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to them, and often is less stilted than alternatives such as *relatively*, *moderately*, and *quite*.

**pretzel** (pret'səl), *n.* a usu. crisp, dry biscuit, typically in the form of a knot or stick, salted on the outside. [1815-25, Amer.; < G Pretzel, var. of Bretzel; OHG brizzila < ML braccellus BRACELET]

**Preus-sen** (proi'sən), *n.* German name of PRUSSIA.

**prev.** 1. previously. 2. previously.

**prevail** (pri vāl'), *v.i.* 1. to be widespread or current; exist generally. 2. to appear or occur as the most important or frequent feature or element; predominate. 3. to be or prove superior in strength, power, or influence (usu. fol. by *over*): *to prevail over one's enemies*. 4. to succeed; become dominant; win out. 5. to use persuasion or inducement successfully (usu. fol. by *on* or *upon*): *Can you prevail on him to go?* [1350-1400; ME < L *praevalēre* = *prae-* PRE- + *valēre* to be strong; cf. PREVALENT] —**prevail'er**, *n.*

**prevailing** (pri vā'ling), *adj.* 1. most frequent; predominant: *prevailing winds*. 2. generally current: *the prevailing opinion*. 3. having superior power or influence. [1580-90] —**prevail'ing-ly**, *adv.*

**Pre-val** (prā val'), *n.* René, born 1943, president of Haiti since 1996.

**prev-a-lent** (prev'ə lənt), *adj.* 1. widespread; of wide extent or occurrence; in general use or acceptance. 2. having the superiority or ascendancy; dominant. 3. Archaic. potent or efficacious. [1570-80; < L *praevalens* (s. of *praevalēns*), *prp.* of *praevalēre* to PREVAIL] —**prev'a-lence**, *n.* —**prev'a-lently**, *adv.*

**prev-ari-cate** (pri var'i kāt'), *v.i.* -**cat-ed**, -**cat-ing**. to speak falsely, misleadingly, or so as to avoid the truth; deliberately misstate; equivocate; lie. [1575-85; < L *praevāricātus*, *ptp.* of *praevāricārī* to straddle something, (of an advocate) collude with an opponent's advocate] —**prev'arica'tion**, *n.* —**prev'arica'tor**, *n.*

**prev-en-ient** (pri vən'yant), *adj.* 1. coming before; antecedent. 2. anticipatory. [1600-10; < L *praevēniens* (s. of *praevēniēns*) coming before, *prp.* of *praevēnire* to anticipate] —**prev-en'ience**, *n.*

**prevent** (pri vnt'), *v.t.* 1. to keep from occurring; stop: *to prevent illness*. 2. to stop from doing something: *There is nothing to prevent us from going*. 3. Archaic. a. to act ahead of; forestall. b. to precede. c. to anticipate. —*v.i.* 4. to interpose a hindrance: *We will come if nothing prevents*. [1375-1425; < L *praevēntus*, *ptp.* of *praevēnire* to anticipate = *prae-* PRE- + *venīre* to come] —**prev-ent'a-ble**, **prev-ent'ible**, *adj.* —**prev-ent'a-abil'ity**, *n.* —**prev-ent'er**, *n.* —**Syn.** PREVENT, HAMPER, HINDER, IMPEDE refer to different degrees of stoppage of action or progress. TO PREVENT is to stop something effectually by forestalling action and rendering it impossible: *to prevent the sending of a message*. TO HAMPER is to clog or entangle or put an embarrassing restraint upon: *to hamper preparations for a trip*. TO HINDER is to keep back by delaying or stopping progress or action: *to hinder the progress of an expedition*. TO IMPEDE is to make difficult the movement or progress of anything by interfering with its proper functioning: *to impede a discussion by demanding repeated explanations*.

**prev-en-tion** (pri vən'shən), *n.* 1. the act of preventing; effectual hindrance. 2. something that prevents; preventive. [1520-30; < LL]

**prev-en-tive** (pri vən'tiv) also **prev-ent'a-tive** (-tā tiv), *adj.* 1. serving to prevent or hinder: *preventive measures*. 2. concerned with prevention, as of disease: *preventive medicine*. —*n.* 3. a drug or other substance for preventing disease. 4. a preventive agent or measure. [1630-40] —**prev-entive-ly**, *adv.* —**prev-entive-ness**, *n.*

**pre-view** (prē'vju), *n.* 1. an earlier or advance view. 2. an advance showing of a motion picture, play, etc., before its public opening. 3. an advance showing of brief scenes in a motion picture, television show, etc., for purposes of advertisement. 4. anything that gives an advance idea or impression of something to come. —*v.t.* 5. to view or show beforehand or in advance. [1600-10]

