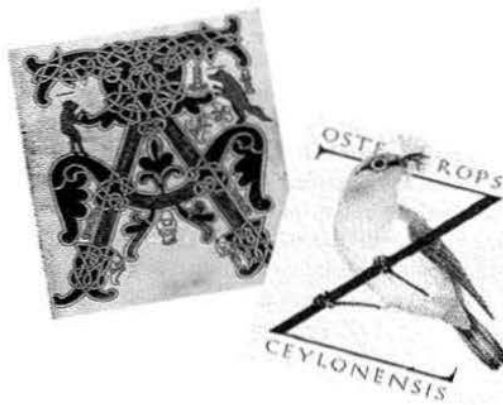


The
American
Heritage[®] Dictionary
of the English Language

FOURTH EDITION



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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 + *gatherum* (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 *suffix* 1a. Subatomic particle: *baryon*. b. Unit; quantum: *photon*.

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

-on³ *suffix*. 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'-) *adj.* Existing or continuing sporadically; intermittent or occasional: *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'-) *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'is, 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-bossel (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'-) *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•o•gy (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*