

Second College Edition

**The
American Heritage
Dictionary**

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ig organ in many fungi. [NLat. < Gk. *peri-*, leather pouch.] —*peri-dial* *adj.*
[*lōt*, -dō'] *n.* A green variety of olive used
[*lōt* < OFr. *peridot*.] —*peri-doric* (-dō'tik).

peri-dō-tir, *pā-dō-tir* *n.* Any of a group of
having a granitic texture and composed
of various pyroxenes and amphiboles.
[*peri*, *dō*.] —*peri-dō-tic* (-dō'tik) *n.*
The point nearest the earth in the or-
bit of a satellite. [OFr. < Med. Lat. *perigeum* <
Gk. *peri*, near + Gk. *gē*, earth.] —*peri-gē-*
an *adj.*

peri-gē-an *adj.* Bot. 1. Having sepals, per-
around the edge of a cuplike receptacle
ovary. 2. Designating perigynous flower
stamens. —*peri-gyn* (-pā-rj'ō-nē) *n.*
peri-hē-lē-on, -hē'lē-on *n.* *pl.* -hē-lē-a (-hē-
lē-ā) *n.* The point nearest the sun in the orbit of a
celestial body. [PERI- + Gk. *hēlios*, sun.]

peri-kār'te-on, -ān *n.* *pl.* -kār-yā (kār'tē-
yā) *n.* A neuron containing the nucleus. —*peri-*

A condition of imminent danger; expo-
sure to harm or loss. 2. Something that endan-
gers. —*peri-l*, -līng, -līs also -līng, -līng,
danger or the chance of injury; imperil.
[*peri*, around + *lōt*, measure.] —*peri-lous*-
ous *adj.*

limf *n.* The fluid in the space between
and bony labyrinth of the internal ear.
nī-tar *n.* 1. *a. Math.* A closed curve
area. b. The length of such a boundary.
or boundary usually protecting a military
or limits of an area. [Fr. *péri-mètre* < Lat.
peri, around + *metron*, measure.] —*peri-*
trik, *peri-metrical* *adj.* —*peri-metrical*

nōrl *n.* A mineral that encloses a dif-
ferent mineral. —*peri-morphic*, *peri-morphic* *adj.*

mīz *n.* *pl.* -mīz (-mē) *n.* *pl.* -mīz (-mē)
A sheath of connective tissue enclosing
fibers. [NLat. : PERI- + Gk. *mis*,
measure.]

lī *adj.* Occurring near the time of

rō-nēf-rē-ōm, -nēf-rē-ōm *n.* *pl.* -rē-ā (-rē-ā)
The tissue surrounding the kidney. [NLat.
around the kidneys : *peri*, around +
nephral, *peri-nephral*, *peri-nephral*, *peri-*

am *n.* *pl.* -nē-ā (-nē-ā) *n.* 1. The portion
occupied by urogenital passages
ded in front by the pubic arch, in the
and laterally by part of the hipbone.
1 the scrotum and the anus in males,
eror vulva junction and the anus in
it. *perinaea* < Gk. : *peri*, around +
nē-ā *adj.*

nōr *n.* *pl.* -nōr (-nē) *n.* *pl.* -nōr (-nē)
A sheath of connective tissue enclosing
ve fibers. —*peri-neurial* *adj.*

An interval of time characterized by
n conditions or events : a *period* of 12
of time characterized by the prev-
lure, ideology, or technology : *arti-*
an period. 3. A unit of geologic time,
id shorter than an era. 4. An interval
olutionary or developmental phase;
iod. 5. Any of various arbitrary tem-
y of the divisions of the academic
playing time of a game. 6. *Physic*
val between two successive occur-
nces : *cycle*. 7. An instance or occur-
8. A point or portion of time at
ed; completion; conclusion. 9. The
a spoken sentence. 10. A punctu-
ing a full stop, placed at the end of
d other statements thought to be
abbreviations. 11. In formal writ-
l carefully balanced clauses. 12. A
rse consisting of two or more cola
or more phrases within a composi-
measures and terminating with a
e least interval in the range of the
1 periodic function of a real vari-
values of the dependent variable
of digits separated by commas in a
umber of digits that repeat in a
For example, 1/7 =
six-digit period. —*adj.* Of, belong-
certain historical age or time : *a*
re. [ME *periode* < OFr. *periode* <
cycle < Gk. *peridos*, circuit :
]

