

THE
RANDOM HOUSE
DICTIONARY
OF THE
ENGLISH
LANGUAGE

Second Edition

Unabridged

Capella 2007
Fujitsu v. Capella

*Dedicated to the memory of
Jess Stein*

COPYRIGHT © 1987, BY RANDOM HOUSE, INC.

First Edition: Copyright © 1983, 1981, 1979, 1973, 1971, 1970, 1969, 1967, 1966, by Random House, Inc.

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, without permission in writing from the publisher. All inquiries should be addressed to Reference Department, Random House, Inc., 201 E. 50th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022. Published in the United States by Random House, Inc., and simultaneously in Canada by Random House of Canada Limited, Toronto

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language and its abbreviations, RHD, RHDEL, RHD-I, and RHD-II, are trademarks of Random House, Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
The Random House dictionary of the English language.
(Random House dictionaries)

1. English language—Dictionaries. I. Flexner,
Stuart Berg. II. Series.

PE1625.R3 1987 423 87-4500
ISBN 0-394-50050-4; 0-394-56500-2 deluxe ed.

A number of entered words which we have reason to believe constitute trademarks have been designated as such. However, no attempt has been made to designate as trademarks or service marks all words or terms in which proprietary rights may exist. The inclusion, exclusion, or definition of a word or term is not intended to affect, or to express a judgment on, the validity or legal status of the word or term as a trademark, service mark, or other proprietary term.

The Concise French Dictionary, edited by Francesca L. V. Langbaum, Copyright © 1983, 1954, by Random House, Inc.

The Concise German Dictionary, edited by Jenni Karding Moulton, Copyright © 1983, 1959, by Random House, Inc.

The Concise Italian Dictionary, edited by Robert A. Hall, Jr., Copyright © 1983, 1957, by Random House, Inc.

The Concise Spanish Dictionary, edited by Donald F. Solá, Copyright © 1983, 1954, by Random House, Inc.

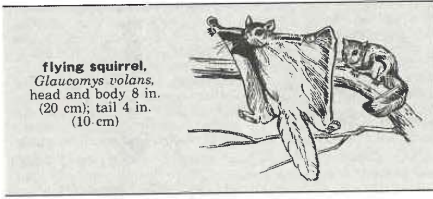
Entire contents of the *Atlas*, Copyright © 1987, by C. S. Hammond & Company.

International Phonetic Alphabet, courtesy International Phonetic Association.

Manufactured in the United States of America

rs/uh

fly/ing squir/rel, any of various nocturnal tree squirrels, as *Glaucomys volans*, of the eastern U.S., having folds of skin connecting the fore and hind legs, permitting long, gliding leaps. [1605-15]



flying squirrel.
Glaucomys volans.
head and body 8 in.
(20 cm); tail 4 in.
(10 cm)

fly/ing start', 1. a start, as in sailboat racing, in which the entrants begin moving before reaching the starting line. 2. a start or beginning of anything, characterized by the participant's vigor and enthusiasm and sometimes by a certain advantage over competitors: *She's off to a flying start in her new job.* [1850-55]

fly/ing tack/le, *Football*. a tackle made by hurling one's body through the air at the player carrying the ball.

Fly/ing Ti/gers, the nickname of U.S. fighter pilots, the American Volunteer Group (AVG), who fought against the Japanese in China during World War II.

fly/ing wing', *Aeron.* an airplane whose wings form almost all the airframe, with the fuselage almost or entirely within the wing structure. [1935-40]

fly-leaf (flī'lef'), *n.*, *pl.* **-leaves**. a blank leaf in the front or the back of a book. [1825-35; FLY¹ (*n.*, in combination: something fastened by the edge) + LEAF]

fly' line', *Angling*. a line for use in fly-fishing.

fly' loft', *Theat.* fly¹ (def. 37).

fly-man (flī'mən), *n.*, *pl.* **-men**. *Theat.* a stagehand, esp. one who operates the apparatus in the flies. [1835-45; FLY¹ + -MAN]

fly' net', a net or fringe to protect a horse from flies or other insects.

