

**kudize**

v  
/ 'k(y)ü.dīz /  
Gk

grant honors to : praise.  
*The planning committee had a luncheon to kudize Mr. Blalock, who donated 100 acres of land for the city park.*

**kudos**

n pl  
/ 'k(y)ü.dōz /  
Gk

praises given for achievement.  
*Daphne received many kudos from the drama coach after her performance in the school play.*

**kudzu**

n  
/ 'kü.d(.)zü /  
Jpn

a vine of China and Japan that is used widely in the southern United States for erosion control and soil improvement.  
*Along many highways of the deep South, kudzu covers the roadside like drapery.*

**labefaction**

**laboratory**

**laborious**

adj  
/ lə'bōrēəs /  
L

involving much work : tiresome.  
*Restoration of the mansion will require laborious effort.*

**labyrinth**

n  
/ 'labə.rin(t)θ /  
Carian? > Gk > L > E

a structure full of intricate passageways that make it difficult to find the way from the interior to the entrance or from the entrance to the interior.

*Lost in the labyrinth of passages beneath the castle, the invaders gave up the attack plan and instead concentrated on finding a way out.*

**labyrinthine**

**laccate**

adj  
/ 'lɑ.kāt /  
L + Ecf

having a varnished or lacquered appearance.  
*The leaves of some tropical evergreens have a laccate surface.*

**lacerate**

**laceration**

n  
/ .læsə'rāshən /  
L > F

a wound made by tearing or rending roughly.  
*Forty stitches were required to close the laceration in Jeremy's scalp.*

**lachrymose**

adj  
/ 'lɑkrə.mōs /  
L

dismal, melancholy.  
*The lachrymose play ruined Samantha's weekend.*

**lackadaisical**

adj  
/ .lɑkə'dāzəkəl /  
E + Ecf

lacking life, spirit, or zest : devoid of energy or purpose.  
*John's piano teacher criticized him for his lackadaisical performance in the recital.*

**laconic**

adj  
/ lə'känik /  
Gk > L

spoken, written, or expressed briefly or tersely : pithy.  
*Mrs. Fitzpatrick's laconic speaking style was quite popular with her students.*

**lacrosse**

n  
/ lə'krōs /  
F

a game that is played on a turfed field by two teams of ten players, each of whom uses a long-handled stick with which the ball is caught, carried, and thrown, with the object being to throw the ball into the opponents' goal.  
*Curious about lacrosse, Pamela signed up for a college intramural team.*

**lacteal**

adj  
/ 'laktēəl /  
L + Ecf  
relating to, consisting of, producing, or resembling milk.  
*Liz was surprised to learn that her lacteal drink was made from soybeans.*

**ladle**

**laggardly**

**lagniappe**

**lagomorph**

n  
/ 'lagə.mōrf /  
Gk > L

[Note: Could be confused with Lagomorpha.] any of several gnawing animals (as hare, rabbit, or pika) resembling the rodents.  
*A lagomorph has well-developed incisors to help it sever plant stems and gnaw on bark.*

**lallation**

**laloplegia**

n  
/ .lələ'plēj(ē)ə /  
Gk

paralysis of the muscles involved in speech.  
*Since Uncle Harry's stroke caused laloplegia, he had to communicate with pencil and paper.*

**lamasery**

n  
/ 'lāməsərē /  
Tibetan > F + Per > F  
a monastery of Tibetan Buddhist monks or priests.  
*Xiang returned from the lamasery a wiser and more introspective man.*

**lambda**

**lambent**

**lambrequin**

n  
/ 'lambə(r)kən /  
D > F  
a short decorative drapery for a shelf edge or for the top of a window casing : valance.  
*An embroidered lambrequin hung over each of the mansion's windows.*

**lament**

v  
/ lə'ment /  
L  
express sorrow for : bewail, mourn.  
*Railroad buffs still lament the demise of the steam locomotive.*

**lampoon**

n  
/ lam'pūn /  
F  
a light mocking satire.  
*The new movie is a lampoon of the horror films that are made especially for teenagers.*

**lamprey**

n  
/ 'lamprē /  
Gaulish? > L > F  
any of various freshwater and saltwater vertebrates that are widely distributed in temperate and subarctic regions and resemble eels but have a large circular jawless suctional mouth with numerous small conical teeth.  
*A large lamprey slithered out of the underwater cave, startling the diver.*

**lancet**

**landau**

n  
/ 'lan.daū /  
G geog name  
a four-wheeled covered carriage.  
*People who cannot picture what a landau looks like should think of Cinderella's carriage.*

**langlauf**

**langouste**

n  
/ län'güst /  
L > OProv > F  
spiny lobster.  
*Alicia ordered the langouste at the fancy seafood restaurant.*

**language**

n  
/ 'laŋgwij /  
L > F > E  
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] the inner tongue or flat plate opposite the mouth of an organ flue pipe.  
*A small chip in the organ's smallest language subtly affected its tone.*

**languescent**

adj  
/ laŋ'gweŋt /  
L  
becoming listless or fatigued.  
*The languescent ballerina struggled through the final scene.*

**languor**

**languorous**

**languorously**

adv  
/ 'laŋ(g)(ə)rəslē /  
L + Ecff  
in a manner characterized by listless indolence or sluggishness.  
*After returning from work, Cora reclined languorously on the sofa.*

**laniary**

adj  
/ 'lānē.erē /  
L  
adapted for tearing.  
*Laniary teeth are common in most carnivores.*

**lantern**

n  
/ 'lantərn /  
Gk > L > F > E  
a portable lamp.  
*The red light in the distance came from a lantern that hung from the last car of the train.*

**lapidary**

**lapideous**

adj  
/ lə'pidēəs /  
L  
of the nature of stone.  
*Lapideous concretions that form in the bladder or kidneys can cause extreme pain.*

**lapillus**

**larcenous**

**larceny**

n  
/ 'lārs(ə)nē /  
L > F > E  
the unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property without the consent of its lawful possessor.  
*When Tina first saw Victor's art collection, she suspected him of larceny.*

**lariat**

n  
/ 'larēət /  
L > Sp  
a long light but strong rope used with a running noose for catching livestock.  
*Jonathan watched in fascination as the cowboy demonstrated his skill with the lariat.*

**larigo**

n  
/ 'lārə.gō /  
Sp  
a ring at each end of the cinch of a western saddle through which the straps pass.  
*When Lynn investigated her loose saddle, she found that a larigo had broken.*

**larithmics**

n pl  
/ləˈrɪθmɪks/  
Gk

the scientific study of the quantitative aspects of population.  
*In accordance with a principle of larithmics, the emigration from the country was offset by an increased rate of population growth.*

**larrigan**

n  
/ˈlɑrəɡən/  
unknown

an oil-tanned moccasin with legs that is used especially by loggers and trappers.  
*The statue of Paul Bunyan depicted him with an ax over his shoulder and a hole in one larrigan.*

**laryngitic**

adj  
/ˌlɑrənˈjɪdɪk/  
Gk

affected with an inflammation of the upper part of the trachea containing the vocal cords.  
*After a long day of pitching his merchandise, the salesman returned home exhausted and laryngitic.*

**laryngitis**

**larynx**  
n  
/ˈlɑrɪŋ(k)s/  
Gk > L

the modified upper part of the respiratory passage of air-breathing vertebrates bounded above by the glottis and continuous below with the trachea.  
*The vocal cords are situated within the larynx.*

**lassitude**

n  
/ˈlɑsətɪd/  
L

a condition of weariness or debility : fatigue.  
*Lassitude is a symptom of many tropical diseases.*

**latensify**

**laterigrade**

adj  
/ˈlɑdərəˌɡrɑd/  
L + L

running sidewise or characterized by such running.  
*The laterigrade movements of the crab delighted the children on the beach.*

**lathe**

n  
/ˈlɑθ/  
E

a machine in which work is rotated about a horizontal axis and shaped by a fixed cutting tool while being held in a chuck.  
*Chloe donned her safety glasses before switching on the lathe.*

**laticiferous**

adj  
/ˌlɑdəˈsɪf(ə)rəs/  
Gk? > L + Ecff  
containing, bearing, or secreting latex.  
*Some laticiferous tropical vines are good sources of rubber.*

