

TOP 100 TOEIC Vocabulary Words

abreast

(adverb, adjective)

DEFINITION

(adv.) alongside each other, moving in one direction; (adj.) well informed, up to date on a subject

SYNONYMS

alongside, aligned, adjacent, informed, apprised

ANTONYMS

unaware, uninformed

USAGE EXAMPLES

Keeping abreast of developments in the crisis allowed the Police Chief to act appropriately when the opportunity arose. (*informed, up to date*)

With so many news web sites on the internet, it is much easier to keep abreast of current events. (*apprised*)

benchmark

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a standard used to evaluate similar things; 2. a point of reference

SYNONYMS

standard, criterion, touchstone, measure, reference point, yard stick, baseline

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

Sara's work on the project set a new benchmark for us all. (*standard*)

Many people look to their role models as benchmarks for their own success. (*reference points, touchstones*)

capitalize

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to benefit from or take advantage of something; 2. to finance something; 3. to exchange debt for stock; 4. to write in capital letters

SYNONYMS

benefit, profit, exploit, finance, bankroll

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

I'm capitalizing on my company's great benefits package by investing in the 401k plan. (*taking advantage of, benefiting*)

Most investors are weary of companies that have an excessively high market capitalization. (*valuation*)

caveat

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a warning against certain acts; 2. in law, an official request to a court not to proceed with a case without notice to the person making the request

SYNONYMS

caution, warning, admonition, sign, condition

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

Holding out for a higher salary before accepting a job offer has one major caveat: someone else might get the job instead. (*caution*)

My office distributed a memo with a caveat against using the fax machine for personal business. (*warning*)

command

(noun, verb)**DEFINITION**

(n.) 1. an order; 2. control over somebody or something; 3. in-depth knowledge or great skill (especially with a language); (v.) 1. to give an order; 2. to have authority or control over someone or something; 3. to demand or be entitled to something; 4. to look over something (such as a view)

SYNONYMS

(n.) order, demand, rule, mandate, request, instruction, authority, power, domination, understanding, knowledge, grasp, mastery, (v.) tell, direct, require, overlook

ANTONYMS

(n.) incertitude, (v.) follow, obey, comply

USAGE EXAMPLES

The officer was given a command, and he followed it. (*order, demand*)
His complete command over his staff comes from his ability to use authority in a respectful, not domineering, manner. (*authority, power*)

compartmentalize**(verb)****DEFINITION**

to separate or organize into categories or compartments

SYNONYMS

separate, organize, partition, isolate, assign

ANTONYMS

bundle, unify

USAGE EXAMPLES

Good leaders are able to review several critical issues and compartmentalize each one without being overwhelmed or distracted. (*separate, organize*)
I know you have a lot on your plate, so you should compartmentalize each project and derive a systematic approach to completing each one. (*separate, isolate*)

context

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a set of facts and circumstances pertaining to a situation or event; 2. the linguistic sense of a word that helps explain its meaning--the words before and after the word in question

SYNONYMS

circumstance, timing, locale, environment, setting

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

I know you think that my comments were meant to be critical, but you heard them out of context, and you don't know the full story behind what I said. (*circumstance, setting*)

It's important to use vocabulary words in the proper context, because a word's usage doesn't always correspond to its literal meaning. (*setting*)

crux

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. an essential point requiring resolution (in an argument); 2. a main or central feature

SYNONYMS

basis, essence, gist, core, point

ANTONYMS

sidebar, add-on

USAGE EXAMPLES

While she has made many good points which may be debated later, the crux of the Senator's argument is that taxes should be lowered for middle-income taxpayers. (*gist, point*)

The crux of the problem is that our experiments simply don't seem to prove our theory. (*basis, most important aspect*)

demographic

(noun, adjective)

DEFINITION

(n.) a statistic, like sex, age, or income, that characterizes human populations; (adj.) relating to demography

SYNONYMS

(n.) characteristic, statistic (with regard to population), group

ANTONYMS

psychographic

USAGE EXAMPLES

Our target demographic for this product is active females between the ages of 17 and 25. (*characteristic, group*)

The geographic segment is the Southern United States, and the demographic segment is farmers between the ages of 35 and 60. (*statistic, characteristic*)

dictate

(verb, noun)

DEFINITION

(v.) 1. to give orders or demands with authority; 2. to speak into a tape recorder for later transcription of the text or to speak text to somebody writing it down; (n.) 1. guiding principals that govern how you behave; 2. an order telling people what they must do.

SYNONYMS

(v.) state, order, command, direct, instruct, (n.) principal, guideline, directive, mandate

ANTONYMS

(v.) request, ask

USAGE EXAMPLES

Devout Catholics follow the dictates handed down by the Vatican. (*guiding principals*)
I had to dictate letters and e-mails to my assistant while my arm was in a cast, and I couldn't type myself. (*speak aloud*)

expenditure

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. the act of spending money; 2. money spent; 3. the consuming or using up of something

SYNONYMS

expense, cost, investment, consumption, use

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

It's true that we should avoid any unnecessary expenses, but we will incur some unavoidable expenditures in order to get this business off the ground. (*expenses, costs*)
Our monthly expenditures are exceeding our budget, so we'll have to make some cutbacks. (*expenses, costs*)

impress

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to cause positive admiration or respect; 2. to fix ideas or facts deeply in the mind

SYNONYMS

affect, move, instill, influence, imprint, strike, engrave, persuade, amaze, dazzle

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

My sales manager impressed upon me the importance of closing the deal. (*instilled, imprinted*)
The chief of police will try to impress the urgency of the situation upon the officers. (*affect, instill*)

incur

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to experience something unpleasant; 2. to become burdened with something, such as a debt

