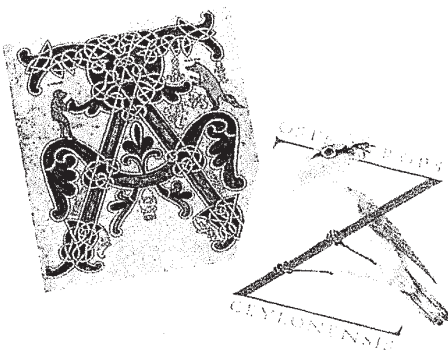


*The*  
**American  
Heritage® Dictionary**  
*of the English Language*

FOURTH EDITION



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openly and boldly: "Old Mrs. Webb avowed that he, in the space of two hours, had worn out her pew more . . . than she had by sitting in it forty years" (Kate Douglas Wiggin). *Confess* usually emphasizes disclosure of something damaging or inconvenient to oneself: *I have to confess that I lied to you*. To *concede* is to intellectually accept something, often against one's will: *The lawyer refused to concede that the two cases had similarities*.

**ac•knowl•edged** (ăk-nôl'ijd) *adj.* Commonly accepted or recognized.

**ac•knowl•edg•ment** or **ac•knowl•edge•ment** (ăk-nôl'tj-mənt) *n.* 1. The act of admitting or owning to something. 2. Recognition of another's existence, validity, authority, or right. 3. An answer or response in return for something done. 4. An expression of thanks or a token of appreciation. 5. A formal declaration made to authoritative witnesses to ensure legal validity.

**a•clin•ic line** (ă-klin'ik) *n.* See **magnetic equator**. [From Greek *aklinēs*, not inclining to either side: *a-*, not; see *A-* + *klinein*, to lean; see *klei-* in Appendix I.]

**ACLU** *abbr.* American Civil Liberties Union

**ACM** *abbr.* asbestos-containing material

**ac•me** (ăk'mē) *n.* The highest point, as of achievement or development: *reached the acme of her career*. See synonyms at **summit**. [Greek *akmē*. See *ak-* in Appendix I.]

**ac•ne** (ăk'nē) *n.* An inflammatory disease of the sebaceous glands and hair follicles of the skin that is marked by the eruption of pimples or pustules, especially on the face. [New Latin, probably from misreading of Greek *akmē*, point, facial eruption. See **ACME**.] —**ac•ned** *adj.*

**acne rosacea** *n.* See **rosacea**.

**a•cock** (ə-kɒk') *adv.* & *adj.* In a cocked position.

**a•coe•lo•mate** (ə-sē'lə-māt') *n.* An animal that lacks a coelom. Acoelomates, which include the flatworm, fluke, tapeworm, and ribbon worm, exhibit bilateral symmetry and possess one internal space, the digestive cavity. [New Latin *Acoelomata*, group name: *A-* + Greek *kōilōma*, *kōilōmat-*, cavity; see **COELOM**.] —**a•coe•lo•mate** (-lə-mīt) *adj.*

**a•coe•lous** (ă-sē'ləs) *adj.* Lacking a true body cavity or digestive tract. [*A-* + **COEL(OM)** + *-OUS*.]

**ac•o•lyte** (ăk'ə-līt') *n.* 1. One who assists the celebrant in the performance of liturgical rites. 2. A devoted follower or attendant. [Middle English *acolit*, from Old French, from Medieval Latin *acolytus*, from Greek *akolouthos*, attendant. See **ANACOLUTHON**.]

**A•co•ma** (ăk'ə-mə, -mō', ă'kə-) *n., pl.* **Acoma** or **-mas** 1a. A Pueblo people, the founders and inhabitants of Acoma. b. A member of this people. 2. The Keresan language of the Acoma. [Acoma, people of the white rock.]

**A•co•ma** (ăk'ə-mə, -mō', ă'kə-) A pueblo of west-central New Mexico west of Albuquerque. Founded c. 1100–1250, it is regarded as the oldest continuously inhabited community in the United States. Population: 2,590.

**A•con•ca•gua** (ăk'ən-kă'gwə, ă'kən-) A mountain, 7,025.4 m (23,034 ft) high, in the Andes of western Argentina near Chile. The highest peak of the Western Hemisphere, it was first scaled in 1897.

**ac•o•nite** (ăk'ə-nīt') *n.* 1. Any of various, usually poisonous perennial herbs of the genus *Aconitum*, having tuberous roots, palmately lobed leaves, blue or white flowers with large hoodlike upper sepals, and an aggregate of follicles. 2. The dried leaves and roots of some of these plants, which yield a poisonous alkaloid that was formerly used medicinally. In both senses also called *monkshood*, *wolfbane*. [French *aconit*, from Latin *aconitum*, from Greek *akoniton*, perhaps from neuter sing. of *akonitos*, without dust or struggle: *a-*, without; see *A-* + *konis*, dust.]