hw which / i pit / i pie / i pier /
oise / ou out / oo took / oo boot /

Synonyms: *period, time, epoch, era, age, term.* These
are general words for an imprecise portion of time, usually
of actual or seemingly long duration. A *period* can be a
roughly specified interval or it can objectively denote a time
historically; an *epoch* waiting period; the *Romantic period*.
Time, used here in its concrete rather than conceptual sense,
often implies a period with certain diversities or possibilities
as seen from a more personal vantage: *those times were the*
best. Time can also be used loosely for a period of not pre-
cisely defined limits: *it was a time of sorrow*. *Epoch* is a
formal word for more precise historical emphasis, implying
usually that the given period is one of change and is seen as
but one among many. More colorful is *era*, which connotes
up associations of a notable flavor or way of life over a long
and important span of time. *Age* accents the great duration
of a period with a salient characteristic, seen from a distant
or at least hypothetical perspective. Used of geologic and
historical periods, an *age* can cover centuries but it is often
used hyperbolically: *ages ago*. A *term* is a formally delimited
period, usually relating to particular institutions: *his term of*
imprisonment; *her term of office*.

peri-odic (pī-rē-dō'tik) *adj.* 1. Having periods or repeated
cycles. 2. Happening or appearing at regular intervals.
3. Taking place now and then; intermittent. [Lat. *periodicus*
< Gk. *peridos* < *peridos*, circuit. —see PERIOD.] —*peri-*
odical *adv.*

Synonyms: *periodic, sporadic, intermittent, occasional,*
fitful. These specify recurrence over a period of time. Some-
thing is *periodic* which occurs at intervals that are, if not
regular, at least generally predictable. *Sporadic* emphasizes
the irregularity of what recurs, as well as its unpredictabil-
ity. *Intermittent* describes anything which comes and goes,
usually infrequently but somewhat expectedly, and stresses
the pauses or interruptions rather than the occurrences. It
usually implies recurrence within understood limits, and
may hint at a significant pattern: *intermittent periods of ra-*
tionality. What is *occasional* happens at random, usually in-
frequently, and is generally not considered very important
or disruptive. Something is *fitful* which comes abruptly, at
odd times, and does not last long.

peri-odic acid (pī-rē-dō'tik) *n.* A white, crystalline inor-
ganic acid, H₂IO₆·2H₂O, used as an oxidizer.

peri-odical (pī-rē-dō'tik) *adj.* 1. Periodic. 2. a. Published
at regular intervals of more than one day. b. Of or pertain-
ing to a publication issued at such intervals. —*n.* A publi-
cation issued at regular intervals of more than one day.

periodical cicada *n.* Seventeen-year locust.

peri-odicality (pī-rē-dō'tik-ē-tē) *n.* The quality of being peri-
odic; recurrence at regular intervals.

periodic law *n.* Chem. The principle that the properties of
the elements recur periodically with increasing atomic num-
ber.

periodic table *n.* Chem. A tabular arrangement of the ele-
ments according to their atomic number.

peri-odon-tal (pī-rē-dōn'tal) *adj.* Of or designating tissue
and structures surrounding and supporting the teeth.
—*peri-odon-tal* *adv.*

peri-odon-tics (pī-rē-dōn'tiks) *n.* (used with a sing. verb)
The dental specialty of periodontal disease. —*peri-odon-*
tical, *peri-odon-tical* *adj.* —*peri-odon-tist* *n.*

peri-onych-ium (pī-rē-dōn'ik-ē-ōm) *n.* *pl.* -i-ā (-i-ā) *n.* Anat.
The border tissue surrounding the nail. [NLat. : PERI- +
Gk. *onux*, nail.]

peri-oste-um (pī-rē-dōs'tē-ōm) *n.* *pl.* -tē-ā (-tē-ā) *n.* A fibrous
membrane covering all bones, except at points of articula-
tion. [NLat. < L.Lat. *periosteum* < Gk. *periosteos*, around
the bone : *peri*, around + *osteon*, bone.] —*peri-oste-al*,
peri-oste-ous *adj.*

peri-ostitis (pī-rē-dōs'tītis) *n.* Inflammation of the perioste-
um. —*peri-ostitic* (-tīt'ik) *adj.*

peri-otic (pī-rē-dō'tik) *adj.* 1. Situated around the ear. 2. Of
or designating the bones immediately around the inner ear.

