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acti-non \ˈak-tə-nən\ *n* [NL, fr. *actinium*] (1926): a gaseous radioactive isotope of radon that has a half-life of about 4 seconds
ac-tion \ˈak-shən\ *n* (14c) **1**: the initiating of a proceeding in a court of justice by which one demands or enforces one's right; *also*: the proceeding itself **2**: the bringing about of an alteration by force or through a natural agency **3**: the manner or method of performing: **a**: the department of an actor or speaker or his expression by means of attitude, voice, and gesture **b**: the style of movement of the feet and legs (as of a horse) **c**: a function of the body or one of its parts **4**: an act of will **5** **a**: a thing done: **DEED** **b**: the accomplishment of a thing usu. over a period of time, in stages, or with the possibility of repetition *c pl*: **BEHAVIOR, CONDUCT** (unscrupulous ~s) **d**: **INITIATIVE, ENTERPRISE** (a man of ~) **6** **a** (1): an engagement between troops or ships (2): combat in war (gallantry in ~) **b** (1): an event or series of events forming a literary composition (2): the unfolding of the events of a drama or work of fiction: **PLOT** (3): the movement of incidents in a plot **c**: the combination of circumstances that constitute the subject matter of a painting or sculpture **7** **a**: an operating mechanism **b**: the manner in which a mechanism or instrument operates **8** **a**: the price movement and trading volume of a commodity, security, or market **b**: the process of betting including the offering and acceptance of a bet and determination of a winner **c**: an opportunity for financial gain (a piece of the ~) **9**: the most vigorous, productive, or exciting activity in a particular field, area, or group (they itch to go where the ~ is — D. J. Henahan)
ac-tion-able \ˈak-sh(ə)-nə-bəl\ *adj* (1591): subject to or affording ground for an action or suit at law — **ac-tion-ably** \-blē\ *adv*
ac-tion-less \ˈak-shən-ləs\ *adj* (ca. 1817): marked by inaction: **IMMOBILE**
action painting *n* (1952): abstract expressionism marked esp. by the use of spontaneous techniques (as dribbling, splattering, or smearing) — **action painter**
action potential *n* (1926): a momentary change in electrical potential (as between the inside of a nerve cell and the extracellular medium) that occurs when a cell or tissue has been activated by a stimulus
ac-ti-vate \ˈak-tə-vāt\ *vb* -vat-ed; -vat-ing *vi* (1626): to make active or more active: **a** (1): to make (as molecules) reactive or more reactive (2): to convert (as a provitamin) into a biologically active derivative **b**: to make (a substance) radioactive **c**: to treat (as carbon or alumina) so as to improve adsorptive properties **d** (1): to set up or formally institute (as a military unit) with the necessary personnel and equipment (2): to put (an individual or unit) on active duty ~ *vi*: to become active — **ac-ti-va-tion** \ˈak-tə-vā-shən\ *n* — **ac-ti-va-tor** \ˈak-tə-vā-tər\ *n*
activated carbon *n* (1921): a highly adsorbent powdered or granular carbon made usu. by carbonization and chemical activation and used chiefly for purifying by adsorption — called also *activated charcoal*
activation analysis *n* (1949): **NEUTRON ACTIVATION ANALYSIS**
activation energy *n* (1940): the minimum amount of energy required to convert a normal stable molecule into a reactive molecule
active \ˈak-tiv\ *adj* [ME, fr. MF or L; MF *actif*; fr. L *activus*, fr. *actus*, pp. of *agere* to drive, do — more at **AGENT**] (14c) **1**: characterized by action rather than by contemplation or speculation **2**: producing or involving action or movement **3** *a of a verb form or voice*: asserting that the person or thing represented by the grammatical subject performs the action represented by the verb (his in "he hits the ball" is ~) **b**: expressing action as distinct from mere existence or state **4**: quick in physical movement: **LIVELY** **5**: marked by vigorous activity: **BUSY** (the stock market was ~) **6**: requiring vigorous action or exertion (~ sports) **7**: having practical operation or results: **EFFECTIVE** (an ~ law) **8** **a**: disposed to action: **ENERGETIC** (took an ~ interest) **b**: engaged in an action or activity (an ~ club member) *c of a volcano*: currently erupting or likely to erupt — compare **DORMANT** **2a**, **EXTINCT** **1b** **d**: characterized by emission of large amounts of electromagnetic energy (an ~ galactic nucleus) **9**: engaged in full-time service esp. in the armed forces (~ duty) **10**: marked by present operation, transaction, movement, or use (~ account) **11** **a**: capable of acting or reacting: reacting readily (~ nitrogen) **b**: tending to progress or to cause degeneration (~ tuberculosis) *c of an electronic circuit element*: capable of controlling voltages or currents **d** (1): requiring the expenditure of energy (~ calcium ion uptake) (2): functioning by the emission of radiant energy (radar is an ~ sensor) **12**: still eligible to win the pot in poker **13**: moving down the line: *visiting in the set* — used of couples in contredanses or square dances — **active** *n* — **ac-tive-ly** *adv* — **ac-tive-ness** *n*
active immunity *n* (ca. 1903): usu. long-lasting immunity that is acquired through production of antibodies within the organism in response to the presence of antigens — compare **PASSIVE IMMUNITY**
active transport *n* (1963): movement of a chemical substance by the expenditure of energy through a gradient (as across a cell membrane) in concentration or electrical potential and opposite to the direction of normal diffusion
ac-tiv-ism \ˈak-ti-vi-zəm\ *n* (1915): a doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action esp. in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue — **ac-tiv-ist** \-vist\ *n* or *adj* — **ac-tiv-ist-ic** \ˈak-ti-vi-stik\ *adj*
ac-tiv-i-ty \ˈak-ti-və-tē\ *n, pl -ties* (1530) **1**: the quality or state of being active **2**: vigorous or energetic action: **LIVELINESS** **3**: natural or normal function: **a**: a process (as digestion) that an organism carries on or participates in by virtue of being alive **b**: a similar process actually or potentially involving mental function; *specif*: an educational procedure designed to stimulate learning by firsthand experience **4**: an active force **5** **a**: a pursuit in which a person is active **b**: a form of organized, supervised, often extracurricular recreation **6**: an organizational unit for performing a specific function; *also*: its function or duties
act of God (ca. 1859): an extraordinary interruption by a natural cause (as a flood or earthquake) of the usual course of events that experience, presence, or care cannot reasonably foresee or prevent
ac-to-my-o-sin \ˈak-tə-mi-ə-sən\ *n* [ISV *actin* + *-o-* + *myosin*] (1942): a viscous contractile complex of actin and myosin concerned together with ATP in muscular contraction
ac-tor \ˈak-tər\ *also* \-tər\ *n* (15c) **1**: one that acts: **DOER** **2** **a**: one who represents a character in a dramatic production **b**: a theatrical

