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mestic animal often due to infection at any time before completion of pregnancy — compare CONTAGIOUS ABORTION 2: MONSTROSITY 3: arrest of development (as of a part or process) resulting in imperfection; also: a result of such arrest

abortionist \ə-ˈbɔr-tən-ist/ *n* (1861): one who induces abortions
abortion pill *n* (1871): a drug taken orally to induce abortion esp. early in pregnancy; esp: RU-486

abortive \ə-ˈbɔr-tiv/ *adj* (14c) 1 *obs*: prematurely born 2: FRUITLESS, UNSUCCESSFUL 3: imperfectly formed or developed 4: tending to cut short — **abortive-ly** *adv* — **abortive-ness** *n*

ABO system \ə-ˈbɔ-ˈsɪ-stəm/ *n* (1944): the basic system of antigens of human blood behaving in heredity as an allelic unit to produce any of the ABO blood groups

abound \ə-ˈbaʊnd/ *vi* [ME, fr. AF *abunder*, fr. L *abundare*, fr. *ab-* + *unda* wave — more at WATER] (14c) 1: to be present in large numbers or in great quantity: be prevalent 2: to be copiously supplied — used with *in* or *with* (life ~ed in mysteries — Norman Mailer) <institutions ~ with evidence of his success — *Johns Hopkins Mag.*>

about \ə-ˈbaʊt/ *adv* [ME, fr. OE *abūtan*, fr. *ab-* + *būtan* outside — more at BUT] (bef. 12c) 1 *a*: reasonably close to (< a year ago) *b*: ALMOST (< started) *c*: on the verge of — usu. used with *be* and a following infinitive (< is ~ to join the army); used with a negative to express intention or determination (< not ~ to quit) 2: on all sides: AROUND 3 *a*: in rotation *b*: around the outside 4: HERE AND THERE 5: in the vicinity: NEAR 6: in the opposite direction (< face ~ the other way ~)

about *prep* (bef. 12c) 1: in a circle around: on every side of: AROUND 2 *a*: in the immediate neighborhood of: NEAR *b*: on or near the person of *c*: in the makeup of (< a mature wisdom ~ him) *d*: at the command of (< has his wits ~ him) 3: engaged in (< act as if they know what they're ~ — T. S. Matthews) 4 *a*: with regard to: CONCERNING (< spoke ~ his past) *b*: concerned with *c*: fundamentally concerned with or directed toward (< poker is ~ money — David Mamet) 5: over or in different parts of

about *adj* (1815) 1: moving from place to place; *specif*: being out of bed 2: AROUND 2

about-face \ə-ˈbaʊt-ˈfās/ *n* [fr. the imper. phrase *about face*] (1861) 1: a 180° turn to the right from the position of attention 2: a reversal of direction 3: a reversal of attitude, behavior, or point of view — **about-face** *vi*

about-turn \ə-ˈtɜrn/ *n* (1893) *Brit*: ABOUT-FACE

above \ə-ˈboʊ/ *adv* [ME, fr. OE *abufan*, fr. *ab-* + *bufan* above, fr. *be-* + *ufan* above; akin to OE *ofer* over] (bef. 12c) 1 *a*: in the sky: OVERHEAD (< the clouds ~) *b*: in or to heaven 2 *a*: in or to a higher place *b*: higher on the same page or on a preceding page *c*: UPSTAIRS *d*: above zero (< 10 degrees ~) 3: in or to a higher rank or number (< 30 and ~) 4 *archaic*: in addition: BESIDES 5: UPSTAGE

above *prep* (bef. 12c) 1 *a*: in or to a higher place than: OVER *b*: upriver of 2 *a*: superior to (as in rank, quality, or degree) *b*: out of reach of (< suspicion) *c*: in preference to *d*: too proud or honorable to stoop to (< not ~ taking undue credit) 3: exceeding in number, quantity, or size: more than (< men ~ 50 years old) 4: as distinct from and in addition to (< heard the whistle ~ the roar of the crowd)

above *n, pl* **above** (13c) 1 *a*: something that is above *b*: a person whose name is written above 2 *a*: a higher authority *b*: HEAVEN *usage* Although still objected to by some, the use of *above* as a noun in sense 1a (< none of the above) (< the above is Thebes's opinion — William Blake) and as an adjective (< without the above reserve — O. W. Holmes †1935) (< I was brought up on the above words — Viscount Montgomery) has been long established as standard.

