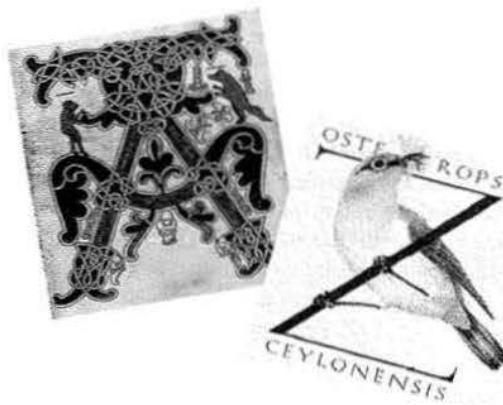


The
**American
Heritage[®] Dictionary**
of the English Language

FOURTH EDITION



Words are included in this Dictionary on the basis of their usage. Words that are known to have current trademark registrations are shown with an initial capital and are also identified as trademarks. No investigation has been made of common-law trademark rights in any word, because such investigation is impracticable. The inclusion of any word in this Dictionary is not, however, an expression of the Publisher's opinion as to whether or not it is subject to proprietary rights. Indeed, no definition in this Dictionary is to be regarded as affecting the validity of any trademark.

American Heritage® and the eagle logo are registered trademarks of Forbes Inc. Their use is pursuant to a license agreement with Forbes Inc.

Copyright © 2006, 2000 Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written permission of Houghton Mifflin Company unless such copying is expressly permitted by federal copyright law. Address inquiries to Reference Permissions, Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

ISBN-13: 978-0-618-70172-8

ISBN-10: 0-618-70172-9

ISBN-13: 978-0-618-70173-5 (hardcover with CD-ROM)

ISBN-10: 0-618-70173-7 (hardcover with CD-ROM)

Visit our websites: www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com
or www.ahdictionary.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The American Heritage dictionary of the English language.—4th ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-395-82517-2 (hardcover) — ISBN 0-618-08230-1
(hardcover with CD ROM)

I. English language—Dictionaries

PE1628 .A623 2000

423—dc21

00-025369

Manufactured in the United States of America

om•ni•sex•u•al (òm'nē-sèk'shō-əl) *adj.* Pansexual. ❖ *n.* A pansexual person. —**om•ni•sex•u•al•i•ty** *n.*

om•ni•um•gath•er•um (òm'nē-əm-gāh'ər-əm) *n.* A miscellaneous collection; a hodgepodge. [Latin *omnium*, genitive pl. of *omnis*, all; see **op-** in Appendix I + *gathering* (mock-Latinate alteration of **GATHER**).]

om•ni•vore (òm'nā-vōr', -vōr') *n.* 1. An omnivorous person or animal. 2. One that takes in everything available, as with the mind. [From New Latin *Omnivora*, omnivores, from neuter pl. of Latin *omnivorus*, omnivorous. See **OMNIVOROUS**.]

om•niv•o•rous (òm-niv'ər-əs) *adj.* 1. Eating both animal and vegetable foods. 2. Taking in everything available, as with the mind: *an omnivorous reader*. [From Latin *omnivorus*: *omni-*, *omni-* + *-vorus*, -vorous.] —**om•niv•o•rous•ly** *adv.* —**om•niv•o•rous•ness** *n.*

Om•o•lon (òm'ə-lōn') *n.* A river, about 965 km (600 mi) long, of northeast Russia flowing northward to the Kolyma River.

o•mot•ic (ō-mōt'ik) *n.* A branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family, spoken in Ethiopia. [After the *Omo River* in western Ethiopia.]

om•pha•los (òm'fā-lōs', -lās) *n., pl. -li (-li)* 1. The navel. 2. A central part; a focal point. [Greek. See **nobh-** in Appendix I.]

Omsk (òmsk) *n.* A city of south-central Russia at the confluence of the Irtysh and Om rivers. On the Trans-Siberian Railroad, it is a major river port and transportation hub. The city was founded in 1716. Population: 1,163,885.