performer **c**: one that behaves as if acting a part **3**: one that takes part in any affair — **ac-tor-ish** \-tə-rish\ *adj*
act out *vi* (1611) **1** **a**: to represent in action (children *act out* what they read) **b**: to translate into action (unwilling to *act out* their beliefs) **2**: to express (as an impulse or a fantasy) directly in overt behavior without modification to comply with social norms
ac-tress \ˈak-trəs\ *n* (1676): a woman who is an actor — **ac-tressy** \-trə-sē\ *adj*
Acts \ˈakts\ *n pl* *but sing in constr*: a book in the New Testament narrating the beginnings of the Christian Church — called also *Acts of the Apostles*; see **BIBLE** table
ac-tu-al \ˈak-č(ə)-wəl, -sh(ə)-wəl\ *adj* [ME *actuel*, fr. MF, fr. LL *actualis*, fr. L *actus* act] (14c) **1** **obs**: **ACTIVE** **2** **a**: existing in act and not merely potentially **b**: existing in fact or reality (~ and imagined conditions) **c**: not false or apparent (~ costs) **3**: existing or occurring at the time: **CURRENT** (caught in the ~ commission of a crime)
actual cash value *n* (ca. 1946): money equal to the cost of replacing lost, stolen, or damaged property after depreciation
ac-tu-al-ity \ˈak-čə-wə-lə-tē, -ak-shə-wə-lə-tē\ *n, pl -ties* (1652) **1**: the quality or state of being actual **2**: something that is actual: **FACT, REALITY** (possible risks which have been seized upon as *actualities* — T. S. Eliot)
ac-tu-al-ize \ˈak-č(ə)-wə-līz, -sh(ə)-wə-līz\ *vb* -ized; -iz-ing *vt* (1701): to make actual: **REALIZE** ~ *vi*: to become actual — **ac-tu-al-iza-tion** \ˈak-č(ə)-wə-lə-zā-shən, -sh(ə)-wə-lə-zā-\ *n*
ac-tu-al-ly \ˈak-č(ə)-wə-lē, -sh(ə)-wə-lē\ *adv* (15c) **1**: in act or in fact: **REALLY** (nominally but not ~ independent — Karl Loewenstein) (don't know how old they ~ are) (~, they just arrived) **2**: in point of fact: in truth — used to suggest something unexpected (I have ~ been invited) (he could ~ read the Greek)
ac-tu-ari-al \ˈak-čə-wer-ē-əl, -shə-\ *adj* (1869) **1**: of or relating to actuaries **2**: relating to statistical calculation esp. of life expectancy — **ac-tu-ari-ally** \-ē-ə-lē\ *adv*
ac-tu-ary \ˈak-čə-wer-ē, -shə-\ *n, pl -ar-ies* [L *actuarius* shorthand writer, alter. of *actarius*, fr. *actum* record — more at **ACT**] (1553) **1** **obs**: **CLERK, REGISTRAR** **2**: one who calculates insurance and annuity premiums, reserves, and dividends
ac-tu-ate \ˈak-čə-wāt, -shə-\ *vt* -ated; -at-ing [ML *actuatus*, pp. of *actuare* to execute, fr. L *actus* act] (1645) **1**: to put into mechanical action or motion **2**: to move to action **syn** see **MOVE** — **ac-tu-a-tion** \ˈak-čə-wā-shən, -shə-\ *n*
ac-tu-a-tor \ˈak-čə-wā-tər, -shə-\ *n* (ca. 1864): one that actuates; *specif*: a mechanical device for moving or controlling something
act up *vi* (1903) **1**: to act in a way different from that which is normal or expected: **a**: to behave in an unruly, recalcitrant, or capricious manner **b**: **SHOW OFF** **c**: to function improperly (this typewriter is *acting up* again) **2**: to become active or acute after being quiescent (her rheumatism started to *act up*)
acuity \ə-kyū-ə-tē, ə-\ *n, pl -ities* [MF *acuité*, fr. LL *acuitas*, *acuitas*, fr. L *acuere*] (1543): keenness of perception: **SHARPNESS**
acu-le-ate \ə-kyū-lē-ət\ *adj* [L *aculeatus* having stings, fr. *aculeus* sting, fr. *acus*] (1875): relating to or being hymenopterans (as bees, ants, and many wasps) of a division (*Aculeata*) typically having the ovipositor modified into a sting