**A•çö•res** (ă-sör'esh) See **Azores**.

**a•corn** (ă'körn', ă'körn) *n.* The fruit of an oak, consisting of a single-seeded, thick-walled nut set in a woody, cuplike base. [Middle English *akorn*, from Old English *æcern*.]

**Word History** A glance at the word *acorn* might produce the surmise that it is made up of *oak* and *corn*, especially if we think of *corn* in its sense of "a kernel or seed of a plant," as in *peppercorn*. The fact that others thought the word was so constituted partly accounts for the present form *acorn*. Here we see the workings of the process of linguistic change known as folk etymology, an alteration in form of a word or phrase so that it resembles a more familiar term mistakenly regarded as analogous. *Acorn* actually goes back to Old English *æcern*, "acorn," which in turn goes back to the Indo-European root \**ōg-*, meaning "fruit, berry."

**acorn squash** *n.* A type of winter squash shaped somewhat like an acorn and having longitudinal ridges, a variously colored rind, and yellow to orange flesh.

**acorn worm** *n.* Any of a class (Enteropneusta) of hemichordate, wormlike animals that inhabit shallow burrows in mud or sand flats of intertidal zones and are equipped with an acornlike proboscis used for digging and collecting food.

**a•cous•tic** (ə-kōd'stik) *adj.* also **a•cous•ti•cal** (-stī-kəl) 1. Of or relating to sound, the sense of hearing, or the science of sound. 2a. Designed to carry sound or to aid in hearing. b. Designed to absorb or control sound: *acoustic tile*. 3. **Music** a. Of or being an instrument that does not produce or enhance sound electronically: *an acoustic guitar*; *an acoustic bass*. b. Being a performance that features such instruments: *opened the show with an acoustic set*. ♡ *n.* **Music** An acoustic instrument. [Greek *akoustikos*, pertaining to hearing, from *akouein*, to hear. See **kous-** in Appendix I.] —**a•cous•ti•cal•ly** *adv.*

**ac•ous•ti•cian** (ăk'ōd-stīsh'ən) *n.* A specialist in acoustics.

**acoustic nerve** *n.* Either of the eighth pair of cranial nerves that

divides to form the cochlear nerve and the vestibular nerve. Also called *auditory nerve*.

**a•cous•tics** (ə-kōd'stik) *n.* 1. (used with a *sing. verb*) The scientific study of sound, especially of its generation, transmission, and reception. 2. (used with a *pl. verb*) The total effect of sound, especially as produced in an enclosed space: "Such annoyances are frequently caused by flaws in the acoustics rather than the performers" (Mel Gussow).

**acoustic spectrography** *n.* A technique for studying sound by separating it into its component frequencies. Also called *audiospectrography*.

**a•cous•to•e•lec•tric** (ə-kōd'stō-lēk'trīk) *adj.* Of or relating to electroacoustics. [**ACOUST(IC)** + **ELECTRIC**.] —**a•cous•to•e•lec•tri•cal•ly** *adv.*

**a•cous•to•op•tics** (ə-kōd'stō-ōp'tiks) *n.* (used with a *sing. verb*) The science of the interaction of acoustic and optical phenomena. [**ACOUST(IC)** + **OPTICS**.] —**a•cous•to•op•ti•cal** *adj.* —**a•cous•to•op•ti•cal•ly** *adv.*

**ACP** *abbr.* American College of Physicians

**acpt.** *abbr.* acceptance

**ac•quaint** (ə-kwānt') *tr.v.* -quaint•ed, -quaint•ing, -quaints 1a.

To cause to come to know personally: *Let me acquaint you with my family*.

b. To make familiar: *acquainted myself with the controls*. 2. To inform: *Please acquaint us with your plans*. [Middle English *aqueinten*, from Old French *acointier*, from Medieval Latin *accognitare*, from Latin *accognitus*, past participle of *accognoscere*, to know perfectly: *ad-*, intensive pref.; see *AD-* + *cognoscere*, to know; see **COGNITION**.]

**ac•quain•tance** (ə-kwānt's) *n.* 1a. Knowledge of a person acquired by a relationship less intimate than friendship. b. A relationship based on such knowledge: *struck up an acquaintance with our new neighbor*. 2. A person whom one knows. 3. Knowledge or information about something or someone: *has a passing acquaintance with Chinese history*. —**ac•quain•tance•ship** *n.*

**acquaintance rape** *n.* Rape perpetrated by someone known to the victim.

**ac•quaint•ed** (ə-kwānt'īd) *adj.* 1. Known by or familiar with another. 2. Informed or familiar: *Are you fully acquainted with the facts?*

**ac•qui•esce** (ăk'wī-ēs') *intr.v.* -esced, -escing, -escies To consent or comply passively or without protest. See synonyms at **assent**. [Latin *acquiescere*: *ad-*, *ad-* + *quiescere*, to rest; see **k'wēia-** in Appendix I.]

