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The New Oxford American Dictionary

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Elizabeth J. Jewell
Frank Abate

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mbining matrices, ve-
er specific rules to ob-

: from Old French, or
from *multiplicare* (see

ign, esp. ×, used to indi-
multiplied by another,

table of the products of
l to 12.

ˌmʌltɪpləˈkeɪv | ▶n.
multiplication: *coronary*

ˌmʌltɪplɪˈkeɪv | ▶n. (pl. **-ies**) a large
ts a multiplicity of ascents.
sts and the multiplicity of

h: from late Latin *multi-*
(see **MULTIPLEX**).

n. a person or thing that

en number (the multipli-
l. ■ Economics a factor by
ome exceeds the resulting
vestment. ■ a device for
re intensity of an electric
easurable level.

(**-ies, -ied**) [trans.] obtain
at contains the first num-
mes: *I asked you to multi-*
intrans.] *we all know how to*

ease greatly in number or
ice *I became a landlord my*
fold | [trans.] *cigarette smok-*
ctors to multiply the risks of
(of an animal or other or-
er by reproducing. ■ prop-

from Old French *multiplier*,

v. [often as submodifier] in sev-
cts: *multiply injured patients.*
r; ,mʌlˈti- | ▶adj. 1 having

or directions.

polarity | -pəˈlerəti | n.;

v. [trans.] record using multitrack recording: [as adj.]
(**multitracked**) *multitracked vocals.*

mul•ti•tu•ber•cu•late | ,mʌltɪt(y)əˈbɜːkyələt | ▶n. a
small primitive extinct mammal of a mainly Creta-
ceous and Paleocene order, distinguished by having
molar teeth with several cusps arranged in two or
three rows.

•Order Multituberculata, subclass Allotheria.
-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from modern Latin *Multitu-*
berculata, from **MULTI-** ‘many’ + Latin *tuberculum* ‘tu-
bercle.’

mul•ti•tude | ,mʌltəˌt(y)ʊd | ▶n. a large number: a
multitude of medical conditions are due to being over-
weight.

■ (**the multitudes**) large numbers of people: *the mul-*
titudes using the roads. ■ (**the multitude**) a large
gathering of people: *Father Peter addressed the multi-*
tude. ■ (**the multitude**) the mass of ordinary people
without power or influence: *placing ultimate political*
power in the hands of the multitude. ■ archaic the state
of being numerous: *they would swarm over the river in*
their multitude.

-PHRASES **cover a multitude of sins** see **COVER**.

-ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from Latin
multitudo, from *multus* ‘many.’

mul•ti•tu•di•nous | ,mʌltəˌt(y)ʊdnəs | ▶adj. very nu-
merous: *the tinkling of multitudinous bells from the herd.*

■ consisting of or containing many individuals or ele-
ments: *the multitudinous array of chemical substances*
that exist in the natural world. ■ poetic/literary (of a body
of water) vast.

-DERIVATIVES **mul•ti•tu•di•nous•ly** adv.; **mul•ti•tu•**
di•nous•ness n.

-ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *multitudo* (see
MULTITUDE) + **-OUS**.

mul•ti•us•er | ,mʌltiˈyʊzər; ,mʌlˈti- | ▶adj. [attrib.] (of a
computer system) able to be used by a number of peo-
ple simultaneously.

■ denoting a computer game in which several players
interact simultaneously using the Internet or other
communications.

mul•ti•va•lent | ,mʌltiˈvələnt; ,mʌlˈti- | ▶adj. 1 having
or susceptible to many applications, interpretations,
meanings, or values: *visually complex and multivalent*
work.

2 Medicine (of an antigen or antibody) having several
sites at which attachment to an antibody or antigen

several sepa-

no-
sible mo-
quest or wa-

-ORIGIN late Mu-
made with closed lip

mum² v. (**mummed**
ditional masked min

-ORIGIN late Midd
and Middle Low Ge

mum³ n. informal a cu
-ORIGIN abbreviatio

mum⁴ n. British ter
-ORIGIN mid 17th c

Mum•bai | ,mʌmˌbi
BOMBAY.

mum•ble | ,mʌmbəl
indistinctly and qui
to hear: [trans.] *he m*

[with direct speech] “
2 [trans.] bite or che
out making much u

n. [usu. in sing.] a q
had replied in a mur

-DERIVATIVES **m**
bling•ly | ,mʌmb(ə

-ORIGIN Middle E
mum•ble•ty•peg

typeg ▶n. a game
a knife or pointed
tinuing until it fail

-ORIGIN early 17t
peg, from *mumble* i
with toothless gu

game that an unsu
the ground using
mum•bo•jum•bo

jumbo ▶n. inform
tended to cause c
legal *mumbo jumbo*
-ORIGIN mid 18t
a supposed Africa
rent sense dates f
mu•meson | myc
Mum•ford | ,mʌn
cial philosopher.
city planning an
volumes (1934–5
City in History (1967).
mum•mer | ,mʌ

ity and indignities of pillage

lly and violently: the army
l off huge quantities of plun-

er n.
from German *plündern*, lit-
oods,' from Middle High
d effects.' Early use of the
to the Thirty Years' War
ian usage; on the outbreak
1642, the word and activity
rces under Prince Rupert.
, with adverbial] jump or dive
r daughters whooped as they

trollably: a car swerved to
nto a ravine. ■ embark im-
course of action: *overconfi-
ahead*. ■ suffer a rapid de-
rth-quarter operating profit
p) pitch: the ship plunged

ush or thrust quickly: the
kets.

