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Collegiate[®]
Dictionary

—  —
Eleventh Edition

The Words You Need Today

AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA[®] COMPANY

Merriam- Webster's Collegiate[®] Dictionary

ELEVENTH
EDITION



Merriam-Webster, Incorporated
Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A.



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b: elevated
fr. fraister to
route: STRAY-
e: astride a
stretched wide
n each side of
lying ~ a riv-
: state of being
strings, prp.
ht ~ more at
tissues: STYP-
e of an astrin-
~ comments);
OLOGY ~ as-
cell of the
ia-ta \mə-tə\
cytes
t dome in the
vigator makes
AF astrelabe,
os, fr. astr- +
ct instrument
lies before the
ces astrology
astrologia, fr.
2: the divts
on human
ts ~ as-tro-
-ō\lē\ adv
ironomy that
s) of celestial
(1929)
so: a trainee
constr (1928)
s for travel in
-tik\ or as-
-ō\lē\ adv
skilled in as-
na
ē \mīk\ adj
s: 2: enor-
as-tro-nom-
onomy equal
at 93 million
fr. AF, fr. L
dy of objects
physical and
1858): pho-
tro-pho-to-
-gra-ri\ n
(1890)
physical prop-
nomena ~
\zī-k(ə)\ē\
icial turf
565): having
er) <~ re-
te-ly adv ~
and Andro-
torn ~> 2
SWARMING
l as loy\}
h, as well as
ylos inviola-
place of ref-
: SANCTU-
: the protec-
by a nation
nminity 4
, the insane
ik\} adj [Gk
med, fr. a- +
s asymmet-
r groups ~

