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usual. ■ (of time in music) having seven beats in a bar.
▶ v. [with obj.] multiply (something) by seven; increase sevenfold.
– ORIGIN early 17th cent. (as a verb): from late Latin *septuplus*, from Latin *septem* 'seven.'

sep·tup·let /sep'təplit, sep't(y)o͞o-/ ▶ n. **1** (usu. **septuplets**) each of seven children born at one birth.
2 Music a group of seven notes to be performed in the time of four or six.
– ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from Latin *septuplus* (see SEPTUPLE), on the pattern of words such as *triplet*.

sep·ul·cher /'sepəlkər/ (Brit. **sepulchre**) ▶ n. a small room or monument, cut in rock or built of stone, in which a dead person is laid or buried.
▶ v. [with obj.] chiefly literary lay or bury in or as if in a sepulcher: *tomes are soon out of print and sepulchered in the dust of libraries.* ■ serve as a burial place for: *when ocean shrouds and sepulchers our dead.*
– ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from Latin *sepulcrum* 'burial place,' from *sepelire* 'bury.'

se·pul·chral /sə'pəlkrəl/ ▶ adj. of or relating to a tomb or interment: *sepulchral monuments.* ■ gloomy; dismal: *a speech delivered in sepulchral tones.*
– DERIVATIVES **se·pul·chral·ly** adv.
– ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from French *sépulchral* or Latin *sepulchralis*, from *sepulcrum* (see SEPULCHER).

sep·ul·ture /'sepəlCHər/ ▶ n. archaic burial; interment: *the rites of sepulture.*
– ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from Latin *sepultura*, from *sepelire* 'bury.'

seq. (also **seqq.**) ▶ adv. short for ET SEQ.

se·qua·cious /si'kwāSHəs/ ▶ adj. formal (of a person) lacking independence or originality of thought.
– DERIVATIVES **se·qua·cious·ly** adv., **se·quac·i·ty** /-'kwasitē/ n.
– ORIGIN mid 17th cent.: from Latin *sequax*, *sequac-* 'following' (from *sequi* 'follow') + -IOUS.

se·quel /'sēkwəl/ ▶ n. a published, broadcast, or recorded work that continues the story or develops the theme of an earlier one. ■ something that takes place after or as a result of an earlier event: *this encouragement to grow potatoes had a disastrous sequel some fifty years later.*
– ORIGIN late Middle English (in the senses 'body of followers,' 'descendants' and 'consequence'): from Old French *sequelle* or Latin *sequella*, from *sequi* 'follow.'

se·que·la /si'kwelə/ ▶ n. (pl. **sequelae** /-'kwelē, -'kwelī/) (usu. **sequelae**) Medicine a condition that is the consequence of a previous disease or injury: *the long-term sequelae of infection.*
– ORIGIN late 18th cent.: from Latin, from *sequi* 'follow.'

se·quence /'sēkwəns/ ▶ n. **1** a particular order in which related events, movements, or things follow each other: *the content of the program should follow a logical sequence.* ■ Music a repetition of a phrase or melody at a higher or lower pitch. ■ Biochemistry the order in which amino acid or nucleotide residues are arranged in a protein, DNA, etc.
2 a set of related events, movements, or things that follow each other in a particular order: *a grueling sequence of exercises | a sonnet sequence.* ■ a set of three or more playing cards of the same suit next to each other in value, for example 10, 9, 8. ■ Mathematics an infinite ordered series of numerical quantities.
3 a part of a film dealing with one particular event or topic: *the famous underwater sequence.*
4 (in the Eucharist) a hymn said or sung after the Gradual or Alleluia that precedes the Gospel.
▶ v. [with obj.] **1** arrange in a particular order: *trainee librarians decide how a set of misfiled cards could be sequenced.* ■ Biochemistry ascertain the sequence of amino acid or nucleotide residues in (a protein, DNA, etc.).
2 play or record (music) with a sequencer.
– PHRASES **in sequence** in a given order.
– ORIGIN late Middle English (sense 4 of the noun): from late Latin *sequentia*, from Latin *sequent-* 'following,' from the verb *sequi* 'follow.'

se·quence danc·ing ▶ n. a type of ballroom dancing in which the couples all perform the same steps and movements simultaneously.

se·quence of tens·es ▶ n. Grammar the dependence of the tense of a subordinate verb on the tense of the verb in the main clause (e.g., *I think that you* are *wrong*; *I thought that you* were *wrong*).

se·quenc·er /'sēkwənsər/ ▶ n. **1** a programmable electronic device for storing sequences of musical notes, chords, or rhythms and transmitting them when required to an electronic musical instrument.
2 Biochemistry an apparatus for determining the sequence of amino acids or other monomers in a biological polymer.

