2000th anniversary or its celebration.
In 1951 the city of Paris celebrated the bimillenary of its founding.

binoculars

n pl
/ bə'näkyələ(r)z /
L > E + L
a handheld optical instrument composed of two telescopes and a focusing device and usually having prisms to increase magnifying ability.
Binoculars have proved to be a great boon to bird-watching.

binomial

biopsy

bireme

bisagre

n
/ bə'sa(ɪ)grē /
MexSp
a small spiny cactus of Mexico and the southwestern United States that is sometimes cut into slices and candied.
Elena often rewarded her children's good behavior with slices of bisagre.

biscuit

n
/ 'biskət /
(L + L) > F > E
a quick bread made in a small shape from dough that has been rolled and cut or dropped and that is raised in the baking by a leavening agent other than yeast.
A hot biscuit with butter and honey was the best part of the lunch.

bise

n
/ 'bēz /
Gmc > F > E
[has homonym: bees] a cold wind; especially : a cold dry north wind of southern France, Switzerland, and Italy.
Jake was told that he would need to pack warm clothes to withstand the bise while he toured Switzerland.

bisector

bittern

bivouac

n
/ 'biv.wak /
G > F
a camping out for a night.
Private Slater packed a peanut butter sandwich for his bivouac.

bizarre

adj
/ bə'zär /
It > F
[has near homonym: bazaar] being strikingly out of the ordinary or at variance with some standard, real or implied.
Todd's bizarre behavior prompted his parents to call a doctor.

blague

v
/ 'bläg /
F
talk pretentiously and usually inaccurately or boastfully.
Politicians who blague generally alienate their audiences.

blandishment

n
/ 'blandishmənt /
L > F > E + Ecf
speech, action, or device that flatters and tends to coax or cajole.
No blandishment can sway Gil from his steadfast sense of propriety.

blarney

n
/ 'blärnē /
Ir geog name
smooth wheedling talk.
Mrs. Lewis was not impressed by Al's blarney as he tried to talk her into raising his grade.

blasphemous

adj
/ 'blasfəməs /
Gk > L
speaking or writing irreverence toward God.
During the Middle Ages many books were condemned as blasphemous and burned.

blasphemy

blatant

adj
/ 'blātənt /
L
completely or crassly obvious : brazen.
Mr. Nall suspended Ed for blatant disobedience during the fire drill.

blatherskite

n
/ 'blathə(r).skīt /
ON + ON
a blustering, talkative, and often incompetent person.
With Jay's luck, the biggest blatherskite in the theater will sit directly behind him.

blazon

n
/ 'blāzən /
F > E
coat of arms.
The duke's blazon was on everything from the tableware to the towels.

bleach

v
/ 'blēch /
E
remove the color or stains from.
Eliza decided not to bleach her stained socks for fear of ruining their elastic.

bleary

blemish

n
/ 'blemish /
Gmc > F > E
defect, flaw.
A skilled watercolorist can render a blemish invisible.

blenny

blight

blissful

adj
/ 'blisfəl /
E
marked by a state of complete or ecstatic happiness.
The blissful bride and groom hurried off on their honeymoon.

blithe

blitz

v
/ 'blitz /
G
rush (a passer) in football from a position as a linebacker or defensive back.
In a desperate bid to stop the other team from scoring, the coach told all three linebackers to blitz the quarterback.

blitzkrieg

n
/ 'blits.krēg /
G
war conducted with great speed and force; specifically : a violent surprise offensive by massed air forces and mechanized ground forces in close coordination.
The French forces were roundly defeated by the Germans' blitzkrieg.

blizzard

n
/ 'blizə(r)d /
unknown
a severe and prolonged snowstorm.
Last winter many cattle perished in a blizzard.

blossom

blotch

n
/ 'bläch /
L? > F > E
imperfection, blemish.
The vendor referred to the ugly blotch on the leather as "natural discoloration."

blouse

bloviate

blucher

n
/ 'blükə(r) /
Prussian name
a shoe having the tongue and vamp cut in one piece and the quarters lapped over the vamp and laced together for closing.
The blucher was very popular with returning servicemen after World War I.

bludgeon

n
/ 'bləjən /
unknown
a short stick used as a weapon usually having one thick, heavy, or loaded end.
The shop teacher confiscated the crude bludgeon Harlan had fashioned from a baseball bat.

blueprint

blunderbuss

n
/ 'bləndə(r).bəs /
D + L > D
an obsolete short gun or firearm that had a large bore and was intended for shooting at close quarters without exact aim.
The museum exhibit featured a blunderbuss along with other 18th-century weapons.

bobbin

bobolink

bocaccio

n
/ bō'kächō /
AmSp&It > E
a large olive to brown red-flushed rockfish of the Pacific coast from British Columbia to southern California.
The bocaccio feeds on a variety of fishes, crabs, and squids.

bocage

n
/ bō'kähz /
F
countryside or landscape marked by intermingled patches of woodland and heath, small fields, tall hedgerows, and orchards.
The charming bocage of rural France presents a variety that delights travelers.

bodega

n
/ bō'dägə /
L > Sp
a combined wineshop and grocery store.
Miguel's mother sent him to the bodega for a loaf of bread.

boiserie

n
/ 'bväzərə /
Gmc > F
carved wood paneling.
In Louis's living room painted boiserie provides a backdrop for a melange of upholstered armchairs.

boisterous

adj

/ 'bɔɪst(ə)rəs /

F > E

full of exuberant uninhibited and often excessive spirits.

The locker room was boisterous after the championship.

bole

n

/ 'bɔɪ /

ON

the trunk of a tree.

Biff threw a knife into the old oak's bole.

bombilation

bonanza

n

/ bə'nanzə /

L > Sp

something that yields an often unexpectedly large profit.

Millie struck a bonanza with her latest business venture.

bonhomous

adj

/ 'bänəməs /

L > F + Ecf

warmly genial.

Will told us about the bonhomous master of ceremonies at the banquet.

boniface

n

/ 'bänəfəs /

name in an Irish play

the proprietor of a hotel, nightclub, or restaurant.

The boniface of the Red Horse Inn loves to have his picture taken with visiting celebrities.

bonsai

n

/ 'bɔɪ.n.sɪ /

Jpn

[has near homonym: banzai] a potted plant (as a tree) dwarfed by special methods of culture.

Joanie spent the afternoon instructing a class on pruning a bonsai.

bookcase

boomerang

boondoggle

Bordelaise

n

/ .bɔrd'laɪz /

F geog name

a brown sauce flavored with a table wine from the Gironde department of France, the capital of which is Bordeaux.

Stuart thickened the Bordelaise over a low flame.

bordereaux

borderline

bore

n

/ 'bɔ(ə)r /

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonyms and near homonym: boar, Boer, and boor.] a tidal flood that regularly or occasionally rushes with a roaring noise into certain rivers.

Ships in the harbor when a bore occurred could suffer damage from its considerable height or force.

borealization

n

/ .bɔr'ɛələ'zəʃən /

Gk > L + Ecff

adaptation (as of plants) to life in more northerly regions.

In the far North, borealization is a primary factor in the evolution of different plant species.

borzoi

n

/ 'bɔr.zɔi /

Russ

a Russian wolfhound.

The borzoi resembles a large greyhound with long wavy hair.

bosky

botanist

n

/ 'bät(ə)nəst /

Gk + Ecf

a professional student of plants.

A botanist identified the mysterious plant growing behind Alysia's garage.

botany

n

/ 'bät(ə)nē /

Gk > F

the branch of biology dealing with plant life.

Jan has no formal education in botany, but she does seem to have a green thumb.

botcher

botuliform

adj

/ 'bächələfɔrm /

L + Ecf

shaped like a sausage.

Cattails have botuliform flower heads.

boudoir

n

/ 'bü.dwä(r) /

F

a woman's dressing room, bedroom, or private sitting room.

The boudoir adjacent to the master bedroom was, to Brooke, the most fascinating room on the tour.

bough

n

/ 'baʊ /

E

[has homonym: bow] a branch of a tree.

Grass would grow better beneath the tree if the lowest bough were removed.

bouillabaisse

bouillon

n
/ 'bü.yän /
F

[Note: Alternate pronunciation has homonym: bullion.] a broth made by slow boiling of meat and especially beef in water.

Benny learned how to make bouillon in his home economics class.

boulevard

n
/ 'bülə.värd /
D > F

a broad thoroughfare often having grassplots with trees along the center or between curbs and sidewalks.

On a warm sunny day many strollers can be found on the boulevard.

boulevardier

boundary

bounteous

bountiful

adj
/ 'baüntəfəl /
L > F > E + Ecf
abundant, plentiful.

The potato farmers rejoiced over their bountiful harvest.

bouquet

n
/ bō'kā /
F

the distinctive fragrance (as of a wine or brandy) derived from the processes of fermentation and aging.

Jim found the bouquet of the mystery wine much to his liking.

bouquiniste

n
/ бүкēnēst /
D > F

a dealer in secondhand books.
The bouquiniste encouraged us to browse as long as we wanted.

bourgeois

adj
/ 'bürzh.wä /
F

of, belonging to, or characteristic of the townsman or the social middle class.

The senator said that he espoused the bourgeois virtues of thriftiness, forethought, and a serious attitude toward life.

bourgeoisie

n
/ бүрzh.wä'zē /
F

the social and economic middle class.

Dillon went to college to, as he put it, "escape from the throes of the bourgeoisie."

boutonniere

n
/ .büt'n'i(ə)r /
F

a flower or bouquet worn in a buttonhole.

The groom wore a sprig of orange blossom as a boutonniere.

bowdlerize

v
/ 'bōdlə.rīz /
E name + Ecf

remove matter considered indelicate or otherwise objectionable from.

When the publisher chose to bowdlerize the novel, the school librarian refused to order it.

bowery

boycott

v
/ 'bōi.kät /
E name

combine against (a person, employer, a group of persons, or a nation) in a policy of suspension of dealings or relations for economic or political reasons.

The people of New Athens resolved to boycott the offending company.

boysenberry

n
/ 'bóiz'n.berē /
Amer name + E

a very large bramble fruit with a flavor like a raspberry especially valued for canning and preserving.

Mark enjoys the tart flavor of a freshly picked boysenberry.

bracelet

brachiate

v
/ 'brakē.āt /
Gk > L

progress by swinging from one hold to another by the arms.

The children enjoyed watching the chimpanzees playfully brachiate from tree to tree.

brachylogy

n
/ bra'kiləjē /
Gk

conciseness of expression.

A successful poet is a master of imagery and brachylogy.

bradawl

n
/ 'brad.əl /
E + E

an awl with a chisel edge used to make holes for screws or thin, small nails.

Desmond found a bradawl in his grandfather's toolbox, but he couldn't figure out what it was used for.

bradycardia

bradyseism

n
/ 'brādē.sīzəm /
Gk

a slow quiet upward or downward movement of Earth's crust.

The outskirts of Naples have been afflicted by bradyseism since a 1980 earthquake.

braggadocio

n
/bragə'dōshēō /
name in English poem
empty boasting or bragging.
Shelly was sure that Keith's claim to have received ten speeding tickets was mere braggadocio.

brankursine

n
/brɑŋ'kərs'n /
L > F
a prickly European herb having rough, fuzzy leaves.
The brankursine has ornamental value because of its claw-shaped leaves.

brasserie

bratwurst

n
/'brat.wərst /
G
fresh pork sausage.
Karen is grilling bratwurst for the pool party.

braunschweiger

n
/'braʊn.shwīgə(r) /
G name
smoked liver sausage.
Derek made a braunschweiger and pickle sandwich for his afternoon snack.

bravura

n
/brə'v(y)ūrə /
It
a show of daring or brilliancy.
The crowd cheered the aerialist for his bravura.

breach

breakfast

breath

n
/'breθ /
E
air charged with a certain fragrance, odor, or other suggestion.
The breath of roses in the parlor came from the window open to the garden.

breccia

n
/'brech(ē)ə /
It
[has near homonym: Brescia] a rock consisting of sharp fragments embedded in a fine-grained matrix (as sand or clay).
A breccia was among the rock specimens that the scientist brought back from her trip to the desert.

bretelle

n
/brə'tel /
Gmc > F
one of a pair of ornamental straps that go from the belt on the front of a dress over the shoulders to the belt in back.
Candace asked for help in adjusting her bretelle.

brevet

n
/brə'vet /
F > E
an official document from a government granting a privilege, title, or dignity.
Dominic found a brevet signed by President Fillmore among his grandfather's papers.

breviloquent

brevity

n
/'brevədē /
L
expression in few words : terseness, conciseness.
Polonius told Queen Gertrude that "brevity is the soul of wit."

bribery

n
/'brīb(ə)rē /
F > E
the act or practice of giving or taking a reward, gift, or favor with a view to corrupt the conduct especially of a person in a position of trust (as a public official).
When the gambler offered the athletes money to lose the game, he was arrested and charged with bribery.

bridle

briefcase

brigadier

n
/'brigə'di(ə)r /
It > F > E
an army, marine, or air force officer ranking just below a major general and above a colonel.
After winning the decisive battle, Hiram was promoted to brigadier.

brigand

n
/'brigənd /
Celt > It > F > E
one who lives by plunder usually as a member of a band.
The captured brigand refused to say a word about his group's leader.

brigantine

n
/'brigəntēn /
Celt > It > F
a two-masted square-rigged sailing ship.
Sailing school will be held on a specially outfitted brigantine.

brilliant

brine

brioche

n
/brē'ōsh /
Gmc > F
a fancy roll of very light yeast dough rich with eggs and butter.
Amy wanted just a brioche and juice for breakfast.

broach

v
/ 'brōch /
F > E
[has homonym: brooch] open up (a subject) for discussion or debate.
No one dares broach the subject of politics in front of Monique.

broadcaster

n
/ 'brōd.kastə(r) /
E + ON > E
a person who disseminates news on radio or television.
Russell has the clear voice and precise diction of an experienced broadcaster.

brocade

n
/ brō'kād /
L > It > Catal > Sp
a rich oriental fabric with raised patterns embroidered in gold and silver threads.
Tina discovered a gorgeous brocade in the remnant bin at the fabric store.

brochette

n
/ brō'shet /
F
meat broiled on a skewer.
Marsha garnished her beef brochette with green peppers.

brochure

n
/ brō'shū(ə)r /
F
pamphlet, booklet.
Juanita designed a brochure for the zoological society.

bromeliad

n
/ brō'mēlē.ad /
Sw name + Lcf
a plant of a family of tropical American herbs or shrubs.
The colorful leaves of the bromeliad make it a popular houseplant.