asym-met-ri-cal-ly \tri-k(ə)\ē\ adv — asym-me-try \i-ə'si-mə-trē\ n
asymptom-tom-at-ic \ā-sim(p)-tə-'ma-tik\ adj (1856): presenting no
symptoms of disease — **asymptom-tom-at-ic-ally** \i-ti-k(ə)\ē\ adv
as-ymp-tote \ā-səm(p)-tōt\ n [prob. fr. NL *asymptotus*, fr. Gk
asymptōtos not meeting, fr. *a-* + *syniptein* to meet — more at
SYMPTOM] (1656): a straight line associated with a curve such that as a
point moves along an infinite branch of the curve the distance from the
point to the line approaches zero and the slope of the curve at the point
approaches the slope of the line — **as-ymp-tot-ic-ally** \ā-səm(p)-tā-tik\
adj — **as-ymp-tot-ic-ally** \i-ti-k(ə)\ē\ adv
asyn-aps-isis \ā-sə-'nəp-səs\ n, pl **-ap-ses** \sēz\ [NL *a-* + *synapsis*
(1930): failure of pairing of homologous chromosomes in meiosis
asyn-chron-ous \jā-'sɪp-krə-'nos, -sɪn-\ adj (1748) 1: not synchro-
nous 2: of, used in, or being digital communication (as between com-
puters) in which there is no timing requirement for transmission and in
which the start of each character is individually signaled by the trans-
mitting device — **asyn-chron-ous-ly** adv
asyn-chron-y \y-kra-nē\ or **asyn-chron-ism** \y-krə-ni-zəm\ n (1875):
the quality or state of being asynchronous: absence or lack of concu-
rence in time
as-yn-det-ic \ā-sən-'de-tik\ adj (ca. 1864): marked by asyndeton —
as-yn-det-ic-ally \i-ti-k(ə)\ē\ adv
asyn-de-ton \ā-'sɪn-də-'tān, (jā-'sɪn-\ n, pl **-tons** or **-ta** \-də-tə\ [LL, fr.
Gk, fr. neut. of *asyndetos* unconnected, fr. *a-* + *syndetos* bound togeth-
er, fr. *syndein* to bind together, fr. *syn-* + *dein* to bind — more at
DIADEMA] (1555): omission of the conjunctions that ordinarily join co-
ordinate words or clauses (as in "I came, I saw, I conquered")
at \ət, 'at\ prep [ME, fr. OE *æt*: akin to OHG *az* at, L *ad*] (bef. 12c) 1 —
used as a function word to indicate presence or occurrence in, on, or
near (staying ~ a hotel) (<~ a party) (sick ~ heart) 2 — used as a
function word to indicate the goal of an indicated or implied action or
motion (aim ~ the target) (creditors are ~ him again) 3 — used as a
function word to indicate that with which one is occupied or em-
ployed (<~ work) (<~ the controls) (good ~ chess) 4 — used as a
function word to indicate situation in an active or passive state or con-
dition (<~ liberty) (<~ rest) 5 — used as a function word to indicate
the means, cause, or manner (sold ~ auction) (laughed ~ my joke)
(acted ~ your own discretion) 6 a — used as a function word to in-
dicate the rate, degree, or position in a scale or series (the temperature
~ 90) (<~ first) b — used as a function word to indicate age or pos-
ition in time (will retire ~ 65)
at also att \ət\ n, pl **at** also att [Lao] (1955) — see *kīp* at MONEY table
at abbr 1 airtight 2 atmosphere 3 atomic
At symbol astatine
AT abbr 1 air temperature 2 ampere-turn 3 automatic transmission
at — see AD-
at-a-brine \a-tə-brən\ n [fr. *Atabrine*, a trademark] (1933): QUINA-
CRINE
atac-tic \ā-'tāk-tik\ adj [ISV *a-* + *-tactic*] (1957): of, relating to, or
being a polymer exhibiting no stereochemical regularity of structure
(<~ polypropylene) — compare ISOTACTIC
At-a-lan-ta \a-tə-'lan-tə\ n [L, fr. Gk *Atalante*] (14c): a fleet-footed
huntress in Greek mythology who challenges her suitors to a race and
is defeated by Hippomenes when she stops to pick up three golden ap-
ples he has dropped
at all adv (14c): in any way or respect: to the least extent or degree
: under any circumstances (doesn't smoke at all)
at-a-man \a-tə-'mən\ n [RUSS] (1835): HETMAN
at-a-mas-co lily \a-tə-'mas-(j)kō-\ n [Virginia Algonquian *attamusco*]
(1743): any of a genus (*Zephyranthes*) of American bulbous herbs of
the amaryllis family with pink, white, or yellowish flowers; esp.: one
(*Z. atamasco*) of the southeastern U.S., with white flowers usu. tinged
with purple
at-a-vism \a-tə-'vɪ-zəm\ n [F *atavisme*, fr. L *atavus* ancestor, fr. *at-*
(prob. akin to *ate* daddy) + *avus* grandfather — more at UNSCLE] (1835)
1 a: recurrence in an organism of a trait or character typical of an an-
cestral form and usu. due to genetic recombination b: recurrence of
or reversion to a past style, manner, outlook, approach, or activity (ar-
chitectural ~) 2: one that manifests atavism: THROWBACK — **at-a-
vis-tic** \a-tə-'vɪs-tik\ adj — **at-a-vis-tic-ly** \i-ti-k(ə)\ē\ adv
atax-ia \ə-'tāk-sē-ə, -sɪ-\ n [Gk, fr. *a-* + *tassinai* to put in order] (1670):
an inability to coordinate voluntary muscular movements that is
symptomatic of some central nervous system disorders and injuries
and not due to muscle weakness — called also *incoordination* — **atax-
ic** \-sɪk\ adj
atax-ia-tel-an-gi-o-cl-e-ta-sia \i-tē-'lan-jē-'ek-'tā-zh(ē)-jə-, -tē-, -tə-\ n
(1961): an inherited systemic disorder marked esp. by progressive
pathological changes in the nervous system resulting in loss of motor
coordination and by increased susceptibility to cancer esp. of lymphoid
tissue
at bat n (1941): an official turn at batting charged to a baseball player
except when the player walks, sacrifices, is hit by a pitched ball, or is
interfered with by the catcher (three hits in five at bats)
ATC abbr air traffic control
ate past of EAT
Ate \ā-'tē, 'ā-(j)ē, 'ā-'tā\ n [Gk *Atē*] (1583): a Greek goddess personify-
ing foohardly and ruinous impulse
-ate n suffix [ME *-at*, fr. AF, fr. L *-atus*, *-atum*, masc. & neut. of *-atus*,
pp. ending] 1: one acted upon (in a specified way) (distillate) 2 [NL
-atum, fr. L]: chemical compound or complex anion derived from a
(specified) compound or element (phenolate); esp: salt or ester of an
acid with a name ending in *-ic* and not beginning with *hydro-* (borate)
2. **ate** n suffix [ME *-at*, fr. AF, fr. L *-atus*, fr. *ae-* stem vowel of 1st conj., +
-tus, suffix of verbal nouns] 1: office: function: rank: group of per-
sons holding a (specified) office or rank or having a (specified) func-
tion (vicariate) 2: state: dominion: jurisdiction (emirate) (khan-
ate)
-ate adj suffix [ME *-at*, fr. L *-atus*, fr. pp. ending of 1st conj., verbs, fr. *-a-*,
stem vowel of 1st conj. + *-tus*, pp. suffix — more at -ED]: marked by
having (craniate)
-ate vb suffix [ME *-aten*, fr. L *-atus*, pp. ending]: act on (in a specified way) (insulate): cause to be modified or affected by (camphorate):
cause to become (activate): furnish with (capacitate)

