



RANDOM HOUSE
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dictionary

SECOND EDITION

RANDOM HOUSE
REFERENCE

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greater part of the seat by an armrest. Also, **confidante**. [**< F**, special use of *confidante* female confidant]

confi-den-tial (kon'fi den'shal), *adj.* 1. spoken, written, acted on, etc., in strict privacy or secrecy; secret: a *confidential remark*. 2. indicating confidence or intimacy; imparting private matters: a *confidential tone of voice*. 3. having another's trust or confidence; entrusted with secrets or private affairs: *confidential secretary*. 4. (of information, a document, etc.) a. bearing the classification *confidential*, usually being above restricted and below secret. b. limited to persons authorized to use information, documents, etc., so classified. Cf. **classification** (def. 5). [1645-55; **< L** *confidenti*(a) CONFIDENTE + **-AL**'] —**con-fi-den'tial-ly**, *adv.* —**con-fi-den'tial-ness**, *n.* —**con-fi-den'tial-ly**, *adv.*

—**Syn.** 1. restricted, private. 2. intimate, familiar. 3. trusted, trustworthy, private. See **familiar**.

confiden-tial commu-ni-ca-tion, *Law*. a confidential statement made to a lawyer, doctor, or pastor, or to one's husband or wife, privileged against disclosure in court if the privilege is claimed by the client, patient, penitent, or spouse. Also called **privileged communication**. [1790-1800]

con-fid-ing (kən fī'ding), *adj.* trustful; credulous or unsuspecting: a *confiding nature*. [1635-45; CONFIDE + **-ING**] —**con-fid-ing-ly**, *adv.* —**con-fid-ing-ness**, *n.*

con-fig-u-rate (kən fig'yū rāt'), *v.t.*, **-rat-ed**, **-rat-ing**. to give a configuration, form, or design to. [by back formation from CONFIGURATION]

con-fig-u-ra-tion (kən fig'yū rā'shən), *n.* 1. the relative disposition or arrangement of the parts or elements of a thing. 2. external form, as resulting from this; conformation. 3. *Astron.* a. the relative position or aspect of heavenly bodies, a group of stars. 4. *Chem.* an atomic spatial arrangement that is fixed by the chemical bonding in a molecule and that cannot be altered without breaking bonds (contrasted with *conformation*). 5. *Computers*. the totality of a computer and the devices connected to it: A common microcomputer configuration consists of a computer, two disk drives, a monitor, and a printer. [1550-60; **< LL** *configuratio* (s. of *configuratio*), equiv. to *L* *configuratus*(us) shaped like its model, ptp. of *configurare* to mold, shape (con- CON- + *figurā*(a) figure + **-ātus** -ATE) + **-iōn** -iōN] —**con-fig-u-ra-tional**, **con-fig-u-ra-tive** (kən fig'yūr ə tiv', -yō rā'tiv), *adj.* —**con-fig-u-ra-tion-al-ly**, *adv.*

con-fig-u-ra-tion-ism (kən fig'yū rā'shə niz'əm), *n.* See **Gestalt psychology**. [1920-25; CONFIGURATION + **-ISM**] —**con-fig-u-ra-tion-ist**, *n.*

con-fig-ure (kən fig'yūr), *v.t.*, **-ured**, **-ur-ing**. 1. to design or adapt to form a specific configuration or for some specific purpose: *The planes are being configured to hold more passengers in each row*. 2. *Computers*. a. to put (a computer system) together by supplying a specific computer with appropriate peripheral devices, as a monitor and disk drive, and connecting them. b. to insert batch files into (a program) to enable it to run with a particular computer. [back formation from CONFIGURATION]

con-fine (kən fin' for 1, 2, 5, 6; kən'fin for 3, 4), *v.*, **-fined**, **-fin-ing**, *n.* —**v.t.** 1. to enclose within bounds; limit or restrict: *She confined her remarks to errors in the report*. *Confine your efforts to finishing the book*. 2. to shut or keep in; prevent from leaving a place because of imprisonment, illness, discipline, etc.: *For that offense he was confined to quarters for 30 days*. —**n.** 3. Usually, **confines**, a boundary or bound; limit; border; frontier. 4. Often **confines**, a region, territory. 5. *Archaic*. confinement. 6. Obs. a place of confinement; prison. [1350-1400 for *n.*; 1515-25 for *v.*; (n.) ME **< MF** *confins*, *confines* **< ML** *confinia*, pl. of *L* *confinis* boundary, border (see **CON-**, **FINE**); (v.) **< MF** *confiner*, v. deriv. of *confins* **< L**, as above] —**con-fin-a-ble**, **con-fine-a-ble**, *adj.* —**con-fine-less**, *adj.* —**con-fin'er**, *n.*