bronchial

bronchitis

n
/ brän'kīdēs /
Gk
acute or chronic inflammation in the lungs.
Because of his bronchitis, Sam had given up jogging.

bronze

v
/ 'bränz /
L > It > F
[has near homonym: brawns]
become like bronze, a moderate yellowish brown alloy of copper and tin, especially in color.
Ike's attempt to bronze on the beach took an unfortunate turn when he fell asleep.

brougham

n
/ 'brü(ə)m /
Scottish name
[has near homonyms: broom, brume] a light closed horse-drawn carriage with the driver outside in front.
The brougham was once a common sight on the streets of London.

brouhaha

n
/ 'brü'hä.hä /
Hebrew? > F
publicity, attention, or excitement far beyond the merits or importance of its cause.
Sean dropped his tray in the cafeteria, causing quite a brouhaha.

brucellosis

n
/ ,brüsə'lōsēs /
E name + Lcf
a human disease characterized by extreme exhaustion and generalized aches and pains and acquired through infected animal products.
An outbreak of brucellosis forced the sausage factory to shut down.

bruise

n
/ 'brüz /
F > E
[has homonym: brews] an injury, especially one produced by a blow or collision, that does not break the surface it injures.
Heather's fall from her bicycle left her with a bad bruise.

bruit

brume

n
/ 'brüm /
L > OProv > F
[has homonym and near homonym: broom and brougham] mist, fog.
The ship's foghorn blared through the drifting brume.

brummagem

adj
/ 'brəməjəm /
E geog name
spurious especially in a cheap and showy way : phony, sham.
Irene usually wears brummagem jewelry when she dines at fancy restaurants.

brumous

bruxism

n
/ 'brək.sizəm /
Gk > E
the habit of unconsciously gritting or grinding the teeth especially in situations of stress or during sleep.
Ellie's bruxism was so pronounced that her dentist made a bite guard for her to wear at night.

buccaneer

n
/ ,bəkə'ni(e)r /
Tupi > F
one of the pirates preying upon Spanish ships and settlements especially in the West Indies in the 17th century.
While on the "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride at Disneyland, Maria thought she saw the eyes of the nearest buccaneer move.

buckram

bucolic

budgetary

buffalo

n
/ 'bʌfələʊ /
Gk > L > Sp > It
a large wild ox with a shaggy mane and short horns that was once abundant on the central and western plains of the United States.
Jamie was awed by the enormosity of the buffalo she saw at the zoo.

buffoon

n
/ bə'fjuːn /
L > It > F
a person professionally engaged in entertaining others by tricks, gestures, or comic pantomime.
Along the midway a buffoon entertained the children with a laughable pantomime.

buffoonery

n
/ (,)bə'fjuːn(ə)rē /
F
the practices of a clown or clownish person; especially : coarse loutish behavior.
Mrs. Decker warned that she would tolerate no buffoonery in her classroom.

bulbous

adj
/ 'bʌlbəs /
L
[has homonym: bulbus]
resembling or suggesting a bulb especially in roundness or in the gross enlargement of a part.
The cartoon character's heavy bulbous body lurched dangerously on his spindly legs, which barely supported him.

bulletin

bulletinize

bullion

bumptiously

adv
/ 'bʌm(p)ʃəsleɪ /
imit + Ecff
in a presumptuously, obtusely, and often noisily self-assertive manner.
Paul began acting bumptiously as soon as he was elected class president.

bumptiously

bungalow

n
/ 'bʌŋɡələʊ /
Hindi
a lightly built single-story house or cottage.
Wendy's dream vacation includes renting a bungalow on a South Pacific island.

buoyant

adj
/ 'bɔɪənt /
Sp
able to regain high spirits after depression : lighthearted.
The buoyant author gladly autographed his book for buyers.

buoyantly

buran

n
/ bʊ'ræn /
Turk > Russ
a northeasterly wind of gale force in Russia and central Asia usually identified with sandstorms in summer and blizzards in winter.
The dreaded buran from northern Siberia swept across the tundra with extraordinary violence.

bureaucracy

n
/ byü'räkrəsē /
F
a system of administration marked by lack of initiative and flexibility, by indifference to human needs or public opinion, and by a tendency to defer decisions to superiors or to impede action with red tape.
Helga blamed the bureaucracy for the six-week delay in getting her passport.

bureaucrat

n
/ 'byüərəkrət /
L > F + Gk > F
a member of the whole body of nonelected government officials.
Alexis spent 20 minutes trying to convince a bureaucrat that she really was seeking employment.

burgher

n
/ 'bɜːrɡər /
G&D
a resident of a town : townsman.
Every burgher showed up for Springfield's fireworks display.

burgherly

burgoo

n
/ (,)bɜːr'gü /
unknown
a savory highly seasoned stew or thick soup containing several kinds of meat and vegetables originally served at political rallies, barbecues, picnics, and community occasions.
Everyone looks forward to eating burgoo at Drew's Derby Day party.

burly

adj
/ 'bɜːrleɪ /
E
[has homonym: burley] strongly built : stout, sturdy.
The director chose Harry for the part of the construction worker because of his burly appearance.

bursar

n
/ 'bɜːrsər /
L
[Note: Could be confused with purser.] an administrative officer (as of a monastery or college) in charge of funds : treasurer.
The bill for the new gym floor was submitted to the school's bursar.

bursiculate

adj
/ bər'sikyələt /
L > E

shaped like a small pouch or purse.
Some seaweed plants have bursiculate leaves.

bursitis

n
/ bər'sīdēs /
L + Ecf

inflammation of a fluid-filled cavity in a joint of the body.
Pain during the tennis game was Brett's first symptom of bursitis.

busby

n
/ 'bæzbē /
E name?

a military full-dress hat made of fur with a bag usually of cloth of the color of the facings of the regiment hanging from the top on the right.
The drum major strutted proudly in his white uniform and black busby.

bushel

butterscotch

n
/ 'bədə(r).skäch /
E

a hard candy made by boiling together brown sugar, corn syrup, and water.
Butterscotch has a deep golden color and a delicious rich taste.

buttress

butyraceous

adj
/ byüd-ə'rāshəs /
Gk > L

resembling butter.
The mixed vegetables were flavored with a butyraceous sauce.

byssinosis

n
/ bisə'nōsəs /
Gk > L

a chronic industrial disease associated with the inhalation of cotton dust over a long period of time.
Employees at the mill wore masks to protect themselves from byssinosis.

byte

Byzantine

adj
/ 'bizəntēn /
Gk

of, relating to, or characteristic of the eastern Roman Empire.
Byzantine bureaucracy has become a byword for cumbersome, complicated, inefficient, and inflexible administration.

cabana

n
/ kə'ban(y)ə /
L > Sp

a tentlike often portable shelter with a projecting canopy over an open side facing a beach or swimming pool.
Sam and Doug will move the cabana closer to the swimming pool.

cabaret

n
/ kabə'rā /
L? > F

a restaurant that provides entertainment, usually singing and dancing.
Sheila's training in tap dancing helped her get a job at the local cabaret.

cabinet

cabochon
adv
/ kabə'shän /
F

in convex form highly polished but not faceted.
The jeweler cut the stone cabochon and mounted it in a platinum setting.

cabriole

n
/ 'kabrē.əl /
F

[Note: Could be confused with capriole.] a ballet leap in which one leg is extended in mid-air and the other struck against it.
The dancers dressed as wood sprites performed a cabriole in every measure of the music.

cache

v
/ 'kash /
L > F

[has homonym: cash] place or store in safety or concealment.
Jim asked Zelda to cache his valuables while he was on sabbatical in Japan.

cachinnate

cacography

n
/ ka'kəgrəfē /
Gk

bad handwriting.
Martin's cacography made his work illegible.

cacophonous

cacophony

n
/ ka'kəfənē /
Gk

harsh or discordant sound.
Spot's encounter with the skunk was accompanied by a burst of cacophony.

cacuminal

cadaver

n
/ kə'davə(r) /
L

a dead human or animal body usually intended for cutting so as to expose the several parts and their locations and connections.
Duncan dissected a cadaver in anatomy class.

cadaverous

cadence

cadre

n
/ 'kɑ:(ə)drɑ /
L > It > F
a nucleus or core group especially of trained personnel or active members of an organization who are capable of assuming leadership or of training and indoctrinating others.
Its highly skilled cadre of managers enabled the company to achieve great success in its first year.

caduceus

n
/ kə'd(y)üs(h)ēəs /
Gk > L
a conventionalized representation of a staff with two snakes curled around it and with two wings at the top.
In Greek mythology the caduceus was the staff of Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

cafeteria

n
/ .kafə'tirēə /
Turk > Sp
a self-service restaurant or lunchroom.
On the last day of school the students had a food fight in the cafeteria.

caisson

n
/ 'kɑ:sən /
L > F
a two-wheeled vehicle for artillery ammunition attachable to a horse-drawn limber for marching.
A caisson is sometimes used to carry the coffin in a military funeral.

caitiff

n
/ 'kɑ:dəf /
L > F > E
a base despicable person.
The story centers on Batman's encounters with a psychotic caitiff, the Riddler.

cajole

cajolery

n
/ kə'jɔ:l(ə)rē /
F
use of delusive enticements.
After much cajolery, the kitten finally came down from the tree.

calabash

n
/ 'kaləbʌʃ /
Ar? > Sp&F
the common bottle gourd.
A calabash with a hole cut in it makes a dandy birdhouse.

caladium

n
/ kə'lādēəm /
Malay > L
any of a small genus of tropical American plants with variously colored arrow-shaped leaves.
Julie delivered a potted caladium to her sick cousin.

calamine

calamity

calcium

n
/ 'kalsēəm /
L
a soft, silver-white bivalent metallic element that occurs in combination with minerals and rocks.
Calcium is an essential element in bones.

calculate

v
/ 'kalkyələt /
L
ascertain or determine by mathematical processes especially of some intricacy.
Toriko likes to calculate her car's gas mileage after every trip.

calculator

n
/ 'kalkyələdə(r) /
L > E + Ecf
a device used for computing amounts.
Mr. Jensen permitted each student to use a calculator during the exam.

calculiform

adj
/ 'kalkyələfɔ:m /
L > ISV
shaped like a pebble.
In the Mayan writing system, the characters were rounded like pebbles and so were described as being calculiform.

calculus

calefacient

adj
/ .kalə'fāʃənt /
L
making warm : heating.
A calefacient ointment relieved some of Dave's muscular pain.

calendar

calibrate

calico

n
/ 'kalə:kə /
Indian geog name
any of various cheap cotton fabrics with figured patterns.
Molly's dress was made of a bold orange and yellow checked calico.

caliginous

adj
/ kə'lijənəs /
F or L
dark, obscure.
A caliginous sky foreshadowed the approaching storm.

calisthenics

n pl
/ ˌkaləs'theniks /
Gk + Ecf

systematic exercises performed usually in rhythm and often in a group to improve the strength, suppleness, balance, and health of the body.

Aunt Julia does calisthenics twice a week in a program called "Body Recall."

calisthenium

calligrapher

n
/ kə'ligrəfə(r) /
Gk

one that writes a beautiful, ornamental, or stylized hand.

Joni and William had their wedding invitations inscribed by a calligrapher.

calliope

n
/ kə'līə(,)pē /
Gk > L

a musical instrument consisting of a series of crude steam or air whistles used on riverboats and in circuses and carnivals.

Passengers gathered on the upper deck of the Mississippi Queen to listen to the calliope.

callously

callow

caloric

adj
/ kə'lōrik /
L > F

of or relating to the heat-producing or energy-producing value of food.

Suzy became obsessed with caloric intake while on her crash diet.

calque

calumet

n
/ 'kalyəmet /
L > F

a highly ornamented ceremonial pipe of the North American Indians that was smoked at sacrifices and other magical or religious rites and on state occasions.

After the three chiefs reached agreement, they passed a feathered calumet.

calumny

n
/ 'kal(y)əmni /
L

a false charge or misrepresentation intended to harm one's reputation : slander.

According to Neal, the recent article about him was pure calumny.

calvities

n
/ kal'vishē.ēz /
L

baldness.

Larry's calvities is intentional: He shaves his head every morning.

calypso

n
/ kə'lip(,)sō /
Gk name

a balladlike improvisation in African rhythm usually satirizing current events first composed and sung in competition in the British West Indies.

Harry Belafonte gained fame as a singer of calypso.

camaraderie

cameline

n
/ 'kamə.lēn /
Sem > Gk > L

a twilled camel's-hair fabric.

Jordan bought a new overcoat made of cameline to wear with his dress suits.

cameo

n
/ 'kamē.ō /
L > F > It

a small theatrical or film role usually performed by a well-known actor and often limited to a single scene.

The producer was grateful that the star accepted a cameo in his new film.

camera

camionette

n
/ ˌkamyə'net /
F

a small truck or bus.

The hotel provides a camionette to shuttle guests to and from the airport.

camisole

camouflage

n
/ 'kaməflāzh /
It > F

a disguise, behavior, or expedient adopted or designed to deceive or hide.

Behind Jerry's camouflage of ignorance resides a wealth of knowledge.

camouflaged

camoufleur

campanile

n
/ ˌkɑmpə'nēlē /
L > It

[Note: Plural form can be pronounced identically.] a bell tower usually freestanding.