se·quent /'sēkwənt/ ▶ adj. archaic following in a sequence or as a logical conclusion.
– DERIVATIVES **se·quent·ly** adv.
– ORIGIN mid 16th cent.: from Old French, or from Latin *sequent-* 'following' (see SEQUENCE).

se·quen·tial /si'kwenCHəl/ ▶ adj. forming or following in a logical order or sequence: *a series of sequential steps.* ■ chiefly Computing performed or used in sequence: *sequential processing of data files.*
– DERIVATIVES **se·quen·ti·al·i·ty** /si,kwenCHē'alitē/ n., **se·quen·tial·ly** adv.
– ORIGIN early 19th cent. (as a medical term in the sense 'following as a secondary condition'): from SEQUENCE, on the pattern of *consequential*.

se·quen·tial ac·cess ▶ n. access to a computer data file that requires the user to read through the file from the beginning in the order in which it is stored. Compare with DIRECT ACCESS.

se·quen·tial cir·cuit ▶ n. Electronics a circuit whose output depends on the order or timing of the inputs. Compare with COMBINATIONAL CIRCUIT.

se·ques·ter /sə'kwestər/ ▶ v. [with obj.] **1** isolate or hide away (someone or something): *Tiberius was sequestered on an island | the jurors had been sequestered since Monday | the artist sequestered himself in his studio for two years.* ■ [no obj.] Chemistry form a chelate or other stable compound with (an ion, atom, or molecule) so that it is no longer available for reactions.
2 take legal possession of (assets) until a debt has been paid or other claims have been met: *the power of courts to sequester the assets of unions.* ■ take forcible possession of (something); confiscate: *rebel property was sequestered and a military government installed.* ■ legally place (the property of a bankrupt) in the hands of a trustee for division among the creditors: (as adj. **sequestered**) *a trustee in a sequestered estate.*
– DERIVATIVES **se·ques·tra·ble** /si'kwestrəbəl/ adj., **se·ques·tra·tor** /'sēkwi,strātər, 'sek-, si'kwes,trātər/ n.
– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *sequestrer* or late Latin *sequestrare* 'commit for safekeeping,' from Latin *sequester* 'trustee.'

se·ques·tered /sə'kwestərd/ ▶ adj. (of a place) isolated and hidden away: *a wild sequestered spot.*

se·ques·trate /'sēkwi,strāt, 'sek-, sə'kwes,trāt/ ▶ v. another term for SEQUESTER.
– ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'separate from general access'): from late Latin *sequestrat-* 'given up for safekeeping,' from the verb *sequestrare* (see SEQUESTER).

se·ques·tra·tion /,sēkwi'strāSHən, ,sek-/ ▶ n. the action of taking legal possession of assets until a debt has been paid or other claims have been met: *if such court injunctions are ignored, sequestration of trade union assets will follow.* ■ the action of taking forcible possession of something; confiscation: *they demanded the sequestration of the incriminating correspondence.* ■ an act of declaring someone bankrupt. ■ the action of making a general cut in government spending: *the measure brings the federal budget closer to sequestration.* ■ Chemistry the action of sequestering a substance.

se·ques·trum /si'kwestrəm/ ▶ n. (pl. **sequestra** /-trə/) Medicine a piece of dead bone tissue occurring within a diseased or injured bone, typically in chronic osteomyelitis.
– DERIVATIVES **se·ques·tral** /-trəl/ adj., **se·ques·trec·to·my** /,sēkwe'strektəmē/ n. (pl. **sequestrectomies**).
– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: modern Latin, neuter of Latin *sequester* 'standing apart.'

se·quin /'sēkwin/ ▶ n. **1** a small, shiny disk sewn as one of many onto clothing for decoration.
2 historical a Venetian gold coin.
– DERIVATIVES **se·quined** (also **sequinned**) adj.
– ORIGIN late 16th cent. (sense 2): from French, from Italian *zecchino*, from *zecca* 'a mint,' from Arabic *sikka* 'a die for coining.' Sense 1 dates from the late 19th cent.

se·quoi·a /sə'k(w)oi-ə/ ▶ n. a redwood tree, esp. the California redwood.
– ORIGIN from modern Latin *Sequoia* (genus name), from *Sequoya*.

Se·quoi·a Na·tion·al Park a national park in the Sierra Nevada of California, east of Fresno. It was established in 1890 to protect groves of giant sequoia trees, of which the largest, the General Sherman Tree, is thought to be between 3,000 and 4,000 years old.