—**Syn.** 1. circumscribe. —**Ant.** 1, 2. free. **con-fined** (kən fīnd'), *adj.* 1. limited or restricted. 2. unable to leave a place because of illness, imprisonment, etc. 3. being in childbirth; being in parturition. [CON-FINE + **-ED**] —**con-fin-ed-ly** (kən fī'nd lē, -fīnd'lē), *adv.* —**con-fin-ed-ness**, *n.*

con-fin-ee (kən fī nē', -fī'nē), *n.* a person held in confinement. [CONFINE + **-EE**]

con-fine-ment (kən fin'mənt), *n.* 1. the act of confining. 2. the state of being confined. 3. the lying-in of a woman in childbed; accouchement; childbirth. 4. *Mil.* incarceration in a guardhouse or prison while awaiting trial or as a punishment (distinguished from arrest). [1640-50; CONFINE + **-MENT**; cf. **F** *confinement*]

con-firm (kən fūrm'), *v.t.* 1. to establish the truth, accuracy, validity, or genuineness of; corroborate; verify: *This report confirms my suspicions*. 2. to acknowledge with definite assurance: *Did the hotel confirm our room reservation?* 3. to make valid or binding by some formal or legal act; sanction; ratify: *to confirm a treaty*; *to confirm her appointment to the Supreme Court*. 4. to make firm or more firm; add strength to; settle or establish firmly: *Their support confirmed my determination to run for mayor*. 5. to strengthen (a person) in habit, resolution, opinion, etc.: *The accident confirmed him in his fear of driving*. 6. to administer the religious rite of confirmation to. [1250-1300; **< L** *confirmare* to strengthen, confirm (see **CON-**, **FIRM**); r. ME *confirmeren* **< OF** **< L**, as above] —**con-firm-a-ble**, *adj.* —**con-firm-a-bil-ity**, *n.* —**con-firm'er**; *Law*, **con-firm-or** (kən'fōr mōr', kən fūr'mōr'), *n.* —**con-firm-ing-ly**, *adv.*

—**Syn.** 1. prove, substantiate, authenticate, validate. 4. fix. —**Ant.** 1. disprove. 3. invalidate. 4. shake.

con-firm-mand (kən'fōr mand', kən'fōr mand'), *n.* a candidate for or recipient of religious confirmation.

[1880-85; **< L** *confirmandus* to be confirmed, ger. of *confirmare* to CONFIRM]

con-firm-a-tion (kən'fōr mā'shən), *n.* 1. the act of confirming. 2. the state of being confirmed. 3. something that confirms, as a corroborative statement or piece of evidence: *His birth certificate served as confirmation of his citizenship*. 4. a rite administered to baptized persons, in some churches as a sacrament for confirming and strengthening the recipient in the Christian faith, in others as a rite without sacramental character by which the recipient is admitted to full communion with the church. 5. a solemn ceremony among Reform and certain Conservative Jews that is held in the synagogue, usually on Shavuoth, to admit formally as adult members of the Jewish community Jewish boys and girls 14 to 16 years of age who have successfully completed a prescribed course of study in Judaism. [1275-1325; ME **< L** *confirmatio* -s. of *confirmatio*. See CONFIRM, **-ATION**] —**con-firm-a-tion-al**, *adj.*

con-firm-a-to-ry (kən fūr'mə tōr'ē, -tōr'ē), *adj.* serving to confirm; corroborative. Also, **con-firm'a-tive**. [1630-40; **< ML** *confirmatorius*, equiv. to *L* *confirmā(re)* (see CONFIRM) + **-tōrius** -TOR'Y']