From the hilltop Obin could just spot the great campanile of Christ Church in Oxford.

camphor

n
/ 'kam(p)fə(r) /
Malay > Ar > L > AF > E
[has near homonym: chamfer] a tough gumlike substance obtained especially from the wood and bark of the camphor tree and used chiefly as a stimulant in medicine.
Whenever Johnny has a cold, his mother spreads on his chest an aromatic ointment containing camphor.

campus

canaille

n
/ kə'nī /
L > It > F
mob, rabble, riffraff.
During the riot the canaille destroyed and looted many stores.

canard

n
/ kə'närd /
F
a false or unfounded report or story; especially : a fabricated report (as by a newspaper).
The report of the famous singer's death turned out to be a canard.

canary

n
/ kə'nerē /
L geog name > Sp > F
a small greenish-yellow finch extensively bred as a cage bird and singer.
When the canary escaped in her living room, Susan put her cat outside until she found the bird.

canasta

n
/ kə'nastə /
L > Sp
a card game that is a form of rummy played usually as a two-hand or as a four-hand partnership game using two full decks plus four jokers.
The two couples often played canasta after having dinner together.

cancrivorious

candelabra

n
/ .kandə'läbrə /
L
a usually ornate and often heavy and large standard supporting a candlestick or lamp.
In December Stella put red and green candles in her candelabra on the mantle.

candelabrum

n
/ .kandə'läbrəm /
L
a large candlestick or a lamp usually ornamented and having several arms or branches.
Germaine admired the ornate silver candelabrum in the center of the table.

candidacy

n
/ 'kan(d)ədəsē /
L + Ecf
the quality or state of being one that is likely or worthy to gain a post, position, or distinction.
Tony's candidacy for the student council will be jeopardized if he fails his algebra exam.

candlewick

n
/ 'kandl.wik /
L > E + E
the twisted threads of soft cotton yarn contained in a candle.
Victor groped to light the candlewick in the dark.

candor

n
/ 'kandə(r) /
L
[has near homonym: canter] unreserved, honest, or sincere expression.
Russell's candor in dealing with difficult issues won over the voters.

canine

canitist

n
/ 'kanətəst /
L + Ecf
one who dyes or tints hair especially in a beauty shop.
Polly has been a canitist in a local beauty shop for 25 years.

cannelloni

cannibal

cannibalism

cannonade

canny

canoe

canoeist

n
/ kə'nüəst /
Arawak > Sp > L > F + Ecf
one that paddles a type of long narrow boat.
Evan became an expert canoeist at summer camp.

canopy

cantankerous

adj
/ kan'ta(i)ŋk(ə)rəs /
AF? > E? + Ecf
marked by ill humor, irritability, and determination to disagree.
The cantankerous old man yelled at Grady as he attempted to retrieve the football.

cantata

cantatory

canteen

canter

v
/ 'kantə(r) /
E geog name
[has homonym: cantor] move at or as if at a three-beat gait resembling but smoother and slower than the gallop.
Cindy let the horse canter for a while but soon spurred it on to a gallop.

cantilever

cantonment

cantor

n
/ 'kantə(r) /
L
[has homonym: canter] a synagogue official who sings or chants liturgical music and leads the congregation in prayer.
Jacob's vocal talent led him to consider becoming a cantor.

canvasser

n
/ 'kanvəsə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E + Ecf
one that takes or counts votes.
Helga volunteered as a canvasser for the upcoming election.

capable

capacious

adj
/ kə'pāshəs /
L
able to contain a great deal.
Dodie went to the beach carrying a capacious canvas bag.

caparison

n
/ kə'parəsən /
Sp > F
an ornamental covering for a horse.
The king's horse wore an elaborately decorated caparison.

capillary

adj
/ 'kapə.lerē /
L
resembling a hair : fine, minute, slender.
The capillary tubes in the tissue puzzled Dr. Chang.

capital

adj
/ 'kapədʒl /
L
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: capitol.] highly meritorious : most enjoyable.
On his dad's birthday, Philip served a capital feast, with every dish cleverly wrapped up in ribbons.

capitativum

adj
/ .kapə'tādəm /
L
levied or granted at so much per head.
Collecting an affordable capitativum fee for civic pool use will not cover operating costs.

capitulate

cappelletti

n pl
/ .kapə'ledē /
L > It
[Note: Could be confused with cavalletti.] small cases of dough usually filled with meat or cheese.
Bo and Annette dined on cappelletti in marinara sauce.

cappuccino

capriccioso

adv
/ kə'prɛchɛ'ʃ(,)sō /
It + Itcf
free and impulsive—used chiefly as a direction in music.
The ending segment of the violin concerto was played capriccioso.

caprice

capricious

adj
/ kə'prɪshəs /
It
not guided by steady judgment, intent, or purpose.
Hazel's capricious behavior is a source of constant annoyance for her sister, Ruth.

capsize

capstan

capsule

caracole

n
/ 'karəkōl /
L? > Sp > F
a half turn either to the right or the left executed by a mounted horse.
The front rank of galloping cavalrymen fired their pistols and then peeled off in a caracole to regroup.

carafe

n
/ kə'raf /
Ar > It > F
a bottle usually made of glass with a narrow neck and spherical body and used to hold water or beverages.
Shlomo ordered a carafe of the house wine.

caramelize

v
/ 'karəmə.lɪz /
L > Pg > Sp > F + Ecf
change (sugar or the sugar content of a food) into a brittle brown substance by heating to about 170–180 C.
Kara is going to caramelize some sugar to make peanut brittle.

carbohydrate

n
/ .kərbō'hī.drāt /
L + Gk
any of a group of neutral compounds composed of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen including the sugars and starches.
The nutrition facts indicated that the candy bar would provide Sheila with over half her daily allowance of carbohydrate.

carbonaceous

carbonate

adj
/ 'kərbənət /
L + ISVcf
of or relating to a salt or ester of carbonic acid.
After reading the paragraph six times, Hugo still could not understand the bonding in the carbonate ion.

carboy

carcinogen

n
/ kār'sinəjən /
Gk
a substance or agent producing or inciting cancerous growth.
Asbestos has been proven to be a powerful carcinogen.

cardiac

cardigan

n
/ 'kärdəgən /
E name
a sweater or jacket that opens the full length of the center front and usually has a round or V-shaped collarless neck.
Samantha's aunt in Scotland sent her a colorful wool cardigan for her birthday.

cardinalate

cardiomegaly

n
/ .kärdēō'megələ /
Gk
enlargement of the heart.
Severe anemia can result in cardiomegaly.

caribou

n
/ 'karəbü /
Algonquian > F
any of several large deer of northern North America.
While in Montana, Jill photographed a caribou silhouetted on a high ridge.

caricaturable

caricature

carillon

n
/ 'karəlän /
L > F
a set of fixed bells pitched in a chromatic series of at least two octaves and sounded by hammers controlled by a keyboard.
Latasha will play the carillon at Andy's wedding.

cark

carnage

n
/ 'kärnij /
L > F
great destruction of life (as in battle) : great bloodshed.
Appeals to stop the carnage of war fell on deaf ears.

carnival

n
/ 'kärnəvəl /
L > It
a traveling enterprise consisting of such amusements as sideshows, games of chance, rides, and shooting galleries.
The carnival was the only place Ralph had the opportunity to eat cotton candy.

carnivore

n
/ 'kärnə.vō(ə)r /
L
a flesh-eating animal.
The hyena is a carnivore that usually eats animals found dead.

carnivorous

carotid

adj
/ kə'rädəd /
Gk
belonging to or situated near either of the two main arteries that supply blood to the head.
Lara felt her pulse with a finger placed on her carotid artery.

carpaccio

n
/ kār'päç(ē)ō /
It
thinly sliced raw meat or fish served with a sauce.
When Linda ordered carpaccio, she didn't know that it is uncooked.

carpophagous

carriageable

carrion

n
/ 'karēən /
L > AF > E
[has near homonym: carillon] the dead and putrefying flesh of an animal.
Vultures were picking over skunk and opossum carrion at the roadside.

carrot

cartel

n
/ kār'tel /
It > F
a voluntary often international combination of independent private enterprises supplying like commodities or services that agree to limit their competitive activities (as by regulating quantity or quality of output).
Started as a cartel, the oil-producing nations control the worldwide price of petroleum.

cartilage

n
/ 'kärd'lij /
L
a translucent elastic tissue that composes most of the skeleton of the embryos and very young of vertebrates and is for the most part converted into bone in the higher forms.
Hans had a small piece of cartilage removed from his elbow.

carton

cartonnage

n
/ 'kɑrtən.əzh /
F
material consisting of linen or papyrus glued together in many thicknesses and usually coated with stucco.
The museum guide said that the elaborate mummy case made of cartonnage had been found in a hidden vault of a pyramid.

caryatid

n
/ .kəre'adəd /
Gk
a draped female figure supporting an entablature in the place of a column or pilaster.
The caryatid appeared to be grimacing from the strain of holding up the temple.

cashew

n
/ 'ka(ə)ʃhü /
Tupi > Pg
the kidney-shaped nut of a tropical American tree naturalized in all warm countries.
Jack dug through the can of mixed nuts, looking for the last cashew.

cashier

n
/ ka'shi(ə)r /
F > D
one that handles customer payments for goods or services rendered.
A cashier must keep a watchful eye for counterfeit currency.

cask

n
/ 'kask /
Sp
[has homonym: casque] any barrel-shaped vessel made of staves, headings, and hoops.
The salesman boasted that the Scotch had been aged in an old sherry cask for many years.

casserole

n
/ 'kasə.rəl /
Gk > L > OProv > F
a vessel usually having a cover and a handle and in which food may be baked and served.
Laura baked the chicken and broccoli in a casserole.

cassoulet

n
/ 'kasə.lā /
F
a casserole of beans baked with herbs and pork sausage and sometimes other meats.
The cassoulet was originally a specialty of southwestern France.

cassowary

castanets

n pl
/ .kastə'nets /
L > Sp
a pair of rhythm instruments consisting of two shells made of ivory, wood, or plastic which are fastened together to hang from the thumb and are clicked by the other fingers.
The flamenco dancer's rapidly clicking castanets intrigued Diana.

castigate

casuistic

casuistry

n
/ 'kəzhəwəstrē /
L > Sp
the study of or the doctrine that deals with cases of conscience.
To complete her degree in philosophy, Tisha had to take a semester of casuistry.

catachresis

n
/ .kadə'krēsəs /
Gk
the misuse of words.
When Monica used the word infer to mean "imply" in her essay, her English teacher wrote catachresis in the margin.

cataclysm

n
/ 'kadə.klizəm /
Gk
a violent geologic change involving sudden and extensive alterations of Earth's surface.
Scientists are standing by their prediction that a cataclysm will occur in California.

cataclysmic

catacomb

catadromous

adj
/ kə'tadrəməs /
Gk > L
living in fresh water and going to the sea to spawn.
Whereas the salmon migrates from the sea to fresh water to spawn, the catadromous American eel does just the reverse.

cataplexy

n
/ 'kad'lepsē /
Gk
a condition of suspended animation and loss of voluntary motion associated with hysteria and schizophrenia.
Doctors were confounded by Juan's cataplexy.

catalina

catalytic

adj
/ .kadəl'idik /
Gk
causing, involving, or relating to the change in the rate of a chemical reaction brought about by often small amounts of a substance that is unchanged chemically at the end of the reaction.
Iron plus small amounts of potassium and aluminum oxides has a catalytic effect on the synthesis of ammonia.

catamaran

catapult

v
/ 'kɑdəpɔlt /
Gk > L
move with a suddenness or force as if propelled by a device that hurls heavy stones.
The general's wartime success was enough to catapult him into political power.

cataract

n
/ 'kɑdərɑkt /
Gk > L > E
a clouding of the lens of the eye obstructing the passage of light.
Grandpa's cataract necessitated surgical replacement of the lens in his eye.

catarrh

n
/ kə'tɑr /
Gk > L > F
[has homonym and near homonym: Qatar and guitar] inflammation of a mucous membrane in humans or animals characterized by congestion and secretion of mucus.
Catarrh can be brought on by infection, allergies, dry air, or chemical irritants.

catastasis

n
/ kə'tɑstəsəs /
Gk
the dramatic complication immediately preceding the climax of a play.
During the catastasis the audience wondered how the hero would resolve his predicament.

catastrophe

n
/ kə'tɑstrə(ɪ)fē /
Gk
the final action that completes the unraveling of the plot in a tragedy : denouement.
In the drama's catastrophe the hero dies a valiant death to save his beloved.

catechism

catechumen

n
/ kɑdə'kyümən /
Gk > L > F
one receiving rudimentary instruction in the doctrines of Christianity.
A child who attends a Sunday School program could be considered a catechumen.

category

caterpillar

n
/ 'kɑdə(r)pɪlər /
L > F > E
the elongated wormlike larva of a butterfly or moth.
The body-surface hairs on the caterpillar in Jamie's hand contain a poisonous substance that causes intense itching.

caterwaul

cathartic

cathedral

adj
/ kə'thēdrəl /
L > E
of, relating to, or being a bishop's church.
Sister Agatha watered the tulips in the cathedral garden.

cathole

caucus

n
/ 'køkəs /
Algonquian
a conference of party or organization leaders to decide on policies, plans, appointees, or candidates.
The caucus stayed in session until 3 a.m. finalizing its slate of nominees.

caudal

adj
/ 'kɔdəl /
L
[has near homonym: coddle] constituting, belonging to, or relating to a tail.
As a tadpole's legs grow, its caudal appendage gradually disappears.

caudillo

n
/ kɑu'thē(l)(i)yō /
L > Sp
a military leader (as in a Latin-American country) usually of guerrilla or irregular forces loyal to him or her personally.
The reporter found that most of the soldiers would willingly give their lives for their caudillo.

cauliflower

n
/ 'kɔləflaʊ(ə)r /
L > It
a garden plant that is closely related to the cabbage and is grown for food.
Sheldon won't eat cauliflower unless it is smothered in melted cheese.

causerie

n
/ kōz(ə)'rē /
L > F
an informal light conversation : chat.
Bridget tried unsuccessfully all evening to engage Mrs. Vickers in causerie.

causeway

caustic

adj
/ 'kɔstɪk /
Gk
capable of destroying the texture of anything or eating away its substance by chemical action : corrosive.
Ned never suspected that perfume might have a caustic effect on plastic.

cauterize

v
/ 'kɔdərɪz /
Gk > L
burn or sear with a caustic brand.
Dr. Bennett used a laser to cauterize Tony's wound.

cavalcade

n
/ 'kavəl.kād /
L > It > F

a procession of riders or carriages.
The king headed up the cavalcade proceeding toward the Duke of Parma.

cavalier

adj
/ .kavə'li(ə)r /
L > OProv > It > F

marked by lofty disregard of others' interests, rights, or feelings.
Eloise displayed a cavalier attitude toward the homecoming plans.

cavalry

caveat

n
/ 'kävē.ät /
L

a warning enjoining one from certain acts or practices.
The oldest caveat of commerce is "Let the buyer beware."

cavernicolous

cavernous

adj
/ 'kavə(r)nəs /
L

constituting or suggesting a large underground chamber.
The thick grove of vine-covered trees threw a cavernous gloom over the area.

cavil

v
/ 'kavəl /
L

object or criticize adversely for trivial reasons.
Even if Tracy's room is spotlessly clean, she knows that her mom will cavil at something about it.

cedilla

n
/ sə'dilə /
L > Sp

a mark placed under a letter to indicate a sound different from that which the unmodified character bears in certain situations.
Martha did not earn a perfect score on her French paper because she forgot the cedilla in the word garçon.

ceiling

n
/ 'seilɪŋ /
E

[has homonym: sealing] the overhead inside lining of a room.
There was a terrible crash from inside the wagon that sounded as if a whole set of dishes had been dropped from the ceiling onto a hard stone floor.

celebrant

celeriac
n
/ sə'lerē.ak /
Gk > L > It?

a plant of the parsley family grown for its turniplike edible root.
Rhoda added chopped celeriac to her soup.

celeritous

adj
/ sə'lerədəs /
L > F > E

swift-moving.
The celeritous bicyclist almost knocked Trudy down.

celery

n
/ 'sel(ə)rē /
Gk > L > It?
a vegetable with leafstalks that are eaten raw or cooked.
Terry's favorite snack is celery filled with pimento cheese.

celestial

adj
/ sə'les(h)chəl /
L

of or relating to the sky.
The awesome display of celestial light was later identified as a meteor shower.

celibacy

cellarage

cellist

cello

cellulose

n
/ 'selyə.lōs /
L > F + Ecf
any of several fibrous substances constituting the chief part of the cell walls of plants and of many fibrous products.
Most household sponges are made of cellulose.

cement

v
/ sə'ment /
L > F > E
join, unite, or cause to adhere by or as if by means of a binding element.
After Byron chose the tiles for his mosaic, he used a strong glue to cement them in place on the pattern.

cemetery

cenotaph

n
/ 'senə.taf /
Gk
a tomb or a monument erected in honor of a person whose body is elsewhere.
A magnificent cenotaph was erected outside the city of Troy.

ensorious

adj
/ sen'sōrēəs /
L

marked by or given to an inclination to discover and severely condemn especially social, moral, or artistic errors.

