

New Oxford American Dictionary

THIRD EDITION

Edited by

Angus Stevenson

Christine A. Lindberg

FIRST EDITION

Elizabeth J. Jewell

Frank Abate

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

EX2003
North Atlantic Imports, LLC
IPR2024-00642

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press, Inc., publishes works that further
Oxford University's objective of excellence
in research, scholarship, and education.

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

Copyright © 2010 by Oxford University Press

First edition 2001

Second edition 2005

Third edition 2010

Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016
www.oup.com

Oxford is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise,
without the prior permission of Oxford University Press.

The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Data available

ISBN 978-0-19-539288-3

7 9 8

Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

1536233313150735

arrangement of musical sounds, principally according to duration and periodic stress. ■ a particular type of pattern formed by such arrangement: *guitar melodies with deep African rhythms*. ■ a person's natural feeling for such arrangement: *they've got no rhythm*. ■ the measured flow of words and phrases in verse or prose as determined by the relation of long and short or stressed and unstressed syllables. ■ a regularly recurring sequence of events, actions, or processes: *the twice daily rhythms of the tides*. ■ An a harmonious sequence or correlation of colors or elements.

DERIVATIVES **rhythm-less** adj.

ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (also originally in the sense 'rhyme'): from French *rhythme*, or via Latin from Greek *rhuthmos* (related to *rhein* 'to flow').

rhythm and blues (abbr.: R & B) ► n. a form of popular music of African-American origin that arose during the 1940s from blues, with the addition of driving rhythms taken from jazz. It was an immediate precursor of rock and roll.

rhythm gui-tar ► n. a guitar part consisting of the chord sequences of a pop or rock song.

rhythm-mic /'rɪθmɪk/ ► adj. having or relating to rhythm: *a rhythmic dance*. ■ occurring regularly: *there are rhythmic changes in our bodies*.

DERIVATIVES **rhythm-cal** adj., **rhythm-cal-ly** /-ɪk(ə)li/ adv.

ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from French *rhythmique* or via Latin from Greek *rhuthmikos*, from *rhuthmos* (see **RHYTHM**).

rhythm-mic gym-nas-tics ► plural n. [usu. treated as sing.] a form of gymnastics emphasizing dancelike rhythmic routines, typically accentuated by the use of ribbons or hoops.

DERIVATIVES **rhythm-mic gym-nast** n.

rhythm-mic-i-ty /'rɪθmɪsəti/ ► n. rhythmic quality or character: *the nursery rhymes' rhythmicity makes them particularly easy to learn*.

rhythm meth-od ► n. a method of avoiding conception by which sexual intercourse is restricted to the times of a woman's menstrual cycle when ovulation is least likely to occur.

rhythm section ► n. the part of a pop or jazz group supplying the rhythm, generally regarded as consisting of bass and drums and sometimes piano or guitar.

rhy-ton /'rɪtən/ ► n. (pl. **rhytons** or **rhyta** /'rɪtə/) a type of drinking vessel used in ancient Greece, typically having the form of an animal's head or a horn, with the hole for drinking at the bottom.

ORIGIN from Greek *rhuton*; neuter of *rhutos* 'flowing'; related to *rhein* 'to flow'.

RI ► abbr. ■ Rex et Imperator (King and Emperor) or Regina et Imperatrix (Queen and Empress). [Latin.] ■ Rhode Island (in official postal use). ■ Royal Institute or Institution.

RIA ► abbr. ■ radioimmunoassay. ■ Royal Irish Academy.

ri-a /'rɪə/ ► n. Geography a long narrow inlet formed by the partial submergence of a river valley.

ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from Spanish *ría* 'estuary'.

ri-al /'rɪəl, 'rɪəl/ ► n. 1 (also **riyal**) the basic monetary unit of Iran and Oman, equal to 100 dinars in Iran and 1000 baiza in Oman.

2 variant spelling of **RIYAL**.

ORIGIN via Persian from Arabic *riyāl* (see **RIYAL**).

Ri-al-to /'rɪəltə, -'ɔltə/ ► 1 a city in southwestern California, west of San Bernardino; pop. 98,700 (est. 2008).

2 an island in Venice, Italy, that contains the old mercantile quarter of medieval Venice. The Rialto Bridge, completed in 1591, crosses the Grand Canal between Rialto and the San Marco Islands.

RIB ► n. a small open boat with a fiberglass hull and inflatable rubber sides.

ORIGIN acronym from *rigid inflatable boat*.

rib /rɪb/ ► n. 1 each of a series of slender curved bones articulated in pairs to the spine (twelve pairs in humans), protecting the thoracic cavity and its organs. ■ a rib of an animal with meat adhering to it used as food; a joint or cut from the ribs of an animal.