**Usage Note** When *acquiesce* takes a preposition, it is usually used with *in* (*acquiesced in the ruling*) but sometimes with *to* (*acquiesced to her parents' wishes*). *Acquiesced with* is obsolete.

**ac•qui•es•cence** (ăk'wī-ēs'səns) *n.* 1. Passive assent or agreement without protest. 2. The state of being acquiescent.

**ac•qui•es•cent** (ăk'wī-ēs'sənt) *adj.* Disposed or willing to acquiesce. —**ac•qui•es•cently** *adv.*

**ac•quire** (ə-kwīr') *tr.v.* -quired, -quir•ing, -quires 1. To gain possession of: *acquire 100 shares of stock*. 2. To get by one's own efforts: *acquire proficiency in math*. 3. To gain through experience; come by: *acquired a growing dislike of television sitcoms*. 4. To locate (a moving object) with a tracking system, such as radar. [Middle English *acquire*, from Old French *acquiere*, from Latin *acquirere*, to add to: *ad-*, *ad-* + *querere*, to seek, get.] —**ac•quir•a•ble** *adj.* —**ac•quir•er** *n.*

**ac•quired** (ə-kwīrd') *adj.* 1. Of or relating to a disease, condition, or characteristic that is not congenital but develops after birth. 2. Resulting from exposure to something, such as an antigen or antibiotic.

**acquired antibody** *n.* An antibody produced by an immune response, in contrast to one occurring naturally in an individual.

**acquired character** *n.* A nonhereditary change of function or structure in a plant or animal made in response to the environment. Also called *acquired characteristic*.

**acquired immune deficiency syndrome** *n.* AIDS.

**acquired immunity** *n.* Immunity obtained either from the development of antibodies in response to exposure to an antigen, as from vaccination or an attack of an infectious disease, or from the transmission of antibodies, as from mother to fetus through the placenta or the injection of antiserum.

**acquired taste** *n.* One that is unpleasant on immediate experience or is likable only after being experienced repeatedly.

**ac•quire•ment** (ə-kwīr'mənt) *n.* 1. The act of acquiring. 2. An attainment, such as a skill or social accomplishment.

**ac•qui•si•tion** (ăk'wī-zīsh'ən) *n.* 1. The act of acquiring. 2. Something acquired or gained: *added two new acquisitions to my library*. [Middle English *adquisicioun*, attainment, from Latin *acquisitiō*, *acquisitiō*, from *acquisitus*, past participle of *acquirere*, to acquire. See **ACQUIRE**.]

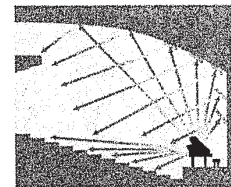
**ac•quis•i•tive** (ə-kwīz'ī-tiv) *adj.* 1. Characterized by a strong desire to gain and possess. 2. Tending to acquire and retain ideas or information: *an acquisitive mind*. —**ac•quis•i•tive•ly** *adv.* —**ac•quis•i•tive•ness** *n.* —**ac•quis•i•tor** (-tər) *n.*

**ac•quit** (ə-kwīt') *tr.v.* -quit•ed, -quit•ing, -quits 1. **Law** To free or clear from a charge or accusation. 2. To release or discharge from a duty. 3. To conduct (oneself) in a specified manner: *acquitted herself well during the interview*. 4. **Obsolete** To repay. [Middle English *aquite*, from Old French *aquiter*: *a-*, to (from Latin *ad-*; see *AD-*) + *quite*, free, clear (from Medieval Latin *quittus*, variant of Latin *quītus*, past participle of *quiescere*, to rest; see **k'wēia-** in Appendix I).] —**ac•quit•ter** *n.*

**ac•quit•tal** (ə-kwīt'l) *n.* 1. Judgment, as by a jury or judge, that a defendant is not guilty of a crime as charged. 2. The state of being found or proved not guilty.



acorn squash  
white acorn squash



acoustics  
Sound waves are deflected off sound panels and distributed throughout a concert hall.

ă pat	oi boy
ā pay	ou out
ār care	ōō took
ā father	ōō boot
ē pet	ū cut
ē be	ūr urge
ī pit	th this
ī pie	th this
īr pier	hw which
ō pot	zh vision
ō toe	ə about, item
ō paw	♦ regionalism

Stress marks: ' (primary);  
' (secondary), as in  
dictionary (dik'shə-nēr'ē)



**butress**, as: **a.** The flared base of certain tree trunks. **b.** A horny growth on the heel of a horse's hoof. **3.** Something that serves to support, prop, or reinforce: "The law is by its very nature a buttress of the status quo" (J. William Fulbright). **♦ tr.v.** **-tressed, -tressing, -tresses** **1.** To support or reinforce with a buttress. **2.** To sustain, prop, or bolster: "The author buttresses her analysis with lengthy dissections of several of Moore's poems" (Warren Woessner). [Middle English *buteres*, from Old French *bouteres*, from *bouter*, to strike against, of Germanic origin. See *bhaul* in Appendix I.]