Helen was in one of her censorious moods at the reception this evening.

census

n
/ sen(t)səs /
L

an official enumeration of the population of a country, city, or other administrative district.

In the United States, a census is taken every ten years.

centaur

n
/ sen.tō(ə)r /
Gk > L

one of an ancient mythical Greek race imagined as men with the bodies of horses.

The estate garden included a marble statue of a centaur.

centennial

centipede

centrifugal

centrifuge

n
/ sentrə.fyüj /
L > F

a machine for whirling fluids rapidly to separate substances of different densities.

A centrifuge was used to separate the cream from the milk.

centripetal

adj
/ sen'tripəd·l /
L + L + Ecf

moving, proceeding, or acting in a direction toward a center or axis.

Centripetal force serves to keep electrons moving around the nucleus of an atom.

cephalalgia

n
/ sefə'lalj(ē)ə /
Gk

pain inside the head : headache.

Mortimer's cephalalgia made him irritable and short-tempered.

cephalometry

Cepheid

n
/ 'sefēəd /
Gk name

one of a class of pulsating stars whose intrinsic light variations are very regular.

The apparent magnitude of a Cepheid can vary greatly in a month's time.

ceraceous

ceramic

adj
/ sə'ramik /
Gk

of or relating to the art of fashioning clay into useful or ornamental objects.

Luke's home is a showcase for ceramic objects he has created.

ceraunograph

n
/ sə'rōnə.graf /
Gk + Gk

an instrument for recording chronologically by pen the occurrence of thunder and lightning.

Marie set up a ceraunograph to monitor the late-summer storms.

cerecloth

cerise

cerium

cerography

n
/ sə'rägräfē /
Gk

the art of making characters or designs in or with wax.

The maps in the old book were originally made by the process of cerography, in which beeswax was used.

cerumen

n
/ sə'rümən /
L

the yellow waxlike secretion from the glands of the external ear—called also "earwax."

The doctor irrigated Ariel's ear to remove impacted cerumen.

cessation

n
/ se'sāshən /
L > F > E

a temporary or final ceasing or discontinuance (as of action).

The peal of the bell marked the cessation of the emergency preparedness drill.

cetology

n
/ sə'täləjē /
L + Gk

[has near homonym: sitology] a branch of zoology dealing with the whales.

Many renowned scientists in the field of cetology assembled in Japan to discuss the recent beaching incidents.

chaffinch

n
/ 'cha(,)finch /
E

a common Old World bird often kept as a cage bird and having in the male a reddish breast plumage and a cheerful song.

Along the river path Janice spotted a chaffinch perched on the back of a bench.

chaffseed

chagrin

n
/ shə'grin /
F

vexation, disquietude, or distress of mind brought on by humiliation, hurt pride, disappointment, or consciousness of failure or error.
Pete tried to conceal his chagrin when his younger brother beat him at chess.

chalaza

chalice

chalicosis

n
/ kalə'kōsəs /
Gk > L

a pulmonary disease occurring among stonecutters that is caused by inhalation of stone dust.
Chalicosis afflicted an alarming number of workers at the monument plant.

chamberlain

n
/ 'chāmbə(r)lān /
Gmc > F > E

a bedchamber attendant for royalty or nobility.
The grand council insisted that the chamberlain wake the king.

chamfer

v
/ 'cham(p)fə(r) /
L > F

cut off corners or edges (as of timber columns or beams).
Gordon decided to chamfer the ceiling beams of his cottage.

champagne

n
/ sham'pān /
L > F

[has homonym: champaign] a pale orange yellow to light grayish yellowish brown.
Of the colors of limousines available for hire, Ted and Kara preferred champagne.

champignon

n
/ sham'pinyən /
F

an edible fungus; especially : the common meadow mushroom.
At dinner, Denise had a stuffed champignon as an appetizer.

chancel

n
/ 'chan(t)səl /
L > F > E

the part of a church in which is located the altar or communion table, the pulpit, and the lectern and which is customarily on a higher level than the nave.
Fitting 75 choir members in the chancel will be an almost impossible task.

chancellor

n
/ 'chan(t)s(ə)lə(r) /
L > F > E

a university officer of high rank.
Professor Burns has all the requirements to be the next chancellor of Highland College.

chandelier

n
/ ,shandə'li(ə)r /
L > F

a lighting fixture suspended from the ceiling and having two or more lights.
Dad finally got around to installing a dimmer switch for our chandelier.

chandelle

n
/ shan'del /
F

an abrupt climbing turn of an airplane.
Many of the passengers gasped when the pilot executed a chandelle.

changeable

chansonnette

chaotic

adj
/ kā'ädik /
Gk

being in a state of or marked by utter confusion completely wanting in order, sequence, organization, or predictable operation.
The course in time management did not help Brenda alter her chaotic lifestyle.

chapeau

n
/ sha'pō /
L > F

[Note: Plural form can be pronounced identically. In addition, word has near homonyms: chapon, shapo.] a hat.
Pierre doffed his chapeau when he entered the room.

chapel

n
/ 'chapəl /
L > F > E

a private place of worship.
The duke's funeral was held in the castle chapel.

chaplaincy

character

n
/ 'karəktə(r) /
Gk > L > F > E

personality as represented or realized in fiction or drama.
The main character in the play is Joan of Arc.

characteristic

adj
/ ,karəktə'ristik /
Gk

belonging to or especially typical of the essential nature of.
At last Meg looked at him, pushing her glasses in characteristic gesture.

charcoal

n
/ 'chär.kōl /
(F + E) > E
a dark-colored or black porous form of carbon used for fuel and various other mechanical, artistic, and chemical processes.
The only supplies Debbie needs for her drawing class are charcoal and a sketch pad.

chariot

charlatan

n
/ 'shärlätən /
It
a pretender to medical knowledge : quack.
A consumer group called the herbal potion vendor a "charlatan."

chartaceous

adj
/ kär'tāshəs /
Gk > L + Ecf
resembling paper : made of paper.
Andrew collected a handful of chartaceous dead leaves.

chartreuse

n
/ shär'trüz /
L > F trademark
a variable color averaging a brilliant yellow green.
Elsie commented that the chartreuse vehicle looked like a huge dollop of wasabi.

chary

chasm

n
/ 'kazəm /
Gk > L
a deep opening : a narrow, deep steep-walled valley, gorge or canyon.
Earthquake tremors opened a great chasm in the valley.

chasmophyte

n
/ 'kazmə.fīt /
Gk
a plant that grows in the crevices of rocks.
There was just enough soil for the chasmophyte to grow in the chinks between rocks on the cliff.

chassepot

chassis

n
/ 'chasē /
L > F
the frame upon which is mounted the body (as of an automobile or airplane).
Gary popped his slot car's body back onto the chassis and set the vehicle back on the track.

chasuble

n
/ 'chazəbəl /
L > F
an outer ecclesiastical garment in the form of a sleeveless cloak or mantle that slips over the wearer's head but remains open at the sides.
The priest wore a white chasuble to celebrate Sunday mass.

chateaubriand

n
/ ,sha.tōbrē'än /
F name
a thick tenderloin steak.
The server commented that both the prime rib and the chateaubriand were excellent menu choices.

chatoyant

chattel

chauffeur

n
/ 'shōfə(r) /
F
[has homonyms: shofar, shophar]
one that is employed to operate a motor vehicle for the transportation of persons.
Henry hired a chauffeur to pick up his grandmother at the airport.

chaussure

n
/ shō'sù(ə)r /
L > F > E
footgear.
Before entering the mosque, all are required to remove their chaussure.

chautauqua

n
/ shə'tōkwə /
N Amer geog name
an institution of the late 19th and early 20th centuries that combined popular education with entertainment, often presented outdoors or in a tent.
Chautauqua declined with the advent of radio.

chauvinism

n
/ 'shōvə.nizəm /
F name
undue especially invidious partiality for a group or place to which one belongs or has belonged.
Chauvinism is alive and well in the school's alumni association.

chauvinistic

chayote

n
/ chä'yōdē /
Nahuatl > Sp
the rounded or pear-shaped fruit of a West Indian annual vine of the cucumber family that is widely cultivated as a vegetable.
Aaron went to three different grocery stores, but none carried the chayote that he needed for his recipe.

cheilion

chemicalize

chemistry

chemotherapy

chenille

chernozem

n
/ 'chernəz,yòm /
Russ
any of a group of dark-colored zonal soils with a deep rich humus horizon found in regions (as the grasslands of central North America) of temperate to cool climate.
The rich chernozem of Ukraine has helped it earn a reputation as "the breadbasket of Eastern Europe."

chevelure

n
/ .shəvə'lú(ə)r /
L > F
a nebulous envelope (as around the nucleus of a comet).
The chevelure of Halley's comet was much dimmer than expected at its last appearance.

chianti

chicanery

n
/ shə'kān(ə)rē /
F
deception by artful subterfuge or misrepresentation : trickery.
The mayor was dogged by allegations of financial chicanery and links to organized crime.

chicle

chiclero

n
/ chi'kler(,)ō /
Sp
a gatherer of latex from the sapodilla tree.
Toby interviewed a chiclero for the journal.

chieftain

chiffon

n
/ shi'fän /
F
a sheer plain-weave very lightweight clothing fabric usually given a dull soft finish.
The singer sauntered into the spotlight in a dress of white chiffon.

chignon

n
/ 'shēn,yän /
L > F
a smooth arrangement of hair worn at the back of the head especially at the nape of the neck.
To emphasize her long neck, Cecile combed her hair into a tight chignon.

Chihuahua

n
/ chə'wä(,)wä /
Mexican geog name
a very small round-headed large-eared short-coated dog reputed to antedate Aztec civilization.
A popular fast food restaurant chain has used a talking Chihuahua in its advertisements.

chilblains

n pl
/ 'chil.blānz /
E + E
instances of redness and swelling of toes, fingers, nose, or ears or sometimes cheeks in cold weather accompanied by itching and burning of skin.
The children stayed out in the snow too long and ended up suffering from chilblains.

chime

chimerical

adj
/ kī'merəkəl /
Gk + Ecff
[Note: Could be confused with chimeric and chimera.] unreal and existing only as the product of wild unrestrained imagination.
Many video games pit the player against chimerical monsters.

chimney

chimpanzee

n
/ .chim.pan'zē /
Kongo
an anthropoid ape of equatorial Africa that is smaller and more arboreal than the gorilla.
The chimpanzee shows inventiveness in making and using tools.

chinchilla

n
/ chin'chilə /
Aimara or Quechua > Sp
a small rodent the size of a large squirrel having very soft fur of a pearly gray color and native to the mountains of Peru and Chile but now extensively bred in captivity.
The chinchilla was introduced into the United States in 1923.

chinook

n
/ shə'nük /
Chehalis
a warm moist southwest wind of the Pacific coastal region from Oregon northward.
The mild temperatures are thanks to a chinook that rolls over the Canadian Rockies.

chiragra

n
/ kī'ragrə /
Gk
pain in the hand.
Aunt Molly's chiragra keeps her from writing many letters.

chiropodist

chistera

chivalrous

adj
/ 'shivəlrəs /
F > E
marked by especial courtesy and high-minded disinterested consideration to women.
Chivalrous behaviors of previous generations are less common in today's atmosphere of equal rights for women.

chivalry

n
/ 'shivəlrē /
F > E

qualifications or character of the ideal knight of the age of chivalry according to the romantic tradition of courtesy, gallantry, and honor.
To the knights of the Round Table, chivalry was of primary importance.

chlorine

n
/ 'klɔrēn /
Gk > L + Ecf

a common nonmetallic element that is used chiefly as a powerful bleaching, oxidizing, and disinfecting agent.
Samantha refused to swim on Thursday because someone put too much chlorine in the pool.

chocolate

adj
/ 'chäklät /
Nahuatl > Sp

of a warm light brown color approximating the color of fresh milk chocolate.
Eva plans to put her chocolate mink coat in storage until the animal rights activists are less vocal.

cholera

n
/ 'kälərə /
Gk > L

any of several diseases of man and domestic animals usually marked by severe gastrointestinal symptoms.
Cholera is a major public health concern in many tropical countries.

choleric

adj
/ 'kälərik /
Gk > L > F > E

angry, irate, wrathful.
The vice-principal was ill suited to his job; he was impatient and choleric.

cholesterol

cholesterosis

n
/ kəlestə'rōsəs /
Gk > ISV

abnormal deposition of cholesterol in the blood.
Cholesterosis can often be moderated by changes in diet.

chonolith

n
/ 'kɔnə.lith /
Gk

an intrusive igneous rock mass of wholly irregular form.
Ages ago a huge chonolith formed at the base of the volcano as it erupted.

choose

chortle

chortling

chough

chrematistic
adj
/ .krēmə'tistik /
Gk

of, relating to, or occupied in the gaining of wealth.
Chrematistic industrialists cared little about the living conditions of their employees.

chromium

n
/ 'krɔmēəm /
Gk > F > L

a blue-white metallic element found naturally only in combination and used especially in alloys and in electroplating.
The car's bumpers were plated with chromium to make them shiny.

chromotrichial

chronic

adj
/ 'kränik /
Gk

marked by long duration and by frequent recurrence over a long time.
Clarence never looked forward to eating because he was troubled with chronic indigestion.

chronically

chronicle

chronological

chrysalis

n
/ 'krisələs /
Sem > Gk > L

an insect (as a butterfly or moth) in the pupal stage of its development in which it is enclosed in a firm case.
Bob and Sam put the chrysalis in a dry container and kept it in the hope that a butterfly would later emerge.

chrysanthemum

n
/ krə'san(t)thəməm /
Gk > L

any plant or flower of a large genus of perennial herbs that are widely distributed in the Old World and that are cultivated for their showy often double and brightly colored flower heads.
Orlando's chrysanthemum won first prize at the flower show.

churlish

adj
/ 'chərlish /
E

difficult to work with or deal with.
Although he was a brilliant conductor, Toscanini could be churlish at times.

churrasco

n
/ chù'rä.skō /
Sp

beef broiled on a spit over an open fire or grilled under an oven flame.
At the barbecue the whole family feasted on the churrasco that Dad cooked.

chutney

n
/ 'chətnē /
Prakrit > Hindi

a condiment that has the consistency of jam and is made of acid fruits with added raisins, dates, and onions and seasoned to taste with spices and vinegar.
Spicy or sweet chutney is sometimes eaten with Indian meals containing curry.

ciguatera

n
/ .sēgwə'terə /
Taino > Sp

poisoning caused by eating fish or mollusks with flesh toxic to man.
Although she contracted ciguatera in June, Constance could not return to work until November.

cinematographer

n
/ .sinəmə'tägrəfə(r) /
Gk

a motion-picture camera operator.
Darina won the award for outstanding cinematographer at last year's Montreal Film Festival.

cinereous

cinnamon

n
/ 'sinəmən /
? > Gk > L > F > E

a culinary spice prepared from the bark of certain tropical trees.
Akbar likes cinnamon in his hot chocolate.

cioppino

n
/ chə'pē.nō /
It

a dish of fish and shellfish cooked in tomato sauce and usually seasoned with wine, spices, and herbs.

