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the "Star-Spangled Banner" ■ (strike something up) begin a friendship or conversation with someone, typically in a casual way.

-ORIGIN Old English *strican* 'go, flow' and 'rub lightly,' of West Germanic origin; related to German *streichen* 'to stroke,' also to STROKE. The sense 'deliver a blow' dates from Middle English.

**strikebreaker** |'stri:k,bre:kər| ▶n. a person who works or is employed in place of others who are on strike, thereby making the strike ineffectual.

-DERIVATIVES **strike•break** v.; **strike•break•ing** |-brə:kɪŋ| n.

**strike force** ▶n. [treated as sing. or pl.] a military force equipped and organized for sudden attack.

**strikeout** |'stri:k,əʊt| ▶n. Baseball an out called when a batter accumulates three strikes.

▶adj. Computing (of text) having a horizontal line through the middle; crossed out.

**strike pay** ▶n. money paid to strikers by their trade union.

**strike price** ▶n. Finance 1 the price fixed by the seller of a security after receiving bids in a tender offer, typically for a sale of bonds or a new stock market issue. 2 the price at which a put or call option can be exercised.

**striker** |'stri:kər| ▶n. 1 an employee on strike. 2 the player who is to strike the ball in a game; a player considered in terms of ability to strike the ball: *a gifted striker of the ball*. ■ (chiefly in soccer) a forward or attacker.

**striker plate** ▶n. a metal plate attached to a doorjamb or lidded container, against which the end of a spring-lock bolt strikes when the door or lid is closed.

**strike-slip fault** ▶n. Geology a fault in which rock strata are displaced mainly in a horizontal direction, parallel to the line of the fault.

**strike zone** ▶n. Baseball an area over home plate extending approximately from the armpits to the knees of a batter when in the batting position. The ball must be pitched through this area in order for a strike to be called.

**striking** |'stri:kɪŋ| ▶adj. 1 attracting attention by reason of being unusual, extreme, or prominent: *the murderer bore a striking similarity to an earlier shooting* | [with clause] *it is striking that no research into the problem is occurring*. ■ dramatically good-looking or beautiful: *she is naturally striking | a striking landscape*.

2 [attrib.] (of an employee) on strike: *striking mine workers*.

▶n. the action of striking: *substantial damage was caused by the striking of a submerged object*.

-PHRASES **within striking distance** see DISTANCE.

-DERIVATIVES **strikingly** adv. [as submodifier] *a strikingly beautiful girl*.

**striking price** ▶n. another term for STRIKE PRICE.

**Strindberg** |'strɪn(d),bɜ:ɡ|, (Johan) August (1849–1912), Swedish playwright and novelist. His satire *The Red Room* (1879) is regarded as Sweden's first modern novel. His later plays are typically tense, psychic dramas, such as *A Dream Play* (1902).

**Strine** |strɪn| (also **strine**) informal ▶n. the English language as spoken by Australians; the Australian accent, esp. when considered striking or uneducated. ■ an Australian.

▶adj. of or relating to Australians or Australian English: *he spoke with a broad Strine accent*.

-ORIGIN 1960s: representing the pronunciation of Australian in Strine.

**string** |strɪŋ| ▶n. 1 material consisting of threads of cotton, hemp, or other material twisted together to form a thin length. ■ a piece of such material used to tie around or attach to something. ■ a piece of catgut or similar material interwoven with others to form the head of a sports racket. ■ a length of catgut or wire on a musical instrument, producing a note by vibration. ■ (strings) the stringed instruments in an orchestra. ■ [as adj.] of, relating to, or consisting of stringed instruments: *a string quartet*.

2 a set of things tied or threaded together on a thin cord: *she wore a string of agates around her throat*. ■ a sequence of similar items or events: *a string of burglaries*. ■ Computing a linear sequence of characters, words, or other data. ■ a group of racehorses trained at one stable. ■ a team or player holding a specified position in an order of preference: *Gary was first string on the varsity football team*.

3 a tough piece of fiber in vegetables, meat, or other food, such as a tough elongated piece connecting the two halves of a bean pod.

4 short for STRINGOCCAS

threadlike concentration of energy within the structure of space-time.