SYNONYMS

sustain, encounter, experience

ANTONYMS

avoid, elude, evade, escape

USAGE EXAMPLES

They had to incur penalty fees because they sent the payment in late. (*sustain*)

If we don't find a way to cut operating costs, we will incur significant losses. (*experience*)

mull

(verb)

DEFINITION

to reflect deeply on a subject

SYNONYMS

ponder, reflect, meditate, think, weigh

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

Before choosing a final candidate for the position, he mulled over the list of interviewees. (*thought, reflected*)

Rumor has it, the retired athlete is mulling a return to the NBA. (*pondering, thinking over*)

savvy

(adjective, noun)

DEFINITION

(adj.) 1. sophisticated and intuitive; 2. having practical knowledge and ability; (n.) keen understanding

SYNONYMS

(adj.) resourceful, astute, sharp, shrewd, informed, experienced, (n.) understanding, discernment

ANTONYMS

(adj.) stupid, uninformed, obtuse

USAGE EXAMPLES

It is not enough to create a wonderful product; an entrepreneur must have business savvy as well.

(understanding, intelligence)

The art center's new controller displayed her financial savvy by correcting the budget deficit within her first year. *(understanding, shrewdness)*

streamline

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to make more economical or efficient; 2. to make something more contoured so that it may move more fluidly through air or water

SYNONYMS

improve, organize, simplify, modernize, contour, shape, smooth

ANTONYMS

complicate

USAGE EXAMPLES

A major goal of the review process is to help streamline operations, which should, in turn, boost profits.

(modernize, simplify, improve)

When aircraft designers aim to streamline their planes, they are striving for a model that creates less air resistance, thereby lowering fuel consumption. *(contour, improve)*

subjective

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. modified by individual bias, rather than based on facts; 2. based on views, experience, or background particular to a given person; 3. existing only in the mind and not independently of it

SYNONYMS

prejudiced, personal, arbitrary, biased, individual

ANTONYMS

objective, non-subjective

USAGE EXAMPLES

My subjective evaluation of the situation calls for an outside point of view, for balance. (*personal, biased*)

His brother did not testify due to his highly subjective point of view. (*prejudiced, biased, arbitrary*)

systematically

(adverb)

DEFINITION

done in a consistent and systematic manner

SYNONYMS

orderly, methodically, consistently

ANTONYMS

randomly

USAGE EXAMPLES

After being systematically passed up for a promotion 3 years in a row, Mike finally quit his job. (*consistently*)

We'll have to systematically go through our old invoices to find the billing discrepancy. (*orderly, methodically*)

esteem

(verb, noun)

DEFINITION

(v.) 1. to respect; (n) 1. respect for someone

SYNONYMS

(v.) value, appreciate, respect, regard, (n.) admiration, high-regard, respect

ANTONYMS

(v.) disrespect, disparage, (n.) disdain, contempt, irreverence

USAGE EXAMPLES

Although I esteem your opinion, I am afraid that I do not agree with you. (*respect*)

After the teachers went on strike, there was a drop in the esteem that people had for teachers. (*respect, admiration*)

exact

(verb, adjective)

DEFINITION

(v.) to demand and obtain something often through force or threats; (adj.) correct or precise in quantity

SYNONYMS

(v.) demand, obtain, take, extort, (adj.) precise, accurate, correct

ANTONYMS

(v.) provide, ask, (adje.) inaccurate, wrong, incorrect

USAGE EXAMPLES

Plastic surgery exacts tremendous skill and dexterity. (*demand*)

I will do you this favor, but I am going to exact a big favor in return. (*demand, obtain*)

disposition

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. personality or temperament, including a person's typical mood and attitude; 2. a natural tendency; 3. arrangement, organization, or control; 4. a settlement or resolution

SYNONYMS

personality, temperament, temper, character, settlement, nature, tendency, inclination, arrangement, control

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

Few things could upset Mary's cheerful disposition. (*character, personality, mood*)

Harry has a well-known disposition for getting himself into trouble. (*tendency, inclination*)

falter

(verb)**DEFINITION**

1. to lose effectiveness, confidence, or ability; 2. to stumble; 3. to speak haltingly

SYNONYMS

stumble, waver, vacillate, hesitate, stammer

ANTONYMS

steady, persist, hold [strong]

USAGE EXAMPLES

Her voice faltered as she tried to confess through her tears. (*wavered*)

She was resolute, and nothing could cause her to falter from her commitment. (*waver*)

harness

(verb)**DEFINITION**

1. to control and direct something for a purpose; 2. to keep something in check; 3. to put a harness (straps) on an animal

SYNONYMS

tame, control, reign in, subdue, suppress, restrain, yoke, hitch

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

You've got to find a way to harness your temper, because you can't go flying off the handle in meetings the way you have been. (*control, suppress*)

We harnessed our joint resources to create a truly innovative product. (*reigned in*)

induce

(verb)**DEFINITION**

1. to cause or produce; 2. to influence or persuade; 3. to reason and make a statement based on observation and fact

SYNONYMS

persuade, influence, move, impel, cause, produce, stimulate, incite

ANTONYMS

repress, hinder, prevent

USAGE EXAMPLES

If you weren't already planning to enter the contest, the prize money is sure to induce you. (*persuade*)

He is a true hero; whenever he sees injustice, he is induced to action. (*impelled, moved*)

allot

(verb)**DEFINITION**

1. to give out in small portions; 2. to allow to have

SYNONYMS

allocate, apportion, dispense, distribute, dole out, give out

ANTONYMS

withhold, keep, retain

USAGE EXAMPLES

Each candidate was allotted five minutes for his speech and three minutes for a rebuttal. (*apportioned, given*)

The bus driver allotted all of the front seats to the best-behaved children. (*gave out, allocated*)

contrive

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to accomplish something by being clever and creative; 2. to make or invent something clever; 3. to create a plan or scheme