**butt shaft** *n.* A blunt arrow used for target practice. [Probably from BUTT.]

**butt weld** *n.* A welded butt joint.

**butt-weld** (büt'weld') *tr.v.* **-weld·ed, -weld·ing, -welds** To join by a butt weld.

**butut** (büt'tüt') *n., pl.* **butut** or **-tuts** See table at **currency**. [Wolof.]

**butyl** (byüt'l) *n.* A hydrocarbon radical, C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>9</sub>, with the structure of butane and valence 1.

**butyl alcohol** *n.* Any of four isomeric alcohols, C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>9</sub>OH, widely used as solvents and in organic synthesis.

**butyl·ate** (byüt'l-ät') *tr.v.* **-at·ed, -at·ing, -ates** To bring a butyl group into (a compound). —**butyl·ation** *n.*

**butyl·ated hy·drox·y·an·i·sole** (byüt'l-ä'tid hī-drök'sē-än'i-söl') *n.* BHA.

**butylated hy·drox·y·tol·u·ene** (hī-drök'sē-töl'yōō-ēn') *n.* BHT.

**butyl·ene** (byüt'l-ēn') *n.* Any of three gaseous isomeric ethylene hydrocarbons, C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>8</sub>, used principally in making synthetic rubbers.

**butyl nitrite** *n.* A colorless, volatile liquid, C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>9</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>, that is marketed in some household room deodorizers and used illicitly to induce euphoria and enhance sexual stimulation.

**butyl rubber** *n.* A synthetic rubber produced by copolymerization of a butylene with isoprene, nearly impermeable to air and used in tires, inner tubes, and insulation.

**buty·ra·ceous** (byüt'tä-rä'shəs) *adj.* Resembling butter in appearance, consistency, or chemical properties. [Latin *butyrum*, butter; see BUTTER + -ACEOUS.]

**butyral·de·hy·de** (byüt'tä-räl'dä-hīd') *n.* A transparent, highly flammable liquid, C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>8</sub>O, used in synthesizing resins. [BUTYR(IC) + AL-DEHYDE.]

**buty·rate** (byüt'tä-rät') *n.* A salt or ester of butyric acid. [BUTYR(IC) + -ATE.]

**butyric** (byüt-tī'fik) *adj.* **1.** Relating to, containing, or derived from butter. **2.** Relating to or derived from butyric acid. [From Latin *butyrum*, butter. See BUTTER.]

**butyric acid** *n.* Either of two colorless isomeric acids, C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>7</sub>COOH, occurring in animal milk fats and used in disinfectants, emulsifying agents, and pharmaceuticals. Also called *butanoic acid*.

**buty·rin** (byüt'tor-in) *n.* Any of three isomeric glyceryl esters of butyric acid, naturally present in butter. [French *butyrine*, from Latin *butyrum*, butter. See BUTTER.]

**buty·ro·phe·none** (byüt-tīr'ō-fä-nōn', byüt'tä-rō-) *n.* Any of a group of neuroleptic drugs, such as haloperidol, administered in the treatment of acute psychotic episodes, schizophrenia, and other psychiatric disorders. [BUTYR(IC) + PHEN- + -ONE.]

**bux·om** (bük'səm) *adj.* **1a.** Healthily plump and ample of figure: "A generation ago, fat babies were considered healthy and buxom actresses were popular, but society has since come to worship thinness" (Robert A. Hamilton). **b.** Full-bosomed. **2.** Archaic Lively, vivacious, and gay. **3.** Obsolete Obedient; yielding; pliant. [Middle English, obedient, from Old English *\*būhsūm*, from *būgan*, to bend, submit. See *bheug*- in Appendix I.] —**bux·om·ly** *adv.* —**bux·om·ness** *n.*

**Bux·te·hu·de** (bük'stə-hōō'də) *n.* Dietrich 1637–1707. Swedish-born organist and composer in Germany. His concerts attracted a wide audience, including Handel and Bach.

