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About the type

This dictionary is typeset in CollinsFedra, a special version of the Fedra family of types designed by Peter Bil'ak. CollinsFedra has been customized especially for Collins dictionaries; it includes both sans serif (for headwords) and serif (entries) versions, in several different weights. Its large x-height, its open 'eye', and its basis in the tradition of humanist letterforms make CollinsFedra both familiar and easy to read at small sizes. It has been designed to use the minimum space without sacrificing legibility, as well as including a number of characters and signs that are specific to dictionary typography. Its companion phonetic type is the first of its kind to be drawn according to the same principles as the regular typeface, rather than assembled from rotated and reflected characters from other types. Peter Bil'ak (born 1973, Slovakia) is a graphic and type designer living in the Netherlands. He is the author of two books, *Illegibility* and *Transparency*. As well as the Fedra family, he has designed several other typefaces including Eureka. His typotheque.com website has become a focal point for research and debate around contemporary type design.

column ('kɒləm) *n* 1 an upright post or pillar usually having a cylindrical shaft, a base, and a capital 2 **a** a form or structure in the shape of a column: *a column of air* 3 **a** monument 3 **a** row, line, or file, as of people in a queue 4 *military* a narrow formation in which individuals or units follow one behind the other 5 *journalism* **a** any of two or more vertical sections of type on a printed page, esp on a newspaper page **b** a regular article or feature in a paper: *the fashion column* 6 a vertical array of numbers or mathematical terms 7 *botany* a long structure in a flower, such as that of an orchid, consisting of the united stamens and style 8 *anatomy, zoology* any elongated structure, such as a tract of grey matter in the spinal cord or the stalk of a crinoid > **columnar** (kə'lɒmnə) *adj* > **columned** or **columnated** ('kɒləm,neɪtɪd) *adj*

● **ETymology** c15: from Latin *columna*, from *columen* top, peak; related to Latin *collis* hill

columniation (kə'lɒmn'eɪʃən) *n* the arrangement of architectural columns

column inch *n* a unit of measurement for advertising space, one inch deep and one column wide

columnist ('kɒləmɪst, -ənmɪst) *n* a journalist who writes a regular feature in a newspaper: *a gossip columnist*

colure (kə'lʊə, 'kəʊlʊə) *n* either of two great circles on the celestial sphere, one of which passes through the celestial poles and the equinoxes and the other through the poles and the solstices

● **ETymology** c16: from Late Latin *colūri* (plural), from Greek *kolourai* cut short, dock-tailed, from *kolos* docked > *oura* tail; so called because the view of the lower part is curtailed

Colwyn Bay ('kɒlwɪn) *n* a town and resort in N Wales, in Conwy county borough. Pop: 30269 (2001)

coly ('kɒli) *n, pl -lies* any of the arboreal birds of the genus *Colius*, family *Coliidae*, and order *Coliiformes*, of southern Africa. They have a soft hairlike plumage, crested head, and very long tail. Also called: **mousebird**

● **ETymology** c19: from New Latin *colius*, probably from Greek *kolios* woodpecker

colza ('kɒlzə) *n* another name for **rape**²

● **ETymology** c18: via French (Walloon) *kolzat* from Dutch *koolzaad*, from *kool* cabbage, *COLE* + *zaad* SEED

colza oil *n* the oil obtained from the seeds of the rape plant and used in making lubricants and synthetic rubber

com *the internet domain name for a commercial company*

COM (kɒm) *n* **a** a process in which a computer output is converted direct to microfiche or film, esp 35 or 16 millimetre film **b** (as modifier): *a COM machine*

● **ETymology** (C)omputer (O)utput on (M)icrofilm

Com. abbreviation 1 Commander 2 committee 3 Commodore

com- or **con-** prefix together; with; jointly; *commingle*

● **ETymology** from Latin *com-*; related to *cum* with. In compound words of Latin origin, *com-* becomes *col-* and *cor-* before *l* and *r*, *co-* before *gn*, *h*, and most vowels, and *con-* before consonants other than *b*, *p*, and *m*. Although its sense in compounds of Latin derivation is often obscured, it means: together, with, etc (*combine, compile*); similar (*conform*); extremely, completely (*consecrate*)

coma¹ ('kəʊmə) *n, pl -mas* a state of unconsciousness from which a person cannot be aroused, caused by injury to the head, rupture of cerebral blood vessels, narcotics, poisons, etc