SYNONYMS

devise, concoct, formulate, design, invent, engineer, manipulate, scheme

ANTONYMS

chance, hazard, destroy

USAGE EXAMPLES

We should contrive a new plan of action, since the old one doesn't seem to be working. (*devise*)

The Internet craze produced a slew of contrived dot-com businesses. (*concocted*)

devise

(verb)

DEFINITION

to create, invent or creatively think up an idea or plan

SYNONYMS

plan, arrange, design, invent, dream up, concoct, plot, collude, conspire

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

Last night I devised a plan to help turn this company around. (*created, invented*)

My assistant is devising the agenda for our next board meeting. (creating)

foremost

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. the most important; 2. before all else

SYNONYMS

first, highest, leading, chief, principle, best, prominent, predominant

ANTONYMS

last, behind, unimportant

USAGE EXAMPLES

First and foremost, we will try to have fun, but our secondary goal is winning. (*most important, most prominently*)

Professor Jackson was the university's foremost expert in the field of biology. (*prominent, best*)

incentive

(noun)

DEFINITION

something that encourages action

SYNONYMS

inducement, enticement, instigation, stimulus, motivation, impetus, encouragement, inspiration

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

The promise of a promotion and raise gave her the incentive she needed to bring in more sales. (*stimulus, motive*)

Newly single, he suddenly had incentive to begin a self-improvement program. (*motive, inspiration*)

novel

(adjective)

DEFINITION

new and original

SYNONYMS

new, original, innovative, unprecedented, unusual

ANTONYMS

old, outdated, antiquated, obsolete

USAGE EXAMPLES

His novel ideas helped turn the company in a new, more successful direction. (*new, original*)

He came up with a novel solution that was the first of its kind. (*new, unprecedented*)

onus

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. burden, duty, or responsibility; 2. the blame for something; 3. burden of proof

SYNONYMS

burden, responsibility, load, obligation, duty, blame, stigma

ANTONYMS

acclaim, commendation

USAGE EXAMPLES

When the economy is in a recession, many believe the onus is on the President and Congress to pull the country out of it. (*burden, obligation*)

He'll always bear the onus of having made bad investment decisions and losing most of the family's retirement savings. (*blame, responsibility*)

opportune

(adjective)

DEFINITION

suitable for a purpose or occurring at the right time

SYNONYMS

appropriate, fitting, apt, auspicious, fortuitous, timely, fortunate

ANTONYMS

inopportune

USAGE EXAMPLES

The family dinner was an opportune time for the young couple to announce their engagement.

(appropriate)

Our morning meeting will provide an opportune time to discuss our strategic plan. *(convenient, apt)*

overt

(adjective)

DEFINITION

open to view, not hidden

SYNONYMS

open, apparent, obvious, unconcealed, clear, evident, manifest, palpable

ANTONYMS

hidden, concealed, covert

USAGE EXAMPLES

Although he didn't criticize me overtly, I could tell that he wasn't happy with my job performance.

(obviously, openly)

In an overt show of support, the President met publicly with the candidate he hoped would succeed him. *(unconcealed, clear)*

preface

(noun, verb)

DEFINITION

(n.) an introduction at the beginning of a book; (v.) to begin with a preface or introduction before presenting your main point

SYNONYMS

(n.) introduction, foreword, prologue, (v.) introduce, begin, open

ANTONYMS

(n.) epilogue, postscript, addendum, closing, conclusion, (v.) close, conclude

USAGE EXAMPLES

I love his books because they are immediately engaging, right from the preface. (*introduction, prologue*)
The world hopes that talks in the Middle East will be a preface to peace. (*introduction, beginning, prologue*)

remit

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to send or dispatch a payment; 2. to cancel or hold back from enforcing something; 3. to reduce the intensity of something (for instance, pain); 4. to restore something; 5. to refer a case to another court (in law); 6. to restore something to its original condition

SYNONYMS

pay, repay, reimburse, send, dispatch, reduce, restore, postpone, defer, refer, revoke, nullify, invalidate

ANTONYMS

intensify, increase, persist, continue

USAGE EXAMPLES

In order to avoid any interest charges, please remit your payment by the end of the week. (*send, dispatch, pay*)
She remitted the fines because the payment came earlier than expected. (*reduced*)

curt

(adjective)

DEFINITION

spoken shortly and often rudely--terse

SYNONYMS

terse, abrupt, brusque, short, blunt, rude

ANTONYMS

gracious, lengthy

USAGE EXAMPLES

We all know he is a busy man, but he still didn't need to be so curt with his secretary when she asked him a question. (*terse, abrupt*)

She gave only a curt nod in reply before rushing off. (*short, brusque*)

assimilate

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to make similar, esp. by absorption into a culture or population; 2. to take into the mind or system

SYNONYMS

integrate, incorporate, absorb, adjust, acculturate, adapt, conform, acclimatize, digest, grasp

ANTONYMS

separate, misunderstand, reject

USAGE EXAMPLES

She was quick to assimilate the new information, and that was part of what made her such a valuable employee. (*grasp, absorb*)

The children were quicker to assimilate than their parents, adopting American dress, language, and culture with relative ease. (*adapt, conform*)

demeanor

(noun)

DEFINITION

a person's outward behavior, manner, or appearance, especially as it reflects on mood or character

SYNONYMS

behavior, attitude, conduct, disposition, deportment

ANTONYMS

temperament

USAGE EXAMPLES

His happy and optimistic demeanor put the employees at ease. (*attitude, disposition*)
We guessed that his lack of friends was due to his unfriendly demeanor. (*behavior, conduct*)

egregious

(adjective)