con-firmed (kən fūrm'd'), *adj.* 1. made certain as to truth, accuracy, validity, availability, etc.: *confirmed reports of new fighting at the front*; *confirmed reservations on the three o'clock flight to Denver*. 2. settled; ratified. 3. firmly established in a habit or condition; inveterate: a *confirmed bachelor*. 4. given additional determination; made resolute. 5. having received the religious rite of confirmation. [1350-1400; ME *confirmyd*. See CONFIRM, **-ED**] —**con-firm-ed-ly** (kən fūr'mid lē), *adv.* —**con-firm-ed-ness** (kən fūr'mid nēs, -fūrm'd'-), *n.*

con-fis-ca-ble (kən fis'kə bəl, kən'fōs kə bəl), *adj.* liable to be confiscated. [1720-30; CONFISCATE + **-ABLE**]

con-fis-cate (kən'fō skāt', kən fōs'kāt'), *v.*, **-cat-ed**, **-cat-ing**, *adj.* —**v.t.** 1. to seize as forfeited to the public domain; appropriate, by way of penalty, for public use. 2. to seize by or as if by authority; appropriate summarily: *The border guards confiscated our movie cameras*. —**adj.** 3. seized. [1525-35; **< L** *confiscatus* (p. of *confiscare* to seize for the public treasury), equiv. to **CON-** CON- + *fisc(us)* basket, moneybag, public treasury (see FISCAL) + **-ātus** -ATE'] —**con-fis-cat-a-ble**, *adj.* —**con-fis-ca-tor**, *n.*

con-fis-ca-to-ry (kən fis'kə tōr'ē, -tōr'ē), *adj.* characterized by, effecting, or resulting in confiscation. [1790-1800; CONFISCATE + **-ORY**']

con-fit (kən fē'), *n.* *French Cookery*. duck or goose cooked in its own fat and preserved. [**< F**; see **COMFIT**]

Con-fite-or (kən fit'ē ōr'), *n.* *Rom. Cath. Ch.* a prayer in the form of a general confession said at the beginning of the Mass and on certain other occasions. [150-1200; ME, after first word of Latin prayer: *I confess*]

con-fiture (kən fī chōōr'), *n.* a confection; a preserve, as of fruit. [1350-1400; ME **< MF**. See **COMFIT**, **-URE**]

con-fla-grant (kən flā'grənt), *adj.* blazing; burning; on fire. [1650-60; **< L** *conflagrant* (s. of *conflagrans*), p. of *conflagrare*. See CONFLAGRATION, **-ANT**]

con-fla-gra-tion (kən flā'grā'shən), *n.* a destructive fire, usually an extensive one. [1545-55; **< L** *conflagratio* (s. of *conflagrāre*), equiv. to *conflagrā(us)* p. of *conflagrare* to burn up (con- CON- + *flagr-* (akin to *fulgur* lightning, *flamma* FLAME, *Gk* *phlox*, see PHLOX) + **-ātus** -ATE) + **-iōn** -iōN] —**con-fla-gra-tive**, *adj.*

con-flate (kən flāt'), *v.t.*, **-flat-ed**, **-flat-ing**. to fuse into one entity; merge: *to conflate dissenting voices into one protest*. [1600-10; **< L** *conflatus*, p. of *conflare* to fuse together, equiv. to **CON-** CON- + *flare* to BLOW']

con-fla-tion (kən flā'shən), *n.* 1. the process or result of fusing items into one entity; fusion; amalgamation. 2. *Bibliog.* the combination of two variant texts into a new one. b. the text resulting from such a combination. [1400-50; late ME **< LL** *conflatio*. See **CONFLATE**, **-iōN**]

con-flict (v. kən flīkt'; n. kən'flikt'), *v.i.* 1. to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash: *The account of one eyewitness conflicted with that of the other*. *My class conflicts with my going to the concert*. 2. to fight or contend; do battle. —**n.** 3. a fight, battle, or struggle, esp. a prolonged struggle; strife. 4. controversy; quarrel: *conflicts between parties*. 5. discord of action, feeling, or effect; antagonism or opposition, as of interests or principles: *a conflict of ideas*. 6. a striking together; collision. 7. incompatibility or interference, as of one idea, desire, event, or activity with another: *a conflict in the schedule*. 8. *Psychiatry*. a mental struggle arising from opposing demands or impulses. [1375-1425; late ME (n.) **< L** *conflictus* a striking together, equiv. to *conflic(ere)* to strike together, contend (con- CON- + *fligere* to strike) + **-tus** suffix of v. action; (v.) **< L** *conflictus*, p. of *conflicere*, or by v. use of the n.] —**con-flict-ion**, *n.* —**con-flic-tive**, **con-flic-tory** (kən flīkt'vē), *adj.* —**Syn.** 1. collide, oppose. 3. encounter, siege. See **fight**. 5. contention, opposition. —**Ant.** 4. accord.

