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Plauen (German 'pləuən) *n* a city in E central Germany, in Saxony; textile centre. Pop: 70 070 (2003 est)

plausible ('plɔ:zəbl̩) *adj* 1 apparently reasonable, valid, truthful, etc: a plausible excuse 2 apparently trustworthy or believable: a plausible speaker [C16: from Latin *plausibilis* 'worthy of applause, from *plaudere* to APPLAUD]

▶ **plausibility** or **plausibleness** *n* ▶ **plausibly** *adv*

plausive ('plɔ:sɪv) *adj* 1 expressing praise or approval; applauding 2 obsolete plausible

plaustral ('plɔ:stɹəl) *adj* obsolete relating to wagons

Plautus ('plɔ:təs) *n* Titus Maccius ('tɪtəs 'mæksɪəs). ?254–?184 BC, Roman comic dramatist. His 21 extant works, adapted from Greek plays, esp those by Menander, include *Menaechmi* (the basis of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*), *Miles Gloriosus*, *Rudens*, and *Captivi*

play (pleɪ) *vb* 1 to occupy oneself in (a sport or diversion); amuse oneself in (a game) 2 (tr) to contend against (an opponent) in a sport or game: Ed played Tony at chess and lost 3 to fulfil or cause to fulfil (a particular role) in a team game: he plays defence; he plays in the defence 4 (tr) to address oneself to (a ball) in a game: play the ball not the man 5 (intr; often foll by *about* or *around*) to behave carelessly, esp in a way that is unconsciously cruel or hurtful; trifle or dally (with): to play about with a young girl's affections 6 (when intr; often foll by *at*) to perform or act the part (of) in or as in a dramatic production; assume or simulate the role (of): to play the villain; just what are you playing at? 7 to act out or perform (a dramatic production) 8 to give a performance in (a place) or (of a performance) to be given in a place 9 (intr) to be received: How will these policies play in Middle England? 10 to have the ability to perform on (a musical instrument): David plays the harp 11 to perform (on a musical instrument) as specified: he plays out of tune 12 (tr) a to reproduce (a tune, melody, piece of music, note, etc) on an instrument b to perform works by (a specific composer): to play Brahms 13 to discharge or cause to discharge: he played the water from the hose onto the garden 14 to operate, esp to cause (a record player, radio, etc) to emit sound or (of a record player, radio, etc) to emit (sound): he played a record; the radio was playing loudly 15 to move or cause to move freely, quickly, or irregularly: lights played on the scenery 16 (tr) stock exchange to speculate or operate aggressively for gain in (a market) 17 (tr) angling to attempt to tire (a hooked fish) by alternately letting out and reeling in line and by using the rod's flexibility 18 to put (a card, counter, piece, etc) into play 19 to gamble (money) on a game 20 **play ball** informal to cooperate 21 **play fair** or **play fair with someone** to prove oneself fair in one's dealings 22 **play false** or **play false with someone** to prove oneself unfair in one's dealings 23 **play by ear** See *ear* 1 (19) 24 **play for time** to delay the outcome of some activity so as to gain time to one's own advantage 25 **play into the hands of** to act directly to the advantage of (an opponent) 26 **play the fool** See *fool* 1 (7) 27 **play the game** See *game* 1 (22) ▶ *n* 28 a dramatic composition written for performance by actors on a stage, on television, etc; drama 29 a the performance of a dramatic composition b (in combination): playreader 30 a games, exercise, or other activity undertaken for pleasure, diversion, etc; esp by children b (in combination): playroom c (as modifier): play dough 31 manner of action, conduct, or playing: fair play 32 the playing or conduct of a game or the period during which a game is in progress: rain stopped play 33 US and Canadian a move or manoeuvre in a game; a brilliant play 34 the situation of a ball that is within the defined area and being played according to the rules (in the phrases *in play*, *out of play*) 35 a turn to play: it's my play 36 the act of playing for stakes; gambling 37 action, activity, or operation: the play of the imagination 38 freedom of or scope or space for movement: too much play in the rope 39 light, free, or rapidly shifting motion: the play of light on the water 40 fun, jest, or joking: I only did it in play 41 **call into play** to bring into operation 42 **make a play for** informal a to make an obvious attempt to gain b to attempt to attract or seduce [Old English *plega* (n), *plegan* (vb); related to Middle Dutch *pleyen*] ▶ **playability** *n*