-ated adj suffix: ³-ATE (plicated)
at-el-ec-ta-sis \a-tə-'lek-tə-səs\ n, pl **-ta-ses** \sēz\ [NL, fr. Gk *atelēs*
incomplete, defective (fr. *a-* + *telos* end) + *ektasis* extension, fr. *ek-*
teinein to stretch out, fr. *ex-* + *teinein* to stretch — more at TELOS,
THIN] (1859): collapse of the expanded lung; also: defective expansion
of the pulmonary alveoli at birth
ate-lier \a-'tē-'lyā\ n [F, fr. MF *atelier* woodpile, fr. *astele* splinter, fr.
L *astella*, dim. of L *astula*] (1699) 1: an artist's or designer's studio or
workroom 2: WORKSHOP
ate-moya \ā-'tə-'mōi-ə, -jə-\ n [ates sweetsop (fr. Tag) + *cherimoya*]
(1914): a white-pulped tropical fruit of a tree that is a hybrid of the
sweetsop and the cherimoya
a tem-po \ā-'tēm-(j)pō\ adv or adj [It] (1834): in time — used as a di-
rection in music to return to the original tempo
atem-po-ral \jā-'tēm-p(ə)-rəl\ adj (1870): independent of or unaffected
by time: TIMELESS
aten-o-lol \ə-'tē-nə-'lōl, -lōl\ n [perh. fr. antihypertensive + *-olol* (as in
propranolol)] (1972): a beta blocker C₁₄H₂₂N₂O₃ used in the treatment
of hypertension
ATF abbr [Bureau of] Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
Ath-a-bas-can \a-'thə-'bas-kən\ or **Ath-a-bas-kan** \-bas-\ also **Ath-a-
pas-can** \-pas-\ or **Ath-a-pas-can** \-pas-\ n [Athabasca, a Cree band,
fr. Cree dial. *ābapaskaw*, name for the area east of Lake Athabasca,
lit., (where) there are reeds one after another] (1846) 1: a family of
American Indian languages spoken primarily in western Canada, Alas-
ka, and the U.S. Southwest 2: a member of a people speaking an
Athabaskan language
Ath-a-na-sian \a-'thə-'nā-zhən, -shən\ adj (1586): of or relating to
Athanasius or his advocacy of the homoousian doctrine against Arian-
ism
Athanasian Creed n (1586): a Christian creed originating in Europe
about A.D. 400 and relating esp. to the Trinity and Incarnation
athe-ism \ā-'thē-'i-zəm\ n [MF *athéisme*, fr. *athée* atheist, fr. Gk *atheos*
godless, fr. *a-* + *theos* god] (1546) 1 **archaic**: UNGODLINESS, WICKED-
NESS 2 a: a disbelief in the existence of deity b: the doctrine that
there is no deity
athe-ist \ā-'thē-'ist\ n (1551): one who believes that there is no deity —
athe-ist-ic \ā-'thē-'is-tik\ or **athe-ist-ic-ally** \ā-'thē-'is-tik-\ adj —
athe-ist-ic-ally \i-ti-k(ə)\ē\ adv
ath-e-ling \a-'thə-'lɪŋ, -thə-\ n [ME, fr. OE *ætheling*, fr. *æthelu* nobility,
akin to OHG *adal* nobility] (bef. 12c): an Anglo-Saxon prince or noble-
man; esp: the heir apparent or a prince of the royal family
Athe-na \ə-'thē-nə\ or **Athe-ne** \-nē\ n [L *Athena*, fr. Gk *Athēnē*] (14c):
the Greek goddess of wisdom — compare MINERVA
ath-e-nae-um or **ath-e-ne-um** \a-'thə-'nē-əm\ n [L *Athenaeum*, a
school in ancient Rome for the study of arts, fr. Gk *Athēnaion*, a temple
of Athena, fr. *Athēnē*] (1799) 1: a building or room in which books,
periodicals, and newspapers are kept for use 2: a literary or scientific
association
athe-o-ret-ic-ally \ā-'thē-'rē-tik-\ adj (1969): not based on