After an afternoon at the beach, Beverly stopped at a local restaurant for cioppino and coffee.

circadian

circinate

adj
/ 'sərs'n.āt /
L

rounded in outline : characterized by or having the form of a flat coil of which the apex is the center.
The retracted tongue of a butterfly forms a circinate coil.

circuit

n
/ 'sərkət /
L > F

the complete path of an electric current.

The average electrical house circuit carries about 30 amperes.

circuitous

adj
/ .sə'kyüədəs /
L

being a circular or winding course : indirect, roundabout.

As we drove through the mountains, the road took an increasingly circuitous route.

circular

circumstantial

adj
/ .sərkəmz'tanchəl /
L + Ecf

belonging to, consisting of, influenced by, or dependent on conditions, facts, or events accompanying others.

The report contains strong circumstantial evidence of wrongdoing by the governor.

cirrhosis

n
/ sə'rōsəs /
Gk + Lcf

[has homonym and near homonym: sorosis and xerosis] a chronic progressive disease of the liver.
The damage caused by cirrhosis is irreversible.

cislunar

adj
/ sis'lünə(r) /
L + L

of or relating to the space between Earth and the Moon or the Moon's orbit.

The space enthusiast talked often about the practicalities of setting up a colony in the cislunar region.

cistern

n
/ 'sistə(r)n /
L > F > E

[has homonym: sistern] an artificial reservoir or tank for holding or storing water or other liquids.

Three weeks into the drought, the farm's cistern ran dry.

citation

cite

citify

citizen

citronella

n
/ .sitrə'nelə /
F > L

a yellowish essential oil with lemonlike odor obtained from either of two grasses and used especially as an insect repellent.

Candles containing citronella were kept burning on the picnic table.

civitas

n
/ 'kēwē.täs /
L

a body of people constituting a politically organized community.

The concept of civitas remains strong in many small towns.

clairvoyant

clandestine

adj
/ klan'destən /

L
marked by, held in, or conducted with secrecy and concealment.
Mike and Sally made clandestine preparations for their mom's surprise birthday party.

claque

n
/ 'klak /

F
[has homonym: clack] an opera hat with a collapsible crown.
As the gentleman entered the opera house, he doffed and flattened his claque.

claret

clarify

clarion

claustrophobe

claustrophobia

n
/ .klōstrə'fōbēə /

Gk + Gk
abnormal dread of being in closed or narrow spaces.
Herman's claustrophobia keeps him from flying on crowded airplanes.

clavichord

clavicle

n
/ 'klavəkəl /

L
a bone in man situated just above the first rib on either side of the neck and having the form of a narrow elongated S.
Garth wore shoulder pads to football practice to protect his clavicle.

claviger

n
/ 'klavəjə(r) /

L
one that keeps the key or keys : custodian, warden.
Because she had forgotten her key, Marsha needed to locate the claviger, Mr. Carl, to open her classroom door.

clemency

n
/ 'klemənsē /

L
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.]
tendency to be mild and compassionate.
Emma supposed she must say more before she would be entitled to Mr. Knightley's clemency.

clepsydra

n
/ 'klepsədrə /

Gk > L
an instrument designed to measure time by the flow of a quantity of water.
For his science project Kerry designed and built a clepsydra.

clerisy

n
/ 'klerəsē /

L > G
the well-educated or learned class : intelligentsia.
Many believe that laws should be readily understood by the general public, not solely by an elite clerisy.

clientele

n
/ .klīən'tel /

L > F
a body of patrons or customers.
Bill hopes to enlarge the clientele of the shoe store.

climatology

clinically

clinician

n
/ klə'nishən /

Gk > F
one who directs, is closely allied with, or works in or through a clinic or with clinical methods.
At the hospital a clinician drew a vial of Harry's blood to test for diabetes.

clinquant

adj
/ 'kliŋkənt /

F
glittering especially with gold decoration : showily ornate.
The theater lobby in its clinquant splendor cast dazzling reflections from every gleaming surface.

clique

n
/ 'klik /

F
[alternate pronunciation has homonym: cleek] a narrow exclusive circle or group of people.
Sofia didn't want to be part of the popular clique because she thought they were the most boring kids in school.

cloche

n
/ klōsh /

L > F
[alternate pronunciation has homonym: closh] a woman's small helmetlike hat usually with deep rounded crown and very narrow brim.
At the Thatchers' wedding Margaret looked smashing in her white ostrich-feather cloche.

cloistered

clothe

v
/ 'klōth /

E
put garments on.
Elizabeth Cady Stanton stressed that she did not propose petitioning the legislature to clothe every woman in male attire.

cloture

clough

clowder

cluse

n
/ 'klüz /
L > F

[has homonym: clues] a narrow gorge cutting transversely through an otherwise continuous ridge.
Although Brian studied the trail map carefully, he found no mention of the cluse that barred his way.

cnemial

adj
/ 'nēmēəl /
Gk + E

relating to the shin or shinbone.
Bud suffered a cnemial injury while quarterbacking in the game last night.

coacervate

n
/ ,kōə'sərvət /
L

an aggregate of colloidal droplets held together by electrostatic attractive forces.
The chemist referred to the aggregation of liquid particles in an emulsion as a coacervate.

coadjutor

n
/ ,kōə'jüdə(r) /
L > F > E

one who works together with another usually in a somewhat subordinate position : assistant.
Offended by being called a "lackey," Marcus prefers to be called a "coadjutor."

coagulate

v
/ kō'agyə.lāt /
L

curdle, clot.
Hemophiliacs lack a protein needed to help blood coagulate.

coalesce

v
/ ,kōə'les /
L

unite by growth into one body.
The nervous host hoped that the tight little groups of guests would coalesce into a real party.

coalescence

n
/ ,kōə'les'n(t)s /
L

a growing together or union in one body, form, or group.
Rain is the result of the coalescence of water droplets within a cloud.

coalification

coalition

n
/ ,kōə'lishən /
L > F + Ecf

the temporary alliance of distinct parties, persons, or states to achieve a common purpose.
Representatives from a coalition of labor unions met with the multinational corporation's lawyers in an attempt to work out a new contract.

coaming

coaration

n
/ ,kōə'rāshən /
L

cooperative tilling of soil as practiced by early village communities.
The villagers found that coaration was the most efficient system for cultivating the land.

coax

coccygeal

cochleariform

adj
/ ,kōklē'a(a)rə,fɔrm /
Gk > L + Ecf

shaped like a spoon.
Jacques theorized that the cochleariform bone was used in prehistoric times as a spoon.

cockatoo

cocoon

n
/ kə'kūn /
L > Prov > F

a silky or fibrous protective encasement created by a larval insect for shelter during the pupal stage.
Ricky found the cocoon of a moth clinging to a branch of an oak tree.

codeine

n
/ 'kō(,)dēn /
Gk + F

a crystalline alkaloid usually made from morphine but feebler in action.
The patient was given codeine to kill the pain.

codicil

n
/ 'kādəsəl /
L > F

a legal instrument made subsequently to a will and modifying it in some respects.
Robert had his lawyer draw up a codicil to clarify a few ambiguities in his will.

codicology

coelostat

n
/ 'sēləstat /
L > ISV + GK > ISV

a device consisting of a flat mirror that is turned slowly by a motor to reflect the Sun continuously into a fixed telescope.
Professor Merkle plans to use a coelostat to photograph the movements of planetary bodies.

coerce

coercion

coeval

adj
/ kō'ēvəl /
L + Ecf
of the same or equal age or antiquity.
Nearly the same in mass and brightness, the stars were thought to be coeval.

coffee

cogent

cogitating

cognizant

adj
/ 'käg'nəzənt /
L > F > E
aware : perceiving with a degree of controlled thought or observation.
Watching television commercials can make viewers more cognizant of fads and fashions.

cognomen

n
/ käg'nōmən /
L
one's family name : surname.
The cognomen "Crane" fit the physical attributes of the tall, lank, long-armed, and shovel-footed Ichabod, whose whole frame most loosely hung together.

coherence

cohesion

coincidental

adj
/ kō.insə'dentl /
L
characterized by the concurrence of events between which there is no causal connection.
It was purely coincidental that the electricity went off just as the guests began to arrive for the surprise party.

cointise

n
/ kwan'tēz /
F > E
a scarf worn on a lady's headdress or as a token of favor on a knight's helmet.
Sir Agravaine proudly displayed the bright red cointise.

colectomy

collabent

adj
/ kō'lābənt /
L
sunken or falling in : collapsing in the middle.
Orville poked the collabent anthill with a stick.

collaborator

n
/ kə'labərədər /
L
[has near homonym: collaborateur]
one that works jointly with others.
Sir William Gilbert was Arthur Sullivan's collaborator for many operettas.

collage

n
/ kə'lāzh /
Gk > LF + Fcf
an artistic composition of fragments of printed matter and other materials pasted on a picture surface.
Sabrina spent weeks finishing a large collage of a Paris street scene.

collateral

adj
/ kə'lədərəl /
L > F > E
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] placed or regarded as side by side : parallel, coordinate, or corresponding in position, order, time, or significance.
Mexico's Sierra Madre Oriental and Occidental mountain ranges are collateral.

collegial

colliery

n
/ 'käljərə /
E
[has near homonym: colory] a coal mine and the buildings connected with it.
The colliery around which the village was built closed when its reserves of coal were exhausted.

collocal

colloquial

colloquy

n
/ 'käləkwe /
L
high-level serious discussion.
Listeners in the gallery must remain silent during the legislators' colloquy.

cologne

n
/ kə'lōn /
G name > F
a perfumed liquid composed of alcohol and certain aromatic oils.
The taxi driver sprayed expensive cologne in his cab every evening.

colonel

colonelcy

n
/ 'kərn'lsē /
L > It > F + Ecf
the office, rank, or commission of a colonel.
Nathan announced that he was being considered for a colonelcy in the infantry.

colonnade

colophon

n
/ 'käləfən /
Gk
an identifying mark, emblem, or device used by a printer or publisher sometimes on the title page, cover, shelfback, or jacket.
The publisher decided on the figure of a Russian wolfhound as its colophon.

coloratura

n
/ ˌkɒləɹə'tʃrə /
L > It

[Note: Could be confused with colorature.] the florid ornamentation in vocal music (as runs, trills, arpeggios).
Barry thinks that he would enjoy opera music more if it did not contain so much coloratura.

colossal

adj
/ kə'læsəl /
Gk > L > F
characterized by extremely great bulk, extent, force, strength, power, or effect.
The new stadium is a colossal building seating about a hundred thousand people.

column

comedienne

n
/ kə.mēdē'en /
Gk > F
[Note: Could be confused with comedian.] an actress who plays in dramas of light and amusing character and typically with a happy ending.
Lucille Ball was America's favorite comedienne during the 1950s.

comestible

comfort

commencement

commendable

adj
/ kə'mendəbəl /
L
worthy of praise.
Jim received several scholarships as a result of his commendable academic performance.

commensurable

commensurate

adj
/ kə'men(t)s(ə)rət /
L
corresponding in size, extent, amount, or degree : proportionate.
The want ad stated that salary would be commensurate with experience.

commentary

commercialize

v
/ kə'mərʃəlaɪz /
L > F + Ecff
make use of for profit-seeking purposes.
The Hopi denounced those who would commercialize their religious dances and ceremonies.

commination

n
/ ˌkæmə'nāʃən /
L
[Note: Could be confused with combination.] an instance or the action of announcing, warning of, or threatening punishment or vengeance.
The president ended his speech with a severe commination against the rebels.

comminute

commiseration

n
/ kə'mɪzə'rāʃən /
L
the feeling or showing of sorrow or the expression of condolence for the wants or distresses of another.
Aunt Betsy sighed and moralized with true and steady commiseration.

commissary

commissional

commodious

adj
/ kə'mɒdɪəs /
L > F > E + Lcf + Ecf
large or roomy and convenient.
Leo and his family rented a modest but commodious villa in Spain.

commorancy

communicate

commute

v
/ kə'myüt /
L
travel back and forth regularly or frequently.
For his work, Horst must commute daily between Philadelphia and New York.

comparatively

adv
/ kəm'parədɪvlē /
L
nearly, approximately.
Well, approximately yes," he replied; "that is, comparatively no.

compatible

compelled

v
/ kəm'peld /
L
forced by physical necessity.
Artie was compelled to hold his breath while swimming under water.

compendium

n
/ kəm'pendɪəm /
L
a work treating in brief form the important features of a whole field of knowledge or subject matter category.
Eileen is writing a compendium of investment information for small company shareholders.

