
MODERN DESK EDITION

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY

OF THE
AMERICAN LANGUAGE

David B. Guralnik, *Editor in Chief*

PRENTICE HALL PRESS

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY of the American Language; MODERN DESK EDITION

Copyright © 1976, 1979 by Simon & Schuster, a Division of Gulf + Western Corporation

All rights reserved

including the right of reproduction

in whole or in part in any form

Published by New World Dictionaries/Prentice Hall Press

A Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Gulf + Western Building

One Gulf + Western Plaza

New York, NY 10023

PRENTICE HALL PRESS, TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD and colophons are trademarks of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Manufactured in the United States of America

4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 79-52089

ISBN: 0-671-41825-4 (Indexed)

0-671-54262-1 (Plain edged)

Previous editions of this book were published by The World Publishing Company, William Collins & World Publishing Co., Inc. and William Collins Publishers, Inc.

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY, Modern Desk Edition is based upon and includes material from WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY, Second College Edition Copyright © 1978, 1976, 1974, 1972, 1979 by Simon & Schuster, a Division of Gulf & Western Corporation, previously published by The World Publishing Company and William Collins & World Publishing Co., Inc.

F
This *Modern Desk Edition* is an abridgment of the popular *Second College Edition*, which was published by WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY, and a careful compression of the text, managed to bring together the best of the words they read and

There are more than 72,000 words in this edition, including all the commonly used terms. In addition, a selection of the special words of science, medicine, and the like, will be found. These words are encountered in present-day life. The listing of the dictionary text is in alphabetical order, as well as abbreviations.

Illustrations, both pictorial and text, shed additional light upon the meaning and use of the words. The illustrations are to appropriate usage of the words. When necessary, a considerable amount of English will be found; this is done for each phrase. Unusual in a dictionary, here, little histories of the words are given, for a clearer understanding of the words.

Following the dictionary, the words are given names with their etymology.

A careful reading of the dictionary will make clear the many kinds of words and its usefulness to the reader.

Editor in Chief

Managing Editor

Editors

Assistants

Chief Proofreader

Illustrator

am-mo-ni-um (ə mō'nē əm) *n.* the radical NH_4 , present in salts produced by the reaction of ammonia with an acid

am-mu-ni-tion (am'yə nish'ən) *n.* [*< L. munire, to fortify*] 1. anything hurled by a weapon or exploded as a weapon, as bullets, shells, bombs, grenades, etc. 2. any means of attack or defense

am-ne-sia (am nē'zhə, -zhə ə) *n.* [*< Gr. a-, not + mnas-thai, to remember*] partial or total loss of memory — **am-ne-si-ac'** (-zē ək'), **am-ne-sic** *adj.* *n.*

am-nes-ty (am'nəs tē) *n., pl. -ties* [*< Gr. amnestia, a forgetting*] a general pardon, esp. for political offenses — **vt. -tied, -ty-ing** to grant amnesty to; pardon

am-ni-on (am'nē ən, -ān') *n., pl. -ni-ons, -ni-a* (-ə) [*< Gr. amnos, lamb*] the innermost membrane of the sac enclosing the embryo of a mammal, reptile, or bird — **am'ni-ot-ic** (-āt'ik) *adj.*

a-moe-ba (ə mē'bə) *n., pl. -bas, -bae* (-bē) [*< Gr. amēbein, to change*] a microscopic, one-celled animal multiplying by fission — **a-moe-bic**, **a-moe-ban** *adj.*

a-moe-boid (ə mē'boid) *adj.* like an amoeba, as in constantly changing shape

a-mok (ə muk') *adv.* [*Malay amok*] 1. in a frenzy to kill 2. in a violent rage

A-mon (ā'mən) an ancient Egyptian deity, later identified with the sun god, **A'mon-Re'** (-rā')

a-mong (ə mʊŋ') *prep.* [*< OE. on, in + gemang, a crowd*] 1. surrounded by [*among friends*] 2. in the group of [*among books*] 3. with a share for each of [*divided among us*] 4. by the joint action of

a-mongst (ə mʊŋst') *prep.* same as **among**

a-mon-ti-l-la-do (ə mən'tē lā'dō) *n.* [*< Sp. < Montilla, a town in Spain*] a pale, rather dry sherry

a-mor-al (ā mō'rəl, -mār'-) *adj.* 1. not to be judged by moral standards; neither moral nor immoral 2. without moral principles — **a-mor-al-i-ty** (ā'mə rāl'ə tē) *n.* — **a-mor'al-ly** *adv.*