acumen \ə-kyū-mən, ə-kyə-mən\ *n* [L *acumin*, *acumen*, lit., point, fr. *acuere*] (ca. 1580): keenness and depth of perception, discernment, or discrimination esp. in practical matters: **SHREWDNESS** **syn** see **DIS-CERNMENT**
acu-mi-nate \ə-kyū-mə-nət\ *adj* (1646): tapering to a slender point
acu-pre-sure \ə-kyə-pre-shər, ə-ka-\ *n* (1859): **SHIATSU**
acu-punc-ture \-pən(k)-čər-\ *n* [L *acus* + E *puncture*] (1684): an orig. Chinese practice of puncturing the body (as with needles) at specific points to cure disease or relieve pain (as in surgery) — **acu-punc-tur-ist** \-pən(k)-čə-rɪst\ *n*
acute \ə-kyūt\ *adj* **acut-er; acut-est** [L *acutus*, pp. of *acuere* to sharpen, fr. *acus* sharp; akin to L *acer* sharp — more at **EDGE**] (14c) **1** **a** (1): characterized by sharpness or severity (~ pain) (2): having a sudden onset, sharp rise, and short course (~ disease) **b**: lasting a short time (~ experiments) **2**: ending in a sharp point: **a**: as being or forming an angle measuring less than 90 degrees (~ angle) **b**: composed of acute angles (~ triangle) **3** *a of an accent mark*: having the form **b**: marked with an acute accent **c**: of the variety indicated by an acute accent **4** **a**: marked by keen discernment or intellectual perception esp. of subtle distinctions: **PENETRATING** (an ~ thinker) **b**: responsive to slight impressions or stimuli (~ hearing) **5**: felt, perceived, or experienced intensely (~ distress) **6**: seriously demanding urgent attention — **acute-ly** *adv* — **acute-ness** *n*
syn **ACUTE, CRITICAL, CRUCIAL** mean of uncertain outcome. **ACUTE** stresses intensification of conditions leading to a culmination or breaking point (an *acute* housing shortage). **CRITICAL** adds to **ACUTE** implications of imminent change, of attendant suspense, and of decisiveness in the outcome (the war has entered a *critical* phase). **CRUCIAL** suggests a dividing of the ways and often a test or trial involving the determination of a future course or direction (a *crucial* vote). **syn** see in addition **SHARP**
acy-elic \jə-si-klik, -si-\ *adj* (1878): not cyclic: **a**: not disposed in whorls or cycles **b**: having an open-chain structure: **ALIPHATIC** (an ~ compound)
acy-clo-vir \jə-si-klo-vir\ *n* [2a- + *cycl-* + *virus*] (1979): a cyclic nucleoside C₈H₁₁N₅O₃ used esp. to treat the symptoms of the genital form of herpes simplex
ac-yl \ə-səl\ *n, often attrib* [ISV, fr. *acid*] (1899): a radical RCO— derived usu. from an organic acid by removal of the hydroxyl from all acid groups — often used in combination
ac-yl-ate \ə-sə-lāt\ *vt* -ated; -at-ing (1907): to introduce an acyl group into — **ac-yl-a-tion** \ə-sə-lā-shən\ *n*
ad \əd\ *n, often attrib* (1841) **1**: **ADVERTISEMENT** **2**: **ADVERTISING**
ad *n* (1947): **ADVANTAGE** **4**
ad- or ac- or af- or ag- or al- or ap- or as- or at- *prefix* [ME, fr. MF, OF & L; MF, fr. OF, fr. L, fr. *ad* — more at **AT**] **1**: to: toward — usu. *ac-* before *c, k, or q* (acculturation) and *af-* before *f* (affluent) and *ag-* before *g* (aggradation) and *al-* before *l* (alliteration) and *ap-* before *p* (apportion) and *as-* before *s* (assuasive) and *at-* before *t* (attune) and *ad-* before other sounds but sometimes *ad-* even before one of the listed