compensable

competently

compilation

complement

n
/ 'kæmpləmənt /
L
a finishing or consummating part, integral, or component.
The earrings made the perfect complement to Anjali's ensemble.

comprehend

v
/ ˌkæmprə'hend /
L > E
see the nature, significance, or meaning of.
Although he had read every word of Moby Dick, Stu failed to comprehend it.

compulsory

compunctious

computernik

comstockery

conceit

conceivable

conceivably

concentric

adj
/ kən'sentrik /
L
having a common center (as circles one within another).
Shane stared at the concentric circles of the dart board for so long that he seemed to be hypnotized.

concept

n
/ 'kän.sept /
L
thought, idea, notion.
Julie's concept of an entertaining movie was not the same as her younger brother's.

concertina

concessible

concessionary

conchiform

adj
/ 'känkə.fɔrm /
Gk > L > ISV
shell-shaped.
Mom keeps her jewelry in a conchiform box.

concierge

n
/ kō'm'syerzh /
L > F
an attendant at the entrance of a building : doorkeeper.
The concierge took note of the mysterious man's comings and goings at the hotel.

conciergerie

conciliate

v
/ kən'silē.āt /
L
win over from a state of hostility or distrust : appease.
The new king hoped to conciliate his subjects by doing them all the good in his power.

concinnity

n
/ kən'sinədē /
L
harmony or fitness in the adaptation of parts to a whole or to each other.
After reading through the writer's first draft, the editor praised the writer for her consistency and concinnity of style.

conclamant

concoction

concomitant

adj
/ kən'kämədənt /
L
occurring along with or at the same time as and with or without causal relationship.
Mr. Simmons noted that his son's poor grades in algebra were concomitant with the start of the basketball season.

concordat

n
/ kən'kɔr.dat /
L > F
a compact between a national government and a religious group establishing terms of agreement concerning matters of mutual interest.
Bonaparte and Pope Pius VII signed a concordat that the state of France should protect and acknowledge the Roman Catholic Church.

concrecence

condemn

v
/ kən'dem /
L
[has near homonym: contemn]
pronounce as ill-advised, reprehensible, wrong, or evil.
Often custom justifies an action that years later it will condemn.

condign

condiment

n
/ 'kändəmənt /
L > F > E
something usually pungent, acid, salty, or spicy added to or served with food to enhance its flavor or to give added flavor : seasoning.
Mustard is the condiment usually served on hot pastrami sandwiches.

condolence

condor

n
/ 'kän.dò(ə)r /
Quechua > Sp
a very large American vulture having the head and neck bare and being one of the largest and most powerful of flying birds.
Of all the birds of prey at the zoo, the Andean condor is Alison's favorite.

conductor

conduit

n
/ 'kän(,)düät /
F > E
a natural or artificial channel through which water or other fluid passes or is conveyed.
Grandfather showed Logan the conduit that irrigated his large garden.

conferential

confetti

n pl
/ kən'fedē /
L > It
tiny colored paper disks or paper streamers so made as to scatter readily when thrown.
Ticker tape and confetti swirled like snow over the crowded street.

confiscate

v
/ 'känfə'skāt /
L
seize by or as if by public authority.
After a two-hour wait, the border guard decided not to confiscate Brenda's antique necklace.

conflagration

n
/ 'känflə'grāshən /
L
a large disastrous fire involving numerous buildings.
Sixty fire trucks were called in to battle the conflagration.

confluence

n
/ 'kän.flüən(t)s /
L
the place of meeting of two streams.
Martina agreed to meet Lynn at the confluence of Rogers Creek and the Little Red River.

confusion

conga

n
/ 'kängə /
African geog name
a Cuban dance of African origin involving three steps followed by a kick and performed by a group in single file.
When he was a child, Jimmy loved to dance the conga.

congeal

congenial

adj
/ kən'jēnyəl /
L
characterized by friendly sociability.
Paul and Linda appreciated the restaurant's congenial atmosphere.

congenital

conglobate

v
/ kən'glōb /
L
form into a ball.
Time-lapse photos showed how clouds conglobate.

conglomerate

n
/ kən'gläm(ə)rət /
L
a mixture gathered from various sources : a composite mass.
Father called his specialty "Irish stew," but it was really more like a conglomerate of indeterminate substances.

congruent

coniferous

adj
/ kō'nif(ə)rəs /
(Gk + L) > L + Ecf
bearing cones.
A covering of coniferous trees keeps some mountains green all winter.

conjugal

conjunctiva

connived

connivery

n
/ kə'niv(ə)rē /
L + Ecf
the practice of cooperating secretly, especially in a wrongful act.
Allen suspects Brenda of connivery in the mysterious sale of the mansion.

connoisseur

n
/ ,känə'sü(ə)r /
L > F
one who is an expert in a subject; especially : one who understands the details, technique, or principles of an art and is competent to act as a critical judge.
The connoisseur who judged the culinary creations is a chef at a five-star restaurant.

connubial

adj
/ kə'n(y)übēəl /
L
of or relating to marriage or the marriage state.
Susan and Stuart spent their honeymoon in a state of connubial contentment.

conqueror

conquian

conquistador

n
/ kōn'k(w)ēstə.dó(ə)r /
L > Sp
conqueror; specifically : any one of the leaders in the Spanish conquest of America, especially of Mexico and Peru, in the 16th century.
Mr. Sanchez found the helmet of a conquistador deep in the canyon.

conscientious

adj
/ ,känchē'enchəs /
L
governed by the dictates of the sense of right or wrong : honest, scrupulous.
Janice was very conscientious about telling the truth.

consecrate

v
/ 'kænsəkrāt /
L

make or declare sacred or holy.
The bishop will consecrate the new chapel next Sunday.

consecutive

consenescence

consensus

n
/ kən'sen(t)səs /
L

collective opinion : the judgment arrived at by most of those concerned.
The Booster Club's consensus was that popcorn would sell better than cotton candy.

consentaneous

conservatory

considerable

consignment

consistory

consomme

consortium

n
/ kən'sɔrsh(ə)əm /
L

[has near homonym: consortion]
an organization of persons having a common interest.
Several organizations joined the consortium that fosters inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of society.

constabulary

n
/ kənz'tabyələre /
L

a body of policemen (as of a particular town, district, country).
The local constabulary was out in force at the Halloween celebration.

constellation

n
/ kənz'tə'lāshən /
L

any one of 88 arbitrary configurations of stars or an area of the celestial sphere covering one of these configurations.
Rani found it difficult to see a scale in the constellation Libra.

constituent

constitution

constrain

construe

v
/ kənz'tru /
L > E

explain the sense or intention of often to one's own satisfaction or according to or in conformity with a given set of circumstances.
Paul tried to construe the situation in the best possible light.

consuetude

n
/ 'kən(t)swət(y)üd /
L

social usage : custom, habit.
The practice of men opening doors for women has fallen from consuetude.

contagious

container

contemporaneous

contiguous

adj
/ kən'tigyəwəs /
L

touching or connected throughout.
Mr. Wallace understands but resents higher shipping costs for U.S. customers living in states outside the contiguous 48.

continuum

contour

contraband

n
/ 'kəntrəbænd /
L > It

goods or merchandise the importation, exportation, or sometimes possession of which is forbidden.
On the teacher's desk sat the contraband taken from students during the day.

contrabass

contrariety

n
/ ,kəntrə'rīədə /
L

the quality or state of being in opposition or disagreement.
Amanda was becoming impatient with her two-year-old son's contrariety.

contretemps

n
/ kō'trətä /
F + L > F
an inopportune embarrassing occurrence : mishap, mischance.
Jeremy moved steadily from blunder to contretemps to embarrassment.

controversy

n
/ 'kəntrəvərsē /
L

a difference marked especially by the expression of opposing views : dispute.
Most television talk shows seem more interested in creating controversy than in trying to resolve it.

contumacious

contusion

n
/ kən't(y)üzhən /
L

a bruise caused by external violence.
The contusion on Wayne's shoulder began to fade nine days after his accident.

convalescence

convection

n
/ kən'vekshən /
L
the circulatory motion that occurs in a fluid at a nonuniform temperature owing to the variation of its density and the action of gravity.
In the tropics, strong convection draws warm air high into the sky.

convene

convenience

convergent

adj
/ kən'vərjənt /
L
tending to move toward one point or each other.
The crowds leaving the stadium became convergent on their way to the subway entrance.

convertible

n
/ kən'vərdəbəl /
L
an automobile having a top that may be folded back, lowered, or removed.
Thelma and Louise enjoyed cruising the highway in Louise's convertible.

conveyance

convivial

adj
/ kən'vivēəl /
L
fond of good company and festivity.
The convivial lodge owners enjoyed socializing with their guests.

convivially

adv
/ kən'vivēələ /
L + Ecf
in a manner that is fond of good company and festivity.
Though the hostess felt ill and wanted to leave the party, she behaved convivially.

convolute

convoy

coordinate

adj
/ kō'örd(ə)nət /
L
equal in rank, quality, or significance.
The United States attempts to keep the branches of government coordinate.

coossify

copious

adj
/ 'kōpēəs /
L
present in large quantity : plentiful, abundant, lavish.
Patrick took copious notes during the lecture.

copyright

coquetry

n
/ 'kōkōtrē /
F
effort or action intended to attract admiration, gallantry, or affection without responsive feeling.
The princess used coquetry as a tool as a carpenter uses a hammer.

coquettishly

cordially

cordillera

n
/ .kò(r)d'lerə /
L > Sp
a group of mountain ranges forming a mountain system of great linear extent.
The Andean cordillera extends along the west coast of South America.

corduroy

n
/ 'kò(r)də.ròi /
F > E name
a cut-pile fabric with vertical ribs or wales, usually made of cotton.
His worn trousers of corduroy were three inches too short.

coriander

n
/ .kōrē'andə(r) /
L
an Old World herb whose ripened dried fruit is used for flavoring especially of pickles, curries, confectioneries, and liquor.
Jane almost always uses coriander to season her stew.

cormorant

n
/ 'kōrm(ə)rənt /
L > F > E
any of various dark-colored web-footed seabirds.
In parts of eastern Asia the cormorant is domesticated by fishermen.

cornea

cornice

n
/ 'kōrnəs /
Gk > L > It > F
the typically molded and projecting horizontal member that crowns an architectural composition.
Here and there among the ruins of the great palace, a cornice or part of a column remained intact.

corniculate

adj
/ kò(r)'nikyələt /
L
having horns or small horn-shaped processes.
In some species of animals, only the males are corniculate.

cornucopia

n
/ .kò(r)n(y)ə'kōpēə /
L
a curved goat's horn from the mouth of which fruit and ears of corn overflow, emblematic of abundance—called also "horn of plenty."
Robert placed various kinds of rolls in the basket shaped like a cornucopia and set it in the center of the table.

corollary

n
/ 'kɔrələre /
L

a proposition that follows upon one just demonstrated and that requires no additional proof.

After proving the theorem, Mr. Barnes showed how the corollary logically followed.

coronach

n
/ 'kɔrənək /
ScGael&IrGael

a lamentation for the dead as sung or played on the bagpipes in Scotland and Ireland : dirge.

The mournful coronach could be heard throughout the valley.

coroner

n
/ 'kɔrənə(r) /
L > F > AF > E

a public officer whose principal duty is to inquire into the cause of any death which there is reason to suppose is not due to natural causes.

The job of coroner combines elements of medicine and detective work.

coronet

n
/ ,kɔrə'net /
Gk > L > F

a small or lesser crown usually signifying a high rank below that of a sovereign.

The princess happily let her young cousin try on the coronet.

corporeal

adj
/ kɔ(r)'pɔrēəl /
L

having, consisting of, or relating to a physical material body : not spiritual.

It's very difficult for Mrs. O'Connor to think in a corporeal way.

corpulent

adj
/ 'kɔ(r)pyələnt /
L

having a large bulky body.
Mike and Edie laughed at the corpulent gorilla as it stuffed bananas into its mouth.

corralled

corridor

corroborate

v
/ kə'rɔbərət /
L

provide evidence of the truth of : confirm.

Without a witness to corroborate his alibi, Zorba remained the chief suspect in the robbery case.

corruptible

corsage

corsair

cortisone

coruscate

v
/ 'kɔrəskāt /
L

gleam with intermittent flashes : glitter, sparkle.

The flickering light from Trudy's lantern made the cave walls coruscate.

corybantic

adj
/ ,kɔrə'bantik /
Gk

like or in the spirit of the attendants or priests of the nature goddess Cybele noted for wildly emotional processions and rites; specifically : wild, frenzied.

At the rock concert many fans engaged in corybantic dancing.

corymb

n
/ 'kɔrim(b) /
Gk > L > F

a flower cluster in which the flower stalks arise at different levels on the main axis and reach about the same height, forming a somewhat flat-topped cluster.

Each corymb of Queen Anne's lace by the porch has a bumblebee on it.

cosmopolite

n
/ kəz'məpəlīt /
Gk

one that is at home in every country.

Although she considered herself a cosmopolite, Sharon still couldn't get used to driving on the left side of the road.

coterie

n
/ 'kɔdərə /
F

an intimate often exclusive group of persons having a binding common interest or purpose : clique.

Phyllis and her coterie arrived fashionably late for the gallery opening.

coterminous

cotyledon

n
/ ,käd'ɪəd'n /
Gk > L

the first leaf or one of the first pair or whorl of leaves developed by the embryo in seed plants and in ferns and related plants.

Mr. Pittman drew a fern cotyledon on the blackboard.

cough

coulisse

n
/ kü'lēs /
F

a side scene of the stage in a theater or the space between the side scenes.

