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**flight** **● n.** a rank of non-commissioned officer in the RAF, above sergeant and below warrant officer.

**flight simulator** **● n.** a machine resembling a cockpit and simulating the conditions of an aircraft in flight, used for training pilots.

**flighty** **● adj.** (-ier -iest) fickle; erratic; restlessly flirtatious.  
DERIVATIVES **flightily** *adv.* **flightiness** *n.*

**flimflam** *informal* **● n.** 1 insincere and unconvincing talk. 2 a confidence trick. **● v.** (**flimflammed**, **flimflamming**) swindle with a flimflam.  
- DERIVATIVES **flimflammer** *n.* **flimflammy** *n.*  
- ORIGIN C16: symbolic reduplication.

**flimsy** **● adj.** (-ier -iest) 1 weak and insubstantial. 2 light and thin. 3 (of a pretext or account) weak; unconvincing **● n.** (pl. -ies) *Brit.* 1 very thin paper. 2 a copy of a document, produced on very thin paper.  
DERIVATIVES **flimsily** *adv.* **flimsiness** *n.*  
ORIGIN C18: prob. from **FLIMFLAM**.

**flinch** **● v.** 1 make a quick, nervous movement as an instinctive reaction to fear or pain. 2 (**flinch from**) avoid through fear or anxiety. **● n.** an act of flinching.  
DERIVATIVES **flincher** *n.* **flinching** *adj.* **flinchingly** *adv.*  
ORIGIN C16 (in the sense 'slink or sneak off'): from OFr. *flenchir* 'turn aside', of W. Gmc origin.

**flinch** **● v.** (flint(t)ɪ) **● v.** variant spelling of **FLENSE**.

**flinders** **● pl. n.** small fragments or splinters.  
ORIGIN ME: prob. of Scand. origin.

**fling** **● v.** (*past and past part* **flung**) 1 throw forcefully; hurl. 2 (**fling oneself into**) wholeheartedly engage in (an activity or enterprise). 3 move with speed: *he flung away to his study*. **● n.** 1 a short period of enjoyment or wild behaviour: *a final fling*. **▶** a short sexual relationship. 2 short for **HIGHLAND FLING**.  
DERIVATIVES **flinger** *n.*  
ORIGIN ME: perh. rel. to ON *flengja* 'flog'.

**flint** **● n.** 1 a hard grey rock consisting of nearly pure silica (chert), occurring chiefly as nodules in chalk. 2 a piece of flint, especially one shaped to form a primitive tool or weapon. 3 a piece of flint used with steel to produce an igniting spark.  
ORIGIN OE: rel. to MDu. *clint* and Old High Ger. *flins*.

**flint corn** **● n.** maize of a variety that has hard, slightly translucent grains.

**flint glass** **● n.** a pure lustrous kind of glass originally made with flint.

**flintlock** **● n.** an old-fashioned type of gun fired by a spark from a flint, or the lock producing the spark.

**flinty** **● adj.** (-ier -iest) 1 of, containing, or reminiscent of flint. 2 (of a person or their expression) very hard and unyielding.  
DERIVATIVES **flintily** *adv.* **flintiness** *n.*

**flip** **● v.** (**flipped**, **flipping**) 1 turn over or cause to turn over with a quick, smooth movement. 2 toss (something) into the air so that it turns over. 3 (**flip through**) flick through. 4 *informal* suddenly become deranged or very angry. **● n.** a flipping action or movement. **● adj.** flip-pant.  
- PHRASES **flip one's lid** (or chiefly N. Amer. **one's wig**) *informal* suddenly become deranged or lose one's self-control.  
- ORIGIN C16: prob. a contr. of **FILLIP**.

**flip** **● n.** another term for **EGG-NOG**.  
- ORIGIN C17: perh. from **FLIP** in the sense 'whip up'.

**flip chart** **● n.** a very large pad of paper bound so that pages can be turned over at the top, used on a stand at presentations.

**flip-flop** **● n.** 1 a light sandal with a thong that passes between the big and second toes. 2 N. Amer. a backward somersault or handspring. 3 N. Amer. *colloq.* an abrupt reversal of policy. 4 Electronics a switching circuit which works by changing between two stable states. **● v.** 1 move with a flapping sound or motion. 2 N. Amer. *informal* make an abrupt reversal of policy.  
- ORIGIN C17: imitative reduplication of **FLOP**.