**latitude**

**latitudinous**

adj  
/ˌlɑdəˈtɪdɪˈnəs/  
L

having breadth especially of thought or interpretation.  
*Poetry is a latitudinous category, ranging from the moralistic to the nihilistic.*

**latkes**

**laudatory**

adj  
/ˈlɑdətɔrē/  
L  
of, relating to, or containing praise.  
*Seth made sure everyone saw his laudatory telegram from the dean.*

**laughter**

**launder**

**laureation**

n  
/ˌlɔrēˈɑʃən/  
L

an act of crowning with or as if with a wreath of leaves as a mark of honor or achievement.  
*At her laureation the recipient of the honorary degree paid tribute to her college professors.*

**laurel**

n  
/ˈlɔrəl/  
L

[has homonym: loral] foliage used by the ancient Greeks to crown victors in the Pythian games.  
*The ancient statue of an unknown athlete bore a carefully carved wreath of laurel.*

**lavash**

n  
/ˈlɑ.vəʃ/  
Armenian  
a large thin crisp unleavened wafer with a rough surface caused by air bubbles during baking.  
*Phil served lavash with goat cheese.*

**lavatory**

n  
/ˈlɑvətɔrē/  
L

a room with conveniences for washing the hands and face and usually with one or more toilets.  
*All of the soap dispensers in the lavatory were empty.*

**lavender**

**layette**

**league**

n  
/ˈleɪg/  
Gaulish > L > E  
[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an English unit of distance of about 3 miles.  
*Long car rides seem shorter if you figure them by the league instead of by the mile.*

**leaky**

**leasable**

**lease**

**leatherine**

**leaven**

n  
/ 'levən /  
L > F > E

[has homonym and near homonyms: levin and eleven, levan] a substance (as yeast) acting or used to produce fermentation in a dough or a liquid.  
*Nina neglected to add the leaven that causes the bread dough to rise.*

**lebkuchen**

n  
/ 'lɛp.kʊkən /  
G

a Christmas cookie usually made with honey, brown sugar, almonds, candied fruit peel, and spices.  
*Bart slipped a lebkuchen to the schnauzer.*

**lecithin**

n  
/ 'lesəθɪn /  
Gk

a substance that is obtained in the manufacture of soybean oil and that is used in foods (as margarine, chocolate, bakery products).  
*Lecithin is used in the production of caramel to make it smoother.*

**lectern**

n  
/ 'lektə(r)n /  
L

a desk or stand with a sloping top and usually a ledge at the bottom of the slope designed to support a book or script in a convenient position for a reader standing before it.  
*Miguel clutched the lectern in an attempt to conceal his nervousness.*

**lectionary**

**lectotype**

**lederhosen**

n pl  
/ 'lɛdə(r).hɔz'n /  
G

knee-length leather trousers worn especially in Bavaria.  
*All the men who volunteered to work at Oktoberfest were asked to wear lederhosen.*

**legacy**

n  
/ 'legəsē /  
L > F > E

money or property given to someone by direction of a will.  
*Tim opened a small business with the legacy from his father.*

**legerdemain**

n  
/ .lejə(r)də'mān /  
F

skill and dexterity in the performance of juggling or conjuring tricks.  
*The performer's legerdemain included making a coworker disappear from an enclosure.*

**legerity**

n  
/ lə'jerədē /  
L > F

mental or physical agility and quickness.  
*The gymnast performed on the balance beam with remarkable legerity.*

**leggieramente**

**legibility**

**legible**

**legislate**

**legitimacy**

**leguminous**

adj  
/ lə'gyümənəs /  
L

of, resembling, or consisting of peas or other vegetables.  
*The only leguminous food that Mandy likes is peas.*

**leisureable**

adj  
/ 'lēzh(ə)rəbəl /  
L > F > E

proceeding deliberately without haste.  
*The bikers made a leisureable tour of the campus.*

**leisure**

**lemniscate**

**lemonade**

**lemur**

n  
/ 'lēmə(r) /  
L

any of numerous arboreal chiefly nocturnal mammals formerly widespread but now largely confined to Madagascar that are related to the monkeys.  
*The lemur is lower on the evolutionary scale and less intelligent than the monkey.*

**length**

n  
/ 'len(k)θ /  
E

the longer of the two straight-line dimensions of a surface or plane or the longest of the three straight-line dimensions of a solid : extent from end to end.  
*Marsha and her father frequently argue over the length of her skirts.*

**leniency**

n  
/ 'lēnēənsē /  
L

the quality or state of being tolerant or merciful.  
*At his sentencing the convicted felon expressed remorse and pleaded for leniency.*

**lenient**

**leoncito**

n  
/ ˌlɔːnˈsɛ(ɪ)tɔ /

Sp  
a lion monkey; any of several South American marmosets.  
*The leoncito has a mane of fur around its head like a lion.*

**leonine**

adj  
/ ˈliːnɪn /

L  
resembling or suggesting that of a lion.  
*Portraits of Beethoven and Einstein always depict them with leonine hairstyles.*

**leopardess**

**leotard**

n  
/ ˈliːəˌtɑrd /

F name  
a close-fitting garment for the torso that is worn for practice or performance by dancers and acrobats.  
*In modern dance, performers often wear a very simple leotard.*

**lepidopterist**

n  
/ ˌlepəˈdɒptərɪst /

Gk  
a specialist in the study of butterflies and moths.  
*Judy was well on her way to becoming a lepidopterist; she already had her own butterfly net.*

**leprosy**

n  
/ ˈleprəsi /

Gk > L  
a progressive infectious disease that affects the skin and nerves and causes lumps, ulcers, white scaly patches, deformities, and eventual loss of sensation.  
*Even though approximately 270 cases of leprosy are diagnosed in the United States each year, effective medications have made the existence of leper colonies unnecessary.*

**leptocercal**

adj  
/ ˌleptəˈsɜrkəl /

Gk + Gk  
tapering off to a long slender point—used of the tail of a fish.  
*The scuba diver showed Jane his scar from a wound he received when whipped by the leptocercal tail of a stingray.*

**lesion**

n  
/ ˈliːzhən /

L > F > E  
[has near homonym: legion] an abnormal change in structure of an organ or part due to injury or disease.  
*Sarah had Dr. Kendall treat the lesion on her shin.*

**lethal**

adj  
/ ˈliːθəl /

L  
of, relating to, or causing death.  
*The lethal fire spread through the Riggs Building rapidly.*

**lethargic**

adj  
/ ləˈθɑːrjɪk /

Gk > L > F  
slow-moving, sluggish.  
*Rhea's dry throat and lethargic disposition warned her that a cold was coming.*

**lethargy**

n  
/ ˈleθə(r)jɪ /

Gk  
the quality or state of being lazy or indifferent : lassitude, apathy.  
*The hot, humid air of the tropics spreads a feeling of lethargy over everyone.*

**letteret**

**lettuce**

n  
/ ˈledəs /

L > F > E  
a common garden vegetable with succulent leaves that are often used in salads.  
*Rosemarie prefers romaine lettuce for her salads.*

**leucite**

**leucoryx**

n  
/ ˈlʊkə(ɪ)rɪks /

Gk  
a large chiefly pale brownish antelope of North Africa.  
*The horns of the leucoryx are evenly curved backwards.*

**levade**

n  
/ ləˈvɑd /

F > G  
a show-ring movement in which a horse raises the forequarters, brings the hindquarters under him, and balances with haunches deeply bent and forelegs drawn up.  
*When a horse's body is at a less-than-45-degree angle with the ground, the movement is called a "levade."*

**levanter**

n  
/ ləˈvɑntə(r) /

L > F > E + Ecf  
a strong easterly Mediterranean wind.  
*When the levanter hits the Rock of Gibraltar, it soars up 1,400 feet, and its vapor becomes a dense white cloud.*

**levee**

n  
/ ˈlevi /

L > F  
[has homonym: levy] an embankment built alongside a body of water to prevent flooding of nearby land.  
*The city plans to construct a levee to prevent flooding from the river.*