● **ETymology** c17: from medical Latin, from Greek *kōma* heavy sleep; related to Greek *koitē* bed, perhaps to Middle Irish *cuma* grief

coma² ('kəʊmə) *n, pl -mae* (-mi:) 1 *astronomy* the luminous cloud surrounding the frozen solid nucleus in the head of a comet, formed by vaporization of part of the nucleus when the comet is close to the sun 2 *botany* **a** a tuft of hairs attached to the seed coat of some seeds **b** the terminal crown of leaves of palms and moss stems 3 *optics* a type of lens defect characterized by the formation of a diffuse pear-shaped image from a point object > **comal** *adj*

● **ETymology** c17: from Latin: hair of the head, from Greek *komē*

Coma Berenices ('kəʊmə,beri'nai:sɪz) *n, Latin*

genitive Comae Berenices ('kəʊmi:) a faint constellation in the N hemisphere between Ursa Major and Boötes containing the **Coma Cluster** a cluster of approximately 1000 galaxies, at a mean distance of 300 million light years

● **ETymology** from Latin, literally: Berenice's hair, named after *Berenice* (died 221 BC), consort of Ptolemy III

Comanche (kə'mæntʃɪ) *n* 1 (*pl -ches or -che*) a member of a Native American people, formerly ranging from the River Platte to the Mexican border, now living in Oklahoma 2 the language of this people, belonging to the Shoshonean subfamily of the Uto-Aztecan family

Comanchean (kə'mæntʃɪən) (*in North America*) *adj*

1 of or relating to the early part of the Cretaceous system and period 2 *n* 2 the strata and time corresponding to the early Cretaceous

comate ('kəʊmeɪt) *adj* *botany* 1 having tufts of hair 2 having or relating to a coma

● **ETymology** c17: from Latin *comātus*, from *coma* hair

comatose ('kəʊmə,təʊs, -təʊz) *adj* 1 in a state of coma 2 torpid; lethargic > **comatously** *adv*

comatulid (kə'mætʃʊlɪd) or **comatula** *n, pl -lids or -lae* (-li:) any of a group of crinoid echinoderms, including the feather stars, in which the adults are free-swimming

● **ETymology** c19: from New Latin *Comatulidae*, from *Comatula* type genus, from Latin *comātus* hairy

comb (kəʊm) *n* 1 a toothed device of metal, plastic, wood, etc, used for disentangling or arranging hair

2 a tool or machine that separates, cleans, and straightens wool, cotton, etc 3 *Austral and NZ* the fixed cutter on a sheep-shearing machine

4 anything resembling a toothed comb in form or function 5 the fleshy deeply serrated outgrowth on the top of the heads of certain birds, esp the domestic fowl 6 anything resembling the comb of a bird 7 a currycomb 8 a honeycomb 9 the row of fused cilia in a ctenophore 10 **go over with a fine-tooth comb, go over with a fine-toothed comb, go through with a fine-tooth comb or go through with a fine-toothed comb** to examine very thoroughly 11 (*tr*) to use a comb on 12 (*when tr*, often foll by *through*) to search or inspect with great care: *the police combed the woods* ▶ See also **comb out**

● **ETymology** Old English *camb*; related to Old Norse *kamb*, Old High German *camb*

combat *n* ('kɒmbæt, -bæt, 'kɑ:m-) 1 a fight, conflict, or struggle 2 **a** an action fought between two military forces **b** (as modifier): *a combat jacket* 3 **single combat** a fight between two individuals; duel

4 **close combat or hand-to-hand combat** fighting at close quarters 5 *vb* (kəm'bæt, 'kɒmbæt, 'kɑ:m-) **-bats, -bating, -bated** 5 (*tr*) to fight or defy 6 (*intr*; often foll by *with* or *against*) to struggle or strive (against); be in conflict (with): *to combat against disease* > **combatable** *adj* > **combater** *n*

