



# RANDOM HOUSE WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY

Second Edition



RANDOM HOUSE  
NEW YORK



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WEBSTER'S

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**Princeton** (prin'səntən) *n.* a borough in central New Jersey, settled 1777. 12,038.

**principal** (prin'səpal) *adj.* 1. first or highest in importance, value, etc. chief; foremost. 2. of, or constituting, principal or capital. a principal shareholder. 3. Geom. (of an axis of a conic) passing through the foci. — *n.* 4. a chief or head. 5. the chief director of a school or, esp. in England, a college. 6. a person who takes a leading part in any activity, as a play actor or a lover. 7. the first player of a division of instruments in an orchestra (excepting the leader). 8. something of principal or chief importance. 9. *Law.* a. a person who authorizes another, as an agent, to represent him or her. b. a person who is responsible for a crime, either as an actual perpetrator or as an abettor present at its commission. Cf. accessory (def. 3). 10. a person primarily liable for an obligation, in contrast with an endorser, or the like. 11. the main body of an estate, or the like, as distinguished from income. 12. Finance. a capital sum, as distinguished from interest or profit. 13. Music. a. an organ stop. b. the subject of a fugue. 14. (in a framed structure) a member, as a truss, upon which adjacent or similar members depend for support or reinforcement. 15. each of the contestants in a duel, as distinguished from the seconds. [1350-1300; ME < L *principālis* first, chief, equiv. to *princeps* (see *PRINCE*) + *-alis* -AL'] — **prin-cip-ally** *adv.* 1. prime, paramount, leading, main, cardinal, prominent. See **CAPITAL**. 4. leader. 5. headmaster, head, master. — **Ant.** 1. secondary, ancillary.

**Usage:** The noun **PRINCIPLE** and the noun and adjective **PRINCIPAL** are often confused. Although pronounced alike, the words are not interchangeable in writing. A **PRINCIPLE** is broadly "a rule of action or conduct" (His overriding principle is greed) or "a fundamental doctrine or law" (Their principles do not permit the use of alcoholic beverages). The adjective **PRINCIPAL** has the general sense "chief, first, foremost": My principal objection is the cost of the project. The noun **PRINCIPAL** has among other meanings "the head or director of a school" (The faculty supported the principal in her negotiations with the board) and "a capital sum, as distinguished from interest or profit" (The monthly payments go mostly for interest leaving the principal practically untouched).

**prin/cipal ar/gument**, *Math.* the radian measure of an argument (def. 8c).

**prin/cipal ax/is**, 1. Optics. a line passing through the center of the surface of a lens or spherical mirror and through the centers of curvature of all segments of the lens or mirror. 2. Physics. one of three mutually perpendicular axes of a body about which the moment of inertia is a maximum or minimum. [1875-80]

**prin/cipal clause**, the main clause.

**prin/cipal dia/gonal**, *Math.* See under **diagonal** (def. 9).

**prin/cipal fo/cus**, *Optics.* See **focal point** (def. 1).

**prin/cipal ide/al**, *Math.* the smallest ideal containing a given element in a ring; an ideal in a ring with a multiplicative identity, obtained by multiplying each element of the ring by one specified element. [1935-40]

**prin/cipal ide/al domain**, *Math.* a commutative integral domain with multiplicative identity in which every ideal is principal. Also called **prin/cipal ide/al ring**. [1940-65]

**prin/cipal-ity** (prin'səpal'itē), *n.*, *pl.* -ties. 1. a quality that falls within a relatively small state or class or position or authority such as an empire, sovereignty, supreme power of a prince or chief ruler; rank or a subordinate state. 2. the rule of a prince of a state. 3. the rule of a prince. 4. the Princeship, Brit. (def. 1). 5. the Princeship, Brit. (def. 1). 6. supramundane powers often in connection with God. Ephes. 6:12. 6. Obs. preeminence. [1300-1400; ME < OF < LL *principālis* first place, primary, authority or territory of a prince]. See **PRINCIPAL**.