**level**

**leverage**

**leviathan**

adj  
/ lə'vīəθən /  
Heb > L > E  
of enormous size.  
*The ore was hauled away in leviathan trucks.*

**levity**

n  
/ 'levədē /  
L  
excessive or unseemly frivolity :  
lack of fitting seriousness.  
*The minister's levity during the eulogy was inappropriate.*

**lexicography**

**liability**

**liable**

**liaison**

**libel**

**liberalize**

**librarian**

n  
/ lī'brerēən /  
L  
one whose vocation is working  
with collections of books,  
manuscripts, or other literary  
materials kept for study or reading.  
*Juan asked the librarian for the key  
to the rare-book cabinet.*

**library**

n  
/ 'lī.brerē /  
L  
a room or section of a building or a  
building itself given over to books,  
manuscripts, or other literary and  
sometimes artistic materials usually  
kept in some convenient order for  
use but not for sale.  
*Stella owns many books and plans  
to convert a spare bedroom to a  
library.*

**libretto**

n  
/ lə'bre(,)dō /  
L  
the text of a work (as an opera) for  
the musical theater.  
*Michelle bought a dual-language  
edition of the libretto of Tosca for a  
quarter at a garage sale.*

**licensable**

**licentiate**

n  
/ lī'senchēət /  
L  
an academic degree ranking below  
that of a doctor given by some  
European institutions of higher  
education.  
*After two years' study, Reverend  
Pease received a licentiate in  
canon law.*

**lichen**

n  
/ 'līkən /  
Gk > L  
[has homonym: liken] any of  
numerous complex plants that are  
made up of an alga and a fungus  
growing in symbiotic association  
on various solid surfaces (as rocks  
or the bark of trees).  
*Sean used a mixture of green paint  
and sawdust to simulate lichen on  
his model train layout.*

**lichenified**

**lichenophagous**

**licit**

adj  
/ 'līsət /  
L  
not forbidden by law : lawful.  
*Even licit drugs can be dangerous  
if not used as directed by a  
physician.*

**lidocaine**

**liege**

adj  
/ 'lēj /  
L > F > E  
having the right to feudal  
allegiance and service.  
*The serf bowed low before his liege  
lord.*

**lien**

**lienholder**

n  
/ 'lēn.hōldər /  
L > F + E  
one having a valid mortgage.  
*When she returned from vacation,  
Iris was mortified to find a stack of  
letters from her lienholder.*

**lieu**

n  
/ 'lü /  
L > F  
[has homonym: loo] place, stead.  
*Miss Woodhouse had many  
acquaintances, but not one among  
them could be accepted in lieu of  
her best friend Miss Taylor for even  
half a day.*

**lieutenancy**

n  
/ lū'tenənsē /  
L > F > E  
the term of a commissioned officer  
in the army, air force, or marine  
corps ranking below a captain.  
*During his lieutenancy, Lionel  
served in Guam.*

**lieutenant**

n  
/ lū'tenənt /  
L > F > E  
a military officer in the army, navy,  
air force, or marine corps.  
*At the end of the novel, the young  
naval hero was finally promoted to  
lieutenant.*

**ligament**

n  
/ 'ligəmənt /

L  
something that ties or unites one thing or part to another.  
*International law is considered by some to be the ligament of mankind.*

**ligature**

n  
/ 'ligəʃə(r) /  
L > F > E

something that is used to bind; specifically : a thread, wire, or other material used in surgery.  
*Dr. Adams removed the ligature that had held the vein closed during the operation.*

**lightning**

adj  
/ 'lɪtnɪŋ /

E  
[has near homonym: lightening] moving with or having the speed and suddenness of lightning.  
*The lightning rapidity of Mr. Julia's jargon and wit is a tool of his trade as an auctioneer.*

**ligniperdous**

adj  
/ 'lɪgnə'pərdəs /  
L + L

destructive to wood.  
*The house had to be inspected for any ligniperdous insects before it could be sold.*

**lilac**

**liliaceous**

adj  
/ 'lɪlɪ'æʃəs /

L  
of, relating to, or resembling any of numerous erect perennial leafy-stemmed bulbous herbs.  
*Deb's curtain material has a colorful liliaceous pattern.*

**lilliputian**

adj  
/ 'lɪlɪ'pyʊʃən /  
imaginary geog name + Ecf  
extremely small.

*The lilliputian furniture and fixtures in the dollhouse astounded and delighted the museum visitors.*

**limb**

n  
/ 'lɪm /  
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: limn.] the outer edge of the apparent disk of a celestial body or a portion of the edge.  
*Teresa spied a crater directly on the Moon's limb.*

**limbiferous**

adj  
/ lɪm'bɪf(ə)rəs /  
L + L

having a border or margin.  
*Mr. Lovejoy told his pupils that they would be expected to use limbiferous paper for all their assignments.*

**limby**

**limerick**

n  
/ 'lɪm(ə)rɪk /

Irish geog name  
a light verse form of five anapestic lines.  
*Noel composed a funny limerick about his teacher.*

**limitrophe**

adj  
/ 'lɪm(ə)trɒf /  
L + Gk

situated on a border or frontier : adjacent, neighboring.  
*The geography teacher asked the class to name all the countries that are limitrophe to Russia.*

**limnology**

n  
/ lɪm'nɒləʒɪ /  
L + Gk

the scientific study of physical, chemical, meteorological, and biological conditions in fresh waters especially of ponds and lakes.  
*An expert in limnology testified that pollution is reducing the fish population in Crystal Lake.*

**limousine**

n  
/ 'lɪməʒɪn /

F geog name  
a small bus (as for transporting passengers to and from an airport).  
*Mrs. Waldrupe was disappointed that her airport limousine was a ramshackle van.*

**linctus**

**lineament**

**linear**

adj  
/ 'lɪnɪə(r) /

L  
involving a single dimension : not square or cubic.  
*The micrometer caliper is an instrument for making precise linear measurements of dimensions such as diameters, thicknesses, and lengths.*

**linen**

**lingerie**

**linguist**

n  
/ 'lɪŋgwəst /

L  
a student of or expert in languages.  
*The famous linguist described how many tribal languages are becoming extinct.*

**linguistically**

**liniment**

n  
/ 'lɪnəmənt /  
L > E

a liquid or semiliquid alcoholic, oily, or saponaceous preparation for application to the skin with friction.

*Winona delicately rubbed liniment over her sore shoulder.*

**linoleum**

n  
/ lə'nɒləəm /  
L

a floor covering made by laying on a cloth backing a mixture of solidified linseed oil and various solid particles and usually pigments.

*The pattern in Sheena's kitchen linoleum resembles inlaid pebbles.*

**liquefiable**

adj  
/ .likwə'fiəbəl /  
L

capable of being reduced to a liquid state.

*Many familiar solid materials are easily liquefiable by heating.*

**liquescent**

adj  
/ li'kwesənt /  
L

being, becoming, or tending to become liquid : melting.

*When a giant asteroid hits the ground, it is transformed into a liquescent mass that becomes a fireball.*

**liqueur**

**liquidate**

**lisle**

**lisse**

**litany**

**literate**

adj  
/ 'lɪdərət /  
L

able to read and write.

*The government's goal for all adult citizens to be literate in 20 years needs a strategic plan.*

**literati**

n pl  
/ .lɪdər'ɹādē /  
L&It

the educated class : intelligentsia.

*The New York literati gathered at the book-signing party.*

**literature**

**lithesome**

adj  
/ 'lɪθsəm /  
E + E

characterized by agile grace.

*Denise's lithesome performance in her audition won her a place in the Royal Ballet.*

**lithochromy**

n  
/ 'lɪθə'krōmē /  
Gk

the art of painting on stone.

*Arthur's work in lithochromy earned him a commission to paint a scene on the museum's slate wall.*

**lithograph**

**litigation**

**litotes**

n  
/ 'lɪdətēz /  
Gk

understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by a negative of the contrary (as in "He's not a bad ball player").

*Rupert loved to use the litotes "not bad" to convey high praise.*

**litterateur**

**litterbug**

**littoral**

adj  
/ 'lɪdərəl /  
L

[has homonym: literal] of, relating to, or being near a shore, especially of the sea.

