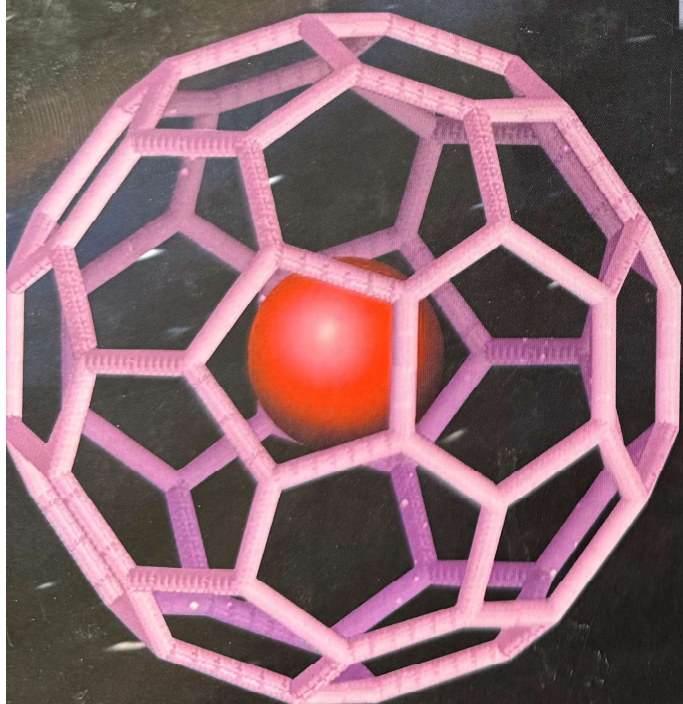


McGraw-Hill
Dictionary of
SCIENTIFIC
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TERMS



Sixth Edition

McGRAW-HILL DICTIONARY OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL TERMS

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 DOW/DOW 0 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

p. cm.

1. Science--Dictionaries. 2. Technology--Dictionaries. I. Title: Dictionary of scientific and technical terms.

503—dc21

2002026436

pityriasis [MED] A fine, branny desquamation of the skin. { 'pid-ə-'rī-ə-'səs }

Pitzer equation [PHYS CHEM] Equation for the approximation of data for heats of vaporization for organic and simple inorganic compounds; derived from temperature and reduced temperature relationships. { 'pit-sər i,kwā-'zhən }

pivot [MECH] A short, pointed shaft forming the center and fulcrum on which something turns, balances, or oscillates. { 'piv-ət }

pivotal condensation [MATH] A method of evaluating a determinant that is convenient for determinants of large order, especially when digital computers are used, involving a repeated process in which a determinant of order n is reduced to the product of one of its elements raised to a power and a determinant of order $n-1$. { 'piv-əd-əl kən-dən-'sā-shən }

pivotal fault See rotary fault. { 'piv-əd-əl fəʊlt }

pivotal method [STAT] A technique for passing from one set of double inequalities to another in order to find a confidence interval for a parameter. { 'piv-əd-əl meth-əd }

pivot anchor [DES ENG] An anchor that permits a pipe to swivel around a fixed point. { 'piv-ət, əŋ-'kər }

pivot bridge [CIV ENG] A bridge in which a span can open by pivoting about a vertical axis. { 'piv-ət 'bri:dʒ }

pivot-bucket conveyor-elevator [MECH ENG] A bucket conveyor having overlapping pivoted buckets on long-pitch roller chains; buckets are always level except when tripped to discharge materials. { 'piv-ət, bək-ət kən-'vā-ər 'el-ə,vād-ər }

pivoted window [BUILD] A window having a section which is pivoted near the center so that the top of the section swings in and the bottom swings out. { 'piv-əd-əd 'win-dō }

pivoting [MATH] In the solution of a system of linear equations by elimination, a method of choosing a suitable equation to eliminate at each step so that certain difficulties are avoided. { 'piv-əd-ɪŋ }

pivoting point [NAV ARCH] The point about which a ship pivots when turning, usually somewhat forward of amidships. { 'piv-əd-ɪŋ, 'pɔɪnt }

pivot joint [ANAT] A diarthrosis that permits a rotation of one bone around another; an example is the articulation of the atlas with the axis. Also known as trochoid. { 'piv-ət 'dʒɔɪnt }

PIXE See proton-induced x-ray emission. { 'pik-'sɛ }

pixel [COMPUT SCI] The smallest part of an electronically coded picture image. [ELECTR] The smallest addressable element in an electronic display; a short form for picture element. Also known as pel. { 'pik-'sel }

pk See peck.

pK [CHEM] The logarithm (to base 10) of the reciprocal of the equilibrium constant for a specified reaction under specified conditions.

PK See psychokinesis.

PKA See cyclic AMP-dependent protein kinase; primary knocked-on atom.

PKC See protein kinase C.

PKU See phenylketonuria.

PI See poiseuille.