The path depicted in the coulisse led the eyes to the center stage.

couloir

n
/ kü'l'wär /
L > F
a deep gorge.
Lance hiked along the stream at the bottom of the couloir.

counsel

n
/ 'kaun(t)səl /
L > F > E
[has homonym: council] advice, direction.
Mr. Knightley shared unpleasant truths with Emma and proved himself her friend by very faithful counsel.

countenance

n
/ 'kaunt(ə)nən(t)s /
L > F > E
the expressive appearance of one's face : look, expression.
The department store Santa's countenance set Loretta at ease.

counterfeit

countermand

countervail

v
/ 'kauntər,väl /
L > F > E
oppose or exert force against : counteract.
Miles built a low wall around his sloping garden to countervail erosion.

countian

coup

n
/ 'kü /
F
a sudden decisive exercise of localized or concentrated force unseating the personnel of a government.
The dictator was ousted by a military coup.

coupon

courier

n
/ 'kürēə(r) /
L > It > F
[has homonym: currier] one who carries messages, news, or information either with urgent haste or in accordance with a regular schedule.
Jaime worked as a courier after school to earn money for a new car.

courlan

courteously

cousin

couture

n
/ kü'tü(ə)r /
L > F
the business of designing, making, and selling fashionable expensive custom-made women's clothing.
At the Paris fashion shows Carolyn talked to several young designers who were just starting out in couture.

covenant

n
/ 'kəvənənt /
L > F > E
an agreement that is usually formal, solemn, and intended as binding.
The book of Genesis describes Noah's covenant with God that saved his family from the Great Flood.

coyote

n
/ ki'ōd(,)ē /
Nahuatl > Sp
a small wolf native to the western part of North America and well established northward in Alaska and eastward at least as far as New York state.
The lone male coyote kept to the edges of the pack for many days before being accepted into the group.

cozened

v
/ 'kəzənd /
L > It
obtained by artful wheedling or tricky dishonesty.
The crooked lawyer cozened the life's savings of several of his clients.

craniectomy

craquelure

crassamentum

credential

credenza

n
/ krə'denzə /
L > It
a sideboard, buffet, or bookcase without legs whose base rests flat on the floor.
Robin's CDs are on the second shelf of the credenza.

credulity

n
/ crə'd(y)ülədē /
L
belief or readiness of belief especially on slight or uncertain evidence.
Marco's personality was a strange mixture of shrewdness and credulity.

creel

creophagy

n
/ krē'äfəjē /
Gk
the use of flesh as food.
After visiting a slaughterhouse, Stephanie was repulsed by creophagy and became a vegetarian.

crepitant

adj
/ 'krepədənt /
L
having or making a crackling sound : crackling.
The boys rolled and tumbled in the pile of crepitant leaves.

crepuscular

adj
/ krə'pəsk(y)ələ(r) /
L + Ecf

active in the twilight.
Darnel blurted out "firefly" when the teacher asked for an example of a crepuscular insect.

crescendo

n
/ krə'shen(,)dō /
L > It

the peak of a gradual increase (as in physical or emotional force or intensity).
As soon as his boat sailed out of the harbor, Angus realized that the wind was nearing a crescendo.

crescent

n
/ 'kres'nt /
L > F > E

the shape or figure defined by a convex and a concave edge.
The moon's silvery crescent disappeared as the eclipse reached totality.

crescive

adj
/ 'kresiv /
L

increasing, growing.
The crescive vines traveled up the trellis.

crescograph

n
/ 'kreskə'graf /
L + Ecf + Gk

an instrument for making perceptible the growth of plants.
The crescograph can magnify small plant movements as much as ten million times.

cretonne

crewelwork

cribral

adj
/ 'kribrəl /
L

of or relating to a sieve : perforated.
The mouths of certain whales contain a cribral structure for collecting food.

crimson

n
/ 'krimzən /
Ar > Sp > E

any of several deep or vivid reds or purplish reds of rather indefinite range.
The sun was dropping slowly from sight, and stripes of purple and orange and crimson and gold reached upward from the distant hills.

crinoline

n
/ 'krin'lin /
L > It > F

a full stiff skirt or underskirt.
The crinoline that Andrea wore in the pageant made her knees itch.

criophore

cronyism
n
/ 'krōnē'izəm /
Gk + Ecf

partiality to familiar friends especially as evidenced in the appointing of political hangers-on to office without due regard for their qualifications.
When the mayor appointed his best friend head of the police department, he was accused of cronyism.

croquet

n
/ krō'kē /
F

a game in which players drive wooden balls with mallets through a series of wickets set out on a lawn in a particular order.
Erica and her friends played croquet in the churchyard.

crotchety

adj
/ 'krächədə /
F > E

subject to whims, crankiness, or ill temper.
Not getting enough sleep usually makes Trudy crotchety in the morning.

croup

n
/ 'krüp /
imit

a spasmodic laryngitis in infants and children characterized by episodes of difficult breathing and hoarse cough.
Mrs. Dowling hoped Everett's sore throat wouldn't develop into croup.

croupier

n
/ 'krüpē.ā /
F

an employee of a gambling casino who watches, collects, and pays bets and assists the dealer in charge of the table.
The croupier tossed two more \$100 chips onto Daphne's growing pile.

croustade

n
/ krü'stād /
Prov > F

a crisp shell (as of toasted or fried bread) in which to serve food.
Louise didn't know whether or not she was supposed to eat the croustade in which her salad was served.

crucial

crucible

n
/ 'krüsəbəl /
L

a vessel or melting pot that is used for melting and calcining a substance (as metal and ore) which requires a high degree of heat.
Clyde began the experiment by dumping the collected samples into a crucible.

cruciferous

adj
/ krü'sif(ə)rəs /
L + Ecff

belonging to or having the characteristics of the mustards or related plants.

Cruciferous vegetables are an excellent source of beta carotene.

crustacean

n
/ krə'stāshən /
L

an animal belonging to a large class of Arthropoda comprising the majority of the marine or freshwater arthropods (as lobsters, shrimps, crabs, and barnacles).

Our team's mascot is Crusty the Crustacean, a ten-pound Maine lobster.

cryophilic

cryophorus

n
/ krī'äfərəs /
Gk > L

an instrument that illustrates the freezing of water by its own evaporation.

The cryophorus was made of glass in the form of a tube connecting two globes partially filled with liquid.

cryptic

cryptographer

n
/ krip'tägräfə(r) /
Gk

one that practices the art of preparing or reading messages in a form intended to prevent their being read by those not privy to secrets of the form.

An inveterate cryptographer, Rico enjoys searching ordinary writing samples for hidden messages.

crystal

adj
/ 'krɪstəl /
Gk

consisting of or resembling quartz that is transparent or nearly so and that is either colorless or only slightly tinged.

Once inside, they hurried down a long hallway, which glittered with crystal chandeliers.

cucaracha

n
/ kükə'rächə /
Mexican song

a Mexican ballroom and nightclub dance.

Determined to win the state ballroom dance title, Joan and Marlon practiced their cucaracha for weeks.

cuchifrito

n
/ kuchi'frēdō /
Sp

a deep-fried cube of pork.

When Lane wasn't looking, Stephanie popped a cuchifrito into the dog's mouth.

cudgel

n
/ 'kəjəl /
E

a short heavy stick used as an instrument for punishment or a weapon.

A nightstick is one kind of cudgel.

cuirass

culgee

n
/ 'kəl.gē /
Per > Hindi

a jeweled plume worn in India on the turban.

Professor Singh happily loaned his grandfather's culgee to the museum.

culinary

adj
/ 'kələ.nerē /
L

of or relating to the kitchen or cookery.

The early colonists used herbs for both culinary and medicinal purposes.

culminant

adj
/ 'kəlmənənt /
L

being at greatest altitude or on the meridian.

The Sun casts the shortest shadows when it is culminant.

culotte

culpable

adj
/ 'kəlpəbəl /
L

meriting condemnation or censure especially as criminal or as conducive to accident, loss, or disaster.

The property owner was guilty of culpable negligence in the accident involving an uncovered manhole.

culprit

n
/ 'kəlpɾət /
L > AF

one who is guilty of a crime or other wrongdoing.

The detectives devised a plan to capture the culprit.

cumbersome

adj
/ 'kəmbə(r)səm /
F > E + Ecf

of an excessive size, shape, or length : unwieldy.

Emrick dragged his cumbersome duffel bag by its strap.

cummerbund

n
/ 'kəmə(r)bənd /
Per > Hindi

a waistband worn in place of a vest with men's dress clothes.
The bride wanted the groom's cummerbund to match the pale pink of her flowers.

cumulative

cuneiform

adj
/ kyü'nēəfɔrm /
L + L

written in characters composed of strokes having the form of a wedge or arrowhead.

The cuneiform Code of Hammurabi is the most complete record of ancient Babylonian law in existence.

cupboard

cupressineous

adj
/ .k(y)üprə'sinēəs /
Gk > L + Ecf

relating to or resembling the cypress.

The wood of cupressineous trees is usually light, moderately hard, and very durable.

curator

n
/ kyə'rādə(r) /
L

one in charge of the exhibits, research activities, and personnel of a museum, zoo, or other place of exhibit.

Eric interviewed the curator of marine mammals at the aquarium.

curliewurly

curmudgeon

n
/ (i)kər'məjən /
unknown

a crusty, ill-tempered, or difficult and often elderly person.

Fiona's dad called her grandfather a "cantankerous old curmudgeon."

current

adj
/ 'kərənt /
L

[has homonyms: courant, currant] presently elapsing.

In the current fiscal year Cornucopia College enjoys a slight budget surplus.

curriculum

n
/ kə'rikjələm /
L

the whole body of courses offered by an educational institution or one of its branches.

The school is planning to add Latin to its curriculum next year.

cursor

cuticle

n
/ 'kyüdəkəl /
L

an external membranous or hardened noncellular investment secreted by the outer surface of the body (as in arthropods).

Because expansion cannot occur in the chitinous cuticle, the growing insect must periodically shed its covering.

cybernetics

n pl
/ .sībə(r)'nediks /
Gk

the comparative study of the automatic control system formed by the nervous system and brain and by mechanical-electrical communication systems and devices (as computers or thermostats).

Bertha's new robotics software promised to revolutionize cybernetics.

cyclical

adj
/ 'sɪkləkəl /
Gk

of, relating to, or belonging to a regularly recurring succession of events or phenomena.

Mr. Ramirez explained the cyclical phases of the Moon to the science class today.

cyclonic

adj
/ sɪ'klänɪk /
Gk

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a rotating storm.

Cyclonic disturbances known as hurricanes usually occur during the summer and fall.

cycloserine

cygnet

n
/ 'sɪgnət /
Gk > L > F > E

a young swan.

Six-year-old Abby, openly contemptuous of the fairy tale, patiently explained to her mother that there's no way an ugly duckling can turn into a swan—only a cygnet can.

cylinder

cymbals

cynegetics

n pl
/ .sɪnə'jedɪks /
Gk

the art of hunting.

Mrs. White began her talk about cynegetics with a recording of melodies played on hunting horns.

cynology

n
/ sə'näləjē /
Gk

[has homonym: sinology]

scientific study of the dog especially in respect to its natural history.

Having a coyote as a childhood pet gave Rick an early interest in cynology.

cynophilist

n
/ sə'näfələst /
Gk

[Note: Could be confused with form of sinophil/sinophile.] a dog fancier : one that is favorably disposed toward dogs.
Although Leon considered himself a cynophilist, he did not trust the pit bull terrier.

cynosure

n
/ 'sɪnəʃu(ə)r /
Gk

a center of attraction or interest.
The student union, with its billiard tables, bowling alley, and snack bar, is a cynosure for freshmen during orientation week.

cytotoxic

dachshund

n
/ 'däks.hünt /
G + G

a small dog of a breed of German origin having long drooping ears, commonly a short sleek coat, and the legs short in comparison with the body length.
Chloe has a brown dachshund named "Oscar."

dactylogram

n
/ dak'tilə.gram /
Gk + Gk

an impression taken from a finger : fingerprint.
Calvin used a magnifying glass to examine the loops and whorls in a dactylogram of his index finger.

dactylology

dactyloscopy

n
/ daktə'läskəpē /
Gk

identification by comparison of fingerprints.
Dactyloscopy indicated that the suspect's fingerprints are indeed on the murder weapon.

daffodil

daguerreotype

dahlia

n
/ 'dalyə /
Sw name > L

a plant of a genus of tuberous-rooted herbs having rayed flower heads.
The brightly colored flowers of the dahlia can be six inches in diameter.

daiquiri

dais

n
/ 'dāəs /
L > F > E
a platform raised usually above the floor of a hall or large room to give distinction or prominence to those occupying it.
A round dais was exactly in the center of the room.

Daliesque

adj
/ .dälē'sk /
Sp name
resembling or suggesting the paintings of the Spanish surrealist artist Dali.
The poster showed a Daliesque face with feathers poking out of each nostril.

dalliance

dallied

damask

Damoclean

adj
/ .damə'klēən /
Gk name + Ecf
involving imminent danger.
Retrieving the car keys from the piranha tank was a Damoclean task indeed.

dandelion

dangerous

dangle

dashiki

dashing

adj
/ 'dashiŋ /
E imit + Ecf
vigorously active : spirited.
The dashing actor was the talk of the party.

dastardly

dasymeter

dauntless

dawdle

dawdler

n
/ 'död(ə)lə(r) /
unknown + Ecf
one who wastes time in idle lingering.
Lauren was such a dawdler that she often missed the school bus.

dazzling

v
/ 'daz(ə)liŋ /
ON > E + Ecf
overpowering with brightness : shining.
Morgan took great satisfaction in dazzling his neighbors with his Christmas light display.

deacon

deactivate

deacrate

dearth

n
/ 'dərth /
E
scarcity : lack of a present necessity.
The general realized that his army was suffering from a dearth of self-confidence.

debacle

n
/ də'bäkəl /
L > OProv > F
a sudden breakdown : collapse.
Craig reads everything he can find regarding the Wall Street debacle of 1929.

debarrass

debenture

n
/ də'benʃə(r) /

L
a writing or certificate signed by a public officer as evidence of a debt or of a right to demand or receive a sum of money.

Uncle John treasures the debenture issued by the Confederate government, even though it is actually worthless.

debility

debonairness

debouchment

n
/ də'bu:ʃmənt /

F
a mouth or outlet especially of a river.

The river's debouchment had to be dredged because the sediment was a hazard to navigation.

debridement

n
/ də'brɪd.məⁿ /

F
the surgical removal of lacerated, devitalized, or contaminated tissue.

The doctor explained to the firefighter why debridement was the best treatment for his second-degree burns.

debris

n
/ də'brɪ /

F
the remains of something broken down or destroyed.

Scattered debris lies where majestic homes stood before last week's tornado.

debut

decadent

decaffeinate

decanter

decadent

n
/ də'sɛd^ənt /

L
a dead person; especially : a person who has recently died.

The relatives of the decedent gathered for the reading of the will.

deceitful

adj
/ də'sɛɪfəl /

E + Ec f
dishonest.

The Better Business Bureau warned Jasper of the awning company's deceitful business practices.

deceive

v
/ də'si:v /

L > F > E
cause to believe the false : delude.

Cara's forgery of her mother's signature did not deceive the principal.

deceleron

decennial

decentralization

deciduous

adj
/ də'sɪdʒwəs /

L
falling off or shed at the end of the growing period, at certain seasons, or at certain stages of development.

Deciduous trees drop their leaves each fall.

decimal

deciphered

v
/ də'sɪfə(r)d /

L + Ar > L > F > E
made out, read, or interpreted despite obscurity.

