

Webster's
New
Collegiate
Dictionary

A Merriam-Webster



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New Collegiate Dictionary

A Merriam-Webster®

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op-pugn \ə-ˈpyūn, ä-ˈ\ *v* [ME *oppugnare*, fr. L *oppugnare*, fr. *ob-* against + *pugnare* to fight — more at *OB-PUGNANT*] 1: to fight against: ASSAIL 2: to call in question — **op-pugn-er** *n*
Ops \ˈɒps\ *n* [L]: the Roman goddess of fertility and plenty and the wife of Saturn
op-sin \ˈɒp-sən\ *n* [prob. back-formation fr. *rhodopsin*]: any of various colorless proteins that are formed with retinal by the action of light on a visual pigment (as rhodopsin)
op-sis \ˈɒp-səs\ *n* *comb. form*, *pl* **op-ses** \-sēz\ or **op-si-des** \-sə-dēz\ [NL, fr. Gk, fr. *opsis* appearance, vision]: structure resembling a (specified) thing <caryopsis>
op-son-ic \ˈɒp-sən-ik\ *adj*: of, relating to, or involving opsonin
op-son-in \ˈɒp-sən-nən\ *n* [L *opsonium* relish (fr. Gk *opsōnion* victuals, fr. *opsōnein* to purchase victuals) + E -in — more at OLIGOPSONY]: an antibody of blood serum that makes foreign cells more susceptible to the action of the phagocytes
op-sy \ˈɒp-sē, əp-\ *n* *comb. form* [Gk -*opsis*, fr. *opsis*]: examination <neuro-ops>
opt \ˈɒpt\ *v* [F *opter*, fr. L *optare* — more at *OPTION*]: to make a choice; *esp*: to decide in favor of something <~ed for a tax increase — Tom Wicker>
opt *abbr* 1 optical; optician; optics 2 optional
op-ta-tive \ˈɒp-ta-tiv\ *adj* 1 *a*: of, relating to, or constituting a verbal mood that is expressive of wish or desire *b*: of, relating to, or constituting a sentence that is expressive of wish or hope 2: expressing desire or wish — **op-ta-tive-ly** *adv*
op-tic \ˈɒp-tik\ *adj* [MF *optique*, fr. ML *opticus*, fr. Gk *optikos*, fr. *opsēsthai* to be going to see; akin to Gk *opsis* appearance, *ops* eye — more at *EYE*] 1: of or relating to vision or the eye 2: dependent chiefly on vision for orientation
optic *n* 1: EYE 2: any of the lenses, prisms, or mirrors of an optical instrument; *also*: an optical instrument
op-ti-cal \ˈɒp-ti-kəl\ *adj* 1: of or relating to the science of optics 2 *a*: of or relating to vision: VISUAL <an ~ illusion> *b*: VISIBLE <an ~ galaxy> *c*: designed to aid vision <an ~ instrument> 3 *a*: of, relating to, or utilizing light <an ~ emission> <an ~ telescope> <~ microscopy> *b*: involving the use of light-sensitive devices to acquire information for a computer <~ character recognition> 4: of or relating to optical art — **op-ti-cal-ly** \-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*
optical activity *n*: ability to rotate the plane of vibration of polarized light to the right or left
optical art *n*: nonobjective art characterized by the use of straight or curved lines or geometric patterns often for an illusory effect (as of motion)
optical bench *n*: an apparatus that is fitted for the convenient location and adjustment of light sources and optical devices and that is used for the observation and measurement of optical phenomena
optical glass *n*: flint or crown glass of well-defined characteristics used *esp*. for making lenses
optical illusion *n*: ILLUSION 2a(1)
optical rotation *n*: the angle through which the plane of vibration of polarized light that traverses an optically active substance is rotated
optic axis *n*: a line in a doubly refracting medium that is parallel to the direction in which all components of plane-polarized light travel with the same speed
optic chiasma *n* [NL *chiasma* X-shaped configuration — more at CHIASMA]: the X-shaped partial decussation on the undersurface of the hypothalamus through which the optic nerves are continuous with the brain
optic disk *n*: the nearly circular light-colored area at the back of the retina where the optic nerve enters the eyeball
op-ti-cian \ˈɒp-ti-shən\ *n* 1: a maker of or dealer in optical items and instruments 2: one that grinds spectacle lenses to prescription and dispenses spectacles — compare OPHTHALMOLOGIST, OPTOMETRIST
optic nerve *n*: either of the pair of nerves that comprise the second pair of cranial nerves, arise from the ventral part of the diencephalon, supply the retina, and conduct visual stimuli to the brain — see *EYE* illustration
op-tics \ˈɒp-tiks\ *n* *pl* but *sing* or *pl* in *constr* 1: a science that deals with the genesis and propagation of light, the changes that it undergoes and produces, and other phenomena closely associated with it 2: optical properties
op-ti-mal \ˈɒp-tə-məl\ *adj*: most desirable or satisfactory: OPTIMUM — **op-ti-mal-i-ty** \ˈɒp-tə-məl-ə-tē\ *n* — **op-ti-mal-ly** \-mə-lē\ *adv*
op-ti-mism \ˈɒp-tə-miz-əm\ *n* [F *optimisme*, fr. L *optimum*, *n*, best, fr. neut. of *optimus* best; akin to L *ops* power — more at *OPULENT*] 1: a doctrine that this world is the best possible world 2: an inclination to put the most favorable construction upon actions and events or to anticipate the best possible outcome — **op-ti-mist** \-mɪst\ *n* — **optimist** or **op-ti-mis-tic** \ˈɒp-tə-mis-tik\ or **op-ti-mis-ti-cal** \-ti-kəl\ *adj* — **op-ti-mis-ti-cal-ly** \-ti-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*
Op-ti-mist \ˈɒp-tə-mɪst\ *n* [Optimist (club)]: a member of a major international service club
op-ti-mize \ˈɒp-tə-miz\ *v* -mized; -miz-ing: to make as perfect, effective, or functional as possible — **op-ti-mi-za-tion** \ˈɒp-tə-mə-ˈzā-shən\ *n* — **op-ti-miz-er** \ˈɒp-tə-mi-zər\ *n*
op-ti-mum \ˈɒp-tə-məm\ *n*, *pl* -ma \-mə\ *also* -mums [L] 1: the amount or degree of something that is most favorable to some end; *esp*: the most favorable condition for the growth and reproduction of an organism 2: greatest degree attained or attainable under implied or specified conditions — **optimum** *adj*
op-tion \ˈɒp-shən\ *n* [F, fr. L *optio*-, *optio* free choice; akin to L *optare* to choose, Gk *epiopsēsthai* to be going to choose] 1: an act of choosing 2 *a*: the power or right to choose: freedom of choice *b*: a privilege of demanding fulfillment of a contract on any day within a specified time *c*: a contract conveying a right to buy or sell designated securities or commodities at a specified price during a stipulated period; *also*: the right conveyed by an option *d*: a right of an insured person to choose the form in

