



# Merriam- Webster's Collegiate<sup>®</sup> Dictionary

TENTH EDITION

Merriam-Webster, Incorporated  
Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A.



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Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Main entry under title:

Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary. — 10th ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-87779-708-0 (unindexed : alk. paper). — ISBN 0-87779-709-9  
(indexed : alk. paper). — ISBN 0-87779-710-2 (deluxe indexed : alk. paper).  
— ISBN 0-87779-707-2 (laminated cover, unindexed).

I. English language—Dictionaries. I. Merriam-Webster, Inc.

PE1628.M36 1998

423—dc21

97-41846

CIP

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Made in the United States of America

30313233RT:WC01

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**preshyope** \prez-bē-ōp; \pres-bē-, -pē- / n [prob. fr. F, fr. Gk *presbyos* old man + *ōps* eye — more at **EYE**] (ca. 1857): one affected with presbyopia  
**presbyopia** \prez-bē-ō-pē-ə, \pres- / n [NL] (1793): a visual condition which becomes apparent esp. in middle age and in which loss of elasticity of the lens of the eye causes defective accommodation and inability to focus sharply for near vision — **pres-by-ō-pic** \-ō-pik, \-i- / adj or n  
**presbyter** \prez-ba-ter, \pres- / n [LL, elder, priest, fr. Gk *presbyteros*, compar. of *presbyos* old man, elder; akin to Gk *pro* before and Gk *bainō* to go — more at **FOR, COME**] (1597): 1: a member of the governing body of an early Christian church 2: a member of the order of ministers in churches having episcopal hierarchies that include bishops, priests, and deacons 3: **ELDER** 4b — **pres-by-ter-ate** \prez-'bi-ta-rat, \prez-'rāt- / n  
**pres-by-ter-i-al** \prez-ba-'tir-ē-ol, \pres- / adj (ca. 1600): of or relating to presbyters or a presbytery — **pres-by-ter-i-al-ly** \-ē-ol-ē- / adv  
**presbyterial** n, *often cap* (1928): an organization of Presbyterian women associated with a presbytery  
**pres-by-ter-i-an** \-ē-on- / n (1640): a member of a Presbyterian church  
**Presbyterian** adj (1641) 1 *often not cap*: characterized by a graded system of representative ecclesiastical bodies (as presbyteries) exercising legislative and judicial powers 2: of, relating to, or constituting a Protestant Christian church that is Presbyterian in government and traditionally Calvinistic in doctrine — **Pres-by-ter-i-an-ism** \-ē-ō-ni-zəm / n  
**presbytery** \prez-ba-ter-ē, \pres-, -bā-trē / n, *pl* -ter-ies [ME & LL; *presbytery* part of church reserved for clergy, fr. LL *presbyterium* group of presbyters, part of church reserved for clergy, fr. Gk *presbyteros* group of presbyters, fr. *presbyteros* elder, priest] (15c): 1: the part of a church reserved for the officiating clergy 2: a ruling body in Presbyterian churches consisting of the ministers and representative elders from congregations within a district 3: the jurisdiction of a presbytery 4: the house of a Roman Catholic parish priest  
**preschool** \prez-'skul (pre-' / adj (1914): of, relating to, or constituting the period in a child's life from infancy to the age of five or six that ordinarily precedes attendance at elementary school  
**preschool** \prez-'skul (ca. 1925): **NURSERY SCHOOL, KINDERGARTEN**  
**preschooler** \prez-'skul-ər / n (1946): 1: a child not yet old enough for school 2: a child attending a preschool  
**praescientia** fr. L *praescientia*, *praesciens*, prp. of *praescire* to know beforehand, fr. *prae-* + *scire* to know — more at **SCIENCE**] (14c): foreknowledge of events: a: divine omniscience b: human anticipation of the course of events: **FORE-SIGHT** — **pre-scient** \-sh(ē)-ənt, \-(ē)-ənt / adj — **pre-scient-ly** / adv  
