

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD™ COLLEGE DICTIONARY

Fourth Edition

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one person or thing, or in languages having dual number, more than two — *n. Gram.* 1 the plural number 2 the plural form of a word 3 a word in plural form

plural-ism (pluor'ə liz'əm) *n.* 1 the quality or condition of being plural, or of existing in more than one part or form 2 the holding by one person of more than one office or church benefice at the same time 3 a) the existence within a nation or society of groups distinctive in ethnic origin, cultural patterns, religion, or the like b) a policy of favoring the preservation of such groups within a given nation or society 4 *Philos.* the theory that reality is composed of a multiplicity of ultimate beings, principles, or substances — cf. DUALISM, MONISM — **plural-ist** *n.*, **adj.** — **plural-ist-ic** *adj. — **plural-ist-ically** *adv.**

plural-ity (pluor'ə lē) *n.*, *pl.* -ties [ME *pluralité* < MFr *pluralité* < L *pluralitas*] 1 the condition of being plural or numerous 2 a great number; multitude 3 a) the holding of two or more church benefices at the same time b) any of the benefices so held 4 the number of votes in an election that the leading candidate obtains over the next highest candidate [if candidate A gets 65 votes, B gets 40, and C gets 35, then A has a *plurality* of 25] 5 MAJORITY (sense 1)

plural-ize (pluor'ə liz') *vt.*, *vi.* -ized', -iz'-ing [Fr *pluraliser*] to make or become plural in form or number — **plural-iz-a-tion** *n.* — **plural-izer** *n.*

plural-ly (pluor'ə lē) *adv.* in the plural number or in a plural sense

pluri- (pluor'ə) [L < *plus* (gen. *pluris*), several: see PLUS] combining form several or many

pluri-axial (pluor'ə ak'sē ə) *adj.* [prec. + AXIAL] Bot. having several axes; specif., having flowers on secondary shoots

plus (plush) *prep.* [L. more < IE **pleyos*, compar. of **pelu-*, much < base **pel-*, > FULL] 1 added to [2 plus 2 equals 4] 2 increased by; based on [salary plus bonus] 3 [informal] with the addition of [he returned wiser and plus \$300] — **adj.** 1 indicating or involving addition [a plus sign] 2 positive [a plus quantity] 3 somewhat higher than [a grade of B plus] 4 involving extra gain or advantage [plus sales, a plus factor] 5 [informal] and more [she has personality plus] 6 Bot. designating one of two strains of certain fungi and algae which only mate with the opposite (minus) strain — *cf.* Elec. POSITIVE (the plus terminal) — **adv.**, *conj.* [informal] in addition; moreover; and [we have the time, plus we have the money] — *n.*, *pl.* **pluses** or **plus'es** 1 a plus sign 2 an added or favorable quantity or thing 3 a positive quantity

plus à change, **plus c'est la même chose** (plü sä shän'zh', plü se lä mēm shōz') [Fr. lit., the more it changes, the more it is the same thing] the more things change, the more they stay the same

plus fours [orig. a tailoring term indicating an added four inches of material for overlap below the knee] loose knickerbockers, esp. formerly, for active sports

plush (plush) *n.* [Fr. *pluiche* < *peluche* < OFr *peluchier*, to pluck < VL *pellucare*: see PLUCK] a fabric with a soft, thick, deep pile — **adj.** 1 of or made of plush 2 [informal] luxurious, as in furnishings

plushy (plush'ē) *adj.* plush'-er, plush'-est 1 of or like plush 2 [informal] luxurious; plush — **plush-ily** *adv.* — **plush-iness** *n.*

plus sign the sign (+) indicating addition or positive quantity

plus size any of a series of sizes in women's garments for full figures

Plu-tarch (pluor'tärk) A.D. 46?-120?; Gr. biographer & historian

plu-teus (pluot'ē ə) *n.*, *pl.* -tes' (-tē) [ModL < L, shelf, backrest < IE **plouto-*, structure of boards] 1 [informal, chiefly, rafter]: from being shaped like a painter's easel 2 Zool. the free-swimming, ciliated, larval stage of sea urchins and brittle stars, characterized by elongated, slender arms