**flippant** **● adj.** not showing a serious or respectful attitude.

ORIGIN C17 (early senses including 'nimble' and 'talkative', then 'playful'): from **FLIP** + **-ANT**.

**flipper** **● n.** 1 a broad, flat limb without fingers, used for swimming by sea animals such as seals, whales, and turtles. 2 a flat rubber attachment worn on the foot for underwater swimming. 3 a pivoted arm in a pinball machine.

**flipping** **● adj.** *informal*, chiefly *Brit.* used for emphasis or to express mild annoyance.  
ORIGIN C20: from **FLIP** + **-ING**².

**flip side** **● n.** *informal* 1 the less important side of a pop single; the B-side. 2 the reverse aspect or unwelcome concomitant of something.

**flip-top** **● adj.** denoting or having a lid that can be easily flipped open.

**flirt** **● v.** 1 behave playfully in a sexually enticing manner. 2 (**flirt with**) experiment casually with (an idea or activity). 3 (**flirt with**) deliberately risk (danger or death). 4 (of a bird) flap or wave (its wings or tail) with a quick flicking motion. **● n.** a person who habitually flirts.  
- DERIVATIVES **flirtation** *n.* **flirtatious** *adj.* **flirtatiously** *adv.* **flirtatiousness** *n.* **flirty** *adj.* (-ier -iest).  
- ORIGIN C16 (orig. in sense 'give someone a sharp blow'; the earliest noun senses were 'joke, gibe' and 'flighty girl'); appar. symbolic, the elements *fl-* and *-it* both suggesting sudden movement; cf. **FLICK**.

**flit** **● v.** (**flitted**, **flitting**) 1 move swiftly and lightly. 2 chiefly *Scottish & N. English* move house or leave one's home, especially in secrecy. **● n.** *Brit. informal* an act of leaving one's home in secrecy.  
- ORIGIN ME: from ON *flytja*; rel. to **FLEET**³.

**flich** /flɪtʃ/ **● n.** 1 a slab of wood cut from a tree trunk. 2 (also **fitch plate**) the strengthening plate in a fitch beam. 3 chiefly *Brit.* a side of bacon.  
- ORIGIN OE *flice*, orig. denoting the cured side of any meat, of Gmc origin.

**fitch beam** **● n.** a compound beam made of an iron plate between two slabs of wood.

**flitter** **● v.** move quickly in a random manner. **● n.** 1 a flittering movement. 2 (in science fiction) a small personal aircraft.  
- ORIGIN ME: frequentative of **FLIT**.

**flittermouse** **● n.** (pl. -mice) old-fashioned term for **BAT**² (in sense 1).  
- ORIGIN C18: on the pattern of Du. *vledermuis* or Ger. *Fledermaus*.

**flixweed** /ˈflɪkswiːd/ **● n.** a plant with small yellow flowers and finely divided leaves, formerly thought to cure dysentery [*Descurainia sophia*].  
- ORIGIN C16: from obs. *flix* (var. of **FLUX**) + **WEED**.

**FLN** **● abbrev.** Front de Libération Nationale.

**float** **● v.** 1 rest or cause to rest on the surface of a liquid without sinking. 2 be suspended freely in a liquid or gas. 3 move slowly or hover in a liquid or the air. 4 (in sport) make (the ball) travel lightly and effortlessly through the air. 5 [*usu. as adj.*] **floating** remain unsettled in one's opinions, where one lives, etc. 6 put forward (an idea) as a suggestion or test of reactions. 7 offer the shares of (a company) for sale on the stock market for the first time. 8 (with reference to a currency) fluctuate or allow to fluctuate freely in value. **● n.** 1 any hollow or lightweight object or device used to achieve buoyancy in water. 2 a small floating object attached to a fishing line signalling the bite of a fish. 3 a floating device which forms part of a valve apparatus controlling a flow of water. 4 *Brit.* a small vehicle or cart powered by electricity. 5 a platform mounted on a truck and carrying a display in a procession. 6 *Brit.* a sum of money used for change at the beginning of a period of selling in a shop or stall. 7 a hand tool with a rectangular blade used for smoothing plaster. 8 a soft drink with a scoop of ice cream floating in it. 9 (in critical path analysis) the period of time by which the duration of an activity may be extended without affecting the overall time for the process.  
PHRASES **float someone's boat** *informal* appeal to or excite someone.  
DERIVATIVES **floatable** *adj.*