con-flict-ed (kən flīkt'ed), *adj.* full of conflicting emotions or impulses: *a situation that makes one feel very conflicted*. [CONFLICT + **-ED**']

con-flict-ing (kən flīkt'ing), *adj.* being in conflict or disagreement; not compatible: *conflicting viewpoints*. [1600-10; CONFLICT + **-ING**] —**con-flict-ing-ly**, *adv.*

con-flict of in-ter-est, 1. the circumstance of a public official, business executive, or the like, whose personal interests might benefit from his or her official actions or influence: *The senator placed his stocks in trust to avoid possible conflict of interest*. 2. the circumstance of a person who finds that one of his or her activities, interests, etc., can be advanced only at the expense of another of them. [1950-55]

con-flict of laws, 1. dissimilarity or discrepancy between the laws of different legal orders, such as states or

principles in a matter that each legal order wishes to regulate. 2. Also called **private international law**, the branch of law dealing with the determination of the law applicable to a private-law matter, of the legal order having jurisdiction to adjudicate such a matter, and of another legal order is to be recognized and enforced locally.

con-flu-ence (kən'flō əns), *n.* 1. a flowing together of two or more streams, rivers, or the like: *the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers*. 2. the place of junction: *St. Louis is at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers*. 3. a body of water formed by the flowing together of two or more streams, rivers, or the like. 4. a coming together of people or things; concourse. 5. a crowd or throng; assemblage. Also, **con-flux** (kən'fluks). [1375-1425; late ME (**< MF**) **< LL** *confluentia*; see CONFLUENT, **-ENCE**] —**Syn.** 4. union, joining, meeting.

con-flu-ent (kən'flō ənt), *adj.* 1. flowing or running together; blending into one: *confluent rivers*; *confluent ideas*. 2. *Pathol.* a. running together: *confluent efflorescences*. b. characterized by confluent efflorescences: *confluent smallpox*. —**n.** 3. one of two or more confluent streams. 4. a tributary stream. [1425-75; late ME (**< MF**) **< L** *confluent* (s. of *confluens*, p. of *confluere* to flow together), equiv. to **CON-** CON- + *flu-* (s. of *fluere* to flow) + **-ent** -ENT; see FLUENT, FLUID]

con-fo-cal (kən fō'kəl), *adj.* *Math.* having the same focus or foci. [1865-70; **CON-** + FOCAL]

con-form (kən fōrm'), *v.i.* 1. to act in accordance or harmony; comply (usually fol. by *to*): *to conform to rules*. 2. to act in accord with the prevailing standards, attitudes, practices, etc., of society or a group: *One has to conform in order to succeed in this company*. 3. to be or become similar in form, nature, or character. 4. to be in harmony or accord. 5. to comply with the usages of an established church, esp. the Church of England. —**v.t.** 6. to make similar in form, nature, or character. 7. to bring into agreement, correspondence, or harmony. —**adj.** 8. *Archaic*. conformable. [1275-1325; ME *confo(u)rmen* **< AF, MF** *conformer* **< L** *conformāre* to shape. See **CON-**, **FORM**] —**con-form'er**, *n.* —**con-form-ing-ly**, *adv.* —**Syn.** 1. yield, agree, consent. 3. correspond, agree, tally. 7. adapt, adjust, accommodate. —**Ant.** 1, 5. dissent. 3. differ.