on (ɔn, ɔn) *prep.* 1a. Used to indicate position above and supported by or in contact with: *The vase is on the table. We rested on our hands and knees.* b. Used to indicate contact with or extent over (a surface) regardless of position: *a picture on the wall; a rash on my back.* c. Used to indicate location at or along: *the pasture on the south side of the river; a house on the highway.* d. Used to indicate proximity: *a town on the border.* e. Used to indicate attachment to or suspension from: *beads on a string.* f. Used to indicate figurative or abstract position: *on the young side, but experienced; on her third beer; stopped on chapter two.* 2a. Used to indicate actual motion toward, against, or onto: *jumped on the table; the march on Washington.* b. Used to indicate figurative or abstract motion toward, against, or onto: *going on six o'clock; came on the answer by accident.* 3a. Used to indicate occurrence at a given time: *on July third; every hour on the hour.* b. Used to indicate the particular occasion or circumstance: *On entering the room, she saw him.* 4a. Used to indicate the object affected by actual, perceptible action: *The spotlight fell on the actress. He knocked on the door.* b. Used to indicate the object affected by a figurative action: *Have pity on them.* c. Used to indicate the object of an action directed, tending, or moving against it: *an attack on the fortress.* d. Used to indicate the object of perception or thought: *gazed on the vista; meditated on his actions.* 5. Used to indicate the agent or agency of a specified action: *cut his foot on the broken glass; talked on the telephone.* 6a. Used to indicate a medicine or other corrective taken or undertaken routinely: *went on a strict diet.* b. Used to indicate a substance that is the cause of an addiction, a habit, or an altered state of consciousness: *high on dope.* 7a. Used to indicate a source or basis: *"We will reach our judgments not on intentions or on promises but on deeds and on results"* (Margaret Thatcher). b. Used to indicate a source of power or energy: *The car runs on methane.* 8a. Used to indicate the state or process of: *on leave; on fire; on the way.* b. Used to indicate the purpose of: *travel on business.* c. Used to indicate a means of conveyance: *ride on a train.* d. Used to indicate availability by means of: *beer on tap; a physician on call.* 9. Used to indicate belonging to: *a nurse on the hospital staff.* 10. Used to indicate addition or repetition: *heaped error on error.* 11a. Concerning; about: *a book on astronomy.* b. Concerning and to the disadvantage of: *We have some evidence on him.* 12. Informal In one's possession; with: *I haven't a cent on me.* 13. At the expense of; compliments of: *drinks on the house.* ❖ *adv.* 1. In or into a position or condition of being supported by or in contact with something: *Put the coffee on.* 2. In or into a position of being attached to or covering something: *Put your clothes on.* 3. In the direction of something: *He looked on while the ship docked.* 4a. Toward or at a point lying ahead in space or time; forward: *The play moved on to the next city.* b. At or to a more distant point in time or space: *I'll do it later on.* 5. In a continuous course: *He worked on quietly.* 6a. In or into performance or operation: *Turn on the radio.* b. In progress or action; in a state of activity: *The show must go on.* 7. In or at the present position or condition: *stay on; hang on.* 8. In a condition of being scheduled for or decided upon: *There is a party on tonight.* ❖ *adj.* 1. Being in operation: *The television is on.* 2a. Engaged in a given function or activity, such as a vocal or dramatic role: *You're on in five minutes!* b. Under or behaving as if under observation: *A minister is always on.* 3. Informal Functioning or performing at a high degree of competence or energy: *The goalie is really on.* 4a. Planned; intended: *We have nothing much on for this weekend.* b. Happening; taking place: *The parade is on.* 5. Baseball Having reached base safely; on base: *Two runners are on.* —**idioms:** **be on to** Slang To be aware of or have information about: *You'll never deceive us again; we're on to you.* **on and off** Intermittently. **on and on** Without stopping; continuously. [Middle English, from Old English *an, on*. See **an-** in Appendix I.]

Usage Note To indicate motion toward a position, both *on* and *onto* can be used: *The cat jumped on the table. The cat jumped onto the table.* *Onto* is more specific, however, in indicating that the motion was initiated from an outside point. *He wandered onto the battlefield* means that he began his wandering at some point off the battlefield. *He wandered on the battlefield* may mean that his wandering began on the battlefield. •

on) two supports. We saw a finch light on (or upon) a bough. To indicate a relation between two things, however, instead of between an action and an end point, *upon* cannot always be used: *Hand me the book on (not upon) the table. It was the only town on (not upon) the main line.* Similarly, *upon* cannot always be used in place of *on* when the relation is not spatial: *He wrote a book on (not upon) alchemy. She will be here on (not upon) Tuesday.*

ON *abbr.* 1. Old Norse 2. Ontario

-on¹ *suff.* 1a. Subatomic particle: *baryon*. b. Unit; quantum: *photon*

-on² *suff.* Inert gas: *radon*. [New Latin, from (ARG)ON.]

-on³ *suff.* A chemical compound that is not a ketone or a compound that contains oxygen in a carbonyl group: *parathion*. [Alteration of -ONE.]

on•a•gain, off•a•gain (ɔn'ə-gèn' ðɪ'ə-gèn', ðɪ-, ɔn'ə-) *adj.* Existing or continuing sporadically; intermittent or occasional: *mal* *on-again, off-again correspondence.*

on•a•ger (ɔn'ə-jər) *n.* 1. A fast-running wild ass (*Equus hemionus* subsp. *onager*) of central Asia, having an erect mane and a broad black stripe along its back. 2. An ancient and medieval stone-propelling siege engine. [Middle English, from Late Latin, from Latin, wild ass, from Greek *onagros*: *onos*, ass + *agrios*, wild; see **agro-** in Appendix I.]

on•air (ɔn'ər', ɔn'ə-) *adj.* Spoken, occurring, or used during broadcast: *an on-air gaffe; changed his on-air name.*

o•nan•ism (ɔ'nā-nīz'əm) *n.* 1. Masturbation. 2. Coitus interruptus. [After *Onan*, son of Judah (Genesis 38:9).] —**o•nan•ist** *n.* —**o•nan•is•tic** *adj.*

o•nas•sis (ō-nās'sis, ō-nā'sis), **Aristotle** 1906?–1975. Turkish-born Greek financier and shipping magnate who pioneered the use of oil supertankers.