(~ memory chips) 2 a: something useful or valued (that valuable ~ patience) b: CONVENIENCE, ADVANTAGE 3 obs: QUANTITY, LOT

com-mo-dore \kə-mə-dōr, -dōr\ n [prob. modif. of D *commandeur* commander, fr. F, fr. OF *comandeur*, fr. *comander* to command] (1695) 1 a: a captain in the navy in command of a squadron b: a commissioned officer in the navy formerly ranking above captain and below rear admiral and having an insignia of one star 2: the ranking officer commanding a body of merchant ships 3: the chief officer of a yacht club or boating association

com-mon \kə-mən\ adj [ME *commun*, fr. OF, fr. L *communis* — more at MEAN] (13c) 1 a: of or relating to a community at large : PUBLIC (work for the ~ good) b: known to the community (~ nuisances) 2 a: belonging to or shared by two or more individuals or things or by all members of a group (a ~ friend) (buried in a ~ grave) b: belonging equally to two or more mathematical entities (triangles with a ~ base) c: having two or more branches (~ carotid artery) 3 a: occurring or appearing frequently : FAMILIAR (a ~ sight) b: of the best known kind c: VERNACULAR 2 (~ names) 4 a: WIDESPREAD, GENERAL (~ knowledge) b: characterized by a lack of privilege or special status (~ people) c: just satisfying accustomed criteria : ELEMENTARY (~ decency) 5 a: falling below ordinary standards : SECOND-RATE b: lacking refinement : COARSE 6: denoting nominal relations by a single linguistic form that in a more highly inflected language might be denoted by two or more different forms (~ gender) (~ case) 7: of, relating to, or being common stock — **com-mon-ly** adv — **com-mon-ness** \-mə-nəs\ n

syn COMMON, ORDINARY, PLAIN, FAMILIAR, POPULAR, VULGAR mean generally met with and not in any way special, strange, or unusual. COMMON implies usual everyday quality or frequency of occurrence (a common error) (lacked common honesty) and may additionally suggest inferiority or coarseness (common manners). ORDINARY stresses conformance in quality or kind with the regular order of things (an ordinary pleasant summer day) (a very ordinary sort of man). PLAIN is likely to suggest homely simplicity (plain hard-working people). FAMILIAR stresses the fact of being generally known and easily recognized (a familiar melody). POPULAR applies to what is accepted by or prevalent among people in general sometimes in contrast to upper classes or special groups (a writer of popular romances). VULGAR, otherwise similar to POPULAR, is likely to carry derogatory connotations (as of inferiority or coarseness) (souvenirs designed to appeal to the vulgar taste).

com-mon n (14c) 1 pl: the common people 2 pl but sing in constr: a dining hall 3 pl but sing or pl in constr, often cap a: the political group or estate comprising the commoners b: the parliamentary representatives of the commoners c: HOUSE OF COMMONS 4: the legal right of taking a profit in another's land in common with the owner or others 5: a piece of land subject to common uses as a: undivided land used esp. for pasture b: a public open area in a municipality 6 a: a religious service suitable for any of various festivals b: ORDINARY 2 7: COMMON STOCK — **in common**: shared together

com-mon-age \kə-mə-nij\ n (1649) 1: community land 2: COMMONALTY 1a(2)

com-mon-al-ity \kə-mə-nə-lə-tē\ n, pl -ties [ME *communalite* commonwealth, alter. of *communalte*] (1582) 1: the common people 2 a: possession of common features or attributes : COMMONNESS b: a common feature or attribute

com-mon-al-ty \kə-mə-nə-lə-tē\ n, pl -ties [ME *communalte*, fr. MF *communalte*, fr. *comunal* communal] (14c) 1 a (1): the common people (2): the political estate formed by the common people b: a usage or practice common to members of a group 2: a general group or body

common carrier n (15c): a business or agency that is available to the public for transportation of persons, goods, or messages

common cattle grub n (1947): a cattle grub (*Hypoderma lineatum*) which is found throughout the U.S. and whose larva is particularly destructive to cattle

common cold n (1786): an acute virus disease of the upper respiratory tract marked by inflammation of the mucous membranes of the nose, throat, eyes, and eustachian tubes and by a watery then purulent discharge

common denominator n (1594) 1: a common multiple of the denominators of a number of fractions 2: a common trait or theme

common difference n (ca. 1891): the difference between two consecutive terms of an arithmetic progression

common divisor n (ca. 1847): a number or expression that divides two or more numbers or expressions without remainder — called also *common factor*

com-mon-er \kə-mə-nər\ n (14c) 1 a: one of the common people b: one who is not of noble rank 2: a student (as at Oxford) who pays for his own board

Common Era n (ca. 1889): CHRISTIAN ERA

common fraction n (ca. 1897): a fraction in which the numerator and denominator are both integers and are separated by a horizontal or slanted line — compare DECIMAL FRACTION

common ground n (1874): a basis of mutual interest or agreement

common-law adj (1848) 1: of, relating to, or based on the common law 2: relating to or based on a common-law marriage

common law n (14c): the body of law developed in England primarily from judicial decisions based on custom and precedent, unwritten in statute or code, and constituting the basis of the English legal system and of the system in all of the U.S. except Louisiana

common-law marriage n (1900) 1: a marriage recognized in some jurisdictions and based on the parties' agreement to consider themselves married and sometimes also on their cohabitation 2: the cohabitation of a couple even when it does not constitute a legal marriage

common logarithm n (ca. 1903): a logarithm whose base is 10

common market n (1952): an economic association (as of nations) formed to remove trade barriers among its members

common measure n (1922): a meter consisting chiefly of iambic lines of 7 accents each arranged in rhymed pairs usu. printed in 4-line stanzas — called also *common meter*