which payments due him on a policy shall be made or applied 3: something that may be chosen: as *a*: an alternative course of action <didn't have many ~s open to him in choosing a career> *b*: an item that is offered in addition to or in place of standard equipment <a car that includes air-conditioning and a V-8 engine among its ~s> 4: an offensive football play in which a back may choose whether to pass or run with the ball — called also *option pass*, *option play* *syn* see *CHOICE*
option-ai \ˈɒp-shən-əl, -shən-əl\ *adj*: involving an option: not compulsory — **option-al-ly** \-əl\ *adv*
op-to-ki-net-ic \ˈɒp-tə-kə-ˈnet-ik, -ki-\ *adj* [Gk *optos* + *kinetic*]: of, relating to, or involving movements of the eyes
op-tom-e-trist \ˈɒp-təm-ə-trɪst\ *n*: a specialist in optometry — compare OPHTHALMOLOGIST, OPTICIAN
op-tom-e-try \-trē\ *n* [Gk *optos* (verbal of *opsēsthai* to be going to see) + *ISV* -metry — more at *OPTIC*]: the art or profession of examining the eye for defects and faults of refraction and prescribing correctional lenses or exercises but not drugs or surgery — **op-to-met-ric** \ˈɒp-tə-me-trɪk\ *also* **op-to-met-ri-cal** \-tri-kəl\ *adj*
opt out *v*: to choose not to participate in something — often used with *of* <impossible for anybody to opt out of politics — Brian Crozier>
op-u-lence \ˈɒp-yu-lən(t)s\ *n* 1: WEALTH, AFFLUENCE 2: ABUNDANCE, PROFUSION
op-u-lent \ˈɒp-lənt\ *adj* [L *opulentus*, fr. *ops* power, help; akin to L *opus* work]: exhibiting or characterized by opulence: as *a*: having a large estate or property: WEALTHY <hoping to marry as ~ widow> *b*: amply or plentifully provided or fashioned often to the point of ostentation <living in ~ comfort> *syn* 1 see RICH *ant* destitute, indigent 2 see LUXURIOUS — **op-u-lent-ly** *adv*
opun-tia \ˈɒ-pən-ˈtʃi(ə)-\ *n* [L a plant, fr. fem. of *opuntius* of Opus, fr. *Opunt*, *Opus* Opus, ancient city in Greece]: PRICKLY PEAR
opus \ˈɒ-pəs\ *n*, *pl* **opera** \ˈɒ-pə-rə, -ˈɒ-pə-\ *also* **opus-es** \ˈɒ-pə-sēz\ [L *oper*, *opus* — more at *OPERATE*]: WORK: *esp*: a musical composition or set of compositions usu. numbered in the order of its issue — *abbr.* *op.*
opus-cule \ˈɒ-pəs-ˈkyl(ə)\ *n* [F, fr. L *opusculum*, dim. of *opus*]: a small or petty work: OPUSCULUM
opus-cu-lum \ˈɒ-pəs-ˈkyl-əm\ *n*, *pl* -la \-lə\ [L]: a minor work (as of literature) — usu. used in *pl.*
or \ˈɔr, (d)ɔr\ *conj* [ME *other*, or, fr. OE *oðthe*; akin to OHG *eddo* or] 1 — used as a function word to indicate an alternative <coffee ~ tea> <sink ~ swim>, the equivalent or substitutive character of two words or phrases <lessen ~ abate>, or approximation or uncertainty <in five ~ six days> 2 *archaic*: EITHER 3 *archaic*: WHETHER 4 — used in logic as a sentential connective that forms a complex sentence which is true when at least one of its constituent sentences is true — compare *DISJUNCTION*
or *prep* [ME, fr. or, adv., early, before, fr. ON *ār*; akin to OE *ār* early — more at *ERE*] *archaic*: BEFORE
or *conj*, *archaic*: BEFORE