am-o-rous (am'ər əs) *adj.* [*< L. amor, love*] 1. fond of making love 2. full of love 3. of sexual love or lovemaking — **am-o-rous-ly** *adv.* — **am-o-rous-ness** *n.*

a-mor-phous (ə mōr'fəs) *adj.* [*< Gr. a-, without + morphē, form*] 1. shapeless 2. of no definite type 3. *Biol.* without specialized structure 4. *Chem., Mineralogy* not crystalline — **a-morphism** *n.* — **a-morphous-ly** *adv.*

am-or-tize (am'ər tīz', ə mōr'-) *vt. -tized', -tiz'ing* [*< L. ad, to + mors, death*] 1. to put money aside at intervals for gradual payment of (a debt, etc.) 2. *Accounting* to write off (expensitures) by prorating over a fixed period Brit. sp. **am'or-tise', -tised', -tis'ing** — **am'or-ti-za'tion** *n.*

A-mos (ā'mas) 1. a Hebrew prophet of the 8th cent. B.C. 2. a book of the Bible containing prophecies attributed to him

a-mount (ə maunt') *vi.* [*< L. ad, to + mons, mountain*] 1. to add up (to a sum) 2. to be equal in meaning, value, or effect — *n.* 1. the sum of two or more quantities; total 2. a principal sum plus its interest 3. a quantity

a-mour (ə moor') *n.* [*Fr. < L. amor, love*] a love affair, esp. an illicit one

amp. 1. ampereage 2. ampere(s)

am-per-age (am'pər ij, am pīr'-) *n.* the strength of an electric current in amperes

am-pere (am'pīr) *n.* [after A. M. Ampère (1775–1836), Fr. physicist] the standard unit for measuring the strength of an electric current; rate of flow of charge of one coulomb per second

am-per-sand (am'pər sand') *n.* [*< and per se and, lit., (the sign) & by itself (is) and*] a sign (&), meaning *and*

am-phet-a-mine (am fet'ə mēn', -min) *n.* a colorless liquid, $\text{C}_9\text{H}_{13}\text{N}$, used as a drug to overcome depression, fatigue, etc. and to lessen the appetite

am-phib-i-an (am fib'ē ən) *n.* [see *ff.*] 1. any of a class of vertebrates, including frogs, toads, salamanders, etc., that usually begin life in the water as tadpoles with gills, and later develop lungs 2. any amphibious animal or plant 3. an aircraft that can take off from or come down on either land or water 4. a vehicle that can travel on either land or water — *adj.* same as **AMPHIBIOUS**

am-phib-i-ous (-əs) *adj.* [*< Gr. amphi-, on both sides + bios, life*] 1. that can live both on land and in water 2. that can operate on both land and water 3. of or for a military operation involving the landing of troops from boats — **am-phib-i-ous-ly** *adv.*

am-phi-the-a-ter, am-phi-the-a-tre (am'fə thē'ə tər) *n.* [*< Gr. amphi-, around + theatron, theater*] a round or oval building with an open space (arena) surrounded by rising rows of seats

am-pho-ra (am'fə ə) *n., pl. -rae* (-ē), -ras [*< Gr. amphi-,*

on both sides + *pherein, to bear*] a tall jar with a narrow neck and base and two handles, used by the ancient Greeks and Romans

am-ple (am'plē) *adj. -pler, -plest* [*< L. amplus*] 1. large in size, extent, etc. 2. more than enough; abundant 3. adequate — **am-ply** *adv.*

am-pli-fi-er (am'plē fī'ər) *n.* 1. a person or thing that amplifies 2. an electronic device used to increase electrical signal strength

am-pli-fy (am'plē fī') *vt. -fied', -fy'ing* [*< L. amplus, ample + facere, to make*] 1. to make stronger; esp., to strengthen (an electrical signal) 2. to expand — *vi.* to expatiate — **am'pli-fi-ca'tion** *n.*

am-pli-tude (am'plē tōd'əd) *n.* [see **AMPLE**] 1. extent; largeness 2. abundance 3. scope or breadth 4. the extreme range of a fluctuating quantity, from the average or mean to the extreme

amplitude modulation the changing of the amplitude of the transmitting radio wave in accordance with the signal being broadcast: distinguished from **FREQUENCY MODULATION**