● **ETymology** c16: from French, from Old French *combattre*, from Vulgar Latin *combattere* (unattested), from Latin *com-* with + *battuere* to beat, hit

combatant ('kɒmbæt'nt, 'kɑ:m-) *n* 1 a person or group engaged in or prepared for a fight, struggle, or dispute 2 *adj* 2 engaged in or ready for combat

combat boot *n* a heavy army boot

combat fatigue *n* another term for **battle fatigue**

combative ('kɒmbətɪv, 'kɑ:m-) *adj* eager or ready to fight, argue, etc; aggressive > **combatively** *adv* > **combateness** *n*

combat trousers or combats ('kɒmbæts, -bæts, 'kɑ:m-) *pl* *n* loose casual trousers with large pockets on the legs

combe or **comb** (ku:m) *n* variant spellings of **coomb**

comber ('kəʊmə) *n* 1 a person, tool, or machine that combs wool, flax, etc 2 a long curling wave; roller

combination (kəm'bɪneɪʃən) *n* 1 the act of combining or state of being combined 2 a union of separate parts, qualities, etc 3 an alliance of people or parties; group having a common purpose 4 **a** the set of numbers that opens a combination

lock **b** the mechanism of this type of lock 5 *Brit* a motorcycle with a sidecar attached 6 *maths*

a an arrangement of the numbers, terms, etc, of a set into specified groups without regard to order in the group: *the combinations of a, b, and c, taken two at a time, are ab, bc, ac* **b** a group formed in this way. The number of combinations of *n* objects taken *r* at a time is $n! / [(n-r)!r!]$. Symbol: ${}_nC_r$. Compare **permutation** (sense 1) 7 the chemical reaction of two or more compounds, usually to form one other compound 8 *chess* a tactical manoeuvre involving a sequence of moves and more than one piece

▶ See also **combinations** > **combinational** *adj*

combination lock *n* a type of lock that can only be opened when a set of dials releasing the tumblers of the lock are turned to show a specific sequence of numbers

combination room *n* *Brit* (at Cambridge University) a common room

combinations (kəm'bɪneɪʃnz) *pl* *n* *Brit* a one-piece woollen undergarment with long sleeves and legs. Often shortened to: **combs** or **coms**. US and Canadian term: **union suit**

combination tone *n* another term for **resultant tone**

combinative ('kɒmbɪ,neɪtɪv, -nətv) *adj*

combinatorial (kəm'bɪnə'tɔ:riəl), or **combinatory** ('kɒmbɪnətəri, -trɪ) *adj* 1 resulting from being, tending to be, or able to be joined or mixed together 2 *linguistics* (of a sound change) occurring only in specific contexts or as a result of some other factor, such as change of stress within a word. Compare **isolative** (sense 1)

combinatorial analysis *n* the branch of mathematics concerned with the theory of enumeration, or combinations and permutations, in order to solve problems about the possibility of constructing arrangements of objects which satisfy specified conditions. Also called: **combinatorics** (kəm'bɪnə'tɔ:riks)

combine *vb* (kəm'bain) 1 to integrate or cause to be integrated; join together 2 to unite or cause to unite to form a chemical compound 3 *agriculture* to harvest (crops) with a combine harvester 4 *n* ('kɒmbain) 4 *agriculture* short for **combine harvester**

5 an association of enterprises, esp in order to gain a monopoly of a market 6 an association of business corporations, political parties, sporting clubs, etc, for a common purpose > **combinable** *adj* > **combinability** *n* > **combiner** *n*

● **ETymology** c15: from Late Latin *combināre*, from Latin *com-* together + *binī* two by two

combine harvester ('kɒmbain) *n* a machine that simultaneously cuts, threshes, and cleans a standing crop of grain

combings ('kəʊmɪnz) *pl* *n* 1 the loose hair, wool, etc, removed by combing, esp that of animals 2 the unwanted loose short fibres removed in combing cotton, etc

combining form *n* a linguistic element that occurs only as part of a compound word, such as *anthropo-* in *anthropology*

comb jelly *n* another name for a **ctenophore**

combo ('kɒmbəʊ) *n, pl -bos* 1 a small group of musicians, esp of jazz musicians 2 *informal* any combination

comb out *vb* (*tr, adverb*) 1 to remove (tangles or knots) from (the hair) with a comb 2 to isolate and remove for a purpose 3 to survey carefully; examine systematically 4 *n* **comb-out** 4 an act of combing out

comb-over *n* a hairstyle in which long strands of hair from the side of the head are swept over the scalp to cover a bald patch

combust (kəm'bʌst) *adj* 1 *astronomy* (of a star or planet) invisible for a period between 24 and 30 days each year due to its proximity to the sun 2 *vb* 2 *chem* to burn

combustible (kəm'bʌstəbəl) *adj* 1 capable of igniting and burning 2 easily annoyed; excitable 3 *a* 3 a combustible substance > **combustibility** or **combustibleness** *n* > **combustibly** *adv*

combustion (kəm'bʌstʃən) *n* 1 the process of burning 2 any process in which a substance reacts