common multiple n (ca. 1890): a multiple of each of two or more numbers or expressions (90 is a common multiple of 6 and 10)

common noun n (ca. 1864): a noun that may occur with limiting modifiers (as a or an, some, every, and my) and that designates any one of a class of beings or things

common or garden adj (1892) chiefly Brit: ORDINARY

com-mon-place \kə-mən-plās\ n [trans. of L *locus communis* widely applicable argument, trans. of Gk *koinos topos*] (1561) 1 archaic: a striking passage entered in a commonplace book 2 a: an obvious or trite comment : TRUISM b: something commonly found

com-mon-place adj (1609): commonly found : ORDINARY, UNREMARKABLE — **com-mon-place-ness** n

commonplace book n (1578): a book of memorabilia

common pleas n pl (1531) 1 sing in constr: COURT OF COMMON PLEAS 2 a: actions over which the English crown did not exercise exclusive jurisdiction b: civil actions between English subjects

common ratio n (1875): the ratio of each term of a geometric progression to the term preceding it

common room n (1683) 1: a lounge available to all members of a residential community 2: a room in a college for faculty use

common salt n (1676): SALT 1a

common school n (ca. 1657): a free public school

common sense n (1535) 1: the unreflective opinions of ordinary people 2: sound and prudent but often unsophisticated judgment

syn SEE SENSE — **com-mon-sense** \kə-mən-sen(t)s\ adj — **com-mon-sen-si-ble** \-sen(t)-sə-bəl\ adj — **com-mon-sen-si-cal** \-sen(t)-si-kəl\ adj — **com-mon-sen-si-cal-ly** \-si-k(-ə)-lē\ adv

common situs picketing n (1965): the picketing of an entire construction site by a trade union having a grievance with only a single subcontractor working there

common stock n (1888): capital stock other than preferred stock

common time n (1674): a musical meter marked by four beats per measure with the quarter note receiving a single beat

common touch n (1944): the gift of appealing to or arousing the sympathetic interest of the common people

com-mon-weal \kə-mən-wel\ n (14c) 1 archaic: COMMONWEALTH 2: the general welfare

com-mon-wealth \-welθ also -welth\ n (15c) 1 archaic: COMMONWEAL 2 2: a nation, state, or other political unit: as a: one founded on law and united by compact or tacit agreement of the people for the common good b: one in which supreme authority is vested in the people c: REPUBLIC 3 cap a: the English state from the death of Charles I in 1649 to the Restoration in 1660 b: PROTECTORATE 1b 4: a state of the U.S. — used officially of Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia 5 cap: a federal union of constituent states — used officially of Australia 6 often cap: an association of self-governing autonomous states more or less loosely associated in a common allegiance (as to the British crown) 7 often cap: a political unit having local autonomy but voluntarily united with the U.S. — used officially of Puerto Rico and of the Northern Mariana Islands

Commonwealth Day n (1959): May 24 observed in parts of the Commonwealth of Nations as the anniversary of Queen Victoria's birthday

common year n (ca. 1909): a calendar year containing no intercalary period

com-mo-tion \kə-mō-shən\ n [ME, fr. MF, fr. L *commotio*, *commotio*, fr. *commovere*] (15c) 1: a condition of civil unrest or insurrection 2: steady or recurrent motion 3: mental excitement or confusion 4: a: an agitated disturbance : TO-DO b: noisy confusion : AGITATION

com-move \kə-müv, kä-\ vt **com-moved**; **com-mov-ing** [ME *commoever*, fr. MF *commuever*, pres. stem of *commovoir*, fr. L *commovere*, fr. *com-* + *movere* to move] (14c) 1: to move violently : AGITATE 2: to rouse intense feeling in : excite to passion

com-mu-nal \kə-myü-nəl, käm-yə-nəl\ adj [F, fr. LL *communalis*, fr. L *communis*] (1811) 1: of or relating to one or more communes 2: of or relating to a community 3 a: characterized by collective ownership and use of property b: participated in, shared, or used in common by members of a group or community 4: of, relating to, or based on racial or cultural groups — **com-mu-nal-ize** \kə-myü-nəl-īz, käm-yə-\ vt — **com-mu-nal-ly** adv

com-mu-nal-ism \-nəl-i-zəm\ n (1871) 1: social organization on a communal basis 2: loyalty to a sociopolitical grouping based on religious or ethnic affiliation — **com-mu-nal-ist** \-nəl-ist\ n or adj

com-mu-nal-ity \kə-myü-nə-lə-tē\ n, pl -ties (1901) 1: communal state or character 2: a feeling of group solidarity

com-mu-nard \kə-myü-när(d)\ n [F] (1874) 1 cap: one who supported or participated in the Commune of Paris in 1871 2: a person who lives in a commune

com-mune \kə-myün\ vb **com-muned**; **com-mun-ing** [ME, to converse, administer Communion, fr. MF *communier* to converse, administer or receive Communion, fr. LL *communicare*, fr. L] vt (15c) obs : TALK OVER, DISCUSS (have more to ~ — Shak.) ~ vi 1: to receive Communion 2: to communicate intimately (~ with nature)

