

**absent** ADJECTIVE Something that is absent is not present in a place or situation. **absence** NOUN

**absentee**, absentees NOUN someone who is not present when they should be.

**absent-minded** ADJECTIVE forgetful.

**absolute** ADJECTIVE ① total and complete • *absolute honesty*.

② having total power • *the absolute ruler*. **absolutely** ADVERB

**absolute zero** NOUN [SCIENCE]

Absolute zero is the lowest temperature possible, and is equal to 0 kelvins, or -273.15° centigrade.

**absolve**, absolves, absolving, absolved VERB To absolve someone of something is to state they are not to blame for it.

**absorb**, absorbs, absorbing, absorbed VERB [SCIENCE] If something absorbs liquid or gas, it soaks it up.

SIMILAR WORDS: soak up, take in

**absorbent** ADJECTIVE Absorbent materials soak up liquid easily.

**absorption** NOUN ① the soaking up of a liquid. ② great interest in something • *my father's absorption in his business affairs*.

**abstain**, abstains, abstaining, abstained VERB ① If you abstain from something, you do not do it or have it • *The patients had to abstain from alcohol*. ② If you abstain in a vote, you do not vote. **abstention** NOUN

SIMILAR WORDS: ① forbear, keep from, refrain

**abstinence** NOUN Abstinence is deliberately not doing something you enjoy.

**abstract** ADJECTIVE [Said *ab-strakt*] ① An abstract idea is based

on thoughts and ideas rather than physical objects or events, for example 'bravery'. ② [ART] Abstract art is a style of art which uses shapes rather than images of people or objects. ③ Abstract nouns refer to qualities or ideas rather than to physical objects, for example 'happiness' or 'a question'. **abstraction** NOUN

**absurd** ADJECTIVE ridiculous and stupid. **absurdly** ADVERB **absurdity** NOUN

SIMILAR WORDS: ludicrous, preposterous, ridiculous

**abundance** NOUN Something that exists in abundance exists in large numbers • *an abundance of wildlife*. SIMILAR WORDS: plenty, profusion

**abundant** ADJECTIVE present in large quantities. **abundantly** ADVERB

**abuse**, abuses [Said *ab-yoose*] NOUN ① cruel treatment of someone • *child abuse*. ② rude and unkind remarks directed towards someone. ③ the wrong use of something • *an abuse of power* • *alcohol abuse*.

**abuse**, abuses, abusing, abused [Said *ab-yooze*] VERB ① If you abuse someone, you speak insultingly to them. ② To abuse someone also means to treat them cruelly. ③ If you abuse something, you use it wrongly or for a bad purpose. **abuser** NOUN SIMILAR WORDS: ① ill-treatment, injury, maltreatment ② ill-treat, maltreat

**abusive** ADJECTIVE rude and unkind. **abusively** ADVERB **abusiveness** NOUN

**abysmal** [Said *ab-biz-ml*] ADJECTIVE very bad indeed • *an abysmal performance*. **abysmally** ADVERB

**abyss**, abysses NOUN a very deep hole. WORD HISTORY: from Greek *abussos* meaning 'bottomless'

**acacia**, acacias [Said *a-kay-sha*] NOUN a type of thorny shrub with small yellow or white flowers.

**academic**, academics ADJECTIVE

① Academic work is work done in a school, college, or university. ► NOUN ② someone who teaches or does research in a college or university.

**academically** ADVERB

**academy**, academies NOUN ① a school or college, usually one that specializes in one particular subject • *the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art*.

② an organization of scientists, artists, writers, or musicians. WORD HISTORY: from Greek *akadēmeia*, the name of the grove where Plato taught

**a cappella** ADJECTIVE OR ADVERB

[MUSIC] without musical accompaniment • *We decided to sing it a cappella* • *an a cappella version of MyWay*

WORD HISTORY: an Italian phrase meaning 'according to (the style of the) chapel'

**accelerate**, accelerates, accelerating, accelerated VERB To accelerate is to go faster.

**acceleration** NOUN the rate at which the speed of something is increasing.

**accelerator**, accelerators NOUN the pedal in a vehicle which you press to make it go faster.

**accent**, accents NOUN ① a way of pronouncing a language • *She had an Australian accent*. ② a mark placed above or below a letter in some languages, which affects the way the letter is pronounced. ③ [ENGLISH] stress placed on a particular word, syllable, or note • *In Icelandic the accent usually falls on the first syllable of a word*. ④ an emphasis on something • *The accent is on action and special effects*.

**accentuate**, accentuates, accentuating, accentuated VERB To accentuate a feature of something is to make it more noticeable.

**accept**, accepts, accepting, accepted VERB ① If you accept something, you say yes to it or take it from someone. ② If you accept a situation, you realize that it cannot be changed • *He accepts criticism as part of his job*. ③ If you accept a statement or story, you believe it is true • *The board accepted his explanation*. ④ If a group accepts you, they treat you as one of the group.

**acceptance** NOUN

WORD HISTORY: from Latin *ad* meaning 'to' and *capere* meaning 'to take'

SPELLING TIP

Do not confuse the spellings of *accept* and *except*: *Please accept my apologies; He works every day except Tuesday*.

**acceptable** ADJECTIVE good enough to be accepted. **acceptably** ADVERB

**access**, accesses, accessing, accessed NOUN ① the right or opportunity to enter a place or to use something. ► VERB ② If you access information from a computer, you get it.

**accessible** ADJECTIVE ① easily reached or seen • *The village was accessible by foot only*. ② easily understood or used • *guidebooks which present information in a clear and accessible style*. **accessibility** NOUN

**accession** NOUN A ruler's accession is the time when he or she becomes the ruler of a country.

**accessory**, accessories NOUN ① an extra part. ② someone who helps another person commit a crime.

**accident**, accidents NOUN ① an unexpected event in which people

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