*Eduardo finally realized his dream when he established a littoral nature preserve.*

**liturgical**

adj  
/ lɪ'tɜrjəkəl /  
Gk > L

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of ceremonial or ritualistic worship.

*The priest donned his liturgical vestments before the mass.*

**liturgy**

n  
/ 'lɪdər(r)jē /  
Gk

a rite or series of rites, observances, or procedures prescribed for public worship in the Christian church in accordance with authorized or standard form.

*Since the Second Vatican Council, the use of the vernacular language, rather than Latin, has become widespread in Catholic liturgy.*

**livelihood**

**liveried**

**livid**

adj  
/ 'lɪvəd /  
L > F

discolored by or as if by bruising : black-and-blue.

*The bicycle accident left a large livid patch on Violet's arm.*



**llama**

n  
/ 'lämә /  
Quechua > Sp  
[has homonym: lama] any of a genus of wild or domesticated cud-chewing mammals of South America related to the camels but smaller and without a hump.  
*The llama thrives in the Alpine grasslands of Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina.*

**loam**

**loathsome**

**lobotomy**

n  
/ lō'bädәмē /  
Gk  
incision into the brain to sever nerve fibers for the relief of certain mental disorders and tension.  
*Lobotomy is no longer the preferred treatment in cases of extreme psychosis.*

**lobscouse**

n  
/ 'läb.skәüs /  
unknown  
a sailor's dish prepared by stewing or baking bits of meat with vegetables, hardtack, and other ingredients.  
*After Fritz returned from his fishing trip, he ordered a hearty portion of lobscouse for dinner.*

**locale**

n  
/ lō'kal /  
L > F  
a place or locality especially when viewed in relation to a particular event or characteristic.  
*Evan's doctor told him he needed to live in a drier locale, so he moved to Tucson.*

**location**

**locomotion**

**locust**

n  
/ 'lōkәst /  
L > E  
a grasshopper that frequently travels in swarms.  
*Cooper placed the captured locust in a mason jar.*

**lodging**

n  
/ 'läjiŋ /  
E  
a place to live : dwelling.  
*After a fire destroyed their home, the family depended on relatives for temporary lodging.*

**logarithm**

n  
/ 'lōgә.rithәm /  
Gk  
the exponent that indicates the power to which a number must be raised to produce a given number.  
*When the math teacher said that 4 is the logarithm of 16 to the base 2, only half the class understood what she was saying.*

**logarithmic**

**loggia**

n  
/ 'läj(ē)ә /  
F > It  
[has near homonym: logia] a roofed open gallery or arcade in the side of a building especially when facing upon an open court.  
*An airy second-floor loggia ran around three sides of the tiny courtyard.*

**logician**

**logistics**

n pl  
/ lō'jistiks /  
Gk  
military science in its planning and handling and implementation of personnel, equipment, and facilities.  
*Juan has been interested in logistics since he first played with toy soldiers.*

**logomachy**

n  
/ lō'gämәkē /  
Gk  
a dispute over or about words.  
*Behind the legislature's logomachy about what makes a Great Lake "great" lay political and economic motives.*

**logorrhea**

n  
/ .lōgә'rēә /  
Gk  
pathologically excessive and often incoherent talkativeness.  
*The patient's logorrhea was indicative of deep emotional problems.*

**loiter**

**longanimity**

n  
/ .längә'nimәdē /  
L  
a disposition to bear injuries patiently : forbearance.  
*Murphy's Law strikes often in George's project, but his longanimity will help him weather all setbacks.*

**longevity**

n  
/ län'jevәdē /  
L  
a long duration of individual life.  
*Mr. Wade's longevity was remarkable, considering he had been sickly as a child.*

**longiloquence**

**longitudinal**

**loquacious**

adj  
/ lō'kwәshәs /  
L  
given to excessive talking : garrulous.  
*Bryn's loquacious sister was quite a hit at the rehearsal party.*

**loquacity**

**lorgnette**

n  
/ ló(r)n'yət /  
F

a pair of eyeglasses or opera glasses with a handle.  
*Lorgnette in one hand and hankie in the other, Mrs. Vandergriff looked just like the opera-goers portrayed in cartoons.*

**loricate**

n  
/ 'lórəkát /  
L

an animal having a hard protective case or shell.  
*The armadillo is a well-known loricate, as is the alligator.*

**lorikeet**

n  
/ 'lórəkēt /  
Malay + Sp&F

any of numerous small arboreal parrots that are found in Australasia and that feed largely upon the nectar of flowers.  
*Ginger has a pet lorikeet that rides on her shoulder.*

**lounge**

**loupe**  
n  
/ 'löp /  
Gmc > F

[has homonyms: loop and loup]  
small magnifying glass used by jewelers and watchmakers.  
*At his jewelry store Arlo always wears a loupe on a chain around his neck.*

**lovat**

**loveliness**  
n  
/ 'ləvlənəs /  
E

the state of being beautiful.  
*Colette was awestruck by the loveliness of the stained-glass windows.*

**loxocosm**

n  
/ 'läksəkázəm /  
Gk

a device to show how the inclination of Earth's axis causes the day's length to vary from season to season.  
*John constructed a loxocosm for the science fair.*

**lozenge**

n  
/ 'läzʰnj /  
F

a small diamond-shaped medicated candy.  
*Mother gave Rick a cherry-flavored lozenge for his sore throat.*

**luau**

n  
/ 'lü.äü /  
Hawaiian

a feast with Hawaiian food and usually Hawaiian entertainment.  
*Sabrina wore a grass skirt to the luau.*

**lucernal**

adj  
/ 'lü'sərnəl /  
L + Ecf  
of or relating to a lamp.  
*A slide projector is a lucernal device for displaying images on a screen.*

**lucid**

adj  
/ 'lüsəd /  
L  
penetrated with light : translucent.  
*The otters romped and played in the lucid stream.*

**lucidity**

**lucrative**

**luculent**  
adj  
/ 'lükyələnt /  
L

transparently clear in thought or expression.  
*The audience was pleasantly amazed at the luculent commentary on the state of the economy.*

**ludicrous**

adj  
/ 'lüdäkrəs /  
L

meriting derisive laughter or scorn : absurd.  
*The jury was instructed to disregard the ludicrous remarks made by the defendant.*

**luftmensch**

n  
/ 'lüft.mench /  
G > Yiddish  
an impractical contemplative person having no definite trade, business, or income : dreamer.  
*Every large family seems to have at least one luftmensch among its members.*

**lugubrious**

adj  
/ lə'gübriəs /  
L > E  
expressive of, marked by, or giving rise to grief or sorrow.  
*The funeral director spoke in lugubrious tones as she explained the arrangements.*

**lullaby**

n  
/ 'lələbī /  
E  
a soothing refrain; especially : a song used to quiet children or lull them to sleep.  
*The baby was asleep before Mary finished singing the lullaby.*

**luminaire**

n  
/ 'lümə'nə(a)(ə)r /  
L > F  
a complete lighting unit including lamp, shade, reflector, fixture, and other accessories.  
*A luminaire was built into each cubicle in the office.*

**luminary**

n  
/ 'lümənərē /  
L

one that is an inspiration to others :  
one who has achieved success in  
his or her chosen field.

*Although a luminary in the field,  
Peter was reluctant to weigh in  
with his opinion about the ethics of  
cloning.*

**luminosity**

n  
/ .lümə'näsədē /  
L

the quantity of radiation emitted by  
a star or other celestial source  
usually expressed in terms of the  
Sun's intensity.

*The comet's luminosity was so  
great that it could be seen during  
the day.*

**luminous**

adj  
/ 'lümənəs /  
L

emitting or seeming to emit a  
steady suffused light that is  
reflected or produced from within.  
*During the movie Stan periodically  
checked the time on the luminous  
dial of his watch.*

**luncheon**

**luncheonette**

n  
/ .lənchə'net /  
E + Fcf

a place where light lunches are  
sold.

*After playing racquetball, Jaime  
stopped at the luncheonette for a  
sandwich.*

**lunge**

v  
/ 'lənʃ /  
F

make a forceful forward  
movement.