DEFINITION

extremely and blatantly bad

SYNONYMS

blatant, flagrant, glaring, gross, rank, outrageous

ANTONYMS

good, great, nice, remarkable

USAGE EXAMPLES

It was an egregious error on his part. (*unusually bad, flagrant*)
That was an egregious oversight on his part and could cost our company millions. (*unusually bad, blatant*)

expatriate

(verb, noun)

DEFINITION

(v.) 1. to banish or exile someone from a country; 2. to permanently leave one's country; (n.) an expatriated person

SYNONYMS

(v.) exile, banish, deport, withdraw, emigrate, (n.) exile, outcast, emigrant, deportee, refugee

ANTONYMS

(v.) immigrate, (n.) immigrant

USAGE EXAMPLES

Hemingway was an American expatriate who wrote of his many interesting adventures in Europe. (*one who lives outside his own country*)

He was tired of the regulations and taxes exacted on businesses in France, so he decided to expatriate from France to the United States. (*permanently move*)

facet

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. an aspect of something; 2. any of the faces of a cut gemstone; 3. in anatomy, any smooth flat area on a hard surface such as a bone or a tooth

SYNONYMS

aspect, phase, component, factor, side, element

ANTONYMS

whole

USAGE EXAMPLES

This is a very complex issues with many different facets. (*aspects, sides*)

The consultants came in and learned every facet of our business before they made any recommendations. (*aspect, element*)

incipient

(adjective)

DEFINITION

in the beginning of development or formation

SYNONYMS

nascent, initial, beginning, inchoate, budding

ANTONYMS

developed, finished

USAGE EXAMPLES

His ideas were still incipient and vague; he needed to develop them more thoroughly. (*initial, inchoate*)
With the economy showing incipient signs of recovery, consumers are regaining their confidence in the stock market. (*initial, beginning*)

malicious

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. wishing to hurt others; 2. committing an act that will hurt others

SYNONYMS

hateful, spiteful, mean, wicked, depraved

ANTONYMS

benevolent, kind, caring

USAGE EXAMPLES

His malicious slandering of his co-worker was unprofessional and unseemly. (*hurtful, meaning to cause harm*)
I don't think it was an accident; I think it was a malicious act intended to hurt him. (*hurtful, meaning to cause harm*)

malignant

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. evil; 2. life-threatening

SYNONYMS

evil, hateful, spiteful, wicked, nasty, injurious, harmful

ANTONYMS

benign, kind, caring

USAGE EXAMPLES

The biopsy showed that the tumor was not malignant and was indeed benign. (*life-threatening, injurious*)

The dictator was an evil and malignant leader. (*evil, wicked*)

spawn

(verb, noun)

DEFINITION

(v.) to give birth or to cause something new to grow; (n.) 1. eggs of fish or amphibians, usually produced in large quantities; 2. offspring, especially when numerous

SYNONYMS

(v.) generate, produce, initiate, (n.) eggs, seed, offspring

ANTONYMS

(v.) kill, destroy, exterminate, eradicate

USAGE EXAMPLES

Male seahorses are very unique in that they keep their spawn in a special pouch in their abdomens.

(*eggs*)

Fewer government regulation coupled with increased freedoms should spawn new start-up companies throughout India. (*create, initiate, give birth to*)

intricate

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. highly involved or complex; 2. made up of many different parts

SYNONYMS

complex, involved, tricky, convoluted, complicated, elaborate, entangled

ANTONYMS

easy, simple

USAGE EXAMPLES

The plan was so intricate, I was sure there was an easier way to complete the project. (*complex, convoluted, involved*)

We can't let him go because he is the only person who understands all the intricacies of the project. (*complexities, difficulties*)

abomination

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. something horrible or shameful; 2. intense dislike coupled with disgust; 3. an action that is vicious or vile

SYNONYMS

anathema, horror, atrocity, antipathy, revulsion, aversion, repugnance, disgust, loathing

ANTONYMS

enjoyment, delight, adoration

USAGE EXAMPLES

Randolph had always regarded Roger's habit of lying with abomination. (*aversion, disgust*)

The mistreatment of children at the daycare center was an abomination. (*horror, atrocity*)

caricature

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. an extreme description or exaggeration of someone or something done for comic effect; 2. creation of such comic representations

SYNONYMS

parody, cartoon, exaggeration, spoof, burlesque

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

His caricatures of popular political figures always added a bit of humor to the magazine. (*spoofs, exaggerations*)

Saturday Night Live often uses caricature to make fun of the people on the show as well as to parody well-known figures. (*parody, burlesque*)

civil

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. having to do with citizens or the general population; 2. activities of citizens, as opposed to church or military; 3. polite and courteous, but restrained; 4. socially acceptable, civilized; 5. relating to civil law as opposed to criminal law

SYNONYMS

public, civic, civilian, cordial, respectful, polite

ANTONYMS

uncivilized, ill-mannered

USAGE EXAMPLES

She felt that her civil rights were violated when the police officer cursed at her. (*civilian, public*)
It is important to be civil even to those people who may not share your point of view. (*cordial, mannerly*)

cliche

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a trite expression or phrase; 2. an overused idea or theme

SYNONYMS

platitude, bromide, truism, saying, banality

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

Try as he might, the groom found it difficult to write vows that were free of clichés used by so many couples before. (*commonplaces, platitudes*)

I know this is a total cliché, but it's true: my wedding day was the happiest day of my life. (*banality, common statement*)

concert

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. agreement in purpose or action; 2. a group of people or things in agreement or harmony; 3. a musical performance

SYNONYMS

agreement, unity, accord, collaboration, cooperation

ANTONYMS

disagreement, discord

USAGE EXAMPLES

All the different divisions worked in concert to provide a seamless solution. (*collaboration, accord*)

It was a concerted effort which had everyone working in cooperation. (*cooperative, harmonious, unified*)

condemn

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to criticize as wrong or immoral; 2. to assign guilt; 3. to determine unfit for public use; 4. to force someone or something into an undesirable circumstance

SYNONYMS

criticize, convict, sentence, doom, censure, denounce, expropriate, reprove, compel, force

ANTONYMS

laud, praise, acquit

USAGE EXAMPLES

Furious, the boss condemned his employees' persistent handling of personal affairs on company time.