▶v. (past and past part. **strung** |strɒŋ|) 1 [with obj. and adverbial] hang (something) so that it stretches in a long line: *lights were strung across the promenade*. ■ thread (a series of small objects) on a string: *he collected stones with holes in them and strung them on a strong cord*. ■ (be strung) be arranged in a long line: *the houses were strung along the road*. ■ (string something together) add items to one another to form a series or coherent whole: *he can't string two sentences together*.

2 [trans.] fit a string or strings to (a musical instrument, a racket, or a bow): *the harp had been newly strung*.

3 [trans.] remove the strings from (a bean).

4 Brit., Billiards another term for LAG<sup>1</sup> (sense 2).

-PHRASES **no strings attached** informal used to show that an offer or opportunity carries no special conditions or restrictions. **on a string** under one's control or influence: *I've got the world on a string*.

▶string along informal stay with or accompany a person or group casually or as long as it is convenient.

**string someone along** informal mislead someone deliberately over a length of time, esp. about one's intentions: *she had no plans to marry him—she was just stringing him along*.

**string something out** cause something to stretch out; prolong something. ■ (string out) stretch out into a long line: *the runners string out in a line across the road*. ■ (be strung out) be nervous or tense: *I often felt strung out by daily stresses*. ■ (be strung out) be under the influence of alcohol or drugs: *he died, strung out on booze and cocaine*.

**string someone/something up** hang something up on strings. ■ kill someone by hanging.

-DERIVATIVES **stringless** adj.; **stringlike** |-lɪk| adj.

-ORIGIN Old English *streng* (noun), of Germanic origin; related to German *Strang*, also to STRONG. The verb (dating from late Middle English) is first recorded in the senses 'arrange in a row' and 'fit with a string.'

**string bass** |bæs| ▶n. (esp. among jazz musicians) a double bass.

**string bean** ▶n. 1 any of various beans eaten in their fibrous pods, such as scarlet runners. 2 informal a tall thin person.

**string bikini** ▶n. a scant bikini with straps of thin cord.

**stringboard** |'strɪŋ,bɔ:rd| ▶n. a board with which the ends of the steps in a staircase are covered. See illustration at STAIR.

**stringcourse** |,strɪŋ,kɔ:rs| ▶n. a raised horizontal band or course of bricks on a building. Also called CORDON.

**stringed** |strɪŋd| ▶adj. [attrib.] (of a musical instrument) having strings: [in combination] *a three-stringed fiddle*.

**stringendo** |strɪŋ'jendə| ▶n. Music ▶adv. & adj. (esp. as a direction) with increasing speed.

▶n. (pl. **stringendos** or **stringendi** |-jendə|) a passage marked to be performed in this way.

-ORIGIN Italian, literally 'squeezing, binding together.'

**stringent** |'strɪŋjənt| ▶adj. (of regulations, requirements, or conditions) strict, precise, and exacting: *California's air pollution guidelines are stringent*.

-DERIVATIVES **stringency** n.; **stringently** adv.

-ORIGIN mid 17th cent. (in the sense 'compelling, convincing'): from Latin *stringere* 'drawing tight,' from the verb *stringere*.

**stringer** |'strɪŋgər| ▶n. 1 a longitudinal structural piece in a framework, esp. that of a ship or aircraft. 2 informal a newspaper correspondent not on the regular staff of a newspaper, esp. one retained on a part-time basis to report on events in a particular place. 3 a side of a staircase, which supports the treads and risers. 4 [in combination] a sports player holding a specified position in an order of preference: *a third-stringer on the football team*.

**stringhalt** |'strɪŋ,hɔ:lt| ▶n. a condition affecting one or both of a horse's hind legs, causing exaggerated bending of the hock.

**string orchestra** ▶n. an orchestra consisting only of bowed string instruments of the violin family.

**stringpiece** |'strɪŋ,pɛs| ▶n. a long piece supporting and connecting the parts of a wooden framework.

**string quartet** ▶n. a chamber music ensemble consisting of first and second violins, viola, and cello. ■ a piece of music for such an ensemble.

**string theory** ▶n. a cosmological theory based on the existence of cosmic strings. See illustration (p. 1687)

■ (of a person) tall, wiry, and thin. ■ (of food) containing tough fibers and so hard to eat. ■ (of a liquid) viscous; forming strings.