or \ˈɔr, (d)ɔr\ *n* [MF, gold, fr. L *aurum* — more at *ORIOLE*]: the heraldic color gold or yellow
OR \ˈɔr, (d)ɔr\ *n* [or]: a logical operator equivalent to the sentential connective or <~ gate in a computer>
OR *abbr.* 1 Oregon 2 owner's risk
or \ˈɔr, (d)ɔr, (d)ɔr\ *n* suffix [ME, fr. OF *-eur*, *-or* & L *-or*; OF *-eur*, fr. L *-or*; OF *-or*, fr. L *-ator* -or, fr. *-atus*, pp. suffix + *-or* — more at *-ATE*]: one that does a (specified) thing <grantor>
or \ˈɔr\ *n* suffix [ME, fr. OF *-eur*, fr. L *-or*]: condition: activity <deemeanor>
ora *pl* of *os*
or-ache or **or-ach** \ˈɔr-ich, -ər-\ *n* [ME *orage*, fr. MF *arrache*, fr. (assumed) VL *atrapex*, *atrapex*, fr. Gk *atrapaxys*]: any of a genus (*Atriplex*) of herbs of the goosefoot family that have small delicious flowers and a utricular fruit enclosed in two bracts
or-a-cle \ˈɔr-ə-kəl, -ər-\ *n* [ME, fr. MF, fr. L *oraculum*, fr. *orare* to speak — more at *ORATION*] 1 *a*: a person (as a priestess of ancient Greece) through whom a deity is believed to speak *b*: a shrine in which a deity reveals hidden knowledge or the divine purpose through such a person *c*: an answer or decision given by an oracle 2 *a*: a person giving wise or authoritative decisions or opinions *b*: an authoritative or wise expression or answer
or-a-cu-lar \ˈɔr-ə-kyl-ər, -ər-\ *adj* [L *oraculum*] 1: of, relating to, or being an oracle 2: resembling an oracle (as in solemnity of delivery) *syn* see *DICTATORIAL* — **or-a-cu-lar-i-ty** \-rə-kyl-ər-ət-ē\ *n* — **or-a-cu-lar-ly** \-rə-kyl-ər-lē\ *adv*
oral \ˈɔr-əl, -ər, -ər-\ *adj* [L *or*, as mouth; akin to OE *ōra* border, L *ora*] 1 *a*: uttered by the mouth or in words: SPOKEN *b*: using speech or the lips *esp.* in teaching the deaf 2 *a*: of, given through, or affecting the mouth *b*: being on or relating to the same surface as the mouth 3 *a*: of, relating to, or characterized by the first stage of psychosexual development in which libidinal gratification is derived from intake (as of food), by sucking, and later by biting *b*: of, relating to, or characterized by personality traits of passive dependency and aggressiveness — **oral-ly** \ˈɔr-əl-ē, -ē-\ *adv*
oral *n*: an oral examination — usu. used in *pl.* <passed his ~s and was awarded the doctorate>
oral history *n*: historical information that is obtained in interviews with persons who have led significant lives and that is usu. tape-recorded — **oral historian** *n*
orange \ˈɔr-ənʃ, -ənʃ-\ *n* [ME, fr. MF, fr. OProv *auranja*, fr. Ar *nāranj*, fr. Per *nārang*, fr. Skt *nāraṅga* orange tree, of Dravidian origin; akin to Tamil *naru* fragrant] 1 *a*: a globose berry with a reddish yellow rind and a sweet edible pulp *b*: any of various rather small evergreen trees (genus *Citrus*) with ovate unilobulate leaves, hard yellow wood, fragrant white flowers, and fruits that are oranges 2: any of several trees or fruits resembling the orange 3: any of a group of colors that lie midway between red and yellow in hue and arc of medium lightness and moderate to high saturation