peri-pa-tetic (pī-rē-pā-tē'tik) *adj.* 1. Of or relating to walk-
ing. 2. *Peripatetic*. Of or pertaining to the philosophy or
methods of teaching of Aristotle. —*n.* 1. A person who
walks from place to place; itinerant. 2. *Peripatetic*. A fol-
lower of the philosophy of Aristotle; Aristotelian. [OFr. *pe-*
ripaetique < Lat. *peripateticus* < Gk. *peripatētikos* <
peripatein, to walk about : *peri*, around + *patein*, to walk.]

peri-pe-tē-ia (pī-rē-pā-tē-ā, -i-ā) *n.* An abrupt or unex-
pected change in a course of events or situation, esp. in a
literary work. [Gk. < *peripeteia*, to change suddenly : *peri*,
around + *pepein*, to fall.]

peri-pety (pā-rīp'tē) *n.* *Peripeteia*.

peri-ph-er-al (pā-rīf'rāl) *adj.* 1. Pertaining to, located on,
or comprising the periphery. 2. Auxiliary. —*n.* An auxiliary
device, such as a printer or plotter, that works in conjunc-
tion with a computer. —*peri-ph-er-al* *adv.*

peripheral nervous system *n.* The part of the nervous sys-
tem comprising the cranial nerves, the spinal nerves, and the
sympathetic nervous system.

peri-ph-ery (pā-rīf'rē) *n.* *pl.* -ies. 1. a. The outermost part
or region within a precise boundary. b. The region or area
immediately beyond a precise boundary. c. A zone consti-
tuting an imprecise boundary. 2. *Math.* a. A perimeter
(sense 1.a.). b. The surface of a solid. 3. *Anat.* A region in

which nerves end. [ME *periphērie* < L.Lat. *periphēria* < Gk.
periphēria < *periphērēs*, carrying around : *peri*, around +
pherein, to carry.]

peri-ph-er-ia (pā-rīf'rē-ā) *n.* *pl.* -ses (-sēz). 1. The use of
circumlocution. 2. A circumlocution. [Lat. < Gk. < *peri-*
phrazein, to express periphrastically : *peri*, around + *phra-*
zein, to say.]

peri-ph-er-ic (pī-rē-frās'tik) *adj.* 1. Having the nature of
or characterized by periphrasis. 2. *Gram.* Constructed by
using an auxiliary word rather than an inflected form; for
example, the phrases *the word of his father* and *his father did*
say are periphrastic, while *his father's word* and *his father*
said are inflected. —*peri-ph-er-ical* *adv.*

peri-ph-y-ton (pā-rīf'tōn) *n.* Sessile organisms that live at-
tached to surfaces projecting from the bottom in a freshwa-
ter aquatic environment. [NLat. < Gk. *periphutos*, planted
all over : *peri*, around + *phuein*, to grow.]

peri-ph-er-al (pā-rīf'rāl) *adj.* *Archit.* Built with a row of
columns on all sides. —*n.* A structure with rows of columns
on all sides. [Lat. *peripteros* < Gk. : *peri*, around + *pteron*,
wing.]

per-ique (pā-rēk) *n.* A strongly flavored, black tobacco
grown in Louisiana and used in various blends. [Louisiana
Fr.]

peri-sarc (pī-rē-sārk) *n.* A horny external covering that en-
closes the poly colonies of certain hydrozoans. [PERI- +
Gk. *sarx*, flesh.] —*peri-sar-cal*, *peri-sar-cous* *adj.*

peri-scope (pī-rē-skōp) *n.* Any of various tubular optical
instruments that contain reflecting elements, such as mir-
rors and prisms, to permit observation from a position dis-
placed from a direct line of sight. —*peri-scopic* (-skōp'ik),
peri-scopical *adj.*

perish (pī-rish) *intr.v.* -ished, -ish-ing, -ish-es. 1. To die,
esp. in a violent or untimely manner. 2. To pass from exis-
tence; disappear gradually. 3. *Regional*. To spoil or deterio-
rate. [ME *perissen* < OFr. *perir*, *periss*, to perish < Lat.
perire : *per*, away + *ire*, to go.]

