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con-tra-band (kôn'tra-bând') ▶ *n.* Goods prohibited in trade. [Lat. *contrabando*: CONTRA- + *bando*, proclamation.] — **con-tra-band'ist** *n.*

con-tra-bass (kôn'tra-bâs') ▶ *n.* See **double bass**. [Obsolete Ital. *contrabasso*: *contra-*, against (< Lat. *contra-*, CONTRA-) + *basso*, bass (< Lat. *bassus*, low).]

con-tra-cep-tion (kôn'tra-sêp'shôn) ▶ *n.* Prevention of conception, as by use of a device, drug, or chemical agent. — **con-tra-cep'tive** *adj. & n.*

con-tract (kôn'trăkt') ▶ *n.* An enforceable agreement between parties. See **Syns at bargain**. ▶ *v.* (kôn'trăkt', kôn'trăkt') 1. To enter into or establish by contract. 2. To catch (a disease). 3. To shrink by drawing together. 4. To shorten (a word or words) by omitting some of the letters or sounds. [< Lat. *contrahere*, contract-, draw together.] — **con-tract'i-bil'i-ty** *n.* — **con-tract'i-ble** *adj.* — **con-tract'ion** *n.*

con-tract'ile (kôn'trăkt'äl, -tîl') ▶ *adj.* Capable of contracting, as muscle tissue.

con-tract'or (kôn'trăkt'ôr) ▶ *n.* One that agrees to perform services at a specified price, esp. for construction work.

con-tract'u-al (kôn'trăkt'chü-äl) ▶ *adj.* Of or like a contract. — **con-tract'u-al-ly** *adv.*

con-tra-dic't (kôn'tra-dîkt') ▶ *v.* 1. To assert the opposite of. 2. To deny the statement of. See **Syns at deny**. 3. To be contrary to or inconsistent with. [Lat. *contradictere*, speak against.] — **con-tra-dic't-able** *adj.* — **con-tra-dic'tor** *n.* — **con-tra-dic'tion** *n.* — **con-tra-dic'to-ry** *adj.*

con-tra-dis-tinc-tion (kôn'tra-dî-sîng'k'-shôn) ▶ *n.* Distinction by contrasting qualities. — **con-tra-dis-tinc-tive** *adj.* — **con'tra-dis-tinc-tive-ly** *adv.*

con-trail (kôn'trăil') ▶ *n.* A visible trail of condensed water vapor or ice crystals formed in the wake of an aircraft at high altitudes. [*condensation* trail.]



contrail

con-tra-in-di-cate (kôn'tra-în-dî-kăt') ▶ *v.* To indicate the inadvisability of. — **con'tra-in-di-cation** *n.* — **con'tra-in-di-c-a-tive** (-îndîk's-tîv) *adj.*

con-tral-to (kôn'trălt'ô) ▶ *n., pl. -tos* 1. The lowest female voice or voice part. 2. A woman having a contralto voice. [Ital.]

con-trap-tion (kôn'trăp'shôn) ▶ *n.* A mechanical device; gadget. [Perh. blend of CONTRIVE and TRAP.]

con-tra-pun-tal (kôn'tra-pûn'täl) ▶ *adj. Mus.* Of, relating to, or incorporating counterpoint.

[< Obsolete Ital. *contrapunto*, counterpoint.] — **con'tra-pun'tal-ly** *adv.*

con-trar-i-an (kôn'tră-rē-ân) ▶ *n.* An investor who makes decisions that contradict prevailing wisdom.

con-trar-i-wise (kôn'tră-rē-wîz', kôn'tră-rē-) ▶ *adv.* 1. From a contrasting point of view. 2. In the opposite way.

con-trar-y (kôn'tră-rē) ▶ *adj.* 1. Opposed; counter. *contrary opinions*. 2. Opposite, as in character or direction. 3. Adverse; unfavorable. 4. (also kôn'tră-rē) Willful or perverse. ▶ *n., pl. -ies*. Something that is opposite or contrary.