com-mune \kə-myün, kä-myün, kä-\ n [F, alter. of MF *comugne*, fr. ML *communia*, fr. L, neut. pl. of *communis*] (1673) 1: the smallest administrative district of many countries esp. in Europe 2: COMMONALTY 1a 3: COMMUNITY: as a: a medieval usu. municipal corporation b (1): MIR (2): an often rural community organized on a communal basis

com-mu-ni-ca-ble \kə-myü-ni-kə-bəl\ adj (1534) 1: capable of being communicated : TRANSMITTABLE (~ disease) 2: COMMUNICATIVE — **com-mu-ni-ca-bil-ity** \-myü-ni-kə-bi-lə-tē\ n — **com-mu-ni-ca-ble-ness** \-myü-ni-kə-bəl-nəs\ n — **com-mu-ni-ca-bly** \-bly\ adv

com-mu-ni-cant \-myü-ni-kənt\ n (1552) 1: a church member entitled to receive Communion; broadly: a member of a fellowship 2: one that communicates; specif: INFORMANT — **communicant** adj

com-mu-ni-cate \kə-myü-nə-kāt\ vb -cat-ed, -cat-ing [L *communicatus*, pp. of *communicare* to impart, participate, fr. *communis* common — more at MEAN] vt (1526) 1 archaic: SHARE 2 a: to convey knowledge of or information about : make known (~ a story) b: to reveal by clear signs (his fear communicated itself ~ to his friends) 3: to cause to pass from one to another (some diseases are easily communicated) ~ vi 1: to receive Communion 2: to transmit information, thought, or feeling so that it is satisfactorily received or understood 3: to open into each other : CONNECT (the rooms ~) — **com-**

mu-ni-ca-tee \,myü-ni-ka-tē\ *n* — **com-mu-ni-ca-tor** \-'myü-nä-kä-tər\ *n*

com-mu-ni-ca-tion \kə-'myü-nä-'kä-shən\ *n* (14c) **1**: an act or instance of transmitting **2 a**: information communicated **b**: a verbal or written message **3 a**: a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior (the function of pheromones in insect ~); also: exchange of information **b**: personal rapport (a lack of ~ between old and young persons) **4 pl a**: a system (as of telephones) for communicating **b**: a system of routes for moving troops, supplies, and vehicles **c**: a personnel engaged in communicating **5 pl but sing or pl in constr a**: a technique for expressing ideas effectively (as in speech) **b** the technology of the transmission of information (as by print or telecommunication) — **com-mu-ni-ca-tion-al** \-shnəl, -shə-nəl\ *adj*

com-mu-ni-ca-tive \kə-'myü-nä-'kä-tiv, -ni-ka-tiv\ *adj* (14c) **1**: tending to communicate: TALKATIVE **2**: of or relating to communication — **com-mu-ni-ca-tive-ly** *adv* — **com-mu-ni-ca-tive-ness** *n*

com-mu-ni-ca-to-ry \kə-'myü-ni-ka-'tör-ē, -tör-\ *adj* (1646) **1**: designed to communicate information (~ letters) **2**: COMMUNICATIVE

com-mu-nion \kə-'myü-nyən\ *n* [ME, fr. L *communio*, *communio* mutual participation, fr. *communis*] (14c) **1**: an act or instance of sharing **2 a cap**: a Christian sacrament in which consecrated bread and wine are consumed as memorials of Christ's death or as symbols for the realization of a spiritual union between Christ and communicant or as the body and blood of Christ **b**: the act of receiving Communion **c cap**: the part of a Communion service in which the sacrament is received **3**: intimate fellowship or rapport: COMMUNICATION **4**: a body of Christians having a common faith and discipline (the Anglican ~)

com-mu-ni-qué \kə-'myü-nä-'kä, -myü-nä-\ *n* [F, fr. pp. of *communiquer* to communicate, fr. L *communicare*] (1852): BULLETIN **1**

com-mu-ni-se *Brit var of COMMUNIZE*

com-mu-nism \käm-yə-'ni-zəm\ *n* [F *communisme*, fr. *commun* common] (1840) **1 a**: a theory advocating elimination of private property **b**: a system in which goods are owned in common and are available to all as needed **2 cap a**: a doctrine based on revolutionary Marxian socialism and Marxism-Leninism that was the official ideology of the U.S.S.R. **b**: a totalitarian system of government in which a single authoritarian party controls state-owned means of production **c**: a final stage of society in Marxist theory in which the state has withered away and economic goods are distributed equitably **d**: communist systems collectively

com-mu-nist \käm-yə-'nist\ *n* (1840) **1**: an adherent or advocate of communism **2 cap**: COMMUNARD **3 a cap**: a member of a Communist party or movement **b often cap**: an adherent or advocate of a Communist government, party, or movement **4 often cap**: one held to engage in left-wing, subversive, or revolutionary activities — **com-mu-nist-ly** *adv* **often cap** — **com-mu-nis-tic** \käm-yə-'nis-tik\ *adj*, *often cap* — **com-mu-nis-ti-cal-ly** \-ti-ka-lē\ *adv*