fly-off (flī'ɒf', -ɒf'), *n.* 1. *Meteorol.* evapotranspiration (def. 1). 2. a competition between aircraft of various manufacturers to establish superior performance, esp. in order to gain a government contract. [1965-70; (def. 1) prob. FLY¹ + (RUN)OFF; (def. 2) FLY¹ + -OFF]

fly-o-ver (flī'ɒvər), *n.* 1. a formation of aircraft in flight for observation from the ground, esp. a prearranged, low-altitude flight over a public gathering. 2. a flight over a simulated target by a bomber or bombing planes. 3. a flight over a specified area, as for viewing: *We booked a one-hour flyover of the Grand Canyon.* 4. the action of passing or flying overhead: *rumors of another UFO flyover.* 5. *Brit.* an overhead crossing, esp. a highway overpass. [1900-05; *n.* use of *v.* phrase *fly over*]

fly-pa-per (flī'pā'pər), *n.* paper designed to destroy flies by catching them on its sticky surface or poisoning them on contact. [1840-50; FLY² + PAPER]

fly-past (flī'pɑst', -pɑst'), *n.* flyby (def. 2a). [1910-15; *n.* use of *v.* phrase *fly past*]

fly' rail', 1. *Furniture*. a horizontally swinging bracket for supporting a drop leaf. 2. Also called fly-rail', *working rail*. *Theat.* the upper row of pins or cleats on a pin rail, used for tying off or fastening lines of scenery to be filed. [1850-55]

Fly/ Riv'er (flī), a river in New Guinea, flowing SE from the central part to the Gulf of Papua, ab. 800 mi. (1290 km) long.

fly' rod', *Angling*. a light, extremely flexible fishing rod specially designed for use in fly-fishing. [1675-85]

flysch (flīsh), *n.* *Geol.* an association of certain types of marine sedimentary rocks characteristic of deposition in a foredeep. [1845-55; < G < Swiss *G flysch* referring to such deposits in the Swiss Alps; perh. akin to Swabian dial. *flins* slate (akin to FLINT)]

fly' sheet', a sheet on which instructions or information are printed; handbill. [1825-35]

fly-speck (flī'spek'), *n.* 1. a speck or tiny stain from the excrement of a fly. 2. any minute spot. 3. *Plant Pathol.* a disease of some fruits, characterized by small, raised, dark spots on the fruit, caused by a fungus, *Leptothyrium pomi*. —*v.t.* 4. to mark with flyspecks. [1850-55; FLY² + SPECK]

fly-strike (flī'strīk'), *n.* *Vet. Pathol.* myiasis. [1935-40]

fly/ swat/ter, a device for killing flies, mosquitoes, and other insects, usually a square sheet of wire mesh attached to a long handle. Also, **fly-/swat/ter**, **fly/swat/ter**. [1885-90]

flyte (flīt), *v.i.*, **flyt-ed**, **flyt-ing**. *n.* *Scot. and North Eng.* flite.

fly-ti-er (flī'tī'ər), *n.* *Angling*. a person who makes artificial lures for fly-fishing. [1880-85; FLY² + TIER³]

fly-trap (flī'trap'), *n.* 1. any of various plants that entrap insects, esp. Venus's-flytrap. 2. a trap for flies. [1765-75; FLY² + TRAP¹]

fly-up (flī'ʌp'), *n.* a formal ceremony at which a girl leaves her Brownie troop, receives a pair of embroidered wings for her uniform, and becomes a member of an intermediate Girl Scout troop. [*n.* use of *v.* phrase *fly up*]

fly-way (flī'wā'), *n.* a route between breeding and wintering areas taken by concentrations of migrating birds. [1890-95; FLY¹ + WAY]

fly-weight (flī'wāt'), *n.* a boxer or other contestant of the lightest competitive class, esp. a professional boxer weighing up to 112 lb. (51 kg). [1905-10; FLY² + WEIGHT]

fly-wheel (flī'hwel', -wel'), *n.* *Mach.* a heavy disk or wheel rotating on a shaft so that its momentum gives almost uniform rotational speed to the shaft and to all connected machinery. [1775-85; FLY¹ + WHEEL]

FM, 1. *Electronics*. frequency modulation: a method of impressing a signal on a radio carrier wave by varying the frequency of the carrier wave. 2. *Radio*. a system of radio broadcasting by means of frequency modulation. 3. of, pertaining to, or utilizing such a system. Cf. **AM**.