-DERIVATIVES **stringily** |-lɪ| adv.; **stringiness** n.

**strip<sup>1</sup>** |stri:p| ▶v. (**stripped**, **stripping**) [trans.] 1 remove all coverings from: *they stripped the bed*. ■ remove the clothes from (someone): [with obj. and complement] *the man had been stripped naked*. ■ [intrans.] take off one's clothes: *they stripped and showered | she stripped down to her underwear*. ■ pull or tear off (a garment or covering): *she stripped off her shirt* | figurative *strip away the hype, and you'll find original thought*. ■ remove bark and branches from (a tree). ■ remove paint from (a surface) with solvent. ■ remove (paint) in this way: *strip off the existing paint*. ■ remove the stems from (tobacco). ■ milk (a cow) to the last drop.

2 leave bare of accessories or fittings: *thieves stripped the room of luggage*. ■ remove the accessory fittings of or take apart (a machine, motor vehicle, etc.) to inspect or adjust it: *the tank was stripped down piece by piece*.

3 (strip someone of) deprive someone of (rank, power, or property): *the lieutenant was stripped of his rank*.

4 sell off (the assets of a company) for profit.

■ Finance divest (a bond) of its interest coupons so that it and they may be sold separately.

5 tear the thread or teeth from (a screw, gearwheel, etc.). ■ [intrans.] (of a screw, gearwheel, etc.) lose its thread or teeth.

6 [intrans.] (of a bullet) be fired from a rifled gun without spin owing to a loss of surface.

▶n. an act of undressing, esp. in a striptease: *she got drunk and did a strip on top of the piano*. ■ [as adj.] used for or involving the performance of stripteases: *a campaigner against strip joints*.

-ORIGIN Middle English (as a verb): of Germanic origin; related to Dutch *stropen*.

**strip<sup>2</sup>** ▶n. 1 a long, narrow piece of cloth, paper, plastic, or some other material: *a strip of linen*. ■ a long, narrow area of land. ■ a main road in or leading out of a town, lined with shops, restaurants, and other facilities. ■ steel or other metal in the form of narrow flat bars.

2 a comic strip.

-ORIGIN late Middle English: from or related to Middle Low German *strippe* 'strap, thong,' probably also to STRIPE.

**strip cropping** ▶n. cultivation in which different crops are sown in alternate strips to prevent soil erosion.

**stripe** |stri:p| ▶n. 1 a long narrow band or strip, typically of the same width throughout its length, differing in color or texture from the surface on either side of it: *a pair of blue shorts with pink stripes*. ■ archaic a blow with a scourge or lash. 2 a chevron sewn onto a uniform to denote military rank. ■ a type or category: *entrepreneurs of all stripes are joining in the offensive*.

▶v. [trans.] (usu. **be striped**) mark with stripes: *her body was striped with bands of sunlight*.

-ORIGIN late Middle English: perhaps a back-formation from STRIPED, of Dutch or Low German origin; compare with Middle Dutch and Middle Low German *stripe*.

**striped** |stri:p| ▶adj. marked with or having stripes: [in combination] *a green-striped coat*.

**striped bass** |bæs| ▶n. a large bass of North American coastal waters, with dark horizontal stripes along the upper sides, migrating up streams to breed. ■ *Morone* (or *Roccus*) *saxatilis*, family Percichthyidae.

**striped hyena** ▶n. a hyena with numerous black stripes on the body and legs, living in steppe and desert areas from northeastern Africa to India. ■ *Hyaena hyaena*, family Hyaenidae.

**striped maple** ▶n. a compact North American maple with large leaves and vertically striped bark. Also called MOOSEWOOD (so named because moose often feed on the bark during severe winters). ■ *Acer pennsylvanicum*, family Aceraceae.

**striped polecat** ▶n. another term for ZORILLA.

**stripsey** |'stri:peɪ| ▶adj. variant spelling of STRIPPLY.

**strippling** |'stri:plɪŋ| ▶n. humorous a young man.

-ORIGIN Middle English: probably from STRIP<sup>2</sup> (from the notion of "narrowness," i.e., slimmness) + -LING.

**strip mall** ▶n. a shopping mall consisting of stores and restaurants typically in one-story buildings located on a busy main road.