(criticized, censured)

The criminal begged the court not to condemn him to prison, even though he admitted to lighting the condemned building on fire. *(sentence, convict)*

conducive

(adjective)

DEFINITION

tending to promote or encourage something to happen or exist--having the right conditions for something

SYNONYMS

favorable, contributive, leading, helpful, promotive, instrumental, expeditious

ANTONYMS

adverse, deleterious, hindering, unfavorable

USAGE EXAMPLES

Exercising before bedtime is not conducive to sound sleep. *(instrumental, helpful)*

The relaxed atmosphere at the office was conducive to high spirits and good morale. *(promotive, contributive)*

adhere

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to follow a rule or instructions; 2. to keep to an agreement; 3. to hold firmly to a belief, idea, or opinion; 4. to stick to the surface or an object

SYNONYMS

comply, obey, conform, heed, stick, cling to, attach, support

ANTONYMS

loosen, separate

USAGE EXAMPLES

We are being more stringent in making sure people adhere to coding standards and product check-off lists before we ship products. (*conform, stick*)

John forced himself to adhere to a strict diet in order to lose weight, but for most people, this type of weight loss is tough to maintain, because adherence to strict diet guidelines can be very difficult. (*stick, comply*)

adorn

(verb)

DEFINITION

to enhance or make more attractive with decoration or ornament

SYNONYMS

decorate, beautify, embellish, ornament, garnish

ANTONYMS

simplify

USAGE EXAMPLES

The beautiful, white horses were adorned with sparkling silver plumes. (*decorated, beautified*)
Such extravagant adornment is really not suitable for everyday wear. (*ornamentation*)

revere

(verb)

DEFINITION

to treat or regard somebody with admiration and deep respect

SYNONYMS

admire, esteem, regard, respect, venerate

ANTONYMS

disrespect, disdain, contemn

USAGE EXAMPLES

I revere doctors who donate their time and resources to help those who cannot afford medical care.

(admire, respect)

The once-revered CEO lost the respect of his employees when he admitted to embezzling funds for his own profit. *(admired, respected)*

profusion

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a lavish or extravagant amount; 2. large quantity of something

SYNONYMS

abundance, extravagance, lavishness, excess, bounty, plenty, wealth

ANTONYMS

sparseness, lack, shortage

USAGE EXAMPLES

This spring the flowers bloomed in greater profusion than in past years. *(abundance)*

Relieved and happy, she offered profuse thanks to the man who saved her life. *(lavish, overflowing, excessive, effusive)*

placid

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. completely free of interruption and disturbance--calm; 2. easily satisfied

SYNONYMS

serene, calm, peaceful, tranquil, imperturbable, even-tempered, composed, halcyon

ANTONYMS

frenzied, turbulent, rough, excited, disturbed

USAGE EXAMPLES

The placid sea and the approaching storm clouds appeared to be the calm before the storm. (*calm*)
Her placid manner often made people think she never got angry. (*even-tempered*)

alleviate

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to relieve or lessen; 2. to make easier

SYNONYMS

mitigate, assuage, allay, lessen, lighten, relieve, ease

ANTONYMS

aggravate, intensify, increase, augment

USAGE EXAMPLES

The medication instantly alleviated the patient's pain. (*relieved, lightened*)
Jon's weekly phone calls were able to alleviate some of his mother's worry while he was stationed overseas. (*assuage, ease*)

ado

(noun)

DEFINITION

unnecessary fuss or excited activity over something

SYNONYMS

fuss, bustle, trouble, commotion, excitement

ANTONYMS

ease, simplicity, effortlessness

USAGE EXAMPLES

Why is everyone so upset? Don't worry, it's much ado about nothing. (*fuss, trouble*)
Weddings today are too much ado--they seem to be getting more lavish, more expensive, and more troublesome than ever before. (*fuss, trouble*)

abound

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to be plentiful; 2. to contain something in large numbers

SYNONYMS

teem, swarm, overflow, prevail, brim

ANTONYMS

lack

USAGE EXAMPLES

The streets abounded with happy revelers. (*teemed, overflowed*)

The abundant food supply meant that the deer would survive through the winter. (*plentiful*)

avail

(noun, verb)

DEFINITION

(n.) 1. help or advantage in something; 2. success in achieving something; (v.) 1. to be of help or be useful; 2. to use (to one's advantage)

SYNONYMS

(n.) use, advantage, benefit, success, gain, help, aid, (v.) benefit, profit

ANTONYMS

damage, harm, hurt

USAGE EXAMPLES

I tried to persuade my sister to come to the party, but to no avail. (*use, success*)

He tried to comfort the crying child, but his efforts were of little avail. (*help, use, benefit*)

characterize

(verb)**DEFINITION**

1. to describe the character or characteristics of somebody or something; 2. to be typical of the way a particular person or thing behaves or looks

SYNONYMS

distinguish, depict, portray, describe, typify, identify, designate

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

His employees characterized him as an intelligent man. (*depicted, portrayed*)

In the book "To Kill a Mockingbird," Atticus Finch is characterized by his quiet dignity. (*distinguished, identified*)

cohesive**(adjective)****DEFINITION**

sticking, holding, or working together as a unit

SYNONYMS

integrated, unified, harmonious

ANTONYMS

broken, separated

USAGE EXAMPLES

Everyone worked together really well; it was a cohesive unit. (*integrated, unified*)