**gliss** /glɪs/ *n.* a continuous slide upward or downward  
 - ORIGIN Ital., from Fr. *glisser* 'to slip, slide'.  
**glissé** /glɪˈseɪ/ *n.* (pl. pronounced same) Ballet a movement in which one foot is slid outward from the body and briefly extended off the ground and the other is brought to meet it.  
 - ORIGIN Fr., lit. 'slipped, glided', past part. of *glisser*.  
**glisten** *v.* (of something wet or greasy) shine or sparkle.  
*n.* a sparkling light reflected from something wet.  
 - ORIGIN OE *glisnian*, of Gmc origin.  
**glister** /ˈglɪstə/ *poetic/literary v.* sparkle; glitter. *n.* a sparkle.  
 - ORIGIN ME: prob. from Mid. Low Ger. *glisteren* or MDu. *glisteren*.  
**glitch** *n.* *informal* 1 a sudden, usually temporary malfunction or irregularity of equipment. 2 an unexpected setback in a plan. 3 Astronomy a brief irregularity in the rotation of a pulsar.  
 - DERIVATIVES **glitchy** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN 1960s (orig. US): of unknown origin.  
**glitter** *v.* 1 shine with a bright, shimmering reflected light. 2 [as *adj.* **glittering**] impressively successful or glamorous: *a glittering career*. *n.* 1 bright, shimmering reflected light. 2 tiny pieces of sparkling material used for decoration. 3 an attractive and exciting but superficial quality.  
 - DERIVATIVES **glitteringly** *adv.* **glittery** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN ME: from ON *glitra*.  
**glitterati** /ˈglɪtəˈrɑːtɪ/ *pl. n.* *informal* fashionable people involved in show business or some other glamorous activity.  
 - ORIGIN 1950s (orig. US): blend of **GLITTER** and **LITERATI**.  
**glitz** *n.* *informal* extravagant but superficial display.  
 - DERIVATIVES **glitzy** *adj.* **glitziness** *n.* **glitzy** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN 1960s (as *glitzy*): from **GLITTER**, suggested by **RITZY** and perh. also by Ger. *glitzerig* 'glittering'.  
**gloaming** *n.* (the gloaming) *poetic/literary* twilight; dusk.  
 - ORIGIN OE *glōmung*, from *glōm* 'twilight', of Gmc origin; rel. to **GLOW**.  
**gloat** *v.* contemplate one's own success or another's misfortune with smugness or malignant pleasure. *n.* an act of gloating.  
 - DERIVATIVES **gloater** *n.* **gloating** *adj.* & *n.* **gloatingly** *adv.*  
 - ORIGIN C16 (in the sense 'give a sideways or furtive look'): of uncertain origin; perh. rel. to ON *glotta* 'to grin' and Mid. High Ger. *glotzen* 'to stare'.  
**glob** *n.* *informal* a lump of a semi-liquid substance.  
 - ORIGIN C20; perh. a blend of **BLOB** and **GOB**.  
**global** /ˈglɔːb(ə)l/ *adj.* 1 of or relating to the whole world; worldwide. 2 relating to or embracing the whole of something, or of a group of things. 3 Computing operating or applying through the whole of a file or program.  
 - DERIVATIVES **globalist** *n.* **globalization** (also **-isation**) *n.* **globalize** (also **-ise**) *v.* **globally** *adv.*  
**global village** *n.* the world considered as a single community linked by telecommunications.  
**global warming** *n.* the gradual increase in the overall temperature of the earth's atmosphere due to the greenhouse effect caused by increased levels of carbon dioxide, CFCs, and other pollutants.  
**globe** *n.* 1 a spherical or rounded object. 2 a golden orb as an emblem of sovereignty. 3 a spherical representation of the earth with a map on the surface. 4 (the globe) the earth. *v.* *poetic/literary* form into a globe.  
 - DERIVATIVES **globe-like** *adj.* **globoid** *adj.* & *n.* **globose** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN ME: from OFr., or from L. *globus*.  
**globefish** *n.* (pl. same or **-fishes**) a pufferfish or a porcupine fish.  
**globeflower** *n.* a plant of the buttercup family with globular yellow or orange flowers. [Genus *Trollius*.]  
**globetrotter** *n.* *informal* a person who travels widely.  
 - DERIVATIVES **globetrot** *v.* **globetrotting** *n.* & *adj.*  
**globigerina** /ˌglɔːbɪdʒɪˈrɪnə/ *n.* (pl. **globigerinas** or **globigerinae** /-nɪ/) a planktonic marine protozoan with