com-mu-ni-tar-i-an \kə-'myü-nä-'ter-ē-ən\ *adj* (ca. 1909): of or relating to social organization in small cooperative partially collectivist communities — **communitarian** *n* — **com-mu-ni-tar-i-an-ism** \-ē-ən-i-zəm\ *n*

com-mu-ni-ty \kə-'myü-nä-tē\ *n*, *pl -ties often attrib* [ME *comunete*, fr. MF *comunetē*, fr. L *communitas*, *communitas*] (14c) **1**: a unified body of individuals: as **a**: STATE, COMMONWEALTH **b**: the people with common interests living in a particular area; broadly: the area itself (the problems of a large ~) **c**: an interacting population of various kinds of individuals (as species) in a common location **d**: a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society (a ~ of retired persons) **e**: a group linked by a common policy **f**: a body of persons or nations having a common history or common social, economic, and political interests (the international ~) **g**: a body of persons of common and esp. professional interests scattered through a larger society (the academic ~) **2**: society at large **3 a**: joint ownership or participation (~ of goods) **b**: common character: LIKENESS (~ of interests) **c**: social activity: FELLOWSHIP **d**: a social state or condition

community antenna television *n* (1953): CABLE TELEVISION

community center *n* (1915): a building or group of buildings for a community's educational and recreational activities

community chest *n* (1919): a general fund accumulated from individual subscriptions to defray demands on a community for charity and social welfare

community college *n* (1948): a 2-year government-supported college that offers an associate degree

community property *n* (ca. 1925): property held jointly by husband and wife

com-mu-nize \käm-yə-'niz\ *vt* — **-nized**; **-nizing** [back-formation fr. *communization*] (1888) **1 a**: to make common **b**: to make into state-owned property **2**: to subject to Communist principles of organization — **com-mu-ni-za-tion** \käm-yə-'nə-'zä-shən\ *n*

com-mu-tate \käm-yə-'tāt\ *vt* — **-tated**; **-tating** [back-formation fr. *commutation*] (1893): to reverse every other half cycle of (an alternating current) so as to form a unidirectional current

com-mu-ta-tion \käm-yə-'tä-shən\ *n* [ME, fr. MF, fr. L *commutationem*, fr. *commutare*] (15c) **1**: EXCHANGE, TRADE **2**: REPLACEMENT; *specif*: a substitution of one form of payment or charge for another **3**: a change of a legal penalty or punishment to a lesser one **4**: an act or process of commuting **5**: the action of commuting

commutation ticket *n* (1848): a transportation ticket sold for a fixed number of trips over the same route during a limited period

com-mu-ta-tive \kə-'myü-tä-tiv, 'käm-yə-'tä-tiv\ *adj* (1612) **1**: of, relating to, or showing commutation **2**: of, relating to, having, or being the property that a given mathematical operation and set have when the result obtained using any two elements of the set with the operation does not differ with the order in which the elements are used (a ~ group) (addition of the positive integers is ~)

com-mu-ta-tiv-ity \kə-'myü-tä-tiv-ə-tē, 'käm-yə-tä-\ *n* (1929): the property of being commutative (the ~ of a mathematical operation)

com-mu-ta-tor \käm-yə-'tä-tər\ *n* (1880) **1**: a series of bars or segments so connected to armature coils of a generator or motor that rotation of the armature will in conjunction with fixed brushes result in unidirectional current output in the case of a generator and in the re-

versal of the current into the coils in the case of a motor **2**: an element of a mathematical group that when used to multiply the product of two given elements either on the right side or on the left side but not necessarily on both sides yields the product of the two given elements in reverse order

com-mute \kə-'myüt\ *vb* **com-mut-ed**; **com-mut-ing** [L *commutare* to change, exchange, fr. *com-* + *mutare* to change — more at MUTABLE] *vi* (15c) **1 a**: CHANGE, ALTER **b**: to give in exchange for another: EXCHANGE **2**: to convert (as a payment) into another form **3**: to exchange (a penalty) for another less severe **4**: COMMUTATE ~ *vi* **1**: MAKE UP, COMPENSATE **2**: to pay in gross **3**: to travel back and forth regularly (as between a suburb and a city) **4**: to yield the same mathematical result regardless of order — used of two elements undergoing an operation or of two operations on elements — **com-mut-able** \-'myü-tä-bəl\ *adj*

commute *n* (1954) **1**: an act or an instance of commuting **2**: the distance covered in commuting

com-mut-er \kə-'myüt-ər\ *n* (ca. 1859) **1**: a person who commutes (as between a suburb and a city) **2**: a small airline that carries passengers relatively short distances on a regular schedule

co-mo-no-mer \,kō-'mō-nə-'mər, -'mō-nə\ *n* [*co-* + *monomer*] (1945) **1**: one of the constituents of a copolymer

comp \kämp\ *n* [short for *complimentary*] (1887): a complimentary ticket; broadly: something provided free of charge

comp \kämp, 'kämp\ *vi* [short for *accompany*] (1949): to punctuate and support a jazz solo with irregularly spaced chords