**praescientific** \prez-'sē-on-'ti-fik / adj (1858): of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a period before the rise of modern science or a state prior to the application of the scientific method  
**praescind** \prez-'sind / v [L *praescindere* to cut off in front, fr. *prae-* + *scindere* to cut — more at **SHED**] (1650): to withdraw one's attention ~v: to detach for purposes of thought  
**prescore** \prez-'skōr, \-'skōr / v (1937): to record (as sound) in advance for use when the corresponding scenes are photographed in making movies  
**prescribe** \prez-'skrib / v **pre-scribéd**; **pre-scrib-ing** [ME, fr. L *praescribere* to write at the beginning, dictate, order, fr. *prae-* + *scribere* to write — more at **SCRIBE**] (15c): 1: to lay down a rule: **DICTATE** 2 [ME, fr. ML *praescribere*, fr. L, to write at the beginning]: to claim a title to something by right of prescription 3: to write or give medical prescriptions 4: to become by prescription invalid or unenforceable ~vt: 1a: to lay down as a guide, direction, or rule of action: **ORDAIN** b: to specify with authority 2: to designate or order the use of as a remedy — **pre-scrib-er** n  
**prescript** \prez-'skript, \pre-' / adj [ME, fr. L *praescriptus*, pp.] (ca. 1540): prescribed as a rule — **pre-script** \pre-'skript / n  
**prescription** \prez-'skrip-shən / n [partly fr. ME *prescripcion* establishment of a claim, fr. MF *prescription*, fr. LL *praescriptio*, *praescriptio*, fr. L, act of writing at the beginning, order, limitation of subject matter, fr. *prae-scribere*; partly fr. L *praescriptio*, *praescriptio* order] (14c): 1a: the establishment of a claim of title to something under common law usu. by use and enjoyment for a period fixed by statute b: the right or title acquired under common law by such possession 2: the process of making claim to something by long use and enjoyment 3: the action of laying down authoritative rules or directions 4a: a written direction for a therapeutic or corrective agent; *specif*: one for the preparation and use of a medicine b: a prescribed medicine c: something like a doctor's prescription (~s for economic recovery) 5a: ancient or long continued custom b: a claim founded upon ancient custom or long continued use 6: something prescribed as a rule  
**prescription drug** n (1951): a drug that can be obtained only by means of a physician's prescription  
**prescriptive** \prez-'skrip-tiv / adj (1748): 1: serving to prescribe (~rules of usage) 2: acquired by, founded on, or determined by prescription or by long-standing custom — **pre-scrip-tive-ly** / adv  
**prescient** \prez-'sēnt / adj (ca. 1859): to choose in advance usu. on the basis of a particular criterion — **pre-scien-tion** \-'lek-shən / n  
**presell** \prez-'sel / v **-sold**, \-'söld / v, **-selling** (1947): 1: to precondition (as a customer) for subsequent purchase or create advance demand for (as a product) esp. through marketing strategies 2: to sell in advance (raised money to publish the book by *preselling* film rights)  
**present** \prez-'n(t) / n (14c): 1: the fact or condition of being present 2a: the part of space within one's immediate vicinity b: the neighborhood of one of superior esp. royal rank 3 *archaic*: **COMPANY** 2a 4: one that is present: as a: the actual person or thing that is present b: something present of a visible or concrete nature 5a: the bearing, carriage, or air of a person esp. stately or distinguished bearing b: a quality of poise and effectiveness that enables a performer to achieve a close relationship with an audience 6: something (as a spirit) felt or believed to be present  
**presence of mind** (1665): self-control so maintained in an emergency or in an embarrassing situation that one can say or do the right thing