con-form-a-ble (kən fōr'mə bəl), *adj.* 1. corresponding in form, nature, or character; similar. 2. compliant; obedient; submissive: *a conformable disposition*. 3. *Geol.* of or pertaining to an unbroken sequence of strata or beds, characteristic of uninterrupted deposition. See **illus.** under **unconformable**. [1425-75; late ME. See **CONFORM**, **-ABLE**]

con-form-al (kən fōr'məl), *adj.* of, pertaining to, or noting a map or transformation in which angles and scale are preserved. [1640-50; **< LL** *conformalis* of the same shape. See **CON-**, **FORMAL**']

con-form-al projec-tion, *Cartog.* a map projection in which angles formed by lines of latitude and longitude made using this projection preserves the shape of any small area. Also called **orthomorphic projection**.

con-form-ance (kən fōr'məns), *n.* the act of conforming; conformity. [1600-10; **CONFORM** + **-ANCE**]

con-form-a-tion (kən'fōr mā'shən), *n.* 1. manner of formation; structure; form, as of a physical entity. 2. symmetrical disposition or arrangement of parts. 3. the act or process of conforming; adaptation; adjustment. 4. the state of being conformed. 5. *Chem.* an atomic spatial arrangement that results from rotation of carbon atoms about single bonds within an organic molecule. (contrasted with *configuration*). [1505-15; **< L** *conformatio* (s. of *conformatio*), equiv. to *conformat(us)* p. of *conformāre* to shape (con- CON- + *formā*(a) FORM + **-āt(us)** -ATE) + **-iōn** -iōN] —**con-for-ma-tion-al**, *adj.* —**Syn.** 1. configuration, shape.

con-form-ist (kən fōr'mist), *n.* 1. a person who conforms, esp. unquestioningly, to the usual practices or standards of a group, society, etc. 2. (often *cap.*) a person who conforms to the usages of an established church, esp. the Church of England. —**adj.** 3. of or characterized by conforming, esp. in action or appearance. [1625-35; **CONFORM** + **-IST**] —**con-form-ism**, *n.*

con-form-i-ty (kən fōr'mē tē), *n.*, *pl.* **-ties**. 1. action in accord with prevailing social standards, attitudes, practices, etc. 2. correspondence in form, nature, or character; agreement, congruity, or accordance. 3. compliance or acquiescence; obedience. 4. (often *cap.*) compliance with the usages of an established church, esp. the Church of England. 5. *Geol.* the relationship between adjacent conformable strata. Cf. **unconformity** (def. 2a). [1375-1425; late ME *conformitate* **< MF** **< LL** *conformatitas*. See **CONFORM**, **-ITY**]

con-found (kən fəund', kən-; for 6 usually kən'fəund'), *v.t.* 1. to perplex or amaze, esp. by a sudden disturbance or surprise; bewilder; confuse: *The complicated directions confounded him*. 2. to throw into confusion or disorder: *The revolution confounded the people*. 3. to throw into increased confusion or disorder. 4. to treat or regard erroneously as identical; mix or associate by mistake: *truth confounded with error*. 5. to mingle so that the elements cannot be distinguished or separated. 6. to damn (used in mild imprecations): *Confound it!* 7. to contradict or refute: *to confound their arguments*. 8. to put to shame; abash. 9. *Archaic*. a. to defeat or overthrow. b. to bring to ruin or naught. Obs. to spend uselessly; waste. [1250-1300; ME *confounden* **< AF** *confondre* **< L** *confundere* to mix, equiv. to **CON-** CON- + *fundere* to pour] —**con-found'a-ble**, *adj.* —**con-found'er**, *n.* —**con-found-ing-ly**, *adv.* —**Syn.** 1. dumbfound, daze, nonpluss, astound.

con-found-ed (kən fəund'ed, kən-), *adj.* 1. bewildered; confused; perplexed. 2. damned (used euphemistically): *That is a confounded lie*. [1325-75; ME; see **CONFOUND**, **-ED**] —**con-found-ed-ly**, *adv.* —**con-found-ed-ness**, *n.*

CONCISE ETYMOLOGY KEY: **<**, descended or borrowed from; **>**, whence; b, blend of; blended; c, cognate with; cf., compare; deriv., derivative; equiv., equivalent; imit., imitative; obl., oblique; r, replacing; s, stem; sp., spelling, spelled; resp., respelling, respelled; trans., translation; ? , origin unknown; †, unattested; ‡, probably earlier than. See the full key inside the front cover.