▶ **playable** *adj* ▶ **play-act** *vb* 1 (intr) to pretend or make believe 2 (intr) to behave in an overdramatic or affected manner 3 to act in or as in (a play)

▶ **play-acting** *n* ▶ **play-actor** *n* ▶ **play along** *vb* (adverb) 1 (intr; usually foll by *with*) to cooperate (with), esp as a temporary measure 2 (tr) to manipulate as if in a game, esp for one's own advantage: he played the widow along until she gave him her money ▶ **playback** ('pleɪbæk) *n* 1 the act or process of reproducing a recording, esp on magnetic tape 2 the part of a tape recorder serving to reproduce or used for reproducing recorded material 3 (modifier) of or relating to the reproduction of signals from a recording: the playback head of a tape recorder ▶ *vb* **play back** (adverb) 4 to reproduce (recorded material) on (a magnetic tape) by means of a tape recorder ▶ **playbill** ('pleɪbɪl) *n* 1 a poster or bill advertising a play 2 the programme of a play ▶ **playbook** ('pleɪbʊk) *n* 1 a book containing a range of possible set plays 2 a notional range of possible tactics in any sphere of activity ▶ **playboy** ('pleɪbɔɪ) *n* a man, esp one of private means, who devotes himself to the pleasures of nightclubs, expensive holiday resorts, female company, etc ▶ **playbus** ('pleɪbas) *n* Brit a mobile playground ▶ **play-by-play** *adj* (of a sports commentary) reporting details of every phase of the match as it happens ▶ **play-centre** *n* NZ a regular meeting of small children arranged by their parents or a welfare agency to give them an opportunity of supervised creative play. Also called (esp in Britain): playgroup ▶ **playdate** ('pleɪdeɪt) *n* a gathering of children at a house for play ▶ **play-day** *n* a day given to play ▶ **playdough** ('pleɪdəʊ) *n* a soft modelling material used by children. Also called (trademark): Play-Doh ▶ **play down** *vb* (tr, adverb) to make little or light of; minimize the