Fm, *Symbol, Chem.* fermium.

fm, *Symbol, Physics.* femtometer.

fm., 1. fathom. 2. from.

f.m., (in prescriptions) make a mixture. [*< L fiat mis-tura*]

FMB, Federal Maritime Board.

FMC, Federal Maritime Commission.

FMCS, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

FM cyclotron, *Physics*. synchrocyclotron.

F.Mk., finmark; Finnish markka. Also, **FMK** **fn**, footnote.

FNMA, Federal National Mortgage Association.

f-number (ef'num'bər), *n.* *Optics, Photog.* a number corresponding to the ratio of the focal length to the diameter of a lens system, esp. a camera lens. In *f*/*N*, 1.4 is the *f*-number and signifies that the focal length of the lens is 1.4 times as great as the diameter. *Abbr.*: *f*/*N*, *f*/*N*, *f*/*N*. Also, **f number**. Also called **focal ratio**, **speed**, **stop number**. Cf. **relative aperture**. [1890-95]

Fo (fō), *n.* *Chinese*. Buddha (def. 1).

fo., folio.

F.O., 1. field officer. 2. foreign office. 3. *Mil.* forward observer.

foal (fō), *n.* 1. a young horse, mule, or related animal, esp. one that is not yet one year of age. —*v.t.*, *v.i.* 2. to give birth to (a colt or filly). [bef. 950; (*n.*) ME *fole*, OE *folā*; c. OHG *folo* (*G Fohlen*); akin to *L pullus* young animal, *Gk pōlos* foal; (*v.*) ME, deriv. of the *n.*]

foam (fōm), *n.* 1. a collection of minute bubbles formed on the surface of a liquid by agitation, fermentation, etc.: *foam on a glass of beer.* 2. the froth of perspiration, caused by great exertion, formed on the skin of a horse or other animal. 3. froth formed from saliva in the mouth, as in epilepsy and rabies. 4. a thick frothy substance, as shaving cream. 5. (in firefighting) a chemically produced substance that smothers the flames on a burning liquid by forming a layer of minute, stable, heat-resistant bubbles on the liquid's surface. **b.** the dispersion of gas bubbles in a solid, as foam glass, foam rubber, polyfoam, or foamed metal. 7. *Literary, the sea.* —*v.i.* 8. to form or gather foam; emit foam; froth. —*v.t.* 9. to cause to foam. 10. to cover with foam; apply foam to: *to foam a runway before an emergency landing.* 11. to insulate with foam. 12. to make (plastic, metal, etc.) into a foam. 13. **foam at the mouth**, to be extremely or uncontrollably angry. [bef. 900; ME *foam*, OE *fām*; c. *G Feim*. —*foam'a-ble*, *adj.* —*foam'er*, *n.* —*foam'ing-ly*, *adv.* —*foam'less*, *adj.* —*foam/like*, *adj.* —*foam'ing*, *adv.* —*Syn.* 1. froth, spume, head, fizz, scum.

foamed/ met'al, *Chem., Metallurgy.* a uniform foamlike metal structure produced when hydrogen bubbles are evolved from metal hydrides uniformly dispersed throughout a host metal or metal alloy; used as a structural material because of its shock-absorbing properties and light weight. Also, **foam' met'al**.