**prin/cipally** (prin'səpal'ē), *adv.* chiefly; primarily. See **PRINCIPAL**, -LY.

**prin/cipal parts**, *Gram.* a set of inflected forms of a word from which all the other inflected forms can be formed, as *sing. sang, sung; smoke, smoked*. [1865-70]

**prin/cipal plane**, *Optics.* a plane that is perpendicular to the axis of a lens, mirror, or other optical system and which rays diverging from a focal point are directed to converge to a focal point.

**prin/cipal point**, *Optics.* the point where a principal ray intersects the axis. [1695-1705]

**prin/cipal quan-tum num-ber**, *Physics.* the non-negative integer quantum number that defines the stationary orbit in the Bohr model of the atom. Also called **prin/cipal quantum number**. [1920-25]

**prin/cipal raft-er**, a diagonal member of a roof truss forming part of a truss and supporting the rafters, which the common rafters rest. See **diag-onal** (def. 1).

**prin/cipal se/ries**, *Math.* See **composition series**.

**prin/cipal sum**, *Insurance.* See **capital sum**.

**prin/cipal val-ue**, *Math.* a value selected at a point in the domain of a multiple-valued function, chosen so that the function has a single value at the point. [1920-30; ME < L *principālis*, equiv. to *princeps* (see *PRINCE*) + *-alis* -AL']

**prin/cipal** (prin'səpal), *n.* supreme power or authority. [1350-1300; ME < L *principālis*, equiv. to *princeps* (see *PRINCE*) + *-alis* -AL']

**prin/cip-les** (prin'səpalz), *n.* an archipelago in the Gulf of Guinea, off the W coast of Africa; chief component of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Total and Prince. 4305; 54 sq. mi. (140 sq. mi.).

**prin/ci-pe**, Formerly, **Prince's Island**.

**prin-cip-ium** (prin'sip'ē-əm), *n.*, *pl.* -cip-ia (-sīp'ē-ə) a principle. [1675-85; < L *principium* lit., that which is first, equiv. to *princeps* (see *PRINCE*) + *-ium* -IUM]

**prin-ciple** (prin'səpal), *n.* 1. an accepted or professed rule of action or conduct; a person of good moral truth from which others are derived; a general law or modern physics. 2. a fundamental, primary, or general law or doctrine of distinctive ruling opinion; the principles of the Stoics. 3. a fundamental doctrine or tenet; a principle. 4. management; a personal or specific basis of conduct or tenet run on modern principles; a kindergarten requirements and obligations of right conduct; a person in action; a working principle for general use. 5. a rule or law exemplified in natural phenomena, the constitution, or the like; the principle of capillary attraction. 6. the method of formation, operation, or procedure exhibited in a given case; a community organization on the something essential quality. 7. a determining characteristic of tuating agency or force; growth is the principle of life. 8. an actualizing agency in the mind or character, as an instinct, faculty, or natural tendency; the principles of stance, esp. one giving to it some distinctive quality or effect. 9. Obs. beginning or commencement. 10. In *cept* a plan in principle. 11. On principle, a. according principle: He refused on principle to agree to the terms of the treaty. b. according to a fixed rule, method, or practice: He drank hot milk every night on principle. [1350-1400; ME, alter. of ME *pryncipe* or L *principium*, on the analogy of *MANICLE*. See **PRINCIPUM**]

**Syn.** 1, 2, 3. **PRINCIPLE, CANON, RULE** imply something established as a standard or test, for measuring, regulating, or guiding conduct or practice. A **PRINCIPLE** is a general and fundamental truth that may be used in deciding conduct or choice; to *adhere to principle*. **CANON**, originally referring to an edict of the Church (a meaning that it still retains), is used of any principle, law, or critical standard that is officially approved, particularly in aesthetics and scholarship; *canons of literary criticism*. A **RULE**, usually something adopted or enacted, is often the theorem, axiom, postulate, proposition. 5. **integrity, probity, rectitude, honor**.