above *adj* (1604): written or discussed higher on the same page or on a preceding page *usage* see **ABOVE**

above all *adv* (14c): before every other consideration: ESPECIALLY
above-board \ə-ˈboʊ-ˈbɔrd/ *adv* [fr. the difficulty of cheating at cards when the hands are above the table] (1594): in a straightforward manner: OPENLY

aboveboard *adj* (1648): free from all traces of deceit or duplicity
above-ground \ə-ˈboʊ-ˈɡraʊnd/ *adj* (1878) 1: located or occurring on or above the surface of the ground 2: existing, produced, or published by or within the establishment (< movies) — **aboveground** *adv*

ab ovo \əb-ˈɒ-ˈ(v)ɒ/ *adv* [L, lit., from the egg] (ca. 1586): from the beginning

abp abbr archbishop

abr abbr abridged; abridgment

ab-ra-ca-dab-ra \ə-ˈbrɑ-ˈkɑ-ˈdɑ-brə/ *n* [LL] (1565) 1: a magical charm or incantation 2: unintelligible language

abrade \ə-ˈbrɑd/ *vb* **abrad-ed**; **abrad-ing** [L *abradere* to scrape off, fr. *ab-* + *radere* to scrape — more at RODENT] *vt* (1677) 1 *a*: to rub or wear away esp. by friction: ERODE *b*: to irritate or roughen by rubbing 2: to wear down in spirit: IRRITATE, WEARY ~ *vi*: to undergo abrasion — **abrad-able** \ə-ˈbrɑd-ə-bəl/ *adj* — **abrad-er** *n*

Abra-ham \ˈɑ-brə-ˈhɑm/ *n* [LL, fr. Gk *Abraham*, fr. Heb *ʾAbrahām*] (14c): an Old Testament patriarch regarded by Jews as the founder of the Hebrew people through his son Isaac and by Muslims as the founder of the Arab peoples through his son Ishmael

abrasion \ə-ˈbrɑ-zhən/ *n* [ML *abrasio*, *abrasio*, fr. L *abradere*] (1554) 1 *a*: a wearing, grinding, or rubbing away by friction *b*: IRRITATION 2: an abraded area of the skin or mucous membrane

ab-rasive \ə-ˈbrɑ-siv/ *adj* (1849) 1: tending to abrade 2: causing irritation (< manners) — **ab-rasive-ly** *adv* — **ab-rasive-ness** *n*

abrasive *n* (1853): a substance (as emery or pumice) used for abrading, smoothing, or polishing
ab-re-ac-tion \ə-ˈbrɛ-ˈak-shən/ *n* [part trans. of G *Abreagierung* catharsis, fr. *ab* off, away + *Reagierung* reaction] (1912): the expression and emotional discharge of unconscious material (as a repressed idea or emotion) by verbalization esp. in the presence of a therapist — **ab-react** \ə-ˈakt/ *vb*

abreast \ə-ˈbrɛst/ *adv* or *adj* (15c) 1: beside one another with bodies in line (< columns of men five ~) 2: up to a particular standard or level esp. of knowledge of recent developments (< keeps ~ of the news)

abridge \ə-ˈbrɪj/ *vt* **abridged**; **abridg-ing** [ME *abregren*, fr. AF *abreger*, fr. LL *abbreviare*, fr. L *ad-* + *brevis* short — more at BRIEF] (14c) 1 *a* *archaic*: DEPRIVE *b*: to reduce in scope: DIMINISH (< attempts to ~

the right of free speech) 2: to shorten in duration or extent (< modern transportation that ~s distance) 3: to shorten by omission of words without sacrifice of sense: CONDENSE *syn* see SHORTEN — **abridg-er** *n*

abridgment or **abridge-ment** \ə-ˈbrɪj-mənt/ *n* (15c) 1: the action of abridging: the state of being abridged 2: a shortened form of a work retaining the general sense and unity of the original

abroach \ə-ˈbrɔch/ *adv* or *adj* (14c) 1 *archaic*: in a condition for letting out a liquid (as wine) 2 *archaic*: in action or agitation: ASTIR (< mischief that I set ~ — Shak.)