2 a long raised piece of stronger or thicker material across a surface or through a structure, and typically serving to support or strengthen it, in particular: ■ Architecture a curved member supporting a vault or defining its form. ■ any of the curved transverse pieces of metal or timber in a ship, extending up from the keel and forming part of the framework of the hull. ■ each of the curved pieces of wood forming the body of a lute or the sides of a violin. ■ each of the hinged rods supporting the fabric of

an umbrella. ■ Aeronautics a structural member in an airfoil, extending back from the leading edge and serving to define the contour of the airfoil. ■ a vein of a leaf (esp. the midrib) or an insect's wing. ■ a ridge of rock or land. ■ Knitting a combination of alternate knit (plain) and purl stitches producing a ridged, slightly elastic fabric, used esp. for the cuffs and bottom edges of sweaters.

► v. (ribs, ribbing, ribbed) [with obj.] 1 (usu. **be ribbed**) mark with or form into raised bands or ridges: *the road ahead was ribbed with furrows of slush*.

2 informal tease good-naturedly: *the first time I appeared in the outfit I was ribbed mercilessly*.

DERIVATIVES **rib-less** adj.

ORIGIN Old English *rib*, *ribb* (noun), of Germanic origin; related to Dutch *rib*(be) and German *Rippe*. Sense 1 of the verb dates from the mid 16th cent.; the sense 'tease' was originally a US slang usage meaning 'to fool, dupe' (1930s).

rib-ald /'rɪbɔld, 'rɪbɔld, 'rɪbɔld/ ► adj. referring to sexual matters in an amusingly rude or irreverent way: *a ribald comment*.

ORIGIN Middle English (as a noun denoting a lowly retainer or a licentious or irreverent person): from Old French *ribaud*, from *riber* 'indulge in licentious pleasures'; from a Germanic base meaning 'prostitute'.

rib-ald-ry /'rɪbɔldrɪ, 'rɪ-/ ► n. ribald talk or behavior.

rib-and /'rɪbænd/ ► n. archaic a ribbon.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *riban*, probably from a Germanic compound of the noun **BAND**.

ribbed /rɪbd/ ► adj. (esp. of a fabric or garment) having a pattern of raised bands: *a ribbed cashmere sweater*. ■ Architecture (of a vault or other structure) strengthened with ribs.

Rib-ben-trop /'rɪbən, trɒp/, Joachim von (1893–1946), German Nazi politician. As foreign minister 1938–45, he signed the nonaggression pact with the former Soviet Union in 1939. He was convicted as a war criminal in the Nuremberg trials and hanged.

rib-bie /'rɪbi/ ► n. (pl. **ribbies**) Baseball, informal a run batted in. See **RBI**.

ORIGIN mid 20th cent.: elaboration of **RBI**.

rib-bing /'rɪbɪŋ/ ► n. 1 a riblike structure or pattern, esp. a band of knitting in rib.

2 informal good-natured teasing.

rib-bit /'rɪbɪt/ ► n. informal the characteristic croaking sound of a frog: *the power of the male's commanding "ribbit" came not from the throat but from vibrations in ear membranes*.

ORIGIN imitative.

rib-bon /'rɪbən/ ► n. 1 a long, narrow strip of fabric, used esp. for tying something or for decoration: *the tiny pink ribbons in her hair | cut four lengths of ribbon*. ■ a strip of fabric of a special color or design awarded as a prize or worn to indicate the holding of an honor, esp. a small multicolored piece of ribbon worn in place of the medal it represents: *old horse show ribbons and rosettes*.

2 a long, narrow strip of something: *slice the peppers into ribbons lengthwise*. ■ a narrow band of inked material wound on a spool and forming the inking agent in some typewriters and computer printers.

► v. [no obj.] extend or move in a long narrow strip like a ribbon: *miles of concrete ribboned behind the bus*.

PHRASES **cut a (or the) ribbon** perform an opening ceremony, typically by formally cutting a ribbon across the entrance to somewhere. **cut (or tear) something to ribbons** cut (or tear) something so badly that only ragged strips remain. ■ damage something severely: *the country has seen its economy torn to ribbons by recession*.

DERIVATIVES **rib-boned** adj., **rib-bon-like** /-lɪk/ adj.

ORIGIN early 16th cent.: variant of **RIBAND**. The French spelling *ruban* was also frequent in the 16th–18th centuries.

rib-bon ca-ble ► n. a cable for transmitting electronic signals consisting of several insulated wires connected together to form a flat ribbon.

rib-bon de-vel-op-ment ► n. chiefly Brit. the building of houses along a main road, esp. one leading out of a town or city.

rib-bon-fish /'rɪbən, fɪʃ/ ► n. (pl. **same** or **ribbonfishes**) any of a number of long slender fishes that typically have a dorsal fin running the length of the body, in particular: ■ a fish of the deepfish family (Trachipteridae). ■ a fish of the cutlassfish family (Trichiuridae). ■ another term for **OARFISH**.

rib-bon grass ► n. another term for **TAPE GRASS**.

rib-bon worm ► n. a chiefly aquatic worm with an elongated, unsegmented, flattened body that is typically brightly colored and tangled in knots, and a long proboscis for catching food. ■ Phylum Nemertea: two classes.

rib-by /'rɪbi/ ► adj. having prominent ribs: *ribby, bony-rumped, horned cattle*.

rib cage ► n. the bony frame formed by the ribs around the chest.