perish-able (pī-rē-shā-bəl) *adj.* Liable to perish, decay, or
spoil; easily injured or destroyed. —*n.* Often *perishables*.
Something, esp. foodstuff, apt to decay or spoil. —*perish-a-*
bility, *perish-able-ness* *n.* —*perish-a-bly* *adv.*

peris-sod-act-yl (pā-ris'ō-dākt'al) *Zool.* —*adj.* 1. Having an
odd number of toes. 2. Of or pertaining to certain hoofed
mammals, such as horses and rhinoceroses, of the order *Per-*
issodactyla, that have an odd number of toes. —*n.* A
hoofed mammal of the order *Perissodactyla*. [Gk. *perisso-*
daktulos : *perissos*, uneven (< *peri*, beyond) + *daktulos*, finger.]
—*peris-sod-act-ylous* (-dākt'al-las) *adj.*

peri-stal-sis (pī-rē-stōl'sis, -stāl'-) *n.* *pl.* -ses (-sēz). Wave-
like muscular contractions that propel contained matter
along tubular organs, as in the alimentary canal. [NLat. <
Gk. *peristaltikos*, peristaltic < *peristellein*, to wrap around :
peri, around + *stellein*, to place.] —*peri-stal-tic* (-stōl'tik,
-stāl'-) *adj.* —*peri-stal-tical* *adv.*

peri-stome (pī-rē-stōm) *n.* 1. Bot. A circular row of tooth-
like appendages surrounding the mouth of a moss capsule.
2. *Zool.* The area around the mouth in certain invertebrates.
[PERI- + Gk. *stoma*, mouth.] —*peri-stō-mal* (-stō'mal), *peri-*
sto-mi-al (-stō'mē-āl) *adj.*

peri-style (pī-rē-stīl) *n.* *Archit.* 1. A series of columns sur-
rounding a temple or other structure, or enclosing a court.
2. A court enclosed by columns. [Fr. *peristyle* < Lat. *peristy-*
lum < Gk. *peristylon* < *peristulos*, surrounded by columns :
peri, around + *stulos*, pillar.] —*peri-stylar* (-stī'lār) *adj.*

peri-the-ci-um (pī-rē-thē'shē-ōm, -sē-ōm) *n.* *pl.* -ci-a
(-shē-ā, -sē-ā) *n.* A small fruiting body in certain fungi,
containing ascospores. [NLat. : PERI- + Gk. *thēkion*, dim. of
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peri-to-ne-um also *peri-to-nae-um* (pī-rē-tō-nē-ōm) *n.* *pl.*
-nē-ā also *-nē-ā* (-nē-ā) *n.* The membrane lining the walls of
the abdominal cavity and enclosing the viscera. [NLat. <
Gk. *peritoneaion* < *peritoneios*, stretched across < *peritonos*,
stretched around : *peri*, around + *teinō*, to stretch.]
—*peri-to-nē-al* *adj.* —*peri-to-nē-al* *adv.*

peri-to-ni-tis (pī-rē-tō-nī'tis) *n.* Inflammation of the perito-
neum.

peri-trich (pī-rē-trīk) *n.* *pl.* *peri-tri-cha* (pā-rī-trī-kā). A
bell-shaped or tubular microorganism of the order *Peritri-*
chida, characterized by a wide oral opening surrounded by
cilia. [NLat. *Peritrichida*, order name : PERI- + Gk. *thrix*,
hair.] —*peri-tri-chous* (pā-rī-trī-kas) *adj.*

peri-wig (pī-rē-wīg) *n.* A wig or peruke. [Alteration of OFr.
peruque. —see PERUKE.]

peri-win-kle (pī-rē-wīng'kal) *n.* 1. Any of several small, ed-
ible marine snails, esp. of the genus *Littorina*, having thick,
cone-shaped, whorled shells. 2. The shell of any of the per-
iwinkles. [ME *periwinkle*, prob. alteration of OE *pinewinkel* :
Lat. *pina*, mussel (< Gk. *pinē*) + OE *wincel*, snail shell.]

peri-win-kle (pī-rē-wīng'kal) *n.* Any of several trailing,
evergreen plants of the genus *Vinca*, esp. *V. minor*, having
glossy, dark-green leaves and blue flowers. [ME *pervenke* <
OFr. *pervenche* < Lat. *pervinca*.]

per-jure (pī-rj'or) *tr.v.* -jured, -jur-ing, -jures. To render (one-
self) guilty of perjury by deliberately testifying falsely under
oath. [ME *perjuren* < OFr. *perjurer* < Lat. *perjurare* : *per*,
through + *jurare*, to swear.] —*per-jur-er* *n.*

which nerves end. [ME *periphērie* < L.Lat. *periphēria* < Gk.
periphēria < *periphērēs*, carrying around : *peri*, around +
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