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-ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from Greek *phōnē* 'sound, voice.'

phone *comb. form* 1 denoting an instrument using or connected with sound: *megaphone*.

2 denoting a person who uses a specified language: *francophone*.

-ORIGIN from Greek *phōnē* 'sound, voice.'

phone bank *n.* a battery of telephones: *campaign volunteers have spent countless hours manning phone banks.*

phone book *n.* a telephone directory.

phone card *n.* another term for **CALLING CARD** (sense 2).

phone-in *n.* & *adj.* another term for **CALL-IN**.

phoneme *['fōnem]* *n.* Phonetics any of the perceptually distinct units of sound in a specified language that distinguish one word from another, for example *p*, *b*, *d*, and *t* in the English words *pad*, *pat*, *bad*, and *bat*. Compare with **ALLOPHONE**.

-DERIVATIVES **phonemic** *['fōnɛmɪk; fō-]* *adj.*; **phonemics** *['fōnɛmɪks; fō-]* *n.*

-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from French *phonème*, from Greek *phōnēma* 'sound, speech,' from *phōnēin* 'speak.'

phone sex *n.* a commercial service providing its customers with sexually explicit telephone conversation for the purposes of sexual gratification.

phonetic *['fōnetɪk]* *adj.* Phonetics of or relating to speech sounds: *detailed phonetic information.*

■ (of a system of writing) having a direct correspondence between symbols and sounds: *a phonetic alphabet.* ■ (of or relating to) phonetics: *phonetic training.*

-DERIVATIVES **phonetically** *[-ɪk(ə)l]* *adv.*; **phoneticism** *[-nɛtɪsɪzəm]* *n.*; **phoneticist** *[-nɛtɪsɪst]* *n.*

-ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from modern Latin *phoneticus*, from Greek *phōnētikos*, from *phōnēin* 'speak.'

phonetics *['fōnetɪks]* *plural n.* [treated as *sing.*] the study and classification of speech sounds.

-DERIVATIVES **phonetician** *['fōnɛtɪʃən]* *n.*

phoney *adj.* & *n.* variant spelling of **PHONY**.

phonically *['fōnɪk]* *adj.* of or relating to speech sounds.

■ (of or relating to) phonics: *the English language presents difficulties if a purely phonetic approach is attempted.*

-DERIVATIVES **phonically** *['fōnɪk(ə)l]* *adv.*

-ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from Greek *phōnē* 'voice' + *-ic*.

phonics *['fōnɪks]* *plural n.* [treated as *sing.*] a method of teaching people to read by correlating sounds with letters or groups of letters in an alphabetic writing system.

phono *['fōnə]* *n.* short for **PHONOGRAPH**.

adj. [attrib.] denoting a type of plug, and the corresponding socket, used with audio and video equipment, in which one conductor is cylindrical and the other is a central prong that extends beyond it.

-ORIGIN 1940s: abbreviation of **PHONOGRAPH**.

phono *comb. form* relating to sound: *phonograph*.

-ORIGIN from Greek *phōnē* 'sound, voice.'

phono-cardiogram *['fōnə'kɑrdɪəgræm]* *n.* Medicine a chart or record of the sounds made by the heart.

phono-gram *['fōnəgræm]* *n.* Phonetics a symbol representing a vocal sound.

phono-graph *['fōnəgræf]* *n.* a record player.

■ chiefly historical an early sound-reproducing machine that used cylinders to record as well as reproduce sound.

-DERIVATIVES **phono-graphic** *['fōnəgræfɪk]* *adj.*

phono-graph record *n.* fuller form of **RECORD** (sense 4).

phono-lite *['fōnəlit]* *n.* Geology a fine-grained volcanic igneous rock composed of alkali feldspars and nepheline.

-ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from **PHONO-** 'relating to sound' (because of its resonance when struck) + *-lite*.

phonology *['fōnələdʒi; fō-]* *n.* the branch of linguistics that deals with systems of sounds (including or excluding phonetics), esp. in a particular language.

■ the system of relationships among the speech sounds that constitute the fundamental components of a language.

-DERIVATIVES **phonological** *['fōnələdʒɪk]* *adj.*; **phonologically** *['fōnələdʒɪk(ə)l]* *adv.*; **phonologist** *[-lɒdʒɪst]* *n.*

phonon *['fōnən]* *n.* Physics a quantum of energy or a quasiparticle associated with a compressional wave such as sound or a vibration of a crystal lattice.

-ORIGIN 1930s: from Greek *phōnē* 'sound,' on the pattern of *photon*.

phonotactics *['fōnə'tæktɪks]* *plural n.* [treated as *sing.*] the study of the rules governing the possible phoneme sequences in a language.

-DERIVATIVES **phonotactic** *[-tɪk]* *adj.*

phony *['fōnɪ]* (also *phoney*) *informal adj.* (*phonier*, *phoniest*) not genuine; fraudulent: *I thought your accent was a bit phony.*

n. (pl. *-ies*) a fraudulent person or thing.