adv. Contrariwise; counter. [< Lat. *contrarius* < *contra*, against.] — **con'trar-i-ly** (kôn'tră-rē-s-lē, kôn'tră-rē-) *adv.* — **con'tra-rî-e-ty** (-tră-rî-tē) *n.* — **con'trar-i-ness** *n.*

con-tract (kôn'trăkt', kôn'trăst') ▶ *v.* 1. To set in opposition in order to show differences. 2. To show differences when compared. ▶ *n.* (kôn'trăst') 1. The act of contrasting or the state of being contrasted. 2. A difference between things compared. 3. One thing that is strikingly different from another. [< Med.Lat. *contrastare*: CONTRA- + Lat. *stare*, stand.] — **con-tract'a-ble** *adj.* — **con-tract'ing-ly** *adv.*

con-trib-ute (kôn'trib'yüt') ▶ *v., -vened, -ven'ing* 1. To act or be counter to; violate. 2. To contradict. See **Syns at deny**. [< Lat. *contrivere*, oppose: CONTRA- + Lat. *venire*, come.] — **con'tra-ven'tion** (-vên'shôn) *n.*

con-trib-ute (kôn'trib'yüt') ▶ *v., -uted, -ut'ing* 1. To give or supply a share (to); participate (in). 2. To help bring about a result. [Lat. *contribuere*, bring together.] — **con'tri-bu'tion** (kôn'tri-byüt'shôn) *n.* — **con'trib'u-tive** *adj.* — **con'trib'u-to-ry** *n.* — **con'trib'u-to-ry** (-tôr'ē, -tôr'ē) *adj.*

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Lat. opportunus. — **op·por·tune·ly** *adv.*
— **op·por·tune·ness** *n.*

op·por·tun·ist (ôp'ôr-tôo'nîst, -tyôô'-) *n.*
One who takes advantage of any opportunity to achieve an end, often with no regard for principles or consequences. — **op·por·tun·ism** *n.*
— **op·por·tun·is·tic** *adj.*

op·por·tu·ni·ty (ôp'ôr-tôo'nî-tê, -tyôô'-) *n.*, *pl. ties.* A favorable or advantageous circumstance or combination of circumstances.

op·pose (ô-pôz') *v.* — **posed**, — **pos·ing** *1.* To be in contention or conflict with. *2.* To be resistant to. *3.* To place opposite, esp. in contrast or counterbalance. [*< Lat. opponere, oppōs-*, set against.] — **op·pos·a·bil·i·ty** *n.* — **op·pos·a·ble** *adj.* — **op·po·si·tion** (ôp'ô-zîsh'ən) *n.* — **op·po·si·tion·al** *adj.* — **op·pos·er** *n.*

op·po·site (ôp'ô-zî) *adj.* *1.* Placed or located directly across from. *2.* Facing or moving away from each other. *3.* Sharply contrasting: *opposite views.* *n.* One that is opposite or contrary to another. *adj.* In an opposite position. *prep.* Across from or facing. [*< Lat. oppositus, p.p. of opponere, oppōs-*.] — **op·po·site·ly** *adv.* — **op·po·site·ness** *n.*

op·press (ô-prêz') *v.* *1.* To keep down by unjust use of force or authority. *2.* To weigh heavily on the mind or spirit of. [*< Lat. opprimere, oppress-*, press against.] — **op·pres·sion** *n.* — **op·pres·sor** *n.*

op·pres·sive (ô-prêz'îv) *adj.* *1.* Difficult to bear; burdensome. *2.* Tyrannical. *3.* Weighing heavily on the mind or spirit. — **op·pres·sive·ly** *adv.* — **op·pres·sive·ness** *n.*

op·pro·bri·ous (ô-prô-brî-əs) *adj.* *1.* Expressing contemptuous reproach. *2.* Shameful or infamous. — **op·pro·bri·ous·ly** *adv.*

op·pro·bri·um (ô-prô-brî-əm) *n.* *1.* Disgrace arising from shameful conduct. *2.* Scorn; contempt. *3.* A cause of shame. [*Lat. < opprobare, reproach: ob-, intensive pref. + probum, a reproach.*]

— **opsy** *suffix.* Examination: *biopsy*. [*< Gk. opsîs, sight.*]

opt (ôpt) *v.* To choose. [*< Lat. optare.*]

op·tic (ôp'tîk) *adj.* Of or relating to the eye or vision. [*< Gk. optikos.*]

op·ti·cal (ôp'tî-kəl) *adj.* *1.* Of or relating to sight. *2.* Designed to assist sight. *3.* Of or relating to optics. — **op·ti·cal·ly** *adv.*

optical art *n.* Op art.

optical disk *n.* *Comp. Sci.* A plastic-coated disk that stores digital data as tiny pits etched into the surface and is read with a laser scanning the surface; laser disk.

optical illusion *n.* A deceptive visual image.

op·ti·cian (ôp-tîsh'ən) *n.* One that makes or sells lenses, eyeglasses, and other optical instruments.