abroad \ə-ˈbrɔd/ *adv* or *adj* (13c) 1: over a wide area: WIDELY 2: away from one's home 3: beyond the boundaries of one's country 4: in wide circulation: ABOUT 5: wide of the mark: ASTRAY

ab-ro-gate \ə-ˈbrɑ-ˈɡæt/ *vt* **ab-gat-ed**; **ab-gat-ing** [L *abrogatus*, pp. of *abrogare*, fr. *ab-* + *rogare* to ask, propose a law — more at RIGHT] (1526) 1: to abolish by authoritative action: ANNUL 2: to treat as nonexistent (< abrogating their responsibilities) *syn* see NULLIFY — **ab-ro-ga-tion** \ə-ˈbrɑ-ˈɡā-shən/ *n*

abrupt \ə-ˈbrʌpt/ *adj* [L *abruptus*, fr. pp. of *abrumper* to break off, fr. *ab-* + *rumper* to break — more at REAVE] (1530) 1 *a*: characterized by or involving action or change without preparation or warning: UNEXPECTED (< came to an ~ stop) (< an ~ turn) (< an ~ decision to retire) *b*: unceremoniously curt (< an ~ manner) *c*: lacking smoothness or continuity (< an ~ transition) 2: giving the impression of being cut or broken off; esp: involving a sudden steep rise or drop (< hills) (< a high ~ bank bounded the stream) *syn* see PRECIPITATE, STEEP — **abrupt-ly** \ə-ˈbrʌpt-ˈli/ *adv* — **abrupt-ness** \ə-ˈbrʌpt-ˈnəs/ *n*

abrup-tion \ə-ˈbrʌp-shən/ *n* (1606): a sudden breaking off or away

abs abbr 1 absolute 2 abstract

ABS \ā-ˈ(j)bē-ˈes/ *n* [acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene] (1964): a tough rigid plastic used esp. for automobile parts and building materials

ABS abbr 1 American Bible Society 2 antilock braking system

ab-scess \əb-ˈses/ *n, pl* **ab-scess-es** \əb-ˈse-səz, -ˈsɛz; -ˈsə-səz/ [L *ab-scessus*, lit., act of going away, fr. *abscedere* to go away, fr. *abs-*, *ab-* + *cedere* to go] (1615): a localized collection of pus surrounded by inflamed tissue — **ab-scessed** \əb-ˈsɛst/ *adj*

ab-scise \əb-ˈsɪz/ *vb* **ab-scised**; **ab-scis-ing** [L *abscisus*, pp. of *abscidere*, fr. *abs-* + *caedere* to cut] *vt* (1612): to separate (as a flower from a stem) by abscission ~ *vi*: to separate by abscission

ab-scisic acid \əb-ˈsɪ-zik-, -ˈsɪk-/ *n* [*abscission* (var. of *abscission*) + *-ic*] (1968): a plant hormone C₁₅H₂₀O₄ that is a sesquiterpene widespread in nature and that typically promotes leaf abscission and dormancy and has an inhibitory effect on cell elongation

ab-scis-sin \əb-ˈsɪ-sən, -ˈsɪ-sən/ *n* [*abscission* + *-in*] (1961): ABCISIC ACID

ab-scis-sa \əb-ˈsɪ-sə/ *n, pl* **abscissas** also **ab-scis-sae** \ə-ˈsɪ-ˈ(s)ɛ/ [NL, fr. L, fem. of *abscissus*, pp. of *abscidere* to cut off, fr. *ab-* + *scindere* to cut — more at SHED] (1694): the horizontal coordinate of a point in a plane Cartesian coordinate system obtained by measuring parallel to the x-axis — compare ORDINATE