*Every few seconds the swordsman  
would lunge at his opponent.*

**lunule**

**luscious**

adj  
/ 'ləʃəs /  
E

having a delicious taste or smell.  
*The waiter pointed to cakes and  
pastries, each more luscious than  
the last, as he told us about them.*

**lustrous**

adj  
/ 'ləstrəs /  
L > It > F + Ecf

having a gloss or shine : gleaming.  
*When dining out, Marcia always  
wears some lustrous jewelry.*

**luthier**

n  
/ 'lütēə(r) /  
Ar > OProv > F

a maker of stringed instruments.  
*The luthier gave Dolores a choice  
of inlay patterns for her new guitar.*

**luxate**

**luxuriant**

**luxury**

**lycanthrope**

n  
/ 'lɪkənθrəp /  
Gk

a person transformed temporarily  
or permanently into a wolf or  
capable of assuming a wolf's form.  
*The zoologist contends that the  
myth of the lycanthrope is one of  
the reasons wolves are so  
maligned.*

**lyceum**

**lycopene**

**lymphatic**

adj  
/ lim'fədɪk /  
Gk > L

conveying a pale fluid that bathes  
the tissues of an organism.  
*The lymphatic system is vital in  
removing harmful bacteria from  
tissues.*

**lynx**

n  
/ 'lɪŋ(k)s /  
Gk

[has homonym: links] any of  
several wildcats with relatively  
long legs, a short stubby tail,  
mottled coat, and often tufted ears.  
*The lynx lives in cold northern  
latitudes, where its favorite prey is  
the snowshoe hare.*

**lyonnaise**

adj  
/ 'lɪənāz /

F geog name  
prepared or seasoned with onions  
and sometimes parsley.  
*Ricardo ordered lyonnaise potatoes  
as an elegant alternative to french  
fries.*

**lyre**

**lyrically**

**macadam**

n  
/ mə'kadəm /  
British name  
broken stone used in roadway  
paving.  
*Depending on the climate, some  
roads are best made of macadam  
and others, of asphalt.*

**macaque**

n  
/ mə'kak /  
Pg > F  
any of numerous short-tailed Old  
World monkeys chiefly of southern  
Asia and the East Indies.  
*The islanders trained a macaque to  
perform several routines for public  
entertainment.*

**macarize**

v  
/ 'makərɪz /  
Gk

pronounce happy or blessed :  
felicitate, laud.  
*After the wedding ceremony  
various friends will give speeches  
to macarize the happy couple.*

**macaroni**

n  
/ .makə'ronē /

It  
an alimentary pasta composed chiefly of semolina dried in the form of slender tubes or small fancy shapes.

*Lucy's favorite pasta dish is macaroni and cheese.*

**macaroon**

n  
/ .makə'rün /

It > F  
a small cake composed chiefly of the white of eggs, sugar, and ground almonds or almond paste or coconut.

*Cheryl placed a fresh macaroon on each saucer before serving the coffee.*

**macaw**

**maceral**

n  
/ 'masə'ral /

L?  
a fragment of plant debris in coal.  
*Penny examined the maceral under a microscope.*

**macerate**

**machination**

**machinator**

**mackerel**

**macle**

**macrame**

n  
/ 'makrə.mā /  
Ar > Turk > It or F  
a coarse lace or decorative fringe made by knotting threads or cords in a geometrical pattern.  
*Penny prefers to use soft yarn in her macrame.*

**macrocosm**

**madeleine**

n  
/ 'mad'lēn /

F name  
a small rich cake baked in a tin shaped like a shell.  
*Knut skipped the main course and went right to the madeleine.*

**mademoiselle**

n  
/ .madəmwə'zəl /

F  
an unmarried French woman.  
*Robert is smitten by a young mademoiselle he met during his trip to Paris.*

**madrigal**

n  
/ 'madrəgəl /  
L > It > E

a polyphonic part-song originating in the 14th century.  
*At the coronation feast the haunting madrigal brought tears to the eyes of the new king.*

**madrilene**

**maelstrom**  
n  
/ 'mälztrəm /  
D

a powerful water current that usually moves in a circular direction with extreme rapidity.  
*A memorable scene from the movie Fantasia features the sorcerer's apprentice caught in a maelstrom.*

**maestro**

n  
/ 'mī(ɪ)strō /  
L > It

a master or teacher of an art (as music).  
*The award-winning singer gave tribute to her maestro at the conservatory.*

**maffick**

**magazine**

**magenta**

n  
/ mə'jentə /

It geog name  
a deep purplish red; specifically : one of the subtractive primary colors.  
*The visual afterimage of magenta is green.*

**maggoty**

**magisterial**

adj  
/ 'majə'stirēəl /

L  
of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a master or teacher : authoritative.  
*Jubril's magisterial air served him well with everyone but his daughter.*

**magistracy**

n  
/ 'majə'strāsē /

L  
the office of a public official entrusted with administration of the laws : magisterial power and dignity.  
*The dissenters were persecuted by the state for refusing to accept the authority of the magistracy.*

**magnanimous**

adj  
/ .mag'nənəməs /

L  
showing or suggesting nobility of feeling and generosity of mind.  
*Simone's magnanimous attitude toward the homeless wasn't shared by her sister.*

**magnetizable**

**magnificat**

**magnificent**

**mahatma**

n  
/ mə'hätmə /  
Skt

a person held worthy of reverence for high-mindedness, wisdom, and selflessness.

*Raoul trekked for three days to seek the advice of the mahatma.*

**mahogany**

n  
/ mə'hägənē /  
unknown

the durable yellowish brown to reddish brown wood of a West Indian tree that is widely used for cabinetwork and fine finish work.  
*Kate's bedroom furniture is made of solid mahogany.*

**mahout**

n  
/ mə'haüt /  
Skt > Hindi

a keeper and driver of an elephant.  
*The mahout trained his elephant to move logs.*

**mai**

n  
/ 'mī /  
Jpn

[has homonym: my] a slow Japanese folk or theater dance featuring hand gestures.  
*Midori is an expert in all forms of Japanese dance, but her favorite is the mai.*

**maillot**

n  
/ ma'yō /  
F

[has near homonym: mayo] a woman's one-piece usually strapless bathing suit.  
*Becky thought that the maillot was out of fashion until she saw several in the catalog.*

**maimed**

adj  
/ 'māmd /  
Gmc > F > E

crippled, mutilated.  
*The maimed dog was taken to the animal hospital for treatment.*

**maintenance**

n  
/ 'mānt(ə)nən(t)s /  
F

the labor of keeping something (as buildings or equipment) in a state of repair or efficiency : upkeep.  
*Excellent maintenance preserved the original gingerbread trim on the Victorian house.*

**maize**

n  
/ 'māz /  
Taino > Sp

[has homonym: maze] Indian corn.  
*Gina enjoys hearing the story of how the native Americans taught the Pilgrims to grow maize.*

**majordomo**

n  
/ .mājə(r)'dō(,)mō /  
L > It > Sp

[has near homonym: mayordomo] a head steward or palace official.  
*Jeeves has been majordomo of Huntington Castle for the last 30 years.*

**majuscule**

adj  
/ 'majə'skyül /  
L > F  
written in large letters (as capitals).  
*Dr. Jenkins could see immediately that the majuscule scripts of the two letters were identical and deduced that the same scribe had written both.*

**malachite**

n  
/ 'malə.kit /  
Gk > L > E

a mineral consisting of a green carbonate of copper that is an ore of copper and is used to make ornamental objects.  
*Pierre bought a piece of malachite at the museum of natural history.*

**maladive**

**maladroit**

**malady**

n  
/ 'malədē /  
L > F > E

a disease, distemper, disorder, or indisposition of the body proceeding from impaired or defective functions.  
*In the 14th century, the malady known as The Black Death swept across Europe, leaving about 25 million people dead.*

**malapropism**

n  
/ 'malə.prä.pizəm /  
F > E theater name  
a blundering use of a word that sounds somewhat like the one intended but is ludicrously wrong in the context.  
*No matter how careful he tries to be, Sherman usually utters at least one malapropism in every campaign speech.*

**malaria**

n  
/ mə'lerē /  
L > It + Gk > L > It  
a disease caused by sporozoan parasites in the red blood cells, transmitted by the bite of anopheline mosquitoes, and characterized by periodic attacks of chills and fevers.  
*During the construction of the Panama Canal many workers succumbed to malaria.*

**malaxage**

n  
/ 'mā.laksij /  
Gk > L > F  
the act or process of softening a material (as clay) by moistening and working it.  
*After the malaxage the clay was ready for molding on the potter's wheel.*

**malediction**

n  
/ .malə'dikshən /  
L  
curse, execration.  
*The villain's last words were a malediction on the entire royal family.*

**malefactor**

n  
/ 'maləfaktə(r) /

L  
one who commits an offense against the law.