The company was finally able to create a cohesive management team that was able to work together in harmony. (*integrated*)

continuity**(noun)****DEFINITION**

1. the quality of being consistent and uninterrupted throughout; 2. something that stays consistent throughout; 3. a detailed film script used to ensure consistency throughout

SYNONYMS

constancy, continuousness, succession, smoothness, flow, unity, consistency, cohesion

ANTONYMS

break, interruption, inconsistency

USAGE EXAMPLES

The company was unhappy with its ad campaign because they felt that there was no continuity between the print and broadcast advertising; the two had very different styles. (*flow, constancy*)

Although I have officially resigned, I'm going to stay on until the new manager has been trained and feels comfortable in the position to ensure continuity of service. (*continuousness, constancy*)

conversant

(adjective)

DEFINITION

having experience, familiarity, or knowledge (usually followed by "with" or "in")

SYNONYMS

versed, practiced, proficient, familiar, knowledgeable, informed

ANTONYMS

ignorant, uninformed

USAGE EXAMPLES

The scholar is conversant in six languages. (*proficient*)

I made the mistake because I am not conversant with the etiquette of golf. (*familiar*)

denominator

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. the number below the line in a fraction; 2. a common characteristic or shared quality; 3. an average degree of quality

SYNONYMS

divisor, commonality, trait, characteristic

ANTONYMS

numerator

USAGE EXAMPLES

For the following fraction, 6 is the common denominator: $1/6$, $2/6$, $4/6$, $7/6$. (*common trait, divisor*)
It seems like movies today are developed for the lowest common denominator. (*common trait, divisor*)

earnest

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. highly serious and sincere in manner or attitude; 2. done in a deeply sincere way; 3. of a serious nature or worthy of serious attention; 4. not distracted

SYNONYMS

fervent, ardent, enthusiastic, deep, grave, serious, sincere, diligent

ANTONYMS

frivolous, flippant, capricious

USAGE EXAMPLES

A good journalist's earnest mission is to inform the public in the most objective way possible. (*sincere*)
If we stop wasting time and this project ever gets underway in earnest, it could be a huge success. (*seriousness*)

factor

(noun, verb)

DEFINITION

(n.) 1. an element contributing to the result of something; 2. a mathematical quantity multiplied with other numbers, or the amount by which something is multiplied; 3. a person or organization that trades for commission; (v.) 1. to include or exclude as a contributing element; 2. to calculate the factors of a given quantity or expression

SYNONYMS

(n.) part, aspect, facet, element, cause, component, ingredient, divisor, agent, representative, (v.) include, divide, calculate, figure

ANTONYMS

(n.) composite, whole; (v.) disregard

USAGE EXAMPLES

We had to factor in possible traffic delays when estimating our arrival time. (*figure*)
The most important factor in the decision to hire her as the new manager was her past record of success in a similar position. (*element, aspect*)

frank

(adjective)

DEFINITION

1. expressing true opinion; 2. blunt; 3. having or showing an appealingly open and honest nature

SYNONYMS

candid, forthright, open, outspoken, direct, blunt

ANTONYMS

reserved, dishonest

USAGE EXAMPLES

To be quite frank with you, I don't agree with your ideas for this project. (*honest, direct*)
The human resources manager was very frank with me after the interview and candidly explained his reasons for not hiring me. (*open*)

influx

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a sudden or ongoing arrival of many things or of a lot of people; 2. an inward flow or movement

SYNONYMS

inflow, inundation, flow, rush, flood

ANTONYMS

outflow, efflux

USAGE EXAMPLES

The sudden influx of new clients meant lots of overtime for the employees. (*rush, inundation*)
With the steady influx of guests, the hotel will make much more money this season than last. (*flood, inflow*)

insulate

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to protect something or prevent the transfer to heat, cold, or sound by surrounding it in insulating materials; 2. to isolate or set apart

SYNONYMS

cover, protect, cushion, encase, shield, isolate, separate, sequester

ANTONYMS

expose

USAGE EXAMPLES

He left the country on vacation in order to insulate himself from the negative publicity surrounding the scandal. (*protect, shield*)
It's impossible to insulate your children from all the violence and strong language in today's media. (*shield, protect*)

interject

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to say or insert something in a way that interrupts what is being said or discussed; 2. to insert between other elements

SYNONYMS

inject, insert, interpose, throw in, include, interrupt

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

If I may interject for a moment, I have one more idea I'd like to discuss before we wrap up this meeting. (*interrupt*)

If I could interject, I believe there is an easier way to do this. (*interrupt, interpose*)

paramount

(adjective)

DEFINITION

foremost in importance or power

SYNONYMS

supreme, predominant, principal, primary, overriding, leading

ANTONYMS

unimportant, insignificant

USAGE EXAMPLES

National security is a paramount issue in the Presidential campaign. (*predominant, leading*)

Of paramount importance in the photojournalist's mind was shooting the scene from a unique perspective. (*supreme, primary*)

perspective

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. point of view; 2. objective assessment of a situation; 3. the appearance of objects to the observer

SYNONYMS

viewpoint, position, angle, attitude, bias, outlook, range, span

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

Each member of the team brought an entirely different perspective to the table, and all points of view were addressed during the meeting. (*position, viewpoint*)

I think we should distance ourselves from this issue in order to gain some perspective. (*outlook, objectivity*)

prospect

(noun, verb)

DEFINITION

(n.) 1. the possibility of future success; 2. something that is expected to happen in the future; 3. someone who is likely to be interested in purchasing a product or service; 4. someone or something that is likely to succeed; 5. the act of exploration, examination or observation; (v.) to search for something desirable

SYNONYMS

(n.) expectation, possibility, outlook, perspective, candidate, opportunity, chance, potential, (v.) explore, search

ANTONYMS

hopelessness, obscurity

USAGE EXAMPLES

His prospects for getting the job are excellent; he really is the best candidate. (*expectations, chances*)

Our agency is currently prospecting for new clients. (*exploring, searching*)

regress

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to return to an earlier, worse condition; 2. to go back to a former state

SYNONYMS

degenerate, deteriorate, relapse, retrogress, revert, return

ANTONYMS

advance, progress, flourish, improve

USAGE EXAMPLES

If expectations are lowered, the employees may regress back to their formerly unproductive ways.