com-pact \kəm-'pakt, 'käm-, 'käm-\ *adj* [ME, firmly put together, fr. L *compactus*, fr. pp. of *compingere* to put together, fr. *com-* + *pingere* to fasten — more at PACT] (14c) **1**: predominantly formed or filled: COMPOSED, MADE **2 a**: having a dense structure or parts or units closely packed or joined (a ~ woolen) (~ bone) **b**: not diffuse or verbose (a ~ statement) **c**: occupying a small volume by reason of efficient use of space (a ~ camera) (a ~ formation of troops) **d**: short-bodied, solid, and without excess flesh **3**: being a topological space and esp. a metric space with the property that for any collection of open sets which contains it there is a subset of the collection with a finite number of elements which also contains it — **com-pact-ly** \-'pakt(t)-lē, -'pakt(t)-\ *adv* — **com-pact-ness** \-'pakt(t)-nəs, -'pakt(t)-\ *n*

compact *vi* (15c) **1**: to make up by connecting or combining: COMPOSE **2 a**: to knit or draw together: COMBINE **b**: to press together: COMPRESS ~ *vi*: to become compacted — **com-pact-ible** \-'pakt-tə-bəl, -'pakt-\ *adj* — **com-pact-er** also **com-pact-er** \-'pakt-ər, -'pakt-\ *n*

com-pact \käm-'pakt\ *n* (1601): something that is compact or compacted: **a**: a small cosmetic case (as for compressed powder) **b**: an automobile smaller than an intermediate but larger than a subcompact

com-pact \käm-'pakt\ *n* [L *compactum*, fr. neut. of *compactus*, pp. of *compacisci* to make an agreement, fr. *com-* + *pacisci* to contract — more at PACT] (1591): an agreement or covenant between two or more parties

com-pact disc \käm-'pakt-\ *n* (1979): a small plastic optical disc usually containing recorded music or computer data

com-pac-tion \kəm-'pakt-shən, 'käm-\ *n* (14c): the act or process of compacting: the state of being compacted

com-pan-ion \kəm-'pan-yən\ *n* [ME *compainoun*, fr. OF *compagnon*, fr. LL *companion-*, *companion*, fr. L *com-* + *panis* bread, food — more at FOOD] (13c) **1**: one that accompanies another: COMRADE, ASSOCIATE; also: one that keeps company with another **2 obs**: RASCAL **3 a**: one that is closely connected with something similar **b**: one employed to live with and serve another

companion *vi* (1622): ACCOMPANY ~ *vi*: to keep company

companion *n* [by folk etymology fr. D *kampanje* poop deck] (1762) **1**: a hood covering at the top of a companionway **2**: COMPANIONWAY

com-pan-ion-able \kəm-'pan-yə-nə-bəl\ *adj* (14c): marked by, conducive to, or suggestive of companionship: SOCIABLE — **com-pan-ion-abil-ity** \-pan-yə-nə-'bi-lə-tē\ *n* — **com-pan-ion-able-ness** *n* — **com-pan-ion-ably** \-'pan-yə-nə-blē\ *adv*

com-pan-ion-ate \kəm-'pan-yə-nət\ *adj* (1926): relating to or having the manner of companions; *specif*: harmoniously or suitably accompanying

companion cell *n* (1887): a living nucleated cell that is closely associated in origin, position, and probably function with a cell making up part of a sieve tube of a vascular plant

companion piece *n* (1844): a work (as of literature) that is associated with and complements another

com-pan-ion-ship \kəm-'pan-yən-'ship\ *n* (1548): the fellowship existing among companions: COMPANY

com-pan-ion-way \-yən-'wā\ *n* [³*companion*] (1840): a ship's stairway from one deck to another

com-pany \kämp-nē, 'kämp-pə-\ *n*, *pl -nies often attrib* [ME *compagnie*, fr. OF *compagnie*, fr. *compain* companion, fr. LL *companion*] (13c) **1 a**: association with another: FELLOWSHIP (enjoy a person's ~) **b**: COMPANIONS, ASSOCIATES (know a person by the ~ she keeps) **c**: VISITORS, GUESTS (having ~ for dinner) **2 a**: a group of persons or things (a ~ of horsemen) **b**: a body of soldiers; esp.: a unit (as of infantry) consisting usu. of a headquarters and two or more platoons **c**: an organization of performing artists **d**: the officers and crew of a ship **e**: a fire-fighting unit **3 a**: a chartered commercial organization or medieval trade guild **b**: an association of persons for carrying on a commercial or industrial enterprise **c**: those members of a partnership firm whose names do not appear in the firm name (John Doe and *Company*)

company *vb* — **-nied**; **-ny-ing** *vi* (14c): ACCOMPANY (may ... fair winds ~ your safe return — John Masefield) ~ *vi*: ASSOCIATE

company man *n* (ca. 1921): a worker who acquiesces in company policy without complaint

company officer *n* (1844): a commissioned officer in the army, air force, or marine corps of the rank of captain, first lieutenant, or second

\ə\ about \ə\ kitten, F table \ər\ further \ə\ ash \ə\ ace \ə\ mop, mar \ə\ out \ch\ chin \e\ bet \e\ easy \g\ go \i\ hit \i\ ice \j\ job \ŋ\ sing \ə\ go \ə\ law \ə\ boy \th\ thin \θ\ the \ü\ loot \ü\ foot \y\ yet \zh\ vision \ä, k, ð, ce, ce, ue, ue, \ see Guide to Pronunciation

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