foamed/ plas'tic. See **expanded plastic**. [1935-40]

foam-flow'er (fōm'flou'ər), *n.* a North American plant, *Tiarella cordifolia*, having a cluster of small, usually white flowers. Also called **false miterwort**. [1890-95; FOAM + FLOWER]

foam' glass', cellular glass made by fusing powdered glass with carbon particles or other gas-generating material, used chiefly for industrial purposes. [1945-50]

foam' rub'ber, a light, spongy rubber, used for mattresses, cushions, etc. [1940-45]

foam-y (fō'mē), *adj.*, **foam-i-er**, **foam-i-est**. 1. covered with or full of foam. 2. consisting of foam. 3. resembling foam. 4. pertaining to foam. [bef. 1000; ME *fomy*, OE *fāmig*. See FOAM, -y¹]. —*foam'i-ly*, *adv.* —*foam'i-ness*, *n.*

fob' (fob), *n.* 1. a small pocket just below the waistline in trousers for a watch, keys, change, etc. Cf. **watch pocket**. 2. a short chain or ribbon, usually with a medallion or similar ornament, attached to a watch and worn hanging from a pocket. 3. the medallion or ornament itself. [1645-55; orig. uncert.; cf. *G dial. Fuppe* pocket]

fob' (fob), *v.t.*, **fobbed**, **fob-bing**. 1. *Archaic*. to cheat; deceive. 2. **fob off**, **a.** to cheat someone by substituting something spurious or inferior; palm off (often fol. by *on*): *He tried to fob off an inferior brand on us.* **b.** to put (someone) off by deception or trickery: *She fobbed us off with false promises.* [1350-1400; ME *fobben*; c. *G foppen* to delude; cf. *foe*]

f.o.b., *Com.* free on board: without charge to the buyer for goods placed on board a carrier at the point of shipment: *automobiles shipped f.o.b. Detroit.* Also, **F.O.B.**

FOBS. See **fractional orbital bombardment system**. Also, **F.O.B.S.**

fo-cal (fō'kal), *adj.* of or pertaining to a focus. [1685-95; < NL *focālis*. See FOCUS, -AL¹]. —*fo'cal-ly*, *adv.*

surrounding areas, as reflected in a set of isoglosses more or less concentrically surrounding it. Cf. **relic area**, **transition area**.

fo'cal infec'tion, *Pathol., Dentistry*. an infection in which bacteria are localized in some region, as the tonsils or the tissue around a tooth, from which they may spread to some other organ or structure of the body. [1920-25]

fo-cal-ize (fō'kə'līz'), *v.t.*, *v.i.*, **-ized**, **-iz-ing**. 1. to bring or come to a focus. 2. to localize. Also, *esp. Brit.*, **fo'cal-ise**. [1835-45; FOCAL + -IZE] —*fo'cal-i-za'tion*, *n.*

fo'cal length', *Optics*. 1. the distance from a focal point of a lens or mirror to the corresponding principal plane. *Symbol:* *f* 2. the distance between an object lens and its corresponding focal plane in a telescope. Also called **fo'cal dis'tance**. [1745-55]

fo'cal plane', *Optics*. 1. a plane through a focal point and normal to the axis of a lens, mirror, or other optical system. Cf. **principal plane**. 2. the transverse plane in a telescope where the real image of a distant view is in focus. [1890-95]

fo'cal-plane shut'ter (fō'kal plān'), *Photog.* a camera shutter situated directly in front of the film/ Cf. **curtain shutter**. [1900-05]

fo'cal point', 1. Also called **principal focus**. *Optics*. either of two points on the axis of a mirror, lens, or other optical system, one point being such that rays diverging from it are deviated parallel to the axis upon refraction or reflection by the system and the other point being such that rays parallel to the axis of the system converge to the point upon refraction or reflection by the system. 2. the point at which all elements or aspects converge; center of activity or attention: *The focal point of our discussion was the need for action.* 3. the central or principal point of focus. [1705-15]

fo'cal ra'tio, *Optics, Photog.* *f*-number. [1925-30]

fo'cal sei'zure, *Pathol.* an epileptic manifestation arising from a localized anomaly in the brain, as a small tumor or scar, and usually involving a single motor or sensory mechanism but occasionally spreading to other areas and causing convulsions and loss of consciousness.