**Usage:** See **PRINCIPAL**.

**prin-cip-ied** (prin'sīp'ēd), *adj.* imbued with or having moral principles (often used in combination); high-principled. [1635-45; *PRINCIPLE* + *-ed*]

**prin/ciple of complementarity**, *Physics.* See **complementarity principle**. [COMPLEMENTARY + *-ity*]

**prin/ciple of correspond-ence**, *Physics.* See **correspondence principle**.

**prin/ciple of dual-ity**, *Math.* See **duality principle**.

**prin/ciple of equiv-alence**, *Physics.* See **equivalence principle**.

**prin/ciple of mathemat-ical induc-tion**, *Math.* a law in set theory which states that if a set is a subset of the set of all positive integers and contains 1, and if for each number *n* in the given set the succeeding natural number *n* is in the set, then the given set is identical to the set of all positive integers. Cf. **induction** (def. 5).

**prin/ciple of superposi-tion**, *Physics.* any of several physical laws that the resultant of similar vector quantities at a point is a function of the sum of the individual quantities, esp. the law that the displacement at a point in a medium undergoing simple harmonic motion is equal to the sum of the displacements of each individual wave. Also called **superposition principle**.

**prin/ciple of vir-tual work**, *Mech.* the principle that the total work done by all forces on a system in static equilibrium is zero for a set of infinitesimally small displacements.

**prin-cox** (prin'koks, prin'kɔks), *n.* Archaic. a self-confident young fellow; coxcomb. Also **prin-cock** (prin'kok, prin'kɔks). [1530-40; orig. uncertain.]

**print** (print), *v.t.* 1. to deck or dress for show. — *v.i.* 2. to deck oneself out. 3. to fuss over one's dress. 4. 2. to deck one's mirror. [1570-80; appar. akin to *FRANK*]

**print** (print), *v.t.* 1. to produce (a text, picture, etc.) by applying inked types, plates, blocks, or the like, to paper or other material either by direct pressure or indirectly through an image onto an intermediate roller. 2. to reproduce (a design or pattern) by engraving upon, as by block. 3. to form a design or block; to print calico, or block. 4. to cause (a manuscript, text, etc.) to be published in stamping with ink. 5. to cause (a letter) to be commonly used in print. 6. to write in letters like those commonly used in print. 7. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 8. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 9. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 10. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 11. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 12. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 13. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 14. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 15. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 16. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 17. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 18. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 19. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 20. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 21. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 22. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 23. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 24. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form. 25. to produce (data) in legible alphanumeric or graphic form.

from an engraved or otherwise prepared block, plate, etc. 26. an indentation, mark, etc., made by the pressure of one body or thing on another. 27. something with which an impression is made; a stamp or die. 28. a fingerprint. 29. Textiles. a. a design or pattern on cloth made by dyeing, weaving, or printing with engraved rollers, blocks of wood, stencils, etc. b. a cloth so treated. c. an article of apparel made of this cloth. 30. something that has been subjected to impression, as a pat of butter. 31. Photog. a picture, esp. a positive made from a negative. 32. any reproduced image, as a blueprint. 33. Motion Pictures, Television. a positive copy of a completed film or filmed program ready for showing; release print. 34. In print, a. in printed form; published. b. (of a book or the like) still available for purchase from the publisher. 35. out of print, (of a book or the like) no longer available for purchase from the publisher. — *adj.* 36. of, for, or comprising newspapers and magazines; print media. [1250-1300; (n.) ME *print(e)*, *print(e)*, *print(e)* < OF *print(e)* impression, print, n. use of fem. *pt. of prendre* to *PRESS* < L *premere*; (v.) ME *preten*, deriv. of the *n.*]

**print**, printing.

**print-able** (print'əbel), *adj.* 1. capable of being printed. 2. suitable for publication; fit to print. [1830-40; *PRINT* + *-ABLE*] — **print-a-ble/ty**, **print-a-ble-ness**, *n.*

**print-a-nier** (Fr. *pran ta nyer*), *adj.* (of food) prepared or garnished with mixed fresh vegetables. Also, **print-a-nière** (Fr. *pran ta nyer*). [1860-65; < F. lit. of spring, MF, equiv. to OF *printan(s)* spring (< L *primum tempus* lit., first season; see **PRIME, TEMPORAL**) + *-ier* -IER']