*The state's correctional program was designed to rehabilitate as well as punish the malefactor.*

**maleficent**

**malice**

n  
/ 'maləs /

L > F > E  
revengeful or unfriendly feelings : ill will, enmity.

*In spite of all he has had to put up with from his classmates, Joel bears them no malice.*

**malign**

**malignant**

adj  
/ mə'liŋənt /

L  
evil in nature or influence or effect.  
*The dark clammy coldness surrounded her like a malignant beast of prey.*

**malingerer**

n  
/ mə'liŋerə(r) /

Gmc? > F  
one who pretends to be ill or otherwise physically or mentally incapacitated so as to avoid duty or work.

*Jamie Farr's character on the television series M\*A\*S\*H was an entertaining malingerer.*

**mallard**

n  
/ 'malə(r)d /

F > E  
a common wild duck of the northern hemisphere.

*When Timmy fed the ducks at the marina, he gave his last piece of bread to the mallard.*

**malleable**

adj  
/ 'malēəbəl /

L > F > E  
capable of being extended or shaped by beating with a hammer or by the pressure of rollers.

*Because tin is malleable at ordinary temperatures, it has been used to make many household implements.*

**mallet**

n  
/ 'malət /

F > E  
a tool with a large head for striking a surface without marring it.

*Ray used a rubber mallet to put the wheel cover back in place after he changed the flat tire.*

**malloseismic**

adj  
/ .malə'si:zmik /

Gk  
of, relating to, or being a region subject to frequent destructive earthquakes.

*Chris refuses to move to any of the malloseismic areas of California.*

**malocclusion**

n  
/ malə'klü:zhən /

L  
an abnormality in the fitting together of upper and lower teeth or dentures.

*Hector wore braces on his teeth to correct a malocclusion.*

**malodorous**

adj  
/ mal'ödərəs /

L + L  
having a bad odor : rank, fetid, stinking.

*Evelina smelled the malodorous skunk from 500 yards away.*

**mammoth**

adj  
/ 'maməθ /

Yakut? > Russ  
gigantic.

*Clarence specialized in growing mammoth vegetables and held several records for his specimens.*

**manacle**

**managerial**

adj  
/ .manə'jirēəl /

L > It + Ecf  
of, relating to, or characteristic of a person who conducts, directs, or supervises something.

*The classified ads included a notice for a managerial position at the steel wool factory.*

**mandate**

n  
/ 'mɑn.dāt /

L  
a formal order from a superior court or official to an inferior one.

*The clerk delivered the written mandate to the lower court judge by hand.*

**mandatory**

adj  
/ 'mɑndə'tōrē /

L  
containing, constituting, or relating to an authoritative command, order, or injunction.

*Several states are instituting a mandatory work program for employable welfare recipients.*

**mandolinist**

**manducatory**

adj  
/ 'mɑnjəkə'tōrē /

L  
relating to, employed in, or adapted for chewing.

*Mr. Rollins brought a live lobster to our biology class so that we could observe its manducatory processes.*

**mange**

**manicotti**

n pl  
/ .manə'kädē /

L > It  
tubular pasta shells stuffed with ricotta.

*The caterer filled the chafing dish with manicotti.*

**manifesto**

n  
/ .mənə'fe(,)stō /  
L > It  
a public declaration of intentions, motives, or views.  
*The Unabomber's rambling manifesto appeared in a number of newspapers nationwide.*

**manipulator**

**manna**

n  
/ 'mənə /  
Heb > Gk > L > E  
[has near homonym: mana]  
something of value that falls one's way : windfall.  
*Children swarmed the parade route collecting the manna of treats tossed from the float.*

**manoptoscope**

**mansard**

**mansuetude**

n  
/ 'mən(t)swətüd /  
L  
the quality or state of being gentle : meekness.  
*Gary remembered his mother as having the sensitivity and mansuetude of a saint.*

**manumit**

v  
/ 'mənəmit /  
L  
set free; especially : release from slavery.  
*The tobacco farmer had agreed to manumit his one slave just before the Civil War began.*

**manuscript**

**maraca**

n  
/ mə'rākə /  
Tupi > Pg  
a dried gourd or rattle containing dried seeds or pebbles that has a handle and is used as a percussion instrument often in pairs.  
*The band's percussionist accentuated the rhythm with a maraca.*

**maraschino**

n  
/ .mə'rə'skē.nō /  
It  
a sweet liqueur that is used as a cocktail ingredient and in preserving cherries.  
*Even though she's a grown woman, Evelyn sometimes likes to make herself a Shirley Temple with clear soda and maraschino.*

**maraud**

**marauding**

v  
/ mə'rōdiŋ /  
F  
roaming about and making irregular sudden small-scale attacks, raids, or incursions for the sake of obtaining loot.  
*Outlaws were marauding in areas where the law was not well established.*

**marble**

**marcescent**

adj  
/ mār'ses'nt /  
L  
of a plant part : withering without falling off.  
*Autumn's first cold snap left many marcescent leaves in its wake.*

**marchioness**

n  
/ 'mārsh(ə)nəs /  
L  
a woman who holds in her own right the rank of marquess.  
*Once a month the workers on the estate brought their disputes before the marchioness to be resolved.*

**margaritaceous**

adj  
/ .mārgərə'tāshəs /  
Gk > L > F > E  
having a satiny iridescence like that of pearl or mother-of-pearl : pearly.  
*The tabletops at the diner have a margaritaceous finish.*

**mariachi**

n  
/ .mārē'ächē /  
F > Sp  
a group of Mexican folk musicians usually consisting of singers, guitarists, and a violinist.  
*On weekends the mariachi entertained diners at the Mexican restaurant.*

**maricolous**

**marionette**

n  
/ .mə(a)rē'net /  
F  
a puppet moved by strings or by hand (as in a puppet show).  
*A marionette of Jay Leno was the hit of the show.*

**maritime**

adj  
/ 'mārətīm /  
E name  
of or relating to navigation or commerce on the sea.  
*After Bob graduates, he plans to join the Navy to study maritime law.*

**marjoram**

n  
/ 'mār.jərəm /  
L > F > E  
any of various usually fragrant and aromatic mints that include several forms used as seasoning in cookery.  
*Vance likes to add marjoram and cream cheese to his scrambled eggs.*

**marmalade**

n  
/ 'märmelād /  
Gk > L > Pg  
a soft clear translucent jelly holding in suspension pieces or slices of fruit and fruit rind.  
*Mom's homemade marmalade on toast is always a great treat for breakfast.*

**marmoset**

n  
/ 'märməsət /  
F > E  
any of numerous small soft-furred South and Central American monkeys with claws instead of nails on all the digits except the great toe.  
*The chisel-like incisors of the marmoset are used for gouging trees to obtain gums and saps.*

**marotte**

n  
/ mə'rät /  
F name + Fcf  
a pet idea or notion.  
*Katrina's marotte is that she is really too good for life as a bookkeeper and should be a company vice-president.*

**marplot**

**marriageable**

**marsupial**

n  
/ mär'süpēəl /  
Avestan? > Gk > L  
any of an order of mammals having a pouch for carrying the young and including kangaroos, wombats, bandicoots, and opossums.  
*The common stereotype of a marsupial is a female kangaroo with a large young one in her pouch.*

**martial**

adj  
/ 'märsəəl /  
L  
[has homonyms: marshal, marshall] belonging or relating to an army or to military life.  
*Patrick Henry believed that the only purpose of England's martial array in the colonies and their seaports could be to force the colonists into submission.*

