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Guide to the use of the **Contents**

| | |
|---|----|
| Preface | iv |
| Guide to the use of the dictionary | v |
| Abbreviations used in the dictionary | xi |
| Note on trademarks and proprietary status | xi |

The Oxford Compact English Dictionary 1

Preface

The *Oxford Compact English Dictionary* is a compact edition of the renowned *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (10th edition). It aims to provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and accessible information on the vocabulary of contemporary English in a single conveniently sized volume.

The second edition of the *Oxford Compact English Dictionary* is part of the range of new generation dictionaries based on the *New Oxford Dictionary of English*. The text is directly informed by the evidence of how the language is actually used today, drawing on the analysis of hundreds of millions of words of real English carried out for *NODE*. This information is presented in a clear, concise, and accessible way; definitions focus on the core meanings of words and avoid technical terms and multiple sense divisions. An open layout, with each new section of an entry (parts of speech, phrases, derivatives, usage notes, and etymologies) on a new line, ensures that finding individual sections, senses, and entries is easy to do.

The dictionary covers a broad range of vocabulary, concentrating on the standard core of English as an international language, but also including a wide selection of terms used in technical, specialist, and literary contexts, making it particularly useful for study as well as general use.

Pronunciations are given using a simple respelling system rather than the International Phonetic Alphabet, making them more readily comprehensible to the non-linguist. Greater clarity has also been introduced into etymologies, which highlight sense development and root words. Language names and other abbreviations are written out in full and technical vocabulary has been simplified and kept to a minimum.

The dictionary provides over two hundred usage notes within the text, giving clear guidance on difficult and controversial points of grammar and usage.

The editor is grateful to Richard Jones for his work as an editorial assistant and to Susan Wilkin, who provided pronunciations.

part of the cost of producing (something) to reduce its price.

– DERIVATIVES **subsidization** noun.

subsidy ● noun (pl. **subsidies**) **1** a sum of money granted from public funds to help an industry or business keep the price of a commodity or service low. **2** a sum of money granted to support an undertaking held to be in the public interest. **3** a grant or contribution of money. **4** historical a parliamentary grant to the sovereign for state needs.

– ORIGIN Latin *subsidiū* ‘assistance’.

subsist ● verb **1** maintain or support oneself, especially at a minimal level. **2** chiefly Law remain in being, force, or effect. **3** (**subsist in**) be attributable to.

– ORIGIN Latin *subsistere* ‘stand firm’.

subsistence ● noun **1** the action or fact of subsisting. **2** the means of doing this. **3** (before another noun) referring to production at a level sufficient only for one’s own use, without any surplus for trade: *subsistence agriculture*.

subsistence level (also **subsistence wage**) ● noun a standard of living (or wage) that provides only the bare necessities of life.

subsoil ● noun the soil lying immediately under the surface soil.

subsonic ● adjective relating to or flying at a speed or speeds less than that of sound.

subspace ● noun **1** Mathematics a space that is wholly contained in another space. **2** (in science fiction) a hypothetical space-time continuum used for communication at a speed faster than that of light.

subspecies ● noun (pl. same) Biology a subdivision of a species, usually a geographically isolated variety.

substance ● noun **1** a particular kind of matter with uniform properties. **2** the real physical matter of which a person or thing consists. **3** solid basis in reality or fact: *the claim has no substance*. **4** the quality of being important, valid, or significant. **5** the most important or essential part or meaning. **6** the subject matter of a text or work of art. **7** an intoxicating or narcotic drug.

– PHRASES **in substance** essentially.

– ORIGIN Latin *substantia* ‘being, essence’, from *substare* ‘stand firm’.

substandard ● adjective below the usual or required standard.

substantial ● adjective **1** of considerable importance, size, or worth. **2** strongly built or made. **3** concerning the essentials of something. **4** real and tangible rather than imaginary.

– DERIVATIVES **substantiality** noun.

substantially ● adverb **1** to a great or significant extent. **2** for the most part; essentially.

substantiate /səbˈstænsiətiə/ ● verb provide evidence to support or prove the truth of.

– DERIVATIVES **substantiation** noun.

– ORIGIN Latin *substantiare* ‘give substance’.

substantive /səbˈstæntɪv/ ● adjective /also səbˈstæntɪv/ **1** having a firm basis in reality and so important or meaningful. **2** having a separate and independent existence. **3** (of law) defining rights and duties as opposed to giving the rules by which such things are established.

● noun Grammar, dated a noun.

– DERIVATIVES **substantively** adverb.

substation ● noun **1** a set of equipment reducing the high voltage of electrical power transmission to that suitable for supply to consumers. **2** a subordinate police station or fire station.

substituent /səbˈstɪtjuːənt/ ● noun Chemistry an atom or group of atoms taking the place of another or occupying a specified position in a molecule.

substitute ● noun **1** a person or thing acting or serving in place of another. **2** a sports player eligible to replace another after a match has begun.

● verb **1** use, add, or serve in place of. **2** replace with another. **3** replace (a sports player) with a substitute during a match.

– DERIVATIVES **substitutable** adjective, **substitution** noun, **substitutive** adjective.

USAGE substitute

Traditionally, **substitute** is followed by **for** and means ‘put (someone or something) in place of another’, as in *she substituted the fake vase for the real one*. It may also be used with **with** or **by** to mean ‘replace (something) with something else’, as in *she substituted the real vase with the fake one*. This can be confusing, since the two sentences shown above mean the same thing, yet the object of the verb and the object of the preposition have swapped positions. Despite the potential confusion, the second, newer use is acceptable, although still disapproved of by some people.

– ORIGIN Latin *substituere* ‘put in place of’.

substrate /sʌbˈstræt/ ● noun **1** the surface or material on which an organism lives, grows, or feeds. **2** the substance on which an enzyme acts.

– ORIGIN anglicized form of **STRATUM**.

substratum ● noun (pl. **substrata**) **1** an underlying layer or substance, in particular a layer of rock or soil beneath the surface of the ground. **2** a foundation or basis.

substructure ● noun an underlying or supporting structure.

subsume ● verb include or absorb in something else.

– DERIVATIVES **subsumable** adjective.

– ORIGIN Latin *subsumere*, from *sumere* ‘take’.

subtenant ● noun a person who leases property from a tenant.

subtend ● verb (of a line, arc, etc.) form (an angle) at a particular point when straight lines from its extremities meet.

– ORIGIN Latin *subtendere*, from *tendere* ‘stretch’.

subterfuge /sʌbˈtɜːfjuːdʒ/ ● noun a trick or deception used in order to achieve one’s goal.

– ORIGIN from Latin *subterfugere* ‘escape secretly’.

subterranean /sʌbˈtɛrɪniən/ ● adjective existing or occurring under the earth’s surface.

– ORIGIN Latin *subterraneus*, from *terra* ‘earth’.

subtext ● noun an underlying theme in a piece of writing or speech.

subtitle ● noun **1** (**subtitles**) captions displayed at the bottom of a cinema or television screen that translate or transcribe the dialogue or narrative. **2** a subordinate title of a published work.

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