(return, revert)

Without consistent accountability, the criminals may regress to their prior, unlawful acts. *(revert, relapse)*

robust

(adjective)**DEFINITION**

1. healthy, strong, and energetic; 2. built to be sturdy and durable; 3. requiring physical strength and endurance; 4. boisterous in manner; 5. hearty, full-flavored; 6. crude or rough

SYNONYMS

healthy, strong, energetic, sturdy, solid, vigorous, hearty, rugged, full-bodied, flavorful, rude, rough

ANTONYMS

frail, weak, feeble, tasteless

USAGE EXAMPLES

He was a tall, handsome, robust young man. *(healthy, strong)*

The young woman was offended by the robust stories her co-workers told over lunch. *(rude, crude)*

subject

(verb)**DEFINITION**

1. to make someone experience something unpleasant; 2. to bring someone under the power or authority of someone else

SYNONYMS

expose, submit, subjugate

ANTONYMS

hide, protect, free

USAGE EXAMPLES

Marines in training are subjected to severe physical and mental tests. (*exposed*)
I want to take my kids to New York, but I don't want to subject them to any of the more dangerous neighborhoods. (*expose*)

tenure

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. the time spent in a particular office or position; 2. the granting of permanent employment after a provisional period, used especially in the teaching profession; 3. the holding of land

SYNONYMS

possession, holding, term, incumbency, occupancy, tenancy

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

During her tenure in office, the mayor made many changes that helped the city's operations work more effectively. (*term, incumbency*)
After several years of outstanding teaching and scholarship, the professor was given tenure. (*a permanent position*)

transcend

(verb)

DEFINITION

to rise above or go beyond the limits of something

SYNONYMS

surpass, be superior, exceed, rise above, go beyond, outshine

ANTONYMS

be inferior, fail, lose

USAGE EXAMPLES

She hoped her son would gain things from soccer that transcend the game itself, like honor and good sportsmanship. (*exceed, rise above, go beyond*)

Many people believe the artist's paintings will transcend time to become legendary. (*go beyond, surpass*)

accordance

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. agreement as to the right course of action; 2. conformity with specified procedures or actions; 3. the act of granting rights; 4. concurrence of opinion

SYNONYMS

consensus, conformity, compliance, bestowal, harmony, agreement, accord

ANTONYMS

disagreement, disharmony

USAGE EXAMPLES

We are in accordance with this proposal and would like to move forward with the project. (*agreement*)

We have completed this project in accordance with the guidelines defined in the initial plan.

(*compliance, conformity*)

pretense

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. insincere or feigned behavior meant to deceive; 2. an unwarranted or unsupported claim

SYNONYMS

dishonesty, fabrication, disguise, charade, pretension, false show, excuse, pretext

ANTONYMS

truth, fact, honesty

USAGE EXAMPLES

He tried to sell us the old computer under the pretense that new computers aren't really more advanced.

(fabrication, false story)

She made absolutely no pretense of being interested. *(false show)*

procure

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to obtain something by special effort; 2. to bring about

SYNONYMS

acquire, buy, find, obtain, gather, accumulate, persuade, bring about, cause, effect

ANTONYMS

lose, scatter, disperse

USAGE EXAMPLES

Fans were lined up for miles to procure an autograph from the famous singer. *(obtain, acquire)*

Before applying to a college, you must first procure a copy of the school's application. *(obtain)*

allay

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to lessen the intensity of something; 2. to calm or lay to rest an emotion

SYNONYMS

mollify, alleviate, sooth, pacify, quiet, ease, calm, reduce, lessen

ANTONYMS

agitate, heighten, magnify, intensify

USAGE EXAMPLES

The homeowners' fears were allayed when they heard the fires were extinguished. (*eased, calmed*)
The Director of Homeland Security is taking measures to allay the people's fear of a future terrorist act. (*ease, lessen*)

attribute

(verb, noun)

DEFINITION

(v.) to explain according to or to give credit to; (n.) a quality or characteristic of a person or thing

SYNONYMS

(v.) accredit, ascribe, impute, credit, (n.) feature, trait, characteristic, property, quality

ANTONYMS**USAGE EXAMPLES**

She attributes her victory in the Boston Marathon to lots of hard training and a positive attitude. (*credits*)
His best attribute is his willingness to help others. (*trait, characteristic*)

circumvent

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to go around something in order to avoid it; 2. to outwit someone through cleverness

SYNONYMS

evade, avoid, sidestep, bypass, circumnavigate, outwit

ANTONYMS

conform, cooperate

USAGE EXAMPLES

They want us to complete hundreds of forms in order to bid on this project; is there any way we can circumvent some of this work? (*avoid, bypass*)

I was completely flabbergasted when my assistant circumvented my authority and went straight to upper-management to request a vacation. (*bypassed, circumnavigated*)

concoct

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to create something imaginative by combining ingredients in a new, unplanned way, especially in cooking; 2. to invent an ingenious story or plan in order to deceive someone

SYNONYMS

create, contrive, prepare, combine, blend, mix, cook up, commingle, brew, devise, invent, scheme

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

With a basic knowledge of ingredients and cooking methods, it is easy to concoct interesting dishes. (*create, cook up*)

With her overactive imagination, she was forever concocting unsuccessful schemes. (*contriving, inventing*)

construe

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to interpret or assign meaning to; 2. to use a word in a particular way