**pre-vious** (prē'vju əs), *adj.* 1. coming or occurring before something else; prior: *the previous owner*. 2. Informal. done, occurring, etc., before the proper time; premature: *Aren't you a little previous with that request?* —**Idiom.** 3. **previous to**, before; prior to. [1615-25; < L *praevious* going before = *prae-* PRE- + *vious*, *adj.* der. of *via* way; see -ous] —**pre-vious-ly**, *adv.* —**pre-vious-ness**, *n.*

**pre-vious ques'tion**, *n.* a parliamentary motion that a vote be taken at once on the main question, cutting off further debate. [1690-1700]

**pre-vi-sion** (pri vizh'ən), *n.* 1. foresight, foreknowledge, or prescience. 2. a prediction; forecast. —*v.t.* 3. to see beforehand; foresee. [1605-15] —**pre-vi'sion-al**, *adj.*

**pre-vo-cal-ic** (prē'vō kəl'ik), *adj.* immediately preceding a vowel.

**Pré-vost d'Ex-iles** (prā vō' deg zēl'), *n.* Antoine François ("Abbé Prévost"), 1697-1763, French novelist.

**pre-washed** (prē'wosh't), *adj.* washed before sale, esp. to produce a soft texture or a worn look: *prewashed jeans*.

**prex-y** (prek'sē), *n.*, *pl.* **prex-ies** Slang. a president, esp. of a college or university. [1870-75, (by shortening and alter. of *president*) + -y]

**prey** (prā), *n.* 1. an animal hunted or seized for food, esp. by a car-

nivorous animal. 2. a person or thing that is the victim of an enemy, disease, swindler, injurious agency, etc. 3. the action or habit of preying: *a beast of prey*. 4. Archaic. booty or plunder. —*v.i.* (usu. fol. by *on* or *upon*) 5. to seize and devour prey: *Foxes prey on rabbits*. 6. to make raids or attacks for booty or plunder: *The Vikings preyed on coastal settlements*. 7. to exert a harmful or destructive and often obsessive influence: *The problem preyed upon his mind*. 8. to victimize another or others: *loan sharks who prey upon the poor*. [1200-50; ME *preye* < OF < L *praeda* booty, prey] —**prey'er**, *n.*

**prez** (prez), *n.* Slang. president. [1890-95; by shortening and resp.]

**PRF**, Puerto Rican female.

**prf.**, proof.

**Pri-am** (pri'am), *n.* a legendary king of Troy, the father of Paris, Cassandra, and Hector.

**pri-ap-ic** (pri ap'ik), *adj.* 1. PHALLIC. 2. exaggeratedly concerned with masculinity and male sexuality. [1780-90]

**pri-a-pism** (pri'ə piz'am), *n.* 1. continuous, usu. nonsexual erection of the penis, esp. due to disease. 2. prurient behavior or display.

**Pri-a-pus** (pri ā'pəs), *n.* 1. an ancient Greek god of male procreative power. 2. (L.C.) PHALLUS.

**Prib'i-lof Is/lands** (prib'ə löf', -ləf'), *n.* a group of islands in the Bering Sea, SW of Alaska, and belonging to the U.S.

**price** (pris), *n.*, *v.*, **priced**, **pric-ing**. —*n.* 1. the sum or amount of money or its equivalent for which anything is bought, sold, or offered for sale. 2. a sum offered for the capture of a person alive or dead: *to put a price on someone's head*. 3. an amount of money for which a person will forsake principles or obligations: *They claim that every politician has his price*. 4. that which must be given, done, or undergone in order to obtain a thing. 5. Archaic. value or worth. —*v.t.* 6. to fix the price of. 7. to ask or find out the price of. [1175-1225; ME *pris* (f) < OF < L *pretium* price, value, worth]

**Price** (pris), *n.* 1. (Edward) Reynolds, born 1933, U.S. novelist. 2. (Mary) Le-on-tyne (jē'an tēn'), born 1927, U.S. soprano.

**price-earn'ings ra'tio**, *n.* the current price of a share of common stock divided by earnings per share over a 12-month period, often used in stock evaluation. *Abbr.*: p/e [1960-65]

**price/fix'ing** or **price-fix'ing**, *n.* the establishing of prices at a determined level, either by a government or by mutual consent among producers or sellers of a commodity. [1945-50]

**price/ in'dex**, *n.* an index of the changes in the prices of goods and services, based on the prices of a previous period, with the base level usu. expressed as 100. [1885-90]

**price-less** (pris'lis), *adj.* 1. having a value beyond all price; invaluable; precious: *a priceless artwork*. 2. delightfully amusing or absurd: *a priceless anecdote*. [1905-10] —**price/less-ness**, *n.*

**price/ point'**, *n.* the price for which something is sold on the retail market, esp. in contrast to competitive prices.