Pluto (pluot'ə) *n.* [L < Gr *Ploutōn* < *ploutos*, wealth: see fol.] 1 *Gr. & Rom. Myth.* the god ruling over the lower world: also called *Hades* by the Greeks and *Dis* or *Orcus* by the Romans 2 the smallest planet of the solar system and the ninth in average distance from the sun: diameter, c. 2,270 km (c. 1,410 mi); period of revolution, c. 248.59 earth years; period of rotation (retrograde), 6.39 earth days; one satellite; symbol, ♇

plu-to-racy (pluot'ä rä sē) *n.*, *pl.* -cies [Gr *ploutokratia* < *ploutos*, wealth, akin to *plein*, to float, swim < IE base **pel-* > FULL] + *kratein*, to rule] 1 government by a government of wealthy people who control or influence a government

plu-to-crat (pluot'ä krät') *n.* [L < Gr *ploutos*, wealth: see prec.] + *-crat*] 1 a member of a wealthy ruling class 2 a person whose wealth is the source of control or great influence — **plu-to-crat-ic** *adj. — **plu-to-crat-ically** *adv.**

plu-ton (pluot'tän) *n.* Geol. a mass of intrusive igneous rock

Plu-ton-ian (pluot'tōn-ē ə) *adj.* [L *Plutonium* < Gr *Ploutōn*] of or like Pluto or the infernal regions

Plu-ton-ic (pluot'tän'ik) *adj.* [L < L *Pluto* (gen. *Plutonis*) + -ic] 1 *Plutonian* 2 [l-] Geol. formed at great depth by intense heat and pressure: said of rock, esp. intrusive igneous rock, that is typically coarse-grained and graniticlike

plu-to-nium (pluot'tōn-ē ə) *n.* [ModL, after PLUTO (planet)] + -IUM: so named (1942) by G. T. SEABORG, E. M. MCMILLAN, A. C. WAHL (1917-), & J. W. KENNEDY (1916-57), U.S. physicists who isolated it (1940), because next to neptunium, as *Pluto* comes next to *Neptune* a radioactive, metallic chemical element, one of the actinides, found in trace quantities in native uranium ores and produced by bombarding uranium with neutrons: atomic no. 94, its most important isotope (plutonium-239) is used in nuclear weapons and as a reactor fuel: see the periodic table of elements in the Reference Supplement

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pluralism / pneumology

Plu-tus (pluot'əs) *n.* [L < Gr *Ploutos* < *ploutos*, wealth: see PLUTOCRACY] *Gr. Myth.* the blind god of wealth

plu-vial (plu'vī ə) *adj.* [L *pluvialis* < *pluvia*, rain < IE **pleu-*, to flow, pour < base **pel-*, to pour, fill > FULL, L *pluere*] 1 a) of or having to do with rain b) having much rain 2 Geol. formed by the action of rain

plu-vi-om-eter (plu'vī əm'ət ər) *n.* [L < L *pluvia*, rain (see prec.) + -METER] RAIN GAUGE — **plu-vi-om-et'ric** (-ə m'et'rik) *adj.* — **plu-vi-om-etry** *n.*

plu-vi-ose (plu'vī əs) *adj.* [L *pluviosus* < *pluvia*: see PLUVIAL] characterized by much rain; rainy: also plu'v-i-ous (-əs) — **plu-vi-osity** (-əs'ə tē) *n.*

ply¹ (pli) *vt.* **plied**, **ply-ing** [ME *plien* < OFr *plier* < L *plicare*, to fold < IE base **plek-*, to entwine > FLAX] [Now Rare] to bend, twist, fold, or mold — *vi.* [Obs.] to bend or submit — *n.*, *pl.* **plies** [ME *plri* < the *v.*] 1 a single thickness, fold, or layer, as of doubled cloth, plywood, etc. 2 one of the twisted strands in rope, yarn, etc. 3 a) the state of being bent or twisted b) bias or inclination — **adj.** having (a specified number of) layers, thicknesses, or strands: usually in hyphenated compounds [three-ply]

ply² (pli) *vt.* **plied**, **ply-ing** [ME *plien*, apothecary for *applier*, APPLY] 1 to do work with; wield or use [a tool, faculty, etc.], esp. with energy 2 to work at [a trade] 3 to address (someone) urgently and constantly [with questions, etc.] 4 to keep supplying [with gifts, food, drink, etc.] 5 to sail regularly back and forth across [boats ply the channel] — *vi.* 1 to keep busy or work [at something or with a tool, etc.] 2 to travel regularly [between places]: said of ships, buses, etc. 3 [Old Poet.] to steer a course — **SYN.** HANDLE