**buy** (bi) *v.* **bought** (bôt), **buy·ing, buys** —**tr.** **1.** To acquire in exchange for money or its equivalent; purchase. See Regional Note at **boughten**. **2.** To be capable of purchasing: "Certainly there are lots of things in life that money won't buy" (Ogden Nash). **3.** To acquire by sacrifice, exchange, or trade: *wanted to buy love with gifts*. **4.** To bribe: *tried to buy a judge*. **5. Informal To accept the truth or feasibility of: *The officer didn't buy my lame excuse for speeding*. —**intr.** To purchase something; act as a purchaser. **♦ n.** **1.** Something bought or for sale; a purchase. **2.** An act of purchasing: *a drug buy*. **3. Informal Something that is underpriced; a bargain. —**phrasal verbs:** **buy into** **1.** To acquire a stake or interest in: *bought into a risky real estate venture*. **2. Informal To believe in, especially wholeheartedly or uncritically: *couldn't buy into that brand of conservatism*. **buy off** To bribe (an official, for example) in order to secure improper cooperation or gain exemption from a regulation or legal consequence. **buy out** To purchase the entire stock, business rights, or interests of. **buy up** To purchase all that is available of. —**idioms:** **buy it Slang** To be killed. **buy time** To increase the time available for a specific purpose: "A moderate recovery thus buys time for Congress and the Administration to whittle the deficit" (G. David Wallace). **buy the farm Slang** To die, especially suddenly or violently. [Middle English, from Old English *būcan*.] —**buy·a·ble** *adj.*******

**buy·back** (bi'bäk') *n.* **1.** An act of buying something that one previously sold or owned. **2.** The repurchase of stock by the company that issued it, as to reduce holdings of a single investor or increase the value of shares by reducing their number.

**buy·er** (bi'ər) *n.* One that buys, especially a purchasing agent for a retail store.

**buyer's market** also **buyers' market** (bi'ərz) *n.* A market condition characterized by low prices and a supply of commodities exceeding demand.

**buy·out** also **buy-out** (bi'out') *n.* **1.** The purchase of the entire holdings or interests of an owner or investor. **2.** The purchase of a company or business: "If the workers do approve the buyout, their company will become the nation's largest employee-owned enterprise" (Harry Anderson).

**Bu·zäu** (ba-zou', böō-zü'ō) A city of southeast Romania northeast of Bucharest. It is an important transportation hub. Population: 149,032.

**buzz** (büz) *v.* **buzzed, buzz·ing, buzz·es** —**intr.** **1.** To make a low droning or vibrating sound like that of a bee. **2a.** To talk, often excitedly, in low tones. **b.** To be abuzz; hum: *The department was buzzing with rumors*. **3.** To move quickly and busily; bustle. **4.** To make a signal with a buzzer. —**tr.** **1.** To cause to buzz. **2.** To utter in a rapid, low voice: "What is he buzzing in my ears?" (Robert Browning). **3.** Informal To fly low over: *The plane buzzed the control tower*. **4.** To call or signal with a buzzer. **5.** To make a telephone call to. **6.** To give a buzzcut to. **♦ n.** **1.** A vibrating, humming, or droning sound. **2.** A low murmur: *a buzz of talk*. **3.** A telephone call: *Give me a buzz at nine*. **4.** Slang **a.** A state of pleasant intoxication, as from alcohol. **b.** A state of stimulation or overstimulation, as from caffeine. **5.** Slang **a.** Excited interest or attention: "The biggest buzz surrounds the simplest antioxidants: vitamins" (Carol Turkington). **b.** Rumor; gossip: *the latest buzz from Hollywood*. **6.** A buzzcut. —**phrasal verb:** **buzz off** Informal To leave quickly; go away: *I told them in no uncertain terms to buzz off*. [Middle English *bussen*, of imitative origin.]

**buzz·ard** (büz'ərd) *n.* **1.** Any of various North American vultures, such as the turkey vulture. **2.** Chiefly British A hawk of the genus *Buteo*, having broad wings and a broad tail. **3.** An avaricious or otherwise unpleasant person. [Middle English *busard*, hawk of the genus *Buteo*, from Old French, from Latin *buteō*.]

**Buzzards Bay** (büz'ərdz) An inlet of the Atlantic Ocean in southeast Massachusetts connected with Cape Cod Bay by the Cape Cod Canal.

**buzz bomb** *n.* See **robot bomb**.

**buzz·cut** or **buzz cut** (büz'küt') *n.* A closely cropped haircut. [From the use of electric clippers instead of scissors.]

**buzz·er** (büz'ər) *n.* An electric signaling device, such as a doorbell, that makes a buzzing sound.

**buzz phrase** *n.* A phrase used as a buzzword.

**buzz saw** *n.* See **circular saw**.

**buzz term** *n.* A buzzword.

**buzz·word** (büz'wörd') *n.* **1.** A word or phrase connected with a specialized field or group that usually sounds important or technical and is used primarily to impress laypersons: "Sensitivity" is the buzzword in the beauty industry this fall" (ADWEEK). **2.** A stylish or trendy word or phrase.

**bv** *abbr.* Bouvet Island (in Internet addresses)

**BVD** (bē've'dē') A trademark used for undershirts and underpants worn by men and boys. This trademark sometimes occurs in print with a final s: "He will be under constant scrutiny, right down to his BVD's" (Los Angeles Times).