**martinetish**

adj  
/ .märt'n'edish /  
F name + Ecf  
like or characteristic of a person who lays stress on a rigid adherence to the details of forms and methods.  
*Though all the students disliked Mr. Wall's martinetish attitude, most of them thought he was an excellent teacher.*

**martyr**

n  
/ 'märdər /  
Gk  
one who voluntarily suffers death as the penalty of witnessing to and refusing to renounce his or her religion or a tenet, principle, or practice belonging to it.  
*St. Stephen, who was stoned to death, is believed to have been the first Christian martyr.*

**martyrology**

n  
/ .märd-ə'räləjē /  
Gk  
an official catalog of martyrs and saints of the Roman Catholic Church.  
*Keith bought an old martyrology at the rummage sale.*

**marzipan**

n  
/ 'märtsəpän /  
Ar > It > G  
a confection made of crushed almonds or almond paste, sugar, and egg whites that is often shaped into various forms (as fruit or animals).  
*Marlene filled the candy dish with marzipan.*

**mascara**

**masonry**

**masquerade**

n  
/ .maskə'rād /  
It > F  
a social gathering of persons wearing covers on their faces and often fantastic costumes especially to impersonate characters from history or legend.  
*Todd and Sheila wore Conehead costumes to the masquerade.*

**massacre**

n  
/ 'masəkə(r) /  
F  
the act or instance of killing a considerable number of human beings or animals.  
*The massacre of buffalo is a regrettable part of the history of the West.*

**massage**

**masseter**

n  
/ mə'sēd-ə(r) /  
Gk > L  
a large muscle that raises the lower jaw and assists in chewing.  
*Tracy argued that she was trying to strengthen her masseter, but Mr. Gold made her throw out her chewing gum anyway.*



**masseuse**

n  
/ mə'səʊ(r)z /  
Ar > F + Fcf

a woman who practices massage and physiotherapy.

*Delia spent an hour with the club's masseuse working out the kinks in her back.*

**mastiff**

n  
/ 'mɑstɪf /  
L > F > E

a very large powerful deep-chested smooth-coated dog of a very old breed used chiefly as a watchdog and guard dog.

*A big brown mastiff stood motionless behind the gate.*

**mastodon**

n  
/ 'mɑstədɒn /  
L

someone or something of gigantic size or unusually large size : giant.

*Mrs. Campbell's automobile collection ranges from a tiny two-seater to an antique mastodon.*

**mastoiditis**

n  
/ .mɑ.stɔɪ'dɪdɪs /  
Gk > L

inflammation of the process of the temporal bone behind the ear.

*Amy's doctor treated her mastoiditis immediately so that it wouldn't cause any permanent hearing damage.*

**matelot**

**matelote**  
n  
/ 'mɑd<sup>ə</sup>l.ɔt /  
F

a sauce made of wine, onions, seasonings, and fish stock.

*Even though it is served with fish, a matelote often contains red wine.*

**mathematician**

**matinee**

n  
/ .mat'nɪə /  
L > F

a performance of a production (as a play, opera, film) or the presentation of a concert or sometimes the holding of some other event in the afternoon or occasionally in the morning or at midnight.

*The English class attended a matinee of Our Town at the local playhouse.*

**matriarch**

**matriarchal**

**matriculant**

**matriculation**

**matrix**

**mattock**  
n  
/ 'mɑdək /  
L > E

a tool that combines features of an ax, adze, and pick and is used for digging and chopping.

*It took Mark three hours of hard work with a mattock and shovel to dig up the tree stump.*

**mattress**

**maturescent**

**matutinal**

**maudlin**

adj  
/ 'mɔdlɪn /  
Biblical Gk name > L > F > E  
tearfully or weakly emotional : effusively sentimental.

*Brian allowed himself to become maudlin only on St. Patrick's Day.*

**maudlinism**

**mausoleum**

**mauve**

n  
/ 'mɔv /  
L > F

a strong purple with a bluish cast.  
*Karen has tired of her bedroom of mauve and blue.*

**maverick**

n  
/ 'mav(ə)rɪk /  
Amer name

a member of any group who refuses to conform and who takes an unorthodox stand.

*The rest of the teachers considered Ms. Thorne to be a maverick because she invited her students to call her by her first name.*

**mawkish**

**maxim**

n  
/ 'mɑksəm /  
L

a saying of proverbial nature.

*"The early bird gets the worm" is Toni's favorite maxim.*

**mayonnaise**

n  
/ 'mɛə.nɛz /  
geog name? > F

a semisolid dressing made by emulsifying a mixture of raw eggs or egg yolks, vegetable oil, and vinegar or lemon juice usually together with salt and condiments.

*Helga wouldn't eat a roast beef sandwich without mayonnaise.*

**mayoralty**

n  
/ 'mɛərəl.tɪ /  
L > F > E

the term of office as the chief executive or nominal head of a city or borough.

*His opponent's television commercial made the point that Henry Vermillion had accomplished little during his mayoralty.*

**meadow**

**mealmouthed**

adj  
/ 'mēlə.maʊθɪd /  
E + E

tending to cloak thoughts, ideas, or intents by the use of obscure or devious language.

*All of Judy's friends saw through her mealmouthed explanation.*

**meandrous**

adj  
/ mē'andrəs /  
Gk geog name

winding, flexuous, rambling.

*Over thousands of years the river had cut a meandrous channel through the plain.*

**measles**

n pl  
/ 'mēzəlz /  
E

a contagious disease characterized by red spots.

*Most doctors recommend that children be vaccinated against measles, mumps, and rubella.*

**measurable**

**mecometer**

**medallion**

n  
/ mə'dalyən /  
L > It > F

a large medal (as for a memorial purpose).

*Charise bought a World War II medallion on eBay.*

**medallionist**

**meddlesome**

adj  
/ 'medʰlsəm /  
L > F > E

officiously intrusive.

*Her landlady's meddlesome manner annoyed Hatty so much that she moved out.*

**medicinal**

**medicine**

n  
/ 'medəsən /  
L

the science and art dealing with the maintenance of health and the prevention, alleviation, or cure of disease.

*Campbell knows that she would like to one day pursue a career in the field of medicine.*

**medicolegal**

**mediocre**

adj  
/ .mēdē'ōkə(r) /  
L

of but a moderate or low degree of quality.

*Jill's grades were mediocre until she started wearing glasses.*

**Mediterranean**

adj  
/ .medətə'rānēən /  
L

of, relating to, characteristic of, or situated near the Mediterranean Sea.

*The Mediterranean island of Malta has been the location for the filming of several movies.*

**medulla**

n  
/ mə'dələ /  
L

a posterior portion of the brain.

*The medulla governs various involuntary vital functions such as respiration.*

**meemies**

**meerschaum**

**megacephalic**

**megalomaniac**

n  
/ .megəlō'mānē.ək /  
Gk

one affected with or exhibiting an excessive enthusiasm for doing great or grandiose things.

*The candidate decried his opponent as a publicity-seeking megalomaniac.*

**megalopolis**

n  
/ .megə'ləpələs /  
Gk

a very large city.

*Without community growth guidelines, a moderately sized city could become a megalopolis like Los Angeles in just a few decades.*

**megaphone**

**melancholia**

**melancholy**

adj  
/ 'melən.kälē /  
Gk > L > F > E

depressed in spirits : mournful.

*The melancholy chirp of a cricket was the only sign of life near him.*

**melba**

n  
/ 'melbə /  
Australian name  
fruit served with ice cream, raspberry sauce, and whipped cream.

*The peach melba was served in a crystal goblet.*

**melee**

n  
/ 'mā(,)lā /  
F

[has homonyms: Malay, mele] a fight or contest between individuals mingled in a confused mass : a confused struggle.

*The soccer match turned into a melee after angry fans stormed the field.*

**melitensis**

adj  
/ .melə'ten(t)səs /  
L geog name

of, derived from, or caused by a particular bacterium of the genus *Brucella*.