Ri-be-ra /'rɪbərə/, José (or Jusepe) de (c.1591–1652), Spanish painter and etcher, resident in Italy from 1616; known as *Lo Spagnoletto* ('the little Spaniard'). He is noted for his religious and genre paintings.

rib eye (also **rib-eye steak**) ► n. a cut of beef from the outer side of the ribs: *a menu that runs to gargantuan rib eyes and ten-pound lobsters*.

ri-bi-tol /'rɪbɪtɒl, -tɒl/ ► n. Chemistry a colorless crystalline compound that is formed by reduction of ribose and occurs in certain plants. ■ An alcohol; chem. formula: HOCH₂(CHOH)₄CH₂OH.

ORIGIN 1940s: from **RIBOSE** + **-ITOL** + **-OL**.

ri-bo-fla-vin /'rɪbɒfləvɪn, 'rɪbɒflə-/ ► n. Biochemistry a yellow vitamin of the B complex that is essential for metabolic energy production. It is present in many foods, esp. milk, liver, eggs, and green vegetables, and is also synthesized by the intestinal flora. Also called **VITAMIN B2** (see **VITAMIN B**).

ORIGIN 1930s: from **RIBOSE** + Latin *flavus* 'yellow' + **-IN**.

ri-bo-nu-cle-ase /'rɪbɒn(y)ʊkəlɪəs, -'æz/ ► n. another term for **RNASE**.

ri-bo-nu-cle-ic ac-id /'rɪbɒn(y)ʊkəlɪk, -'klɪk/ ► n. see **RNA**.

ORIGIN 1930s: **ribonucleic** from **RIBOSE** + **NUCLEIC ACID**.

ri-bo-se /'rɪbəs, -bɔz/ ► n. Chemistry a sugar of the pentose class that occurs widely in nature as a constituent of nucleosides and several vitamins and enzymes.

ORIGIN late 19th cent.: arbitrary alteration of **ARABINOSE**, a related sugar.

ri-bo-some /'rɪbəsəm/ ► n. Biochemistry a minute particle consisting of RNA and associated proteins, found in large numbers in the cytoplasm of living cells. They bind messenger RNA and transfer RNA to synthesize polypeptides and proteins.

DERIVATIVES **ri-bo-so-mal** /'rɪbəsəməl/ adj.

ORIGIN 1950s: from **RIBONUCLEIC ACID** + **-SOME**.

ri-bo-zy-me /'rɪbɒzɪm/ ► n. Biochemistry an RNA molecule capable of acting as an enzyme.

ORIGIN 1980s: blend of **ribonucleic** (from **RIBONUCLEIC ACID**) and **ENZYME**.

rib-tick-ler ► n. informal an amusing joke or story.

DERIVATIVES **rib-tick-ling** adj., **rib-tick-ling-ly** adv.

ri-bu-lose /'rɪbʊləs, -lɔz/ ► n. Chemistry a sugar of the pentose class that is an important intermediate in carbohydrate metabolism and photosynthesis.

ORIGIN 1930s: from **RIBOSE** + **-ULOSE**.

rib-wort /'rɪbwɜrt, -wɜrt/ (also **ribwort plantain**) ► n. a Eurasian plantain with erect ribbed leaves and a rounded flower spike, well established as a weed in North America. ■ *Plantago lanceolata*, family Plantaginaceae.

Ri-car-di-an /'rɪkɑrdɪən/ ► adj. of or relating to the time of any of three kings of England, Richard I, II, and III. ■ of or holding the view that Richard III was a just king who was misrepresented by Shakespeare and other writers.

► n. a contemporary or supporter of Richard III.

DERIVATIVES **Ri-car-di-an-ism** /-nɪzəm/ n.

ORIGIN from medieval Latin *Ricardus* 'Richard' + **-IAN**.

Ri-car-di-an ► adj. relating to or denoting the doctrines of the political economist David Ricardo (1772–1823).

Ric-ci ten-sor /'rɪtʃɪ, 'rɪtʃɪ/ ► n. Mathematics a set of components that describes part of the curvature of space-time. It is a symmetric second-order tensor.

ORIGIN 1920s: named after Curbastro G. Ricci (1853–1925), Italian mathematician.

RICE ► abbr. rest, ice, compression, and elevation (treatment method for bruises, strains, and sprains).

PRONUNCIATION KEY *ə* ago, up; *ɔ* over, fur; *ʌ* hat; *ā* ate; *ā* car; *e* let; *ē* see; *i* fit; *ī* by; *ng* sing; *ō* go; *ō* law, for; *oi* toy; *ōō* good; *ōō* goo; *ou* out; *th* thin; *th* then; *zh* vision