**BVE** *abbr.* Black Vernacular English

**B vitamin** *n.* A member of the vitamin B complex group of vitamins.

**BVM** *abbr.* Blessed Virgin Mary

**bvt.** *abbr.* brevet

**BW** *abbr.* **1.** biological warfare **2.** also **b/w** black and white

**.bw** *abbr.* Botswana (in Internet addresses)

**bwa·na** (bwä'nä) *n.* Used as a form of respectful address in parts of Africa. [Swahili, from Arabic *abūnā*, our father: *abū*, bound form of *ab*, father; see *b* in Appendix II + -nā, our.]

**BWI** *abbr.* British West Indies

**BX** *abbr.* Base Exchange

**bx.** *abbr.* box

**by**¹ (bi) *prep.* **1.** Close to; next to: *the window by the door*. **2.** With the use or help of; through: *We came by the back road*. **3.** Up to and beyond; past: *We drove by the house*. **4.** In the period of; during: *sleeping by day*. **5.** Not later than: *by 5:30 P.M.* **6a.** In the amount of: *letters by the thousands*. **b.** To the extent of: *shorter by two inches*. **7a.** According to: *played by the rules*. **b.** With respect to: *siblings by blood*. **8.** In the name of: *swore by the Bible to tell the truth*. **9.** Through the agency or action of: *was killed by a bullet*. **10.** Used to indicate a succession of specified individuals, groups, or quantities: *One by one they left. They were persuaded little by little*. **11a.** Used in multiplication and division: *Multiply 4 by 6 to get 24*. **b.** Used with measurements: *a room 12 by 18 feet*. **c.** Toward. Used to express direction with points of the compass: *south by east*. **♦ adv.** **1.** On hand; nearby: *Stand by*. **2.** Aside; away: *We put it by for later*. **3.** Up to, alongside, and past: *The car raced by*. **4.** At or to one's home or current location: *Stop by later today*. **5.** Into the past: *as years go by*. —**idiom:** **by oneself** **1.** Without company; alone: *went by herself*. **2.** Without help: *wrote the book by myself*. [Middle English, from Old English *bi*, *be*. See *ambhi* in Appendix I.]

**by²** (bi) *n.* Variant of **bye**.

**b.y.** *abbr.* billion years

**by- or bye-** *pref.* **1.** By: *bygone*. **2.** Secondary, incidental: *byway*.

**.by** *abbr.* Belarus (in Internet addresses)

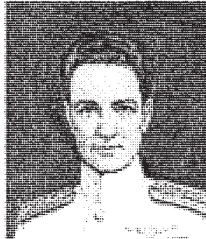
**by and by** *adv.* After a while; soon.

**by-and-by** (bi'an-bī') *n.* Some future time or occasion.

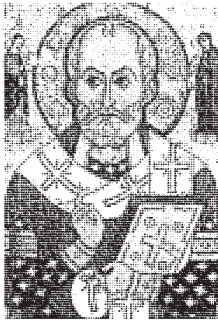
**by and large** *adv.* For the most part; generally: *By and large, the play was a success*. [Earlier, to (the wind) and off it, in one direction and another (said of the manner of handling a sailing vessel): *by¹, toward + LARGE, with the wind abaft the beam*.]

ā pat	oi boy
ā pay	ou out
ā care	ōō took
ā father	ōō boot
ē pet	ū cut
ē be	ūr urge
ī pit	th thin
ī pie	th this
īr pier	hw which
ō pot	zh vision
ō toe	ā about, item
ō paw	♦ regionalism

Stress marks: ¹ (primary);  
² (secondary), as in  
dictionary (dīk'shə-nēr'ē)



**Richard E. Byrd**  
detail from a 1931 portrait  
by Seymour Millais Stone  
(1877-?)



**Byzantine**  
13th-century Russian icon  
depicting St. Nicholas

ā pat	oi boy
ā pay	ou out
ār care	ōo took
ā father	ōo boot
ē pet	ū cut
ē be	ūr urge
ī pit	th thin
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ō pot	zh vision
ō toe	ā about, item
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Stress marks: ' (primary);  
' (secondary), as in  
dictionary (dīk'shə-nēr'ē)

**by-bid·der** (bī'bid'ər) *n.* A person who bids at an auction to raise prices for the owner. —**by-bid'ing** *n.*

**Byb·los** (bīb'las, -lōs') An ancient city of Phoenicia north-northeast of present-day Beirut, Lebanon. It was the chief city of Phoenicia in the second millennium B.C. and was noted for its papyrus.

**by-blow** (bī'blō') *n.* 1. An indirect or chance blow. 2. A child born out of wedlock.

**by-catch** (bī'käch', -käch') *n.* The portion of a fishing catch that is discarded as unwanted or commercially unusable.

**Byd·goszcz** (bid'gōsh, -gōshch) A city of north-central Poland northeast of Poznań. Chartered in 1346, it developed during the Middle Ages around the site of a prehistoric fort. Population: 382,004.