- ORIGIN mod. L., from L. *globus* 'spherical object, globe' (because of the globular chambers in its shell) + *-ger* 'carrying' + **-INA**.  
**globular** /ˈglɒbjʊlə/ *adj.* 1 globe-shaped; spherical. 2 composed of globules.  
 - DERIVATIVES **globularity** *n.*  
**globular cluster** *n.* Astronomy a large compact spherical star cluster, typically of old stars in the outer regions of a galaxy.  
**globule** /ˈglɒbjʊl/ *n.* 1 a small round particle of a substance; a drop. 2 Astronomy a small dark cloud of gas and dust seen against a brighter background such as a luminous nebula.  
 - DERIVATIVES **globulous** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN C17: from Fr., or from L. *globulus*, dimin. of *globus* 'spherical object, globe'.  
**globulin** /ˈglɒbjʊlɪn/ *n.* Biochemistry any of a group of simple proteins soluble in salt solutions and forming a large fraction of blood serum protein.  
**glochidium** /ˌglɔːkɪdɪəm/ *n.* (pl. **glochidia**) Zoology a parasitic larva of certain freshwater bivalve molluscs, which attaches itself by hooks and suckers to the fins or gills of fish.  
 - ORIGIN C19: mod. L., based on Gk *glōkhis* 'arrowhead'.  
**glockenspiel** /ˈglɒk(ə)nspiːl, -ʃpiːl/ *n.* a musical percussion instrument consisting of a set of tuned metal pieces mounted in a frame and struck with small hammers.  
 - ORIGIN C19: from Ger. *Glockenspiel*, lit. 'bell play'.  
**glom** /glɒm/ *v.* (glommed, glomming) *N. Amer. informal* 1 steal. 2 (glom on to) become stuck or attached to.  
 - ORIGIN C20: var. of Scots *glauin*, of unknown origin.  
**glomerulonephritis** /ˌglɒ.mer.jʊləˈneɪ.fraɪtɪs/ *n.* Medicine acute inflammation of the kidney, typically caused by an immune response.  
**glomerulus** /ˌglɒ.mer.jʊˈlʊs/ *n.* (pl. **glomeruli** /-lɪ, -lɪz/) Anatomy & Biology a cluster of nerve endings, spores, or small blood vessels, especially of capillaries around the end of a kidney tubule.  
 - DERIVATIVES **glomerular** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN C19: mod. L., dimin. of L. *glomus*, *glomer-* 'ball of thread'.  
**gloom** *n.* 1 partial or total darkness. 2 a state of depression or despondency. *v.* appear gloomy.  
 - ORIGIN ME (as *v.*): of unknown origin.  
**gloomy** *adj.* (-ier, -iest) 1 poorly lit, especially so as to cause fear or depression. 2 causing or feeling depression or despondency.  
 - DERIVATIVES **gloomily** *adv.* **gloominess** *n.*  
**gloop** *n.* *informal* sloppy or sticky semi-fluid matter.  
 - DERIVATIVES **gloopy** *adj.*  
 - ORIGIN C20: symbolic.  
**glop** *n.* *informal*, chiefly *N. Amer.* sticky and amorphous matter. 2 a soft, shapeless lump of something.  
 - DERIVATIVES **gloppy** *adj.* (-ier, -iest).  
 - ORIGIN 1940s: symbolic.  
**Gloria** *n.* 1 a hymn beginning *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (Glory be to God in the highest), forming a set part of the Mass. 2 the doxology beginning *Gloria Patris* (Glory be to the Father), used after psalms and in formal prayer.  
**glorify** *v.* (-ies, -ied) 1 praise and worship (God). 2 reveal the glory of (God) through one's actions. 3 describe or represent as admirable, especially unjustifiably or undeservedly. 4 [as *adj.* **glorified**] represented as or appearing more elevated or special than is the case: *the word processor is not merely a glorified typewriter*.  
 - DERIVATIVES **glorification** *n.* **glorifier** *n.*  
**glorious** *adj.* 1 having or bringing glory. 2 strikingly beautiful or impressive.  
 - DERIVATIVES **gloriously** *adv.* **gloriousness** *n.*  
**glory** *n.* (pl. **-ies**) 1 high renown or honour won by notable achievements. 2 praise, worship, and thanksgiving offered to God. 3 magnificence; great beauty. 4 the splendour and bliss of heaven. 5 a luminous ring or halo, especially as depicted around the head of Christ or a saint. *v.* (glory in) take great pride or pleasure in. 6 exult in unpleasantly or boastfully.