am-pul (am'pool) *n.* [*< Fr. < L. ampulla, bottle*] a small glass container for one dose of a hypodermic medicine: also **am'pule** (-pyool), **am'poule** (-pōol)

am-pu-tate (am'pyə tāt') *vt. -tated', -tat'ing* [*< L. am-, for ambi- + putare, to prune*] to cut off (an arm, leg, etc.), esp. by surgery — **am-pu-ta'tion** *n.*

am-pu-tee (am'pyə tē) *n.* a person who has had a limb or limbs amputated

Am-ster-dam (am'star dam') constitutional capital of the Netherlands: pop. 868,000

amt. amount

Am-trak (am'trak') *n.* [*American tr(avel) (tr)a(c)k*] a nationwide system of passenger railroad service

a-muck (ə muk') *adv.* same as **AMOK**

am-u-let (am'yə lit) *n.* [*< L.*] something worn on the body as a charm against evil

a-muse (ə myōz') *vt. a-mused', a-mus'ing* [*< Fr. à, at + OFr. muser, to stare fixedly*] 1. to keep pleasantly occupied; entertain 2. to make laugh, smile, etc. — **a-mus'a-bile** *adj.* — **a-mus'er** *n.*

a-muse'ment (-mənt) *n.* 1. a being amused 2. something that amuses

amusement park an outdoor place with devices for entertainment, as a merry-go-round, etc.

am-yl-ase (am'yə lās') *n.* [*< Gr. amylon, starch*] an enzyme that helps change starch into sugar, found in saliva, etc.

an (ən; stressed an) *adj., indefinite article* [*< OE. an, one*] 1. one; one sort of 2. each; any one 3. per [two an hour] *An* is used before words beginning with a vowel sound [*an eye, an honor, an ultimatum*]

an, an' (an) *conj.* [*< and*] 1. [Dial.] and 2. [Archaic] if — **an** [*< L. -anus*] *adj. -forming and n.-forming suffix* meaning: 1. (one) belonging to [*diocesan*] 2. (one) born in or living in [*American*] 3. (one) believing in [*Mohammedan*]

a-nab-o-lism (ə nab'ə liz'm) *n.* [*< Gr. anabolē, a rising up + -ism*] the biological process by which food is changed into living tissue

a-nach-ro-nism (ə nak'rə niz'm) *n.* [*< Gr. ana-, against + chronos, time*] 1. anything out of its proper time in history 2. the representation of this — **a-nach-ro-nis'tic** *adj.* — **a-nach-ro-nis'ti-cal-ly** *adv.*

an-a-con-da (an'ə kən'də) *n.* [*< ?*] 1. a large S. American snake of the boa family 2. any similar snake that crushes its victim in its coils

a-nae-mi-a (ə nē'mē ə) *n.* same as **ANEMIA**

an-aer-obe (an er'ōb, an'ə rōb') *n.* [*< Gr. an-, without + aëro-, AERO- + bios, life*] a microorganism that can live where there is no free oxygen — **an-aer-o-bic** (an'er ō'bik, -ə rō'-) *adj.*

an-aes-the-sia (an'əs thē'zhə) *n.* same as **ANESTHESIA** — **an-aes-the'tic** *adj.*, *n.* — **an-aes-the-tist** *n.* — **an-aes-the-tize'** *vt. -tized', -tiz'ing*

an-a-gram (an'ə gram') *n.* [*< Gr. anagrammatizein, transposition letters*] 1. a word or phrase made from another by rearranging its letters (Ex.: *now-won*) 2. [*pl., with sing. v.*] a game of forming words by arranging letters drawn randomly from a stock

An-a-helm (an'ə him') city in SW Calif.: pop. 167,000

a-nal (ā'n'l) *adj.* of or near the anus

an-al-ge-si-a (an'l jē'zē ə, -sē ə) *n.* [*< Gr. an-, without + algēsia, pain*] a state of not feeling pain although fully conscious

an'al-ge-sic (-zik, -sik) *adj.* of or causing analgesia — *n.* a drug producing analgesia

analog computer a computer that uses volta sent the numerical data of physical quantities

a-nal-o-gize (ə nal'ə jīz') *vi., vt. -gized', -giz'ing* or explain by, analogy — **a-nal'o-gist** *n.*

a-nal'o-gous (-gəs) *adj.* [see **ANALOGY**] 1. similar in certain respects 2. *Biol.* similar in not in origin and structure — **a-nal'o-gous-ly** *adv.*