Se·quoy·a /sə'kwoi-ə/ (also **Sequoyah, Sequoia**) (c.1770–1843), Cherokee Indian scholar; Cherokee name *Sogwali*; also known as **George Guess** or **Gist**. He invented a writing system (the Cherokee syllabary) 1809–21 for the Cherokee language and with it taught thousands of Cherokee Indians to read and write. The giant sequoia trees of California are named for him.

ser. ▶ abbr. ■ serial. ■ series. ■ sermon.

se·ra /'si(ə)rə/ plural form of SERUM.

se·rac /sə'rak/ ▶ n. a pinnacle or ridge of ice on the surface of a glacier.
– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from Swiss French *sérac*, originally the name of a compact white cheese.

se·ragl·io /sə'rälyō/ ▶ n. (pl. **seraglios**) **1** the women's apartments (harem) in a Muslim palace. ■ another term for HAREM (sense 2).
2 historical a Turkish palace, esp. the Sultan's court and government offices at Constantinople.
– ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from Italian *serraglio*, via Turkish from Persian *sarāy* 'palace'; compare with SERAI.

se·ra·i /sə'rī/ ▶ n. another term for CARAVANSARY (sense 1).

Se·raing /sə'raN/ an industrial town in Belgium, on the Meuse River, southwest of Liège; pop. 61,657 (2008).

Se·ram Sea variant spelling of CERAM SEA.

se·ra·pe /sə'räpē/ (also **sarape**) ▶ n. a shawl or blanket worn as a cloak in Latin America.
– ORIGIN Mexican Spanish.

ser·aph /'serəf/ ▶ n. (pl. **seraphim** /'serə,fim/ or **seraphs**) an angelic being, regarded in traditional Christian angelology as belonging to the highest order of the ninefold celestial hierarchy, associated with light, ardor, and purity.
– ORIGIN Old English, back-formation from *seraphim* (plural), via late Latin and Greek from Hebrew *śĕrāpīm*. Compare with CHERUB.

se·raph·ic /sə'rafik/ ▶ adj. characteristic of or resembling a seraph or seraphim: *a seraphic smile.*
– DERIVATIVES **se·raph·i·cal·ly** /-ik(ə)lē/ adv.
– ORIGIN mid 17th cent.: from medieval Latin *seraphicus*, from late Latin *seraphim* (see SERAPH).

Se·raph·ic Doc·tor the nickname of St. Bonaventura.

Se·ra·pis /sə'rāpis/ Egyptian Mythology a god whose cult was developed by Ptolemy I at Memphis as a combination of Apis and Osiris, to unite Greeks and Egyptians in a common worship.

ser·a·skier /,serə'ski(ə)r/ ▶ n. historical the commander in chief and minister of war of the Ottoman Empire.
– ORIGIN Turkish, from Persian *sar'askar* 'head (of the) army.'

Serb /sərb/ ▶ n. a native or inhabitant of Serbia. ■ a person of Serbian descent.
▶ adj. of or relating to Serbia, the Serbs, or their language.
– ORIGIN Serbian *Srb*.

Ser·bi·a /'sərbēə/ a republic in the Balkans; pop. 7,379,300 (est. 2009); official language, Serbian; capital, Belgrade.

> Serbia was conquered by the Turks in the 14th century and regained independence in 1878. Serbian rivalry with the Austro-Hungarian Empire contributed to the outbreak of World War I, after which Serbia was absorbed into the kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (named Yugoslavia from 1929 to 2003). In 1991–92 four out of the six Yugoslav republics seceded; Serbia became involved in armed conflict with neighboring Croatia and in the civil war in Bosnia. On the breakup of Yugoslavia it remained in federation with Montenegro until 2006.

Ser·bi·an /'sərbēən/ ▶ n. **1** the Southern Slavic language of the Serbs, almost identical to Croatian but written in the Cyrillic alphabet. See SERBO-CROAT.
2 another term for SERB.
▶ adj. of or relating to Serbia, the Serbs, or their language.

Serbo- ▶ comb. form Serbian; Serbian and ...: *Serbo-Croat.* ■ relating to Serbia.

Ser·bo-Cro·at /,sərbō'krō,ät, 'krōt/ (also **Serbo-Croatian** /krō'äSHən/) ▶ n. a term for the South Slavic language spoken in Serbia, Croatia, and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia. Serbo-Croat comprises two closely similar forms: Serbian, written in the Cyrillic alphabet, and Croat, written in the Roman alphabet. Since the breakup of Yugoslavia the names of the individual languages have generally been preferred.
▶ adj. of or relating to this language.

PRONUNCIATION KEY ə *ago, up*; ər *over, fur*; a *hat*; ā *ate*; ä *car*; e *let*; ē *see*; i *fit*; ī *by*; NG *sing*; ō *go*; ô *law, for*; oi *toy*; o͝o *good*; o͞o *goo*; ou *out*; TH *thin*; TH *then*; ZH *measure*

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