SYNONYMS

interpret, explain, infer, define, understand, comprehend

ANTONYMS

misconstrue, misinterpret

USAGE EXAMPLES

I'm not quite sure how to construe John's strange behavior in the meeting today. (*explain, interpret*)

I apologize if I've misconstrued your statements, but it seemed like you were being purposely offensive. (*misinterpreted, misunderstood*)

proximity

(noun)

DEFINITION

the quality of being near or close together

SYNONYMS

nearness, closeness, vicinity, adjacency, togetherness, juxtaposition, propinquity, immediacy

ANTONYMS

distance, farness, remoteness

USAGE EXAMPLES

My house is in proximity to the store and the library. (*nearness, vicinity*)

The proximity of the men's homes helped them to remain friends over the years. (*closeness, nearness*)

simulate

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to reproduce or create a model of something; 2. to mimic looks or behavior; 3. to pretend

SYNONYMS

imitate, copy, model, represent, duplicate, mimic, re-create, pretend, fake, feign

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

The pilot simulated a maneuver he had learned in flight school the week before. (*imitated, re-created*)

There are several flight simulator games that simulate the experience of flying. (*mimic, re-create*)

tantamount

(adjective)

DEFINITION

equivalent to a particular thing in effect, outcome, or value--the same as

SYNONYMS

equal, equivalent, identical, parallel, synonymous

ANTONYMS

opposite, unlike

USAGE EXAMPLES

The way the executives pulled money from the company to pay for their bonuses was tantamount to stealing, in the employees' minds. (*equivalent*)

Many felt the questionable accounting practices of the company were tantamount to corporate fraud. (*equal*)

admonish

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to rebuke or scold somebody mildly, but earnestly; 2. to advise somebody to do or, more often, not to do something; 3. to indicate duties or obligations

SYNONYMS

reprove, chide, scold, rebuke, warn, advise, caution

ANTONYMS

commend, praise, compliment

USAGE EXAMPLES

They were admonished against making any self-incriminating statements in court. (*advised, cautioned*)

The mother admonished her child for eating cookies before dinner. (*scolded, chided*)

aggregate

(noun, verb, adjective)

DEFINITION

(n.) 1. something formed by adding together several amounts or things; 2. a combination or composite of separate elements; (v.) 1. to unite or bring together to form a whole; 2. to add up to a number; (adj.) collected together from different sources to form a whole

SYNONYMS

(n.) collective, total, entirety, (v.) gather, amass, (adj.) combined, complete

ANTONYMS

(n.) element, unit, (adj.) individual, particular

USAGE EXAMPLES

The aggregate of church officials debated over the "prayer in school" controversy. (*collective*)
The aggregate funds from various sources enabled the fund raiser to successfully proceed with the plan for expansion. (*total*)

exhort

(verb)

DEFINITION

1. to strongly urge someone to do something; 2. to give advice in an urgent manner

SYNONYMS

urge, admonish, entreat, enjoin, beseech, advise

ANTONYMS

block, discourage, dissuade, impede

USAGE EXAMPLES

I exhorted my sister not to elope with her boyfriend, but to have a proper wedding instead. (urged, advised)
The success coach will exhort his client to make many changes in his life. (*incite, urge*)

collateral

(noun, adjective)

DEFINITION

(n.) 1. a security pledged for the repayment of a loan; 2. accompaniment to something else (as in: collateral damage); (adj.) 1. serving as an addition to support or corroborate; 2. running side by side (as in: collateral ridges of mountains); 3. descendent from the same ancestor

SYNONYMS

(n.) security, guarantee, insurance, confirmation, substantiation, validation, (adj.) parallel, additional, accompanying, connected, dependent, indirect, side-by-side

ANTONYMS

(adj.) unrelated, independent

USAGE EXAMPLES

This brochure is one of the best collateral pieces we've ever designed, and I'm sure it will generate many sales for the client. (*accompanying, additional*)

Lisa put her car up as collateral when she applied for a small business loan. (*security, guarantee*)

critterion

(noun)

DEFINITION

a standard used to judge things

SYNONYMS

benchmark, gauge, measure, standard, rule, principle

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

We have only one criterion for deciding who we will hire for this job: the successful candidate must possess a large vocabulary. (*standard, rule*)

It is true that our criteria for success in this experiment are very stringent, but we believe that it is necessary to maintain high standards in research. (*benchmarks, gauges*)

inalienable

(adjective)

DEFINITION

protected from being removed or taken away

SYNONYMS

unassailable, inviolable, natural, inherent, basic, sacrosanct, absolute

ANTONYMS

vulnerable, assailable, unprotected

USAGE EXAMPLES

The Constitution guarantees us certain inalienable rights as U.S. citizens. (*unassailable, sacrosanct*)
The terms of this contract are inalienable. (*inviolable, absolute*)

nuance

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a subtle difference, distinction or variation in something; 2. a subtle quality

SYNONYMS

subtlety, suggestion, hint, trace, refinement

ANTONYMS

USAGE EXAMPLES

There was a nuance of anger in his voice that was almost undetectable in his otherwise calm demeanor. (*hint, trace, shade*)
My best friend is allergic to almonds, and even a nuance of almond flavor will cause her to have a reaction. (*suggestion, trace*)

conviction

(noun)

DEFINITION

1. a firmly held belief; 2. firmness of belief or opinion; 3. a final judgment of guilty in a criminal case and the punishment that is imposed

SYNONYMS

belief, opinion, confidence, certitude, certainty, condemnation, sentencing, penalty

ANTONYMS

uncertainty, doubt, dubiety

USAGE EXAMPLES

His conviction in the business' success was so strong, he was willing to go into debt in order to create the product. (*belief, confidence*)

He would not make a good CEO because he has a hard time making decisions and generally leads without conviction. (*certitude, confidence*)