PLA See programmed logic array.

placanticline [GEOL] A gentle, anticlinallike uplift of the continental platform, usually asymmetric and without a typical outline. { 'plak-'ant-i, k'lɪn }

place [MATH] A position corresponding to a given power of the base in positional notation. Also known as column. { 'plās }

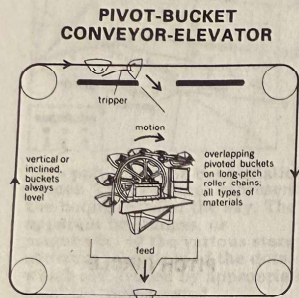
placebo [MED] A preparation, devoid of pharmacologic effect, given to patients for psychologic effect, or as a control in evaluating a medicinal believed to have a pharmacologic action. { 'plā-'chā-'bō or plā-'sē-'bō }

placeholder [COMPUT SCI] A section of computer storage reserved for information that will be provided later. { 'plās, 'hōl-dər }

placenta [BOT] A plant surface bearing a sporangium. [EMBRYO] A vascular organ that unites the fetus to the wall of the uterus in all mammals except marsupials and monotremes. { 'plā-'sent-ə }

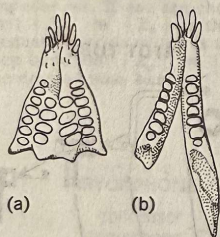
placenta accreta [MED] A placenta that has partially grown into the myometrium of the uterus. { 'plā-'sent-ə ə-'krēd-ə }

placental barrier [EMBRYO] The tissues intervening between the maternal and the fetal blood of the placenta, which prevent or hinder certain substances or organisms from passing from mother to fetus. { 'plā-'sent-əl 'bar-i-ər }



Components of pivot-bucket conveyor-elevator and typical path of travel.

PLACODONTIA



Dentition of *Paraplacodus broilii*, Triassic, Switzerland. (a) Upper jaw. (b) Lower jaw.

PLAGE



The disk of the sun photographed in H- α light, showing bright plages in centers of activity and dark filaments (prominences). (Sacramento Peak Observatory, operated by the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, Inc.)

placenta previa [MED] A pregnancy disorder in which the placenta is abnormally located near or over the cervix. { 'plā-'sen-tə 'prē-'vē-ə }

placentation [BOT] The attachment of ovules to the inner ovarian wall by means of the placenta. Also known as formation and fusion of the placenta to the ovule. { 'plās-ən-'tā-shən }

placer [GEOL] A mineral deposit at or near the surface of the earth, formed by mechanical concentration of mineral matter from weathered debris. Also known as ore of sedimentation. { 'plās-ər }

placer claim [MIN ENG] A mining claim located on the surface of or ground whose mineral contents are extracted by the use of water, as by sluicing, or hydraulicking. { 'plās-ər klēm }

placer dredge [MIN ENG] A dredge for mining placer deposits; it consists of a chain of closely spaced buckets passing over an idler tumbler and an upper series of rollers. { 'plās-ər 'dredʒ }

placer location [MIN ENG] Location of a tract of land on or near its surface, rather than within lodes or veins, in place. { 'plās-ər lō-'kā-'shən }

placer mining [MIN ENG] 1. The extraction and concentration of heavy metals from placers. 2. Mining of placer deposits by sluicing, or talus. { 'plās-ər 'maɪnɪŋ }

place value [MATH] The value given to a digit by virtue of its location in a numeral. { 'plās, 'væl-yū }

placic horizon [GEOL] A black to dark red soil horizon which is usually cemented with iron and is not very permeable. { 'plā-'sɪk hō-'rɪ-zən }

placode [EMBRYO] A platelike epithelial thickening, frequently marking, in the embryo, the anlage of an organ. { 'plā-'kōd }

Placodermi [PALEON] A large and varied class of Paleozoic fishes characterized by a complex bony armor covering the head and the front portion of the trunk. { 'plā-'kōd-ər-mē }

Placodontia [PALEON] A small order of Triassic mammal-like reptiles of the subclass Euryapsida characterized by flat, crushing teeth in both the upper and lower jaws and on the palate. { 'plā-'kōd-ən-'tā-ə }

Placothuriidae [INV ZOO] A family of holothurian echinoderms in the order Dendrochirotida; individuals are in plates and have a complex calcareous ring mechanism. { 'plā-'kō-thō-'rī-ə-'dē }

plage [ASTRON] One of the luminous areas that appear in the vicinity of sunspots or disturbed areas on the sun; they can be seen distinctively in spectroheliograms taken in the calcium K line. { 'plāʒh }

Plagept [GEOL] A suborder of the soil order Inceptisols, with very thick surface horizons of mixed mineral and organic materials resulting from manure or human wastes added over long periods of time. { 'plā-'gept }

plagioplate [PETR] An aplite composed chiefly of plagioclase (oligoclase to andesine), possibly green hornblende, and accessory quartz, biotite, and muscovite. { 'plā-'jē-ə-'plīt }

Plagiaulacida [PALEON] A primitive, monofamilial suborder of multituberculata mammals distinguished by their dentition (dental formula I 3/0 C 0/0 Pm 5/4 M 2/2), having canine premolars and two rows of cusps on the upper molars. { 'plā-'jē-ə-'yū-'lās-ə-'dā }

Plagiaulacidae [PALEON] The single family of the extinct multituberculata suborder Plagiaulacida. { 'plā-'jē-ə-'yū-'lās-ə-'dē }

plagiocephaly [MED] A type of strongly asymmetric skull deformation, in which the anterior portion of the skull is depressed posteriorly and the posterior portion of the skull is not in the midline but on a diagonal. { 'plā-'jē-ə-'sēf-ə-'lē }

plagioclase [MINERAL] 1. A type of triclinic feldspar having the general formula (Na,Ca)Al(Si,Al)Si₃O₈. 2. A series in the plagioclase group which can be divided into a number of varieties based on the relative proportion of the solid solution end members albite and anorthite (An): albite (An 0-10), oligoclase (An 10-30), andesine (An 30-50), labradorite (An 50-70), anorthite (An 70-90), and anorthite (An 90-100). { 'plā-'jē-ə-'klās }