Ply-mouth (plim'θ) 1 seaport in Devonshire, SW England, on the English Channel: county district pop. 243,000 2 a seaport on the English seaport town on the SE coast of Mass.: settled by the Pilgrims (1620) as the 1st permanent colonial settlement (Plymouth Colony) in New England: pop. 52,000

Plymouth Rock¹ [after fol.] any of a breed of domestic chicken with white or gray, barred plumage: formerly raised esp. for its eggs and meat, now usually kept for crossbreeding

Plymouth Rock² boulder at Plymouth, Mass., where the Pilgrims who sailed on the *Mayflower* are said to have landed in 1620

ply-wood (plī'wud) *n.* [PLY¹ + WOOD] a construction material made of thin layers of wood glued and pressed together, usually with their grains at right angles to one another

Přezh (pul'žen ə) city in W Czech Republic: pop. 172,000

pm abbrev. 1 phase modulation 2 postmortem: also *p.m.* 3 pre-mium

Pm Chem. symbol for promethium

PM abbrev. 1 [L *post meridiem*] after noon: used to designate the time from noon to midnight: also *P.M.* or *p.m.* or *pm* 2 Past Master 3 Paymaster 4 Police Magistrate 5 Postmaster 6 Prime Minister 7 Provost Marshal

PMG abbrev. 1 Paymaster General 2 Postmaster General

pmk abbrev. postmark

PMS abbrev. PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME

P/N, PN, p/n, or pn abbrev. promissory note

pneum- (nūm, nyūm) combining form PNEUMO-: used before a vowel

pneuma (nūm'mə, nyūm'ə) *n.* [Gr < *pnein*, to breathe < IE echoic base **pneu-*, to wheeze, breathe > OE *fneosan*, to SNEEZE] the soul or spirit

pneu-matic (nūm'tä'ik, nyūm'ə) *adj.* [L *pneumaticus* < Gr *pneumatikos* < *pneuma*, breath: see prec.] 1 of or containing wind, air, or gases 2 a) filled with compressed air [pneumatic tire] b) worked by compressed air [pneumatic drill] 3 [informal] having a full, shapely figure; often, specif., having large breasts: said of a woman 4 Theol. having to do with the spirit or soul 5 Zool. having hollows filled with air, as certain bones in birds — **pneu-mat-ically** *adv.*

pneu-mat-ics (-iks) *n.* the branch of physics that deals with the mechanical properties of air and other gases

pneumat- (nūm'tə-, -tə; nyūm'ə; nūm'tə-, -tə; nyūm'ə) [L < Gr *pneuma* (gen. *pneumatōs*), air, spirit, breath < *pnein*: see PNEUMA] combining form 1 the presence of air or vapor [pneumatolysis] 2 breathing [pneumatometer] 3 spirit [pneumatology]

pneu-ma-to-log-ic (nūm'mə täl'ə-jē, nyūm'ə) *n.* [prec. + -LOGY] Theol. 1 the study of spirits or spiritual phenomena 2 any doctrine on the Holy Spirit — **pneu-ma-to-log-ic** (-tə lā-jē'ik) *adj.* or **pneu-ma-to-log-ical**

pneu-ma-to-ly-sis (-täl'ē sis) *n.* [ModL: see PNEUMATO- & -LYSIS] the process of rock alteration and mineral formation by the action of gases emitted from solidifying igneous rocks — **pneu-ma-to-lytic** (-tə lē'ik) *adj.*

pneu-ma-to-m-eter (nūm'mə tām'ət ər, nyūm'ə) *n.* *Physiol.* an instrument for measuring the capacity or force of the lungs in respiration

pneu-ma-to-phore (nūm'mə tō fōr', -tə; nyūm'ə; nūm'tə-, -tə; nyūm'ə) *n.* 1 Bot. a porous, wood, specialized branch growing upright into the air from the buried roots of certain swamp trees, as the mangrove, and providing access to the atmosphere 2 Zool. a polyp with a gas-filled cavity in siphonophore hydrozoans, serving as a float for the colony

pneu-mec-tomy (nūm mek'tə mē, nyūm'ə) *n.*, *pl.* -mies the surgical removal of all or part of a lung

See the inside front cover for pronunciation information.

The symbol * is used to mark terms of American origin.