-DERIVATIVES **phonily** *['fōnɪl]* *adv.*; **phoniness** *n.*

-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: of unknown origin.

phony war the period of comparative inaction at the beginning of World War II between the German invasion of Poland (September 1939) and that of Norway (April 1940).

phoney *['fōne]* *informal exclam.* (also *pfui*) used to express disdain or disbelief: *I say phoney to all their money and fine clothes.*

n. nonsense: *those excuses are a lot of phoney.*

-ORIGIN 1920s: imitative.

-phore *comb. form* denoting an agent or bearer of a specified thing: *ionophore* | *semaphore*.

-DERIVATIVES **-phorous** *comb. form* in corresponding adjectives.

-ORIGIN from modern Latin *-phorus*, from Greek *-phoros*, *-phorōn* 'bearing, bearer,' from *pherein* 'to bear.'

phoresy *['fōrəsi]* *n.* Zoology an association between two organisms in which one (e.g., a mite) travels on the body of another, without being a parasite.

-DERIVATIVES **phoretic** *['fōrɛtɪk]* *adj.*

-ORIGIN 1920s: from French *phorésie*, from Greek *phorēsis* 'being carried.'

Phoronida *['fōrənəda]* *n.* Zoology a small phylum of wormlike marine invertebrates.

-DERIVATIVES **phoronid** *['fōrənɪd]* *n.*

-ORIGIN modern Latin (plural), from Latin *Phoronis*, *Phoronid*, the name of a character in Greek mythology.

phosgene *['fəʃən]* *n.* Chemistry a colorless poisonous gas made by the reaction of chlorine and carbon dioxide. It was used as a poison gas, notably in World War I.

•Alternative name: **carbonyl chloride**; chem. formula: **COCl₂**.

-ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from Greek *phōs* 'light' + *-GEN*, with reference to its original production by the action of sunlight on chlorine and carbon monoxide.

phosphatase *['fəʃfə,tas]* *n.* Biochemistry an enzyme that catalyzes the hydrolysis of organic phosphates in a specified (acid or alkaline) environment.

phosphate *['fəʃfət]* *n.* 1 Chemistry a salt or ester of phosphoric acid, containing **PO₄³⁻** or a related anion or a group such as **-OPO(OH)₂**.

2 an effervescent soft drink containing phosphoric acid, soda water, and flavoring.

-ORIGIN late 18th cent.: from French, from *phosphore* 'phosphorus.'

phosphatic *['fəʃfætɪk]* *adj.* (chiefly of rocks and fertilizer) containing or consisting of phosphates.

phosphatide *['fəʃfə,tɪd]* *n.* Biochemistry any of a class of compounds that are fatty acid esters of glycerol phosphate with a nitrogen base linked to the phosphate group.

phosphatidylcholine *['fəʃfə,tɪd'l kəleɪn; fəʃfə,tɪd-l]* *n.* Biochemistry another term for **LECITHIN**.

phosphene *['fəʃfən]* *n.* a ring or spot of light produced by pressure on the eyeball or direct stimulation of the visual system other than by light.

-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: formed irregularly from Greek *phōs* 'light' + *phainein* 'to show.'

phosphide *['fəʃfɪd]* *n.* Chemistry a binary compound of phosphorus with another element or group.

phosphine *['fəʃfən]* *n.* Chemistry a colorless foul-smelling gaseous compound of phosphorus and hydrogen, analogous to ammonia.

•Chem. formula: **PH₃**. It forms salts containing the **phosphonium** ion, **PH₄⁺**.

-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from **PHOSPHO-** 'relating to phosphorus' + *-NE*, on the pattern of *amine*.

phosphite *['fəʃfɪt]* *n.* Chemistry old-fashioned term for phosphonate (see **PHOSPHONIC ACID**).

phospho *comb. form* representing **PHOSPHORUS**.

phosphocreatine *['fəʃfə'kreɪtɪn]* *n.* Biochemistry a phosphate ester of creatine found in vertebrate muscle, where it serves to store phosphates to provide energy for muscular contraction.

phosphodiesterase *['fəʃfə'di:estərəs]* *n.* Biochemistry an enzyme that breaks a phosphodiester bond in an oligonucleotide.

phosphodiester bond *['fəʃfə'di:estər]* *n.* Biochemistry a chemical bond of the kind joining successive sugar molecules in a polynucleotide.

phospholipase *['fəʃfə'lɪpəs]* *n.* Biochemistry an enzyme that hydrolyzes lecithin or a similar phospholipid.

phospholipid *['fəʃfə'lɪpɪd]* *n.* Biochemistry a lipid containing a phosphate group in its molecule, e.g., lecithin.

phosphonic acid *['fəʃfənɪk]* *n.* Chemistry a crystalline acid obtained by the reaction of phosphorus trioxide with water.