Onassis, Jacqueline Lee Bouvier Kennedy See **Jacqueline Lee Bouvier Kennedy**.

O•ña•te (ō-nyā'tè), **Juan de** 1550?–1630? Spanish explorer and conquistador. He claimed New Mexico for Spain in 1598 and served as its governor until 1607.

on•board or on•bored (ɔn-bōrd', -bōrd', ɔn-) *adj.* Carried or used aboard a vehicle or vessel: *onboard radar systems.* —**on•board** *adv.*

once (wʌns) *adv.* 1. One time only: *once a day.* 2. At one time in the past; formerly: *Once known, his face is never forgotten.* 3. At any time; ever: *Once known, his face is never forgotten.* 4. By one degree of relationship: *my first cousin once removed.* ❖ *n.*

A single occurrence; one time: *Once will have to do. You can go just this once.* ❖ *conj.* As soon as; if ever; when: *Once he goes, we can clean up.*

❖ *adj.* Having been formerly; former: *the once capital of the nation.* —**idiom:** **at once** 1. All at one time; simultaneously: *Everything happened at once. The view of the skyline is at once awesome, grand, and disappointing.* 2. Immediately; instantly: *Leave the room at once.* [Middle English *ones*, from *on*, *one*, from Old English *ān*. See **oi-no-** in Appendix I.]

once•o•ver (wʌns'ɔ'vər) *n.* Informal A quick but comprehensive survey or performance: *Let's give this memorandum the once-over.*

❖ **on•cet** (wʌnst) *adv.* Southern & South Midland U.S. Once. [Variant of ONCE.]

on•cho•cer•ci•a•sis (ɔng'kō-sər-kī'ə-sis) *n.* A disease caused by infestation with filarial worms of the genus *Onchocerca*, especially a disease of humans caused by *O. volvulus* and characterized by nodular swellings on the skin and lesions of the eyes. Transmitted by black flies, the disease occurs in tropical regions of Africa and Central America. Also called *river blindness*. [New Latin: *Onchocerca*, genus name (Greek *onkos*, barb + Greek *kerkos*, tail) + -IASIS.]

on•ci•di•um (ɔn-sīd'ē-əm, ɔng-kīd'ə-) *n.* Any of numerous epiphytic tropical American orchids of the genus *Oncidium*, having clusters of showy flowers. [New Latin *Oncidium*, genus name: Greek *onkos*, barb, hook (from the shape of its labellum) + New Latin *-idium*, diminutive suff. (from Greek *-idion*).]

on•co•gene (ɔn'kō-jēn, ɔng'-) *n.* A gene that causes the transformation of normal cells into cancerous tumor cells, especially a viral gene that transforms a host cell into a tumor cell. [Greek *onkos*, mass, tumor; see **ONCOLOGY** + **GENE**.]

on•co•gen•e•sis (ɔn'kō-jēn'ē-sis, ɔng'-) *n.* The formation and development of tumors. [Greek *onkos*, mass, tumor; see **nek-²** in Appendix I + -GENESIS.]

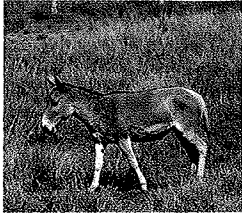
on•co•gen•ic (ɔn'kō-jēn'ik, ɔng'-) *adj.* Tending to cause or give rise to tumors: *an oncogenic virus*. [Greek *onkos*, mass, tumor; see **ONCOLOGY** + -GENIC.] —**on•co•gen•ic•i•ty** (-jə-nīs'ē-tē) *n.*

on•col•ogy (ɔn-kōl'ə-jē, ɔng'-) *n.* The branch of medicine that deals with tumors, including study of their development, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. [Greek *onkos*, mass, tumor; see **nek-²** in Appendix I + -LOGY.] —**on•col•og•ic•al** (-kō-lōj'ē-kəl), **on•col•og•ic** (-lōj'ik) *adj.* —**on•col•ogist** *n.*

on•com•ing (ɔn'kūm'ing, ɔn'-) *adj.* Coming nearer; approaching: *an oncoming storm.* ❖ *n.* An approach; an advance.

on•cor•na•vi•rus (ɔn-kōr'nā-vī'rəs, ɔng'-) *n.* Any of a group of viruses that contain single-stranded RNA and produce tumors in birds and mammals. [Greek *onkos*, mass, tumor; see **ONCOLOGY** + **RNA** + **VIRUS**.]

one (wʌn) *adj.* 1. Being a single entity, unit, object, or living being. 2. Characterized by unity; undivided: *They spoke with one voice.* 3a. Of the



onager
Equus hemionus subsp. *onager*