or concerned with theory
ath-ero- comb form [Gk *athērā*]: atheroma (atherogenic)
ath-ero-gen-e-sis \a-'thə-rō-'jē-nə-səs\ n (1953): the formation of
atheroma
ath-ero-gen-ic \-jē-nik\ adj (1954): relating to or causing atherogene-
sis (an ~ diet)
ath-er-o-ma \a-'thə-'rō-mə\ n, pl **-mas** also **-ma-ta** \-mə-tə\ [NL
atheroma, *atheroma*, fr. L, a tumor containing matter resembling gruel,
fr. Gk *athērōma*, fr. *athērā* gruel] (1875) 1: fatty degeneration of
the inner coat of the arteries 2: an abnormal fatty deposit in an
artery — **ath-er-o-ma-tous** \-rō-mə-təs\ adj
ath-ero-scle-ro-sis \a-'thə-rō-'sklē-'rō-səs\ n [NL] (1910): an arterio-
sclerosis characterized by atheromatous deposits in and fibrosis of the
inner layer of the arteries — **ath-ero-scle-ro-tic** \-sklē-'rā-tik\ adj
athirst \ə-'θɪrst\ adj [ME, fr. OE *afstyrst*, pp. of *afstyrstan* to suffer
from thirst, fr. *of*, from + *styrstan* to thirst — more at OF] (bef. 12c)
1 **archaic**: THIRSTY 2: having a strong eager desire (that for ever
feel ~ for glory — John Keats) **syn** see EAGER
ath-lete \ə-'θlēt, -'a-'thə-'lēt\ n [ME, fr. L *athleta*, fr. Gk *athlētēs*, fr.
athlein to contend for a prize, fr. *athlon* prize, contest] (15c): a person
who is trained or skilled in exercises, sports, or games requiring phys-
ical strength, agility, or stamina
athlete's foot n (1928): ringworm of the feet
ath-let-ic \ə-'θlēt-ik, -'a-'thə-'lēt-ik\ adj (1636) 1: of or relating to ath-
letes or athletics 2: characteristic of an athlete; esp: VIGOROUS, AC-
TIVE 3: MESOMORPHIC 4: used by athletes — **ath-let-ic-ally**
\i-ti-k(ə)\ē\ adv — **ath-let-ic-ism** \-lēt-ik-si-zəm\ n
ath-let-ics \ə-'θlēt-iks, -'a-'thə-'lēt-ik\ n pl but sing or pl in constr (1749)
1: exercises, sports, or games engaged in by athletes 2: the practice
or principles of athletic activities
athletic supporter n (1927): a supporter for the genitals worn by men
participating in sports or strenuous activities
at-home \ət-'hōm, 'at-'hōm\ adj (1951) 1: intended or suitable for
one's home (an ~ dress) 2: being or occurring at one's home (<~
entertainment)
at home n (1745): a reception given at one's home
-athon n comb form [*marathon*]: event or activity lasting a long time or
involving a great deal of something (ulkaathon)
athwart \ə-'θwɔrt, naut often -'θɔrt\ prep (15c) 1: ACROSS 2: in
opposition to (a procedure directly ~ the New England prejudices
— R. G. Cole)
athwart adv (ca. 1500) 1: across esp. in an oblique direction 2: in
opposition to the right or expected course (and quite ~ goes all decur-
rum — Shak.)
athwart-ship \-shɪp\ adj (1775): being across the ship from side to side
(<~ and longitudinal framing)
athwart-ships \-shɪps\ adv (1718): across the ship from side to side

\ə\ about \ə\ kitten, F table \ər\ further \ə\ ash \ə\ ace \ə\ mop, mar
\ə\ out \ə\ chin \ə\ bet \ē\ easy \ə\ go \i\ hit \i\ ice \j\ job
\ə\ sing \ə\ go \ə\ law \ə\ boy \ə\ thin \ə\ the \ə\ loot \ə\ foot
\ə\ yet \ə\ vision, beige \k, ʰ, æ, u, \ see Guide to Pronunciation