importance of ▶ **player** ('pleɪə) *n* 1 a person who participates in or is skilled at some game or sport 2 a person who plays a game or sport professionally 3 a person who plays a musical instrument 4 an actor 5 informal a participant, esp a powerful one, in a particular field of activity: a leading city player 6 See *record player* 7 the playing mechanism in a Pianola ▶ **player-manager** *n* a player who plays in a sports team and also manages it ▶ **player piano** *n* a mechanical piano; Pianola ▶ **playfield** ('pleɪfɪld) *n* a field for sports or public festivities ▶ **playful** ('pleɪfʊl) *adj* 1 full of high spirits and fun: a playful kitten 2 good-natured and humorous: a playful remark ▶ **playfully** *adv* ▶ **playfulness** *n* ▶ **playgirl** ('pleɪgɜ:l) *n* 1 a rich woman devoted to pleasure 2 informal an actress ▶ **playgoer** ('pleɪgəʊə) *n* a person who goes to theatre performances, esp frequently ▶ **playgoing** ('pleɪgəʊɪŋ) *theatre* *n* 1 the activity of attending the theatre ▶ *adj* 2 characterized by attending the theatre ▶ **playground** ('pleɪgraʊnd) *n* 1 an outdoor area for children's play, esp one having swings, slides, etc, or adjoining a school 2 a place or region particularly popular as a sports or holiday resort 3 a sphere of activity: reading was his private playground ▶ **playgroup** ('pleɪgru:p) *n* a regular meeting of small children arranged by their parents or a welfare agency to give them an opportunity of supervised creative play. See also *preschool*, *playschool* ▶ **playhouse** ('pleɪhaʊs) *n* 1 a theatre where live dramatic performances are given 2 a toy house, small room, etc, for children to play in ▶ **playing** ('pleɪɪŋ) *n* 1 the act of taking part in a game or sport 2 the act of performing a piece of music ▶ **playing card** *n* one of a pack of 52 rectangular stiff cards, used for playing a variety of games, each card having one or more symbols of the same kind (diamonds, hearts, clubs, or spades) on the face, but an identical design on the reverse. See also *suit* (4) ▶ **playing field** *n* chiefly Brit a field or open space used for sport ▶ **playland** ('pleɪlənd) *n* a playground ▶ **playleader** ('pleɪli:ðə) *n* a person who leads or assists with organized children's play ▶ **playless** ('pleɪlɪs) *adj* having no play ▶ **playlet** ('pleɪlɪt) *n* a short play ▶ **playlist** ('pleɪlɪst) *n* 1 a list of records chosen for playing, as on a radio station 2 a list of tracks to be played in a particular order on an MP3 player or CD player ▶ *vb* 3 (tr) to put (a song or record) on a playlist ▶ **play-lunch** *n* NZ a schoolchild's mid-morning snack ▶ **playmaker** ('pleɪmeɪkə) *n* sport a player whose role is to create scoring opportunities for his or her team-mates ▶ **playmaking** ('pleɪmeɪkɪŋ) *n* sport the initiating of offensive plays in sports ▶ **playmate** ('pleɪmeɪt) or **playfellow** *n* a friend or partner in play or recreation: childhood playmates ▶ **play off** *vb* (adverb) 1 (tr; usually foll by *against*) to deal with or manipulate as if in playing a game: to play one person off against another 2 (intr) to take part in a play-off ▶ *n* **play-off** 3 sport an extra contest to decide the winner when two or more competitors are tied 4 chiefly US and Canadian a contest or series of games to determine a championship, as between the winners of two competitions ▶ **play-off** *n* 1 an extra period that is played to decide the winner of a game 2 a game that is played to decide the winner of a competition ▶ **play on** *vb* (intr) 1 (adverb) to continue to play 2 Also: **play upon** (preposition) to exploit or impose upon (the feelings or weakness of another) to one's own advantage 3 (adverb) cricket to hit the ball into one's own wicket ▶ **play on words** *n* another term for *pun* 1 (1) ▶ **play out** *vb* (adverb) 1 (tr) to finish: let's play the game out if we aren't too late 2 (tr; often passive) informal to use up or exhaust 3 (tr) to release gradually: he played the rope out 4 (intr) to happen or turn out: Let's wait and see how things play out ▶ **playpen** ('pleɪpen) *n* a small enclosure, usually portable, in which a young child can be left to play in safety ▶ **playroom** ('pleɪru:m, -rɒm) *n* a recreation room, esp for children ▶ **playschool** ('pleɪsku:l) *n* an informal nursery group taking preschool children in half-day sessions. Also called: playgroup ▶ **playslip** ('pleɪslɪp) *n* a form used to nominate numbers in a lottery draw ▶ **playsome** ('pleɪsəm) *adj* another word for *playful* ▶ **PlayStation** ('pleɪsteɪʃən) *n* trademark a video games console ▶ **playsuit** ('pleɪsɜ:t, -sju:t) *n* a woman's or child's outfit, usually comprising shorts and a top ▶ **play-the-ball** *n* rugby league a method for bringing the ball back into play after a tackle, in which the tackled player is allowed to stand up and kick or heel the ball behind him or her to a team-mate ▶ **plaything** ('pleɪθɪŋ) *n* 1 a toy 2 a person regarded or treated as a toy: he thinks she is just his plaything ▶ **playtime** ('pleɪtaɪm) *n* a time for play or recreation, esp the school break ▶ **play up** *vb* (adverb) 1 (tr) to emphasize or highlight: to play up one's best features 2 Brit informal to behave irritatingly (towards) 3 (intr) Brit informal (of a machine, car, etc) to function erratically: the car is playing up again 4 Brit informal to hurt; give (one) pain or trouble: my back's playing me up again 5 **play up to** a to support (another actor) in a performance b to try to gain favour with by flattery ▶ **playwear** ('pleɪweə) *n* a set of clothing suitable for playing in ▶ **play with** *vb* (intr, preposition) 1 to consider without giving deep thought to or coming to a conclusion concerning: we're playing with the idea of emigrating 2 to behave carelessly with: to play with a girl's affections 3 to fiddle or mess about with: he's just playing with his food ▶ **playwright** ('pleɪraɪt) *n* a person who writes plays ▶ **playwriting** or **playwrighting** ('pleɪraɪtɪŋ) *n* the writing of plays

plaja ('plɑ:jə; Spanish 'plaja) *n* (in the US) a temporary lake, or its dry often salty bed, in a desert basin [Spanish: shore, from Late Latin *plagia*, from Greek *plagios* slanting, from *plagos* side; compare French *plage* beach]

Player ('pleɪə) *n* Gary ('gæɪrɪ), born 1935, South African golfer; winner of nine major championships (1959–78), including the British Open (1959, 1968, 1974)

plaza ('plɑ:zə; Spanish 'plaθa) *n* 1 an open space or square, esp in Spain or a Spanish-speaking country 2 chiefly US and Canadian a modern complex of