so as to immerse it com-
: with boiling water and then
ter. ■ (often **be plunged**
) a specified condition or
me was illuminated, then it
ness. ■ [trans.] sink (a plant
t) in the ground.

ving into water: we went
e a cold plunge.

value or amount: the bank
: profits.

informal commit oneself to
ch one is nervous.

glish: from Old French
l on Latin *plumbum* 'lead,

in excavated at the foot of
e falling water.

nming pool, typically one
ed to refresh or invigorate

evice consisting of a rub-
ed to clear blocked pipes

anism that works with a
ment.

s or spends money reck-

low-cut neckline on a

[intrans.] play a keyboard
nent, esp. in an unex-

adding an *s*: *CDs, MiGs*. They may also, esp. if periods
are involved, employ an apostrophe: *D.D.S.'s*. **3** The
plurals of proper names typically end in *s* or *es*, never
with an apostrophe: *the Smiths, the Joneses, the Rosses*.
See also **usage** at **APOSTROPHE**¹.

pluralism |'plʊərə,lɪzəm| ▶n. **1** a condition or sys-
tem in which two or more states, groups, principles,
sources of authority, etc., coexist.

■ a form of society in which the members of minority
groups maintain their independent cultural tradi-
tions. ■ a political theory or system of power-
sharing among a number of political parties. ■ a
theory or system of devolution and autonomy for
individual bodies in preference to monolithic state
control. ■ Philosophy a theory or system that recog-
nizes more than one ultimate principle. Compare
with **MONISM**.

2 the practice of holding more than one office or
church benefice at a time.

-DERIVATIVES **pluralist** |-list| n. & adj.; **pluralis-**
tic |-listik| adj.; **pluralistically** |-listək(ə)lɪ| adv.

pluraliety |plʊə'relɪtē| ▶n. (pl. **-ies**) **1** the fact or state
of being plural: *some languages add an extra syllable to
mark plurality*.

■ [in sing.] a large number of people or things: *a plural-
ity of critical approaches*.

2 the number of votes cast for a candidate who re-
ceives more than any other but does not receive an ab-
solute majority: *his winning plurality came from creating
a reform coalition*.

■ the number by which this exceeds the number of
votes cast for the candidate who placed second.

3 chiefly historical another term for **PLURALISM** (sense 2).

-ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *plu-
ralite*, from late Latin *pluralitas*, from Latin *pluralis* 're-
lating to more than one' (see **PLURAL**).

USAGE: On the difference between **plurality** and
majority, see **usage** at **MAJORITY**.

pluralize |'plʊərə,lɪz| ▶v. [trans.] **1** cause to become
more numerous.

■ cause to be made up of several different elements.
2 give a plural form to (a word).

-DERIVATIVES **pluralization** |,plʊərəlɪ'zəʃən| n.
pluri- ▶comb. form several: *pluripotent*.

-ORIGIN from Latin *plus*, *plur-* 'more,' *plures* 'several.'

pluripotent |,plʊəri'pɒtnt| ▶adj. Biology (of an im-
mature or stem cell) capable of giving rise to several
different cell types.

-ORIGIN 1940s: from **PLURI-** 'several' + Latin *potent-*
'being able' (see **POTENT**¹).

plus |pləs| ▶prep. with the addition of: *two plus four is
six* | *he was awarded the full amount plus interest*.

■ informal together with: *all apartments have a small
kitchen plus private bathroom*.

▶adj. **1** [postpositive] /

-DERIVATIVES **plushly** adv.; **plush-**
(**plushier**, **plushiest**) adj.

-ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from old
contraction of *peluche*, from Old
pluck,' based on Latin *pilus* 'hair-
ous' dates from the 1920s.

plush velvet ▶n. a kind of plu-
dense nap, resembling velvet.

plus-minus ▶n. [often as adj.] loc-
used as an indication of a player
lated by adding one for each ge-
er's team in even-strength play
the ice, and subtracting one fr
plus sign ▶n. the symbol +, in
positive value.

Plutarch |'plʊ,tɑ:k| (c.46-c.
and philosopher; Latin n
Plutarchus. He is chiefly know
lection of biographies of prom-
mans.

pluteous |'plʊtjəs| ▶n. (pl.
planktonic larva of some eel
what triangular with lateral p
-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from
(with reference to its shape).

Pluto |'plʊtʊ| **1** Greek Mytho
world. Also called **HADES**.

2 Astronomy the most remote
system, ninth in order from
1930 by Clyde Tombaugh.

Pluto usually orbits beyon
distance of 5,900 million k
its orbit is so eccentric that
the sun than Neptune (i
smaller than earth's moo
km), but it was discovere
satellite (Charon), which
should properly be regard

-ORIGIN via Latin from
the god of the underworld

plutocracy |plʊ'tɒkrə:
by the wealthy.

■ a country or society gov-
or ruling class of peopl
their wealth.

-DERIVATIVES **pluto-**
plutocratically |,plʊt

-ORIGIN mid 17th cen
from *ploutos* 'wealth' + *kr*

USAGE: See **usage** at **A**

plutocrat |'plʊtə,kræ:
whose power derives fro

pluton |'plʊ,tən| ▶n. (c
neous rock.