•A dibasic acid; chem. formula: **HPO(OH)₂**.

-DERIVATIVES **phosphonate** *['fəʃfə,nat]* *n.*

-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: *phosphonic* from **PHOSPHO-** 'relating to phosphorus,' on the pattern of *nitronic*.

phosphonium *['fəʃfə'nɪəm]* *n.* see **PHOSPHINE**.

-ORIGIN late 19th cent.: blend of **PHOSPHORUS** and **AMMONIUM**.

phosphoprotein *['fəʃfə'prəteɪn]* *n.* Biochemistry a protein that contains phosphorus (other than in a nucleic acid or a phospholipid).

phosphor *['fəʃfər]* *n.* a synthetic fluorescent or phosphorescent substance, esp. any of those used to coat the screens of cathode-ray tubes.

■ old-fashioned term for **PHOSPHORUS**.

-ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *phosphorus* (see **PHOSPHORUS**).

phosphorated *['fəʃfə'rætɪd]* *adj.* combined or impregnated with phosphorus.

phosphor bronze *n.* a tough, hard form of bronze containing a small amount of phosphorus, used esp. for bearings.

phosphoresce *['fəʃfə'res]* *v.* [intrans.] emit light or radiation by phosphorescence.

phosphorescence *['fəʃfə'rens]* *n.* light emitted by a substance without combustion or perceptible heat: *the stones overhead gleamed with phosphorescence.*

■ Physics the emission of radiation in a similar manner to fluorescence but on a longer timescale, so that emission continues after excitation ceases.

-DERIVATIVES **phosphorescent** *adj.*

phosphoric *['fəʃfərɪk]* *adj.* relating to or containing phosphorus.

■ Chemistry of phosphorus with a valence of five. Compare with **PHOSPHOROUS**.

-ORIGIN late 18th cent.: from French *phosphorique*, from *phosphore* 'phosphorus.'

phosphoric acid *n.* Chemistry a crystalline acid obtained, e.g., by treating phosphates with sulfuric acid, and used in fertilizer and soap manufacture and in food processing.

•A tribasic acid; chem. formula: **H₃PO₄**.

phosphorite *['fəʃfərɪt]* *n.* a sedimentary rock containing a high proportion of calcium phosphate.

-ORIGIN late 18th cent.: from **PHOSPHORUS** + *-ITE*.

phosphorous *['fəʃfərəs; fəʃfərəs]* *adj.* relating to or containing phosphorus. Compare with **PHOSPHORIC**.

■ Chemistry of phosphorus with a valence of three.

■ phosphorescent.

USAGE: The correct spelling for the noun denoting the chemical element is **phosphorus**, while the correct spelling for the adjective meaning 'relating to or containing phosphorus' is **phosphorous**. A common mistake is to use the spelling **phosphorous** for the noun as well as the adjective.

phosphorous acid *n.* another term for **PHOSPHONIC ACID**.

phosphorus *['fəʃfərəs]* *n.* the chemical element of atomic number 15, a poisonous, combustible non-metal that exists in two common allotropic forms, **white phosphorus**, a yellowish waxy solid that ignites spontaneously in air and glows in the dark, and **red phosphorus**, a less reactive form used in making matches. (Symbol: **P**)

-ORIGIN late 17th cent.: from Latin, from Greek *phōsphōros*, from *phōs* 'light' + *-phoros* 'bringing.'

phosphorylase *['fəʃfərə,lās; fəʃfərə,lās]* *n.* Biochemistry an enzyme that introduces a phosphate group into an organic molecule, notably glucose.

phosphorylate *['fəʃfərə,læt; fəʃfərə,læt]* *v.* [trans.] (often be *phosphorylated*) chiefly Biochemistry introduce a phosphate group into (a molecule or compound).

-DERIVATIVES **phosphorylation** *['fəʃfərə'læʃən]* *n.*

phot *['fəʊt]* *n.* a unit of illumination equal to one lumen per square centimeter.

-ORIGIN early 20th cent.: from Greek *phōs*, *phōt-* 'light.'

photic *['fəʊtɪk]* *adj.* technical of or relating to light, esp. as an agent of chemical change or physiological response.

■ Ecology denoting the layers of the ocean reached by sufficient sunlight to allow plant growth: *an average depth for the photic zone is about 300 feet.*

photon *['fəʊtən]* *n.* (pl. *-ons*) Physics the hypothetical supersymmetric counterpart of the photon, with spin $-1/2$.

-ORIGIN 1970s: from **PHOTON** + *-ino* from **NEUTRINO**.

photo *['fəʊtə]* *n.* (pl. *-os*) a photograph.

■ informal a photo finish.

-ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: abbreviation.

photo *comb. form* 1 relating to light: *photochemical*.

2 relating to photography: *photocomposition*.

-ORIGIN sense 1 from Greek *phōs*, *phōt-* 'light'; sense 2, abbreviation of **PHOTOGRAPHY**.