**present** \prez-'n(t) / n [ME, fr. OF, fr. *praesentare*] (13c): something presented: **GIFT**  
**present** \prez-'n(t) / v [ME, fr. OF *praesentare*, fr. L *praesentare*, fr. *praesens*, *praesentis*, adj.] (14c): 1a (1): to bring or introduce into the presence of someone esp. of superior rank or status (2): to introduce socially b: to bring (as a play) before the public 2: to make a gift to 3: to give or bestow formally 4a: to lay (as a charge) before a court as an object of inquiry b: to bring a formal public charge, indictment, or presentation against 5: to nominate to a benefice 6a: to offer to view: **SHOW** b: to bring to one's attention (~this ~s a problem) 7: to act the part of: **PERFORM** 8: to aim, point, or direct (as a weapon) so as to face something or in a particular direction ~vi: 1: to present a weapon 2: to become manifest 3: to come forward as a patient 4: to make a presentation 5 *see GIVE* — **pre-sent-er** n  
**present** \prez-'n(t) / adj [ME, fr. OF, fr. L *praesent-*, *praesens*, fr. prp. of *praesense* to be before one, fr. *prae-* + *esse* to be — more at **IS**] (14c): 1: now existing or in progress 2a: being in view or at hand b: existing in something mentioned or under consideration 3: constituting the one actually involved, at hand, or being considered 4: of, relating to, or constituting a verb tense that is expressive of present time or the time of speaking 5 *obs*: **ATTENTIVE** 6 *archaic*: **INSTANT, IMMEDIATE** — **pre-sent-ness** n  
**present** \prez-'n(t) / n (14c) 1 a *obs*: present occasion or affair b *pl*: the present words or statements; *specif*: the legal instrument or other writing in which these words are used 2 a: the present tense of a language b: a verb form in the present tense 3: the present time — at **present**: at or during this time: **NOW**  
**presentable** \prez-'zen-tə-bəl / adj (ca. 1626): 1: capable of being presented 2: being in condition to be seen or inspected esp. by the critical — **pre-sent-a-bil-i-ty** \-'zen-tə-'bil-i-tē / n — **pre-sent-a-bil-ess** \-'zen-tə-bəl-əs / n — **pre-sent-a-bly** \-'blē / adv  
**present arms** \prez-'zent-ə / n [fr. the command *present arms*] (ca. 1884): 1: a position in the manual of arms in which the rifle is held vertically in front of the body 2: a command to assume the position of present arms or to give a hand salute  
**present-tation** \prez-'zen-'tā-shən, \prez-'n, \prez-'n / n (15c) 1a: the act of presenting b: the act, power, or privilege esp. of a patron of applying to the bishop or ordinary for instituting someone into a benefice 2: something presented: as a: a symbol or image that represents something b: something offered or given: **GIFT** c: something set forth for the attention of the mind d: a descriptive or persuasive account (as by a salesman of a product) 3: the position in which the fetus lies in the uterus in labor with respect to the mouth of the uterus 4: an immediate object of perception, cognition, or memory 5 *often cap*: a church feast on November 21 celebrating the presentation of the Virgin Mary in the temple 6: the method by which radio, navigation, or radar information is given to the operator (as the pilot of an airplane) — **pre-sent-ta-tion-al** \-shənəl, \-shə-'nəl / adj  
**present-tative** \prez-'zen-tə-tiv, \prez-'n, \prez-'n / adj (ca. 1842): known, knowing, or capable of being known directly rather than through cognition  
**present-day** \prez-'n-t-'dā / adj (1887): now existing or occurring  
**present-tee** \prez-'n-tē, \prez-'n / n (15c): one who is presented or to whom something is presented  
**praesentient** \prez-'sen(t)-sh(ē)-ənt, \prez- / n, \prez-'n(t) / adj [L *praesentient-*, *praesentiens*, prp. of *praesentire*] (1814): having a presentiment  
**praesentiment** \prez-'zen-tə-mənt / n [F *praesentiment*, fr. MF, fr. *praesentir* to have a presentiment, fr. L *praesentire* to feel beforehand, fr. *prae-* + *sentire* to feel — more at **SENSE**] (1714): a feeling that something will or is about to happen: **PREMONITION** — **pre-sen-ti-men-tal** \-'zen-tə-'men-tl / adj  
**present-ism** \prez-'n-ti-zəm / n [*present*] (1923): all outlook dominated by present-day attitudes and experiences — **pre-sent-ist** \-'n-ti-st / adj  
**present-ly** \prez-'n-t-ē / adv (14c) 1 a *archaic*: at once b: before long: without undue delay 2: at the present time: **NOW**  
**usage** Both senses 1b and 2 are flourishing in current English, but many commentators have objected to sense 2. Since this sense has been in continuous use since the 15th century, it is not clear why it is objectionable. Perhaps a note in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1909) that the sense has been obsolete since the 17th century in literary English is to blame, but the note goes on to observe that the sense is in regular use in most English dialects. The last citation in that dictionary is from a 1901 Leeds newspaper, written in Standard English. Sense 2 is most common in contexts relating to business and politics (<the fastest-rising welfare cost is Medicaid, *presently* paid by the states and cities — William Safire)  
**present-ment** \prez-'zent-mənt / n (14c) 1: the act of presenting to an authority a formal statement of a matter to be dealt with; *specif*: the notice taken or statement made by a grand jury of an offense from their own knowledge without a bill of indictment laid before them 2: the act of offering at the proper time and place a document (as a bill of exchange) that calls for acceptance or payment by another 3a: the act of presenting to view or consciousness b: something set forth, presented, or exhibited c: the aspect in which something is presented  
**present participle** n (1864): a participle that typically expresses present action in relation to the time expressed by the finite verb in its clause and that in English is formed with the suffix *-ing* and is used in the formation of the progressive tenses  
**present perfect** adj (1887): of, relating to, or constituting a verb tense that is formed in English with *have* and that expresses action or state completed at the time of speaking — **pre-sent-per-fect** n  
**present tense** n (14c): the tense of a verb that expresses action or state in the present time and is used of what occurs or is true at the time of speaking and of what is habitual or characteristic or is always or neces-

\ə\ abut \v\ kitten, F table \ər\ further \ə\ ash \ə\ ace \ə\ mop, mar \ə\ out \tʃ\ chin \e\ bet \ē\ easy \ə\ go \h\ hit \i\ ice \i\ job \j\ sing \d\ go \d\ law \d\ boy \tɪ\ thin \θ\ the \l\ loot \l\ foot \j\ yet \z\ vision \ə, ɛ, ɪ, ɔ, œ, u, ɛ, ɪ. \see Guide to Pronunciation

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