When one considers the variety of handwriting, and of bad handwriting, too, that must be deciphered, it increases the wonder that so seldom a letter is delivered to the wrong person.

declamatory

adj
/ də'klamətɔrē /

L
marked by rhetorical effect or display : stilted.
Minna's declamatory sermon alienated many of her listeners.

declension

decline

declivous

decorticate

v
/ dɛ'kɔ(r)dəkæt /

L
remove the bark, husk, or other outer covering from.
Sharp front teeth allow squirrels to decorticate hickory nuts.

decoupage

n
/ .dəkü'pəʒh /

F
the art of decorating surfaces by applying cutouts and then coating them with several layers of a finish such as lacquer or varnish.
Aunt Hazel's interest in arts and crafts was kindled by a free class in decoupage.

decreolization

decrescendo

decumbiture

decussate

adj
/ 'dekəsət /

L
shaped like an X.
Each wing of the moth had a decussate marking.

deducibility

defamatory

deferential

defervescence

n
/ dē(ɪ)fər'ves'n(t)s /
L

the subsidence of a fever.
Antonio's mother was relieved to note the signs of defervescence in her son.

deficiency

n
/ də'fɪʃənsē /
L

the quality or state of lacking some quality, faculty, or characteristic necessary for completeness.
Scurvy is caused by a deficiency of vitamin C in the diet.

defilade

definite

adj
/ 'def(ə)nət /
L

free of all ambiguity, uncertainty, or obscurity.
Dad sounded quite definite when he told us to turn off the TV.

degauss

deglutition

dehisce

dehiscence

n
/ də'his'n(t)s /
L + Ecf

the bursting open of a capsule or pod at maturity.
In dry weather, dehiscence of some seed pods occurs prematurely.

deify

deign

deipnosophist

n
/ dip'näsəfəst /
Gk

a person skilled in table talk.
Clint's reputation as a deipnosophist makes him an ideal dinner guest.

delectable

adj
/ də'lektəbəl /
L

deliciously flavored.
JoAnne selected Black Forest cake from the delectable dessert offerings.

delegate

deleterious

adj
/ .delə'tirēəs /
Gk

hurtful, destructive.
The museum did not permit flash photography because of the possible deleterious effects on the paintings.

delicacy

n
/ 'deləkəsē /
L

something pleasing to eat that is accounted rare or luxurious.
Caviar is considered a delicacy.

delicatessen

n
/ .deləkə'tes'n /
F > G

a store where ready-to-eat food products (as cooked meats and prepared salads) are sold.
Marta stopped at the delicatessen to buy some cold cuts for our lunch.

delicious

adj
/ də'lishəs /
L

appealing to one of the bodily senses, especially that of taste.
Judith said the fudge was the most delicious she had ever tasted.

delineate

delinquency

delinquent

n
/ də'liŋkwənt /
L

a transgressor against duty or law.
The police referred to Harold as a "delinquent" when he was found on the street after curfew.

deliquesce

v
/ .delə'kwes /
L

become soft or liquid with age.
After a couple of weeks in the refrigerator, lettuce begins to deliquesce.

deliquescent

delitescent

adj
/ .delə'tesənt /
L

lying hidden : obfuscated, latent.
The psychiatrist tried to discover the delitescent significance of his patient's dreams.

delphinium

deltiology

n
/ .deltē'äləjē /
Gk

the hobby of collecting postcards.
Jodie got started in deltiology just last year but already has postcards from over 100 countries.

deltoidal

delude

demagoguery

n
/ 'deməgäg(ə)rē /
Gk + Ecf

the principles or practices of rabble-rousers.
Economic hardship often gives rise to demagoguery.

demarcate

v
/ də'mär.kāt /
Gmc > It > Sp
mark by bounds.
Sol used fishing line to demarcate his half of the room from his brother's.

demaree

demeanor

n
/ də'mēnə(r) /
L > F > E
behavior toward others : outward manner.
The vice-president's icily serious demeanor was fodder for the late-night talk shows.

demegoric

dementia

demersal

demesne

n
/ də'mān /
F
[has near homonym: domain] legal possession of land as one's own.
The earl vowed to defend his demesne at any cost.

demiglace

demise

demitasse

n
/ 'demē.tas /
L > F > E + Per > Ar > F
a small cup of coffee usually taken black.
Nathan sipped nervously at a demitasse while he waited for his attorney.

demobilize

demography

n
/ də'mägrəfē /
Gk
the statistical study of the characteristics of human populations especially with reference to size and density, growth, distribution, migration, and vital statistics.
Beth's interest in demography led her to a career in advertising.

demolition

demoniacal

demulcent

adj
/ də'məlsənt /
L
soothing, softening.
The pharmacist told Boris that a demulcent syrup would be best for his sore throat.

demurrage

denizen

n
/ 'denəzən /
L > F > E
a dweller in a certain place or region.
Melvin asked a local denizen for directions.

denominator

denouement

n
/ .dānū'mä /
L > F
the final outcome, result, or unraveling of the main dramatic complication in a play or other work of literature.
The loose ends of the plot were neatly tied up in the surprising denouement.

dentifrice

n
/ 'dentəfrəs /
L
a powder, paste, or liquid used in cleaning the teeth.
John decided to use a dentifrice containing baking soda.

depilatory

n
/ də'pilətōrē /
L > F
a cosmetic for the temporary removal of undesired hair.
Hank mixed a depilatory into his sister's shampoo.

deprecatory

deracinated

adj
/ də'ras'n.ātəd /
L > F + Ecf
physically, mentally, or emotionally separated from one's racial, social, or intellectual group.
Erica's father worries that she might become deracinated at such a large university.

derailleur

n
/ də'rālə(r) /
F
[has homonym: derailer] a mechanism for shifting gears on a bicycle that operates by moving the chain from one set of exposed gears to another.
Laurent's derailleur jammed a few minutes into the race, and he was forced to the side of the road.

dereism

derelict

n
/ 'derə.lik /
L
a thing voluntarily abandoned by its owner with the intention of not retaking it and rightly claimed by the first person who takes possession of it; specifically : a boat abandoned on the high seas.
Tom sank his yacht when his rescuers arrived lest it become a derelict.

dereliction

n
/ .derə'likshən /
L
intentional or conscious neglect (as of principles).
The security guard was summarily fired for dereliction of duty.

derogatorily

derogatory

adj
/ də'ragə.tōrē /

L
expressive of low estimation or reproach : disdainful.

Janet did not appreciate the derogatory remarks her brother made about her dress.

derrick

n
/ 'derik /

E name
the framework or tower over a deep drill hole (as that of an oil well) for supporting the tackle for boring or for hoisting and lowering.

The rocket was supported on the launch pad by a tower that was a converted oil derrick.

descendible

desecrate

desiccate

v
/ 'desə.kāt /

L
[has near homonym: desecrate] dry up or cause to dry up : deprive or exhaust of moisture.

The hot sunshine and the dry wind combined to desiccate Martha's tomato plants.

design

desirable

desman

n
/ 'dez.mən /

Sw
an aquatic insectivorous mammal of Russia that resembles a mole.
At one end the desman has a long, flared snout and at the other end a long, flattened tail.

desolate

adj
/ 'desələt /

L
characterized by abandonment, isolation, or barrenness.
The irrigation project revived the once desolate farming community.

despair

n
/ də'spa(a)(ə)r /

L
utter loss of hope.
Despair overcame Gerald as he stared at his French exam.

desperado

n
/ .despə'rä(,)dō /

L > Sp
a bandit of the western frontier.
Louis pretended to be a desperado holding up a stagecoach.

desperate

despicable

adj
/ də'spikəbəl /

L
meriting hatred, scorn, or loathing.
Sylvester's stress level would be greatly reduced if he found fewer situations despicable.

despotism

n
/ 'despə.tizəm /

Gk > F
absolute government in which power is vested in a single ruler.
Those who believe in the progress of humanity have a hard time explaining 20th-century despotism.

destrier

n
/ 'destrēər /

L > F > E
a large powerful horse used as a war-horse by a medieval knight.
The knight rapidly saddled his destrier and galloped off to battle the invaders.

desuetude

n
/ 'deswē.tüd /

L
discontinuance from use, practice, exercise, or functioning : a state of protracted suspension or of apparent abandonment.
In some schools the practice of memorizing great poems has fallen into desuetude.

desultorily

adv
/ .desəl'tōrəlē /

L
in an erratic, wavering manner.
Orna behaved desultorily at the dress rehearsal.

desultory

adj
/ 'desəl.tōrē /

L
not cogently relevant : digressive.
Nancy's comments in class are usually rather desultory, but today her remarks were very relevant.

deterge

detergent

deterrence

n
/ də'tərən(t)s /

L + Ecf
the act or process of turning aside, discouraging, or preventing from acting especially by fear.
The police hoped that Ted's severe jail sentence would promote the deterrence of criminal acts by the other gang members.

deterrent

n
/ də'tərənt /

L
something that discourages or prevents from acting by fear or consideration of unpleasant attendant consequences.
The police hoped that Ted's severe jail sentence would serve as a deterrent to criminal activity by the other gang members.

detinue

detonator

detour

detriment

detritus

n
/ də'trɪdəs /
L

a product of disintegration or wearing away : fragment or fragmentary material.

The aerial photo of Don's ranch shows a fan of detritus at the mouth of the gulch.

detrude

deuce

n
/ 'd(y)üs /
L > F

[has near homonyms: do's, dues] a tie in tennis in points toward a game or in games requiring scoring of two consecutive points by one side to win the game or set.

The first point won in tennis after deuce is called "advantage in" if won by the server, "advantage out" if won by the receiver.

deuteragonist

n
/ d(y)üdə'ragənəst /
Gk + Gk

a person who serves as a foil to another.

The movie's hero was thwarted by the villainous deuteragonist.

devolution

dewclaw

dextrally

dhurrie

n
/ 'dərē /
Hindi
a thick cotton cloth or carpet made in India.
The dhurrie in Morgan's foyer is one she purchased during her trip to Delhi.

diabetes

n
/ dīə'bēdēz /
Gk
any of certain abnormal conditions characterized by the secretion and excretion of excessive amounts of urine.
Drugs and diet changes can control diabetes in most patients.

diablerie

n
/ dē'äblə(,)rē /
L > F
dealings with the devil or devils : witchcraft, sorcery.
Each Halloween, stories of diablerie resurface in the media.

diacetate

diadem

n
/ 'dīədem /
Gk > L > F > E
crown; specifically : an ornamental headband worn (as by Eastern monarchs) as a badge of royalty.
A brocade diadem would be a perfect finishing touch for Josh's King David costume.

diagnose

v
/ 'dīəgnōs /
Gk > L
identify a condition by evaluating its signs and symptoms.
Dr. Morris was reluctant to diagnose Tina's condition until he had the test results.

diagonal

adj
/ dī'agənəl /
Gk > L
running across from corner to corner.
Chris preferred the tile floor with the diagonal pattern.

diagram

dialysis

n
/ dī'aləsəs /
Gk
the separation of substances in solution by means of their unequal diffusion through semipermeable membranes.
Blood was removed from the patient, purified by dialysis, and then returned to the patient's bloodstream.

diapason

n
/ dīə'pāzən /
Gk > L
a burst of harmonious sound : melody, strain.
The trumpeters filled the courtyard with thrilling diapason.

diapered

diaphanous

adj
/ dī'afənəs /
GK > L
characterized by such fineness and delicacy of texture as to permit seeing through.
The jellyfish were so diaphanous that you could be next to them in the water and never know they were there.

diaphragm

diary

diaspore

diatribe

n
/ 'dīə.trīb /
Gk
a bitter, abusive, and usually lengthy speech or piece of writing.
After supper, Deirdre launched into her familiar diatribe against commercial television.

diazotype

dicerous

adj
/ 'disərəs /
Gk

having two antennae.
Because most insects have a pair of antennae, they are dicerous.

dichotomy

n
/ dɪ'kɪdəmē /
Gk

the phase of the Moon or an inferior planet in which just half its disk appears illuminated.
The Moon had just reached dichotomy when Amos began planting.

dickcissel

didactic

adj
/ dɪ'daktɪk /
Gk

fitted or intended to teach.
Guy's innovative and effective didactic style inspired his students to produce amazing work.

didacticism

didascaly

dietetic

dietetics
n pl
/ dɪə'tedɪks /
Gk

the science or art of applying the principles of nutrition to the feeding of individuals or groups under different economic conditions or for hygienic or therapeutic purposes.
Pam concentrated on dietetics in her graduate studies with hopes of joining a world hunger organization after receiving her degree.

different

difficult

adj
/ 'dɪfə(ɪ)kəlt /
L

hard to understand : puzzling, obscure.
There were so many words that were difficult, and Milo knew hardly any of them.

diffident

adj
/ 'dɪfədənt /
L

lacking confidence in oneself : distrustful of one's own powers.
Emma was always quick and assured; her sister was slow and diffident.

digitalis

n
/ dɪjə'taləs /
L

the dried leaf of the purple foxglove containing substances that are used to prepare a drug that is a heart stimulant.
Digitalis has proved to be the most effective treatment for Ginger's heart disorder.

dilapidated

adj
/ dɪ'ləpə'deɪdət /
L

decayed, deteriorated, injured, or fallen into partial ruin.
Only birds and bats resided in the dilapidated old house.

dilatory

adj
/ 'dɪlə.tōrē /
L

characterized by procrastination or delay : slow.
Mr. Knightley always moved with the alertness of a mind which could be neither undecided nor dilatory.

dilemma

diligence

diligently

dillydally

v
/ 'dɪlə.dəlē /
Gmc > F > E

waste time by loitering or delay.
"There's lots to do; we have a very busy schedule—from 6:00 to 7:00 we dillydally," he exclaimed.

diluent

n
/ 'dɪlyəwənt /
L

an inert substance added to a mixture especially for reducing the concentration of active ingredients.
Water added to the insecticide acts as a diluent and a carrier.

dilute

v
/ dɪ'lüt /
L

make less concentrated : diminish the strength, activity, or flavor of.
Because of the heat produced, caution is needed when using water to dilute concentrated sulfuric acid.

dimension

n
/ də'menʃən /
L

a measurable aspect such as length or width.
Height is one dimension of a cube.

diminuendo

diminutive

adj
/ dɪ'mɪnyədɪv /
L

small especially in size : tiny.
Kerry was first to notice the diminutive hummingbird at the honeysuckle bush.

diocese

n
/ 'dɪəsəs /
Gk > L > F

the district in which a bishop has churchly authority.
The local bishop's diocese covers five counties.