op·tics (ôp'tîks) *n.* (*takes sing. v.*) The scientific study of light and vision.

op·ti·mal (ôp'tî-məl) *adj.* Most favorable or desirable. — **op·ti·mal·ly** *adv.*

op·ti·mism (ôp'tî-mîz'm) *n.* *1.* A tendency to expect the best possible outcome or dwell on the most hopeful aspects of a situation. *2.* *Philos.* The doctrine that this world is the best of all possible worlds. [*< Lat. optimus, best.*]

— **op·ti·mist** *n.* — **op·ti·mis·tic** *adj.* — **op·ti·mis·ti·cal·ly** *adv.*

op·ti·mize (ôp'tî-mîz') *v.* — **mized**, — **miz·**

ing *1.* To make as perfect or effective as possible. *2.* To make the most of. — **op·ti·mi·za·tion** *n.*

op·ti·mum (ôp'tî-məm) *n.*, *pl. -ma* (-mə) or *-mums*. The point at which the condition, degree, or amount of something is the most favorable. [*Lat., best.*] — **op·ti·mum** *adj.*

op·tion (ôp'shən) *n.* *1.* The act of choosing; choice. *2.* The power or freedom to choose. *3.* The right to buy or sell something within a specified time at a set price. *4.* Something available as a choice. [*Lat. optio.*] — **op·tion·al** *adj.* — **op·tion·al·ly** *adv.*

op·tom·e·try (ôp-tôm'tî-trê) *n.* The profession of examining eyes and prescribing corrective lenses or other treatments for visual defects. [*Gk. optos, visible + -metry.*] — **op·to·met·ric** (ôp'tî-mêt'rik) *adj.* — **op·tom·e·trist** *n.*

op·u·lent (ôp'yə-lənt) *adj.* *1.* Possessing great wealth. *2.* Lavish. [*Lat. opulentus.*] — **op·u·lence** *n.* — **op·u·lent·ly** *adv.*

o·pus (ô'pas) *n.*, *pl. o·p·e·ra* (ô'pə-rə, ôp'ər-ə) or *o·pus·es*. A creative work, esp. a musical composition. [*Lat.*]

or (ôr; *ar when unstressed*) *conj.* Used to indicate: *a.* An alternative. *b.* The second of two alternatives: *either right or wrong.* *c.* A synonymous or equivalent expression: *acrophobia, or fear of heights.* *d.* Indefiniteness: *two or three.* [*< OE oðthe.*]

Usage: When all the elements in a series connected by *or* are singular, the verb they govern is singular: *Tom or Jack is coming.* When all the elements are plural, the verb is plural. When the elements do not agree in number, some grammarians have suggested that the verb be governed by the element to which it is nearer: *Tom or his sisters are coming.* Other grammarians, however, have argued that substitute constructions be found: *Either Tom is coming or his sisters are.* See Usage Notes at **neither, nor**.

OR *abbr.* *1.* operating room *2.* Oregon

— **or¹** *suffix.* One that performs a specified action: *detector.* [*< Lat.*]

— **or²** *suffix.* State; activity: *behavior.* [*< Lat.*]

o·ra·cle (ôr'ə-kəl, ôr'ə-) *n.* *1a.* A shrine consecrated to a prophetic deity. *b.* A priest or priestess at such a shrine. *c.* A prophecy made known at such a shrine. *2.* A wise person. [*< Lat. oraculum.*] — **o·ra·c·u·lar** (ôr-räk'yə-lər, ô-) *adj.*

o·ral (ôr'al, ôr'-) *adj.* *1.* Spoken rather than written. See Usage Note at **verbal**. *2.* Of the mouth: *oral surgery.* *3.* Used in or taken through the mouth. *4.* Relating to the first stage of psychosexual development in psychoanalytic theory. [*< Lat. os, ôr-, mouth.*] — **o·ral·ly** *adv.*

O·ran (ô-rän', ô-rän') A city of NW Algeria on the Gulf of Oran, an inlet of the Mediterranean Sea. Pop. 409,788.

or·ange (ôr'înj, ôr'-) *n.* *1a.* Any of several citrus trees having white flowers and round, reddish-yellow fruit. *b.* The sectioned pulpy fruit of an orange, having a sweetish acidic juice. *2.* The hue of the visible spectrum lying between red and yellow. [*< Skt. nārāṅga.*] — **or·ange** *adj.*

Orange. A city of S CA NNE of Santa Ana. Pop. 110,658.

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