Foch (fosh; *Fr.* fōsh), *n.* **Fer-di-nand** (fer de nān'), 1851-1929, French marshal.

fo-ci (fō'sī, -kī), *n.* a pl. of **focus**.

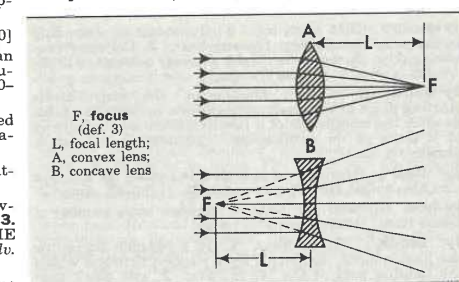
fo-com-e-ter (fō kom'ī tər), *n.* *Optics*. an instrument for measuring the focal length of a lens or other optical system. [1850-55; FOC(US) + -o- + -METER]

fo'c's'le (fōk'səl), *n.* *Naut.* forecastle. Also, **fo'c's'le**. [*resp.* reflecting syncope and loss of pre-consonantal *r*]

fo-cus (fō'kəs), *n.*, *pl.* **-cus-es**, **-ci** (-sī, -kī), *v.* **-cused**, **-cus-ing** (or *esp. Brit.* **-cused**, **-cus-ing**). —*n.* 1. a central point, as of attraction, attention, or activity: *The need to prevent a nuclear war became the focus of all diplomatic efforts.* 2. *Physics*. a point at which rays of light, heat, or other radiation, meet after being refracted or reflected. 3. *Optics*. a. the focal point of a lens. **b.** the focal length of a lens. **c.** the clear and sharply defined condition of an image. **d.** the position of a viewed object or the adjustment of an optical device necessary to produce a clear image: *in focus*; *out of focus*. 4. *Geom.* (of a conic section) a point having the property that the distances from any point on a curve to it and to a fixed line have a constant ratio for all points on the curve. See *diag.* under **ellipse**, **hyperbola**, **parabola**. 5. *Geol.* the point of origin of an earthquake. 6. *Pathol.* the primary center from which a disease develops or in which it localizes. —*v.t.* 7. to bring to a focus or into focus: *to focus the lens of a camera.* 8. to concentrate: *to focus one's thoughts.* —*v.i.* 9. to become focused. [1635-45; < *L.* *foculus*, *hearth*] —*fo'cus-a-ble*, *adj.* —*fo'cus-er*, *n.*

—*Syn.* 1. center, heart, core, nucleus.

fo'cus-ing, *adv.*



fo'cusing cloth', an opaque cloth surrounding the ground glass of a camera so as to shield the eyes of the photographer from light that would otherwise prevent seeing the image in the ground glass. [1850-55]

fo'cusing screen', *Photog.* See under **reflex camera**. [1855-60]

fo-d'er (fod'ər), *n.* 1. coarse food for livestock, composed of entire plants, including leaves, stalks, and grain, of such forages as corn and sorghum. 2. people considered as readily available and of little value: *cannon fodder*. 3. raw material: *fodder for a comedian's routine*. —*v.t.* 4. to feed with or as if with fodder. [bef. 1000; ME; OE *fodder*, *fōder*; c. *G Futter*; akin to *food*] —*Syn.* 1. See **feed**.

fo-d'er-beet (fod'ər bēt'), *n.* sugar beet used as fodder. Also, **fo-d'er beet'**. [FODDER + BEET']

fod-gel (fod'jəl), *adj.* *Scot.* fat; stout; plump. [1715-25; *fodge* (var. of *FADGE*) a short, fat person + *-el* *adj.* suffix]

foe (fō), *n.* 1. a person who feels enmity, hatred, or

CONCISE ETYMOLOGY KEY: <, descended or borrowed from; >, whence; b, blend of, blended; c, cognate with; cf., compare; deriv., derivative; equiv., equivalent; imit., imitative; obl., oblique; r, rhotac; r, rhotac; s, stem; sp., spelling, spelled; resp., respelling, respelled;