**print-back** (print'bak'), *n.* Photog. an enlarged print from a microfilm copy. [*n.* use of *v.* phrase *print back*]

**print/ed cir-cuit**, *Electronics.* a circuit in which the interconnecting conductors and some of the circuit components have been printed, etched, etc., onto a sheet or board of dielectric material (**PC board, print/ed-cir-cuit board**). [1945-50]

**print/ed mat/ter**, 1. any of various kinds of printed material that qualifies for a special postal rate. 2. a classification of international mail consisting of such items, including catalogs and circulars. [1875-80]

**printer** (prin'ter), *n.* 1. a person or thing that prints, esp. a person whose occupation is printing. 2. Computers. an output device that produces a paper copy of alphanumeric or graphic data. 3. an instrument that automatically records telegraphic messages by means of a printing mechanism actuated by incoming signals. 4. Motion Pictures. a photographic machine through which run, together with unexposed film, a master print can be duplicated. [1495-1505; *PRINT* + *-ER*'] — **print'er-like**, *adj.*

**print'er's dev'il**, devil (def. 5). [1785-65]

**print'er's er/ror**, an error introduced into typeset copy by the compositor, so that the printer cannot charge for correcting it. Abbv.: P.E., p.e. Cf. **author's alteration**.

**print'er's mark**, a stamp or device, usually found on the copyright page, that identifies a book as the work of a particular printer.

**print'er's ream**. See under **ream** (def. 1).

**print-er-y** (print'eri), *n.*, *pl.* -eries. 1. (formerly) an establishment for typographic printing. 2. an establishment where printing, as of books or newspapers, etc., is done. [1630-40; *PRINT* + *-ERY*]

**print-head** (print'hed'), *n.* Computers. the printing element, as a daisy wheel or thimble, on a computer printer. Also, **print' head**. [*PRINT* + *HEAD*]

**print-ing** (print'ing), *n.* 1. the art, process, or business of producing books, newspapers, etc., by impression from movable types, plates, etc. 2. the act of a person or firm. 3. printed material. 4. the total number of copies of a book or other publication printed at one time: The book had a first printing of 10,000. 6. writing in which the letters resemble printed ones. [1350-1400; ME; see *PRINT*, -ING']

**print-ing frame**, Photog. a shallow, boxlike device with a glass plate on one side and an opaque, removable back, for holding a negative firmly against printing paper in contact printing. [1870-75]

**print-ing ink**, a type of ink that flows smoothly, dries quickly, and is of a consistency able to hold enough color to make printed matter legible; used to transfer the image on a press plate to the printing surface. [1870-80]

**print-ing of/fice**, a shop or factory in which printing is done. [1725-35]

**print-ing pa-per**, Photog. sensitized paper for printing positives. [1780-90]

**print-ing press**, a machine, as a cylinder press or rotary press, for printing on paper or the like from type, plates, etc. [1580-90]

**print/jour-nalism**, journalism as practiced in newspapers and magazines. [1970-75] — **print/jour-nalist**

**print-less** (print'lis), *adj.* making, retaining, or showing no print or impression. [1600-10; *PRINT* + *-LESS*]

**print-mak-er** (print'mā'kar), *n.* a person who makes prints, esp. an artist working in one of the graphic mediums. [1925-30; *PRINT* + *MAKER*]

**print-mak-ing** (print'mā'king), *n.* the art or technique of making prints, esp. as practiced in engraving, etching, drypoint, woodcut or serigraphy. [1925-30; *PRINT* + *MAKING*]

**CONCISE PRONUNCIATION KEY:** *kt.* *carp*, *dare*, *purr*, *not equal*, *if*, *ice*, *ox*, *over*, *order*, *oil*, *book*, *boat*, *out*, *up*, *urge*, *child*, *sing*, *show*, *thin*, *that*, *th* as in *treasure*, *a* as in *alone*, *e* as in *spire*, *i* as in *machine*, *o* as in *goat*, *u* as in *circus*, *y* as in *fire* (*fī*), *hour* (*haur*), and *i* as in *and* *o* can serve as syllabic consonants, as in *cradle* (*krād*), and *button* (*but*). See the full key inside the front cover.