**bye¹** also **by** (bi) *n.* 1. A secondary matter; a side issue. 2. *Sports* The position of one who draws no opponent for a round in a tournament and so advances to the next round. —**idiom: by the bye** (or **by**) By the way; incidentally. [From BY¹.]

**bye²** (bi) *interj.* Used to express farewell. [Short for GOODBYE.]

**bye-** *pref.* Variant of **by-**.

**bye-bye** (bī'bi', bi-bī') *interj.* Used to express farewell. ♦ *adv. Informal* 1. Away. 2. To bed; to sleep: "[Live Senate television is] a great way to go *bye-bye*. Pretty soon you're asleep" (William Proxmire). [Reduplication of BYE².]

**by-e·lec·tion** also **bye-e·lec·tion** (bī'f-lēk'shən) *n.* A special election held between general elections to fill a vacancy, as for a parliamentary seat.

**Bye·lo·rus·sia** (byē'lō-rūsh'ə) See **Belarus**. —**Byel'o·rus'sian** *adj. & n.*

**by·gone** (bī'gōn', -gōn') *adj.* Gone by; past: *bygone days*. ♦ *n.* One, especially a grievance, that is past: *Let bygones be bygones*.

**by·law** (bī'lō') *n.* 1. A law or rule governing the internal affairs of an organization. 2. A secondary law. [Middle English *bilawe*, body of local regulations; akin to Danish *by-lag*, township ordinance: Old Norse *byr*, settlement; see **bheue-** in Appendix I + Old Norse *\*lagu*, law; see **leg-** in Appendix I.]

**Word History** A casual glance at the word *bylaw* might make one think that the element *by-* means "secondary, subsidiary," especially since *bylaw* can mean "a secondary law." It is possible that *by-*, as in *byway*, has influenced *bylaw* in the sense "secondary law"; however, *bylaw* existed long before the sense in question. The word is first recorded in 1283 with the meaning "a body of customs or regulations, as of a village, manor, religious organization, or sect." *By-* comes from Old Norse (as may the whole word *bylaw*) and is related to the element *-by* in the names of many places where Scandinavians settled when they invaded England during the early Middle Ages, such as Whitby. We get the sense of this *-by* if we compare the related Old Icelandic word variously spelled *byr*, *byr*, *byr*, meaning "a town or village" in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark and "a farm or landed estate" in Iceland. We thus see why *bylaw* would mean "a body of customs of a village or manor" and why we use the word to mean "a law or rule governing the internal affairs of an organization."

**by·line** also **by-line** (bī'lin') *n.* A line at the head of a newspaper or magazine article carrying the writer's name. ♦ *tr.v. -lined, -lin'ing, -lines* To publish (a newspaper or magazine article) under a byline. —**by/lin'er** *n.*

**by·name** (bī'nām') *n.* 1. A surname. 2. A nickname.

**BYOB** *abbr.* 1. bring your own booze 2. bring your own bottle

**by·pass** also **by-pass** (bī'pās') *n.* 1. A highway or section of a highway that passes around an obstructed or congested area. 2. A pipe or channel used to conduct gas or liquid around another pipe or a fixture. 3. A means of circumvention. 4. *Electricity* See **shunt** (sense 3). 5. *Medicine* a. An alternative passage created surgically to divert the flow of blood or other bodily fluid or circumvent an obstructed or diseased organ. b. A surgical procedure to create such a channel: *a coronary artery bypass*; *a gastric bypass*. ♦ *tr.v. -passed, -pass'ing, -pass'es* 1. To avoid (an obstacle) by using an alternative channel, passage, or route. 2. To be heedless of; ignore: *bypassed standard office procedures*. 3. To channel (piped liquid, for example) through a bypass.

**by·past** (bī'pāst') *adj.* Past; bygone.

**by·path** (bī'pāth', -pāth') *n.* An indirect or rarely used path; a byway.

**by·play** (bī'plā') *n.* Secondary action or speech taking place while the main action proceeds, as during a theatrical performance.

**by·prod·uct** or **by-prod·uct** (bī'prōd'əkt) *n.* 1. Something produced in the making of something else. 2. A secondary result; a side effect.

**Byrd** (bārd), **Richard Evelyn** 1888–1957. American naval officer and explorer. He became famous in 1926 for being the first, with his pilot Floyd Bennett, to fly over the North Pole (a feat that was refuted in the 1990s). Later he turned his attention to Antarctica, leading five expeditions between 1929 and 1956 and establishing a base for scientific discovery at Little America.

**Byrd, William** 1674–1744. American planter and colonial official whose diaries (written in shorthand) provide a rare and humorous account of daily life in pre-Revolutionary Virginia.

**byre** (bir) *n.* Chiefly *British* A barn for cows. [Middle English, from Old English *byre*. See **bheue-** in Appendix I.]

**Byrnes** (būrnz), **James Francis** 1879–1972. American politician who served as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (1941–1942). As secretary of state (1945–1947) he tried unsuccessfully to ease postwar tensions between the United States and the USSR.