ab-scis-sion \əb-ˈsɪ-zhən/ *n* [ME *abscisioun*, fr. AF *abscission*, L *abscission*, *abscissio*, fr. *ab-scindere*] (15c) 1: the act or process of cutting off: REMOVAL 2: the natural separation of flowers, fruit, or leaves from plants at a special separation layer

ab-scond \əb-ˈskænd, əb-ˈ/ *vi* [L *abscondere* to hide away, fr. *abs-* + *condere* to store up, conceal — more at CONDEMENT] (ca. 1578): to depart secretly and hide oneself — **ab-scond-er** *n*

ab-seil \əb-ˈsāl, -ˈsɪ-ˈ(ə)/ *vi* [G *abseilen*, fr. *ab* down, off + *Sell* rope] (1941) *chiefly Brit*: RAPPEL — **abseil** *n*

ab-sence \əb-ˈsɛns(t)s/ *n* (14c) 1: the state of being absent 2: the period of time that one is absent 3: WANT, LACK (< an ~ of detail) 4: inattention to present surroundings or occurrences (< of mind)

ab-sent \əb-ˈsɛnt/ *adj* [ME, fr. AF, fr. L *absent*, *absens*, pp. of *abesse* to be absent, fr. *ab-* + *esse* to be — more at IS] (14c) 1: not present or attending: MISSING 2: not existing: LACKING (< danger in a situation where power is ~ — M. H. Trytten) 3: lost in thought: not attentive *syn* see ABSTRACTED — **ab-sent-ly** *adv*

ab-sent \əb-ˈsɛnt, -ˈab-/ *vi* (15c): to keep (oneself) away

ab-sent \əb-ˈsɛnt/ *prep* (1944): in the absence of: WITHOUT

ab-sen-tee \əb-ˈsɛn-ˈtɛ/ *n* (1605): one that is absent: as *a*: a proprietor that lives away from his or her estate or business *b*: one missing from work or school — **absentee** *adj*

absentee ballot *n* (1889): a ballot submitted (as by mail) in advance of an election by a voter who is unable to be present at the polls

ab-sen-tee-ism \əb-ˈsɛn-ˈtɛ-ˈi-zəm/ *n* (1829) 1: prolonged absence of an owner from his or her property 2: chronic absence (as from work or school); also: the rate of such absence

ab-sent-mind-ed \əb-ˈsɛnt-ˈmɪn-dəd/ *adj* (1829) 1: lost in thought and unaware of one's surroundings or actions: PREOCCUPIED; also: given to absence of mind 2: indicative of or resulting from preoccupation or absence of mind *syn* see ABSTRACTED — **ab-sent-mind-ed-ly** *adv* — **ab-sent-mind-ed-ness** *n*

absent without leave *adj* (1793): absent without authority from one's place of duty in the armed forces

ab-sinthe also **ab-sinth** \əb-ˈ(sɪn)(t)h/ *n* [F *absinthe*, fr. L *absinthium*, fr. Gk *apsinthion*] (1612) 1: WORMWOOD 2: a green liqueur which is flavored with wormwood, anise, and other aromatic herbs and commercial production of which is banned in many countries for health concerns; also: a liqueur resembling absinthe

ab-so-lute \əb-ˈsə-lūt, -ˈsə-/ *adj* [ME *absolut*, fr. AF, fr. L *absolutus*, fr. pp. of *absolvere* to set free, absolve] (14c) 1 *a*: free from imperfection: PERFECT (it is a most ~ and excellent horse — Shak.) *b*: free or relatively free from mixture: PURE (< alcohol) *c*: OUTRIGHT, UNMITIGATED (< an ~ lie) 2: being, governed by, or characteristic of a ruler or authority completely free from constitutional or other restraint (< power) 3 *a*: standing apart from a normal or usual syntactical relation with other words or sentence elements (< the ~ construction *this being the case* in the sentence "this being the case, let us