**price/ support'**, *n.* the maintenance of the price of a commodity, product, etc., esp. by means of public subsidy or government purchase of surpluses. [1945-50]

**price/ tag'**, *n.* 1. a label or tag that shows the price of the item to which it is attached. 2. cost; price. [1880-85, Amer.]

**price/ war'**, *n.* intensive competition, esp. among retailers, in which prices are repeatedly cut in order to undersell competitors or force competitors out of business. [1925-30]

**pric-ey** (pri'sē), *adj.* **pric-i-er**, **pric-i-est**. expensive or unduly expensive: *a pricey wine*. [1930-35] —**pric-ey-ness**, *n.*

**prick** (prik), *n.* 1. a puncture made by a needle, thorn, or the like. 2. the act of pricking: *the prick of a needle*. 3. the state or sensation of being pricked. 4. a sharp pain or feeling of discomfort caused by or as if by being pricked; twinge. 5. a sharp point or part; prickle. 6. *Vulgar Slang*. a. PENIS. b. a nasty, obnoxious, or contemptible person. 7. *Obs.* a pointed instrument or weapon. —*v.t.* 8. to pierce with a sharp point; puncture: *I pricked my finger*. 9. to affect with sharp pain, as from piercing. 10. to cause sharp mental pain to; sting, as with remorse: *His conscience pricked him*. 11. to urge on with or as if with a goad or spur. 12. to mark (a surface) with pricks or dots in tracing something. 13. to mark or trace by means of pricks or dots. 14. to cause to stand erect or point upward (usu. fol. by *up*): *The dog pricked up its ears*. 15. to lame (a horse) by driving a nail improperly into its hoof. 16. to transplant (a seedling) into a container that provides more room for growth (usu. fol. by *out* or *off*). —*v.i.* 17. to perform the action of piercing or puncturing something. 18. to have a sensation of being pricked. 19. to rise erect or point upward, as the ears of an animal (usu. fol. by *up*). 20. to spur or urge a horse on; ride rapidly. —**Idiom.** 21. **prick up one's ears**, to become very alert; listen attentively. [bef. 1000; (n.) ME *pricke*, OE *prican*, *prican* dot, point; (v.) ME *priken*, OE *prican*; c. D. LG *prik* point] —**prick'er**, *n.*

**prick-et** (prik'it), *n.* 1. a sharp metal point on which to stick a candle. 2. a candlestick with one or more such points. 3. a buck in his second year. [1300-50; ME; see PRICK, -ET]

pre-sum'it, *adj.*, *n.*  
pre-sur/ger-y, *adj.*  
pre-sur/gi-cal, *adj.*  
pre-sur-round', *v.t.*  
pre-sur/vey, *n.*  
pre-sur-vey', *v.t.*  
pre-sweet'en, *v.t.*  
pre-symp-to-mat'ic, *adj.*  
pre-taste', *n.*, *v.t.*, -**tast-ed**, -**tast-ing**.  
pre-tech-no-log'i-cal, *adj.*; -**ly**, *adv.*  
pre-tel/e-vi'sion, *adj.*  
pre-tell', *v.* -**told**, -**tell-ing**.  
pre-tes/ti-fy', *v.t.*, -**fied**, -**fy-ing**.  
pre-tes/ti-mo'ny, *n.*, *pl.* -**nies**.  
pre-tick/et-ed, *adj.*  
pre-tour/na-ment, *n.*  
pre-train', *v.t.*  
pre-treat', *v.t.*  
pre-u-ni-ver'si-ty, *adj.*

pre-vac/ci-nate', *v.t.*, -**nat-ed**, -**nat-ing**.  
pre-vac/ci-na'tion, *n.*  
pre-val-u-a-tion, *n.*  
pre-val/ue, *n.*, *v.t.*, -**ued**, -**u-ing**.  
pre-ver/bal, *adj.*  
pre-Vic-to-ri-an, *adj.*  
pre-vis'it, *n.*, *v.*  
pre-warm', *v.t.*  
pre-wash', *n.*, *v.t.*  
pre-wean'ing, *adj.*  
pre-worn', *adj.*  
pre-weight', *v.t.*  
pre-wire', *v.t.*, -**wired**, -**wir-ing**.  
pre-work', *v.*  
pre/work', *n.*, *adj.*  
pre-wrap', *v.t.*, -**wrapped**, -**wrapped-pling**.  
pre-writ'ten, *adj.*