an-a-logue, an-a-log (an'ə lōg') *n.* a thing is analogous — *adj.* of or by means of an analc usually analog

a-nal'o-gy (ə nal'ə jē) *n., pl. -gies* [*< Gr. analogos, to + logos, ratio*] 1. similarity in some respect of something point by point with som lar 3. *Biol.* similarity in function but not structure

an-a-lyse (an'ə līz') *vt. -lysed', -lys'ing* chiefly *ANALYZE*

a-nal'y-sis (ə nal'ə sis) *n., pl. -ses' (-sēz')* [*Gr. + lysis, a loosening*] 1. a breaking up of a wh parts to find out their nature, etc. 2. a stem findings 3. same as **PSYCHOANALYSIS** 4. *Chem.* tion of compounds and mixtures into their cor determine their nature or proportion — **an-a-ly lit'i k'l**, **an'a-lyt'ic** *adj.* — **an'a-lyt'i-cal-ly** *adv.*

an-a-lyst (an'ə list) *n.* 1. a person who analy as **PSYCHOANALYST**

an'a-lyze' (-līz') *vt. -lyzed', -lyz'ing* 1. to su parts so as to find out their nature, etc. 2. carefully so as to determine the nature of choanalyze — **an'a-lyz'a-ble** *adj.* — **an'a-lyz'er** *n.*

an-a-pest, an-a-pest (an'ə pest') *n.* [*< Gr. + paiein, to strike*] a metrical foot of three s; first two unaccented and the third accented

an-a-pestic *adj.*

an-ar-chism (an'ər kīz'm) *n.* 1. the theory th of government should be replaced by volunte tion 2. resistance, sometimes by terrorism, to an'ar-chist (-kīst) *n.* 1. a person who believ chism 2. a promoter of anarchy — **an'ar-chis'ti**

an'ar-chy (-kē) *n.* [*< Gr. an-, without + arc-*] 1. the complete absence of government 2. f order and violence 3. disorder; confusion — (-ār'kik), **an'ar-chi-cal** *adj.*

anat. 1. anatomical 2. anatomist 3. anatomy

a-nath'e-ma (ə nath'ə mə) *n., pl. -mas* [*< Gr. vated to evil*] 1. a thing or person accused 2 person greatly detested 3. a formal curse, as communicating a person 4. any strong curse

a-nath'e-ma-tize' (-tiz') *vt., vi. -tized', -tiz'ing* an anathema (against); curse

a-nat-o-mize (ə nat'ə mīz') *vt., vi. -mized', -miz'ing* to dissect (an animal or plant) in order to stud ture 2. to analyze in detail — **a-nat'o-mist** *n.*

a-nat'o-my (-mē) *n., pl. -mies* [*< Gr. ana-, nein, to cut*] 1. the dissecting of an organism study its structure 2. the science of the struc mals or plants 3. the structure of an organis tailed analysis — **an-a-tom'i-cal** (an'ə tām'i tom'ic) *adj.* — **an'a-tom'i-cal-ly** *adv.*

-ance [*< L.*] a suffix meaning: 1. the act of [*u-* a being [*vigilance*] 3. a thing that [*conveyance* that is [*dissonance, inheritance*]

an-ces-tor (an'ses'tər) *n.* [*< L. ante-, before go*] 1. a person from whom one is descended; an early type of animal from which later l evolved 3. a predecessor — **an'ces'tress** (-tras) *n.*

an-ces-tral (an'ses'trəl) *adj.* of or inherited t tors — **an-ces'tral-ly** *adv.*

an-ces-try (an'ses'trē) *n., pl. -tries* 1. family lineage 2. ancestors collectively

an-chor (an'kər) *n.* [*< Gr. ankura, a hook*] 1. a object, as an iron weight with flukes, low- ered into the water by cable to keep a ship from drifting 2. anything giving security or stability — *vt.* to hold secure as by an anchor — *vi.* 1. to lower the anchor 2. to become fixed — **at anchor** anchored

an'chor-age (-ij) *n.* 1. money charged for the right to anchor 2. an anchoring or being anchored 3. a place to anchor

an-cho-rite (an'kə rit') *n.* [*< Gr. ana-, back + chōreia, retire*] a religious re- cluse; hermit: also **an'cho-ret** (-rit) — **an'cho-**

fat, āpe, cār, ten, ēven; is, bīte; gō, hōrn, tōōl
' as in *able* (ā'b'l); ē, Fr. coeur; ō, Fr. feu; Fr.