**by·road** (bī'rōd') *n.* See **byway** (sense 1).

**By·ron** (bī'rən), **George Gordon**. Sixth Baron Byron of Rochdale, 1788–1824. British poet acclaimed as one of the leading figures of the romantic movement. The "Byronic hero"—lonely, rebellious, and brooding—first appeared in *Manfred* (1817). Among his other works are *Childe Harold* (1812–1818), *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816), and the epic satire *Don Juan* (1819–1824). Byron was notorious for his love affairs and unconventional lifestyle. He died while working to secure Greek independence from the Turks. —**By·ron'ic** (bī-rōn'ik) *adj.* —**By·ron'i·cal·ly** *adv.*

**byss·i** (bīs'i') *n.* A plural of **byssus**.

**byss·i·no·sis** (bīs'i-nō'sis) *n.* An occupational respiratory disease caused by the long-term inhalation of cotton, flax, or hemp dust and characterized by shortness of breath, coughing, and wheezing. Also called *brown lung disease*. [Late Latin *byssinum*, linen garment (from Latin *byssus*, linen cloth; see **BYSSUS**) + **-OSIS**.]

**byssus** (bīs'as) *n., pl. byssus·es* or **byss·i** (bīs'i') 1. *Zoology* A mass of strong, silky filaments by which certain bivalve mollusks, such as mussels, attach themselves to rocks and other fixed surfaces. 2. A fine-textured linen of ancient times, used by the Egyptians for wrapping mummies. [Middle English *bissus*, linen cloth, from Latin, from Greek *bussos*, linen; akin to Sanskrit *picu*, cotton (of Dravidian origin), or ultimately from Egyptian *w'd*, linen.] —**byss'al** (bīs'al) *adj.*

**by·stand·er** (bī'stān'dər) *n.* A person who is present at an event without participating in it.

**by·street** (bī'strēt') *n.* A side street.

**byte** (bit) *n.* A sequence of adjacent bits, usually eight, operated on as a unit by a computer. [Alteration and blend of **BIT** and **BITE**.]

**By·tom** (bē'tōm, bī-) A city of southwest Poland northwest of Katowice. It became part of Prussia in 1742 and was incorporated into Poland in 1945. Population: 231,848.

**by·way** (bī'wā') *n.* 1. A side road. Also called *byroad*. 2. A secondary or arcane field of study.

**by·word** also **by-word** (bī'wōrd') *n.* 1a. A proverbial expression; a proverb. b. An often-used word or phrase. 2. One that represents a type, class, or quality: "Polyester got its déclassé reputation in the 1970s after cheap, poorly made double-knit leisure suits became a byword for bad taste" (Fortune). 3. An object of notoriety or interest: *The eccentric poet was a byword in literary circles*. 4. An epithet. [Middle English *byworde*, from Old English *biword*, translation of Latin *proverbium*.]

**by·your·leave** (bī'yor-lev') *n.* A request for permission: *rudely helped herself to the dessert without a by-your-leave*.

**Byz·an·tine** (bīz'an-tēn', -tīn', bī-zān'tīn) *adj.* 1a. Of or relating to the ancient city of Byzantium. b. Of or relating to the Byzantine Empire. 2. Of or belonging to the style of architecture developed from the fifth century A.D. in the Byzantine Empire, characterized especially by a central dome resting on a cube formed by four round arches and their pendentives and by the extensive use of surface decoration, especially veined marble panels, low relief carving, and colored glass mosaics. 3. Of the painting and decorative style developed in the Byzantine Empire, characterized by formality of design, frontal stylized presentation of figures, rich use of color, especially gold, and generally religious subject matter. 4a. Of the Eastern Orthodox Church or the rites performed in it. b. Of a Uniat church that maintains the worship of the Eastern Orthodox Church or the rites performed in it. 5. often **byzantine** a. Of, relating to, or characterized by intrigue; scheming or devious: "a fine hand for Byzantine deals and cozy arrangements" (New York). b. Highly complicated; intricate and involved: *a bill to simplify the byzantine tax structure*. ♦ *n.* A native or inhabitant of Byzantium or the Byzantine Empire.

**Byzantine Empire** also **Eastern Empire** The eastern part of the later Roman Empire, dating from A.D. 330 when Constantine I rebuilt Byzantium and made it his capital. Its extent varied greatly over the centuries, but its core remained the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor. The empire collapsed when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

**By·zan·ti·um** (bī-zān'shē-əm, -tē-əm) 1. The Byzantine Empire. 2. An ancient city of Thrace on the site of present-day Istanbul, Turkey. It was founded by the Greeks in the seventh century B.C. and taken by the Romans in A.D. 196. Constantine I ordered the rebuilding of the city in 330 and renamed it Constantinople.

**.bz** *abbr.* Belize (in Internet addresses)



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