*Clyde's melitensis fever was reduced by antibiotics.*

**mellifluous**

adj  
/ me'liflʌwəs /  
L

sweetly flowing : smooth, honeyed.  
*The soprano's mellifluous voice lulled Frank to sleep.*

**mellisonant**

adj  
/ me'lisənənt /  
L + L

pleasing to the ear.  
*Tonia's mellisonant voice never failed to put her little sister to sleep.*

**mellophone**

**mellow**

adj  
/ 'me(ə)lɒ /  
E

[has homonym: melo] relaxed and at ease : pleasantly convivial.  
*The after-dinner crowd enjoyed listening to the mellow, laid-back singer.*

**melodrama**

n  
/ 'melədrəmə /  
Gk > L > F

a play characterized by extravagant theatricality, subordination of characterization to plot, and predominance of physical action.  
*George was put off by the opera's melodrama but was enthralled by the beauty of the music.*

**melophonic**

**memoir**

n  
/ 'mem.wär /  
L > F

a history or narrative composed from or stressing personal experience and acquaintance with the events, scenes, or persons described.  
*The memoir of Burton Smith was published last year.*

**memorabilia**

n pl  
/ .memərə'bilēə /  
L

things remarkable and worthy of remembrance or record.  
*The memorabilia in the hall of fame traced the history of basketball from its beginning in 1891.*

**memory**

**menace**

**menagerie**

n  
/ mə'naj(ə)rē /  
F

a collection of wild or foreign animals in cages or enclosures.  
*The eccentric billionaire's menagerie includes two pandas and a white rhino.*

**mendacious**

**mendicant**

n  
/ 'mendəkənt /  
L

one who begs; especially : one who lives by begging.  
*The mendicant on the street corner once had a high-paying job.*

**menehune**

n  
/ .menə'hünē /  
Hawaiian

a small mythical Polynesian being living in the mountains and working at night as a stone builder.  
*The Hawaiian folklorist told the tale of a stone temple built overnight by a menehune.*

**menial**

adj  
/ 'mēnēəl /  
L > E

of, relating to, or being work not requiring special skill or not calling into play the higher intellectual powers and often regarded as lacking dignity, status, or interest.  
*Viewed by some office workers as a menial task, making coffee can be quite an art.*

**meniscus**

n  
/ mə'niskəs /  
Gk > L

the curved upper surface of a liquid column.  
*Because mercury sticks to itself better than to other substances, its meniscus is convex, or rounded upward.*

**menorah**

n  
/ mə'nōrə /  
Heb

a candelabrum with nine candlesticks used in the celebration of Hanukkah.  
*Stuart put the candles in the menorah just before the ceremony.*

**mentality**

n  
/ men'talədē /  
L

intellectual power or capacity : learning ability.  
*The mentality of dolphins is greater than that of sharks.*

**mentor**

n  
/ 'men.tò(ə)r /  
Gk name

teacher, tutor, coach.  
*After Helen won the spelling competition, she said that her mother was her mentor.*

**mephitic**

n  
/ mə'fidəs /  
OScan > L

a noxious, pestilential, or foul exhalation from the earth.  
*Ivy suspected she was approaching the geyser when she smelled a strong mephitic.*

**mercenary**

adj  
/ 'mərə'sn.ərē /  
L

showing conspicuous lust for money : based on or marked by greed.  
*No one in the family knows where Antonio gets his mercenary tendencies.*

**mercurial**

adj  
/ .mər'kyūrēəl /  
L

characterized by rapid and unpredictable changeableness or by quick-wittedness : sprightly, temperamental, volatile.

*Christopher's mercurial twists of temperament were a trial to his mother.*

**merely**

adv  
/ 'mi(ə)rlē /  
L > E + Ecf

no more than : barely, only.

*Joseph was merely pretending to be asleep.*

**meridian**

n  
/ mə'ridēən /  
F > E

a great circle of the celestial sphere passing through its poles and the zenith of a given place.

*The apparent solar day is measured by the interval of time between two successive passages of the Sun across the observer's celestial meridian.*

**meringue**

n  
/ mə'raŋ /  
F

[has near homonym: marang] a mixture of beaten egg whites and powdered sugar baked at low temperature and used as a topping (as on pies and puddings).

*Thelma scraped the meringue off her pie.*

**mermaid**

n  
/ 'mər.mād /  
E

a fabled marine creature having the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a fish.

*As they sailed closer to what they thought was the end of the world, the sailors kept expecting to see a mermaid.*

**mermithergate**

**merriment**

**meshummad**

**mesmerize**

**mesoseismal**  
adj  
/ .mezō'sizməl /  
Gk

of or relating to the center of an area of earthquake disturbance.  
*The town in the mesoseismal area suffered the most damage from the earthquake.*

**metachrosis**

n  
/ .medə'krōsəs /  
Gk

the power of some animals (as many fishes and reptiles) to change color voluntarily by the expansion of special pigment cells.

*Metachrosis helps octopi blend with their environments to avoid being easy prey.*

**metagnomy**

**metallurgical**

**metamorphosis**

n  
/ .medə'mò(r)fəsəs /  
Gk > L

change of physical form or substance that takes place during an insect's life as it matures.

*Complete metamorphosis is characteristic of beetles, butterflies and moths, flies, and wasps.*

**metaphor**

n  
/ 'medə'fò(ə)r /  
Gk

an implied comparison in contrast to the explicit comparison of the simile.

*The poet used the image of a drifting boat as a metaphor for the troubled soul.*

**metastase**

v  
/ mə'tastə'siz /  
Gk

spread, as a disease-producing agent, from the original site of disease to another part of the body.  
*The oncology professor pointed on the diagram to where the cancer cells would metastasize next.*

**meteoroidal**

adj  
/ .mēdēə'rōid'ɪ /  
Gk + Ecf

of or relating to meteors in orbit around the Sun.

*The many craters on the Moon are the result of meteoroidal bombardment.*

**methodical**

**meticulosity**

n  
/ mə'tikyə'lāsədē /  
L + Ecf

the quality or state of being extremely painstaking in the consideration or treatment of details.

*The gallery visitor marveled at the artist's meticulosity in depicting details so realistically.*

**metonymy**

n  
/ mə'tänəmē /  
Gk

a figure of speech that consists in using the name of one thing for that of something else with which it is associated (as in "spent the evening reading Shakespeare").

*The metonymy "threads" for clothes has recently come back into popular slang.*

**metoposcopy**

n  
/ .medə'päskəpē /  
Gk

the art of reading character or telling fortunes from the markings of the forehead.

*Gerald has a high, bumpy forehead that would provide a truly interesting study in metoposcopy.*

**metronome**

n  
/ 'metrən.ōm /  
Gk

an instrument that emits an audible repetitive tap regulated to mark rhythm (as for music or marching).

*Martina used a metronome to hypnotize her cat.*

**mettwurst**

**meuniere**

**meuse**

**mezzanine**

n  
/ 'mez˚n.ēn /  
L > It > F

the lowest balcony in a theater.  
*Melinda says that she enjoys the view from the mezzanine better than the view from the orchestra.*

**miasma**

n  
/ mī˚azmə /  
Gk > L

[Note: Could be confused with miasm.] a vaporous exhalation (as of a marshy region or of rotting matter) formerly believed to contain a substance causing disease.

*Eloise couldn't wait to escape from the miasma that had settled over the entire swamp.*

**microcosm**

n  
/ 'mīkrə.kāzəm /  
Gk

a miniature universe.  
*Kate could spend hours watching the microcosm of her ant farm.*

**microfiche**

n  
/ 'mīkrō.fēsh /  
F

a sheet of film containing several rows of photographic records on a reduced scale that are enlarged for reading or viewing.

*Norma examined a microfiche of old newspaper pages while doing research at the library.*

**micrograph**

n  
/ 'mīkrə.graf /  
Gk + Gk

a graphic reproduction of the image of an object formed by a microscope.

*The biology teacher showed the class a micrograph of a plant cell.*

**micrurgy**

n  
/ 'mī(˚)krərjē /  
Gk > ISV

the practice of using minute tools in a magnified field.

*Lorraine's excellence at micrurgy helped her greatly with her model making.*

**midgetism**

n  
/ 'mījəd.izəm /  
E + Ecf

the state of being an unusually small creature or thing.

*In the art of bonsai, midgetism is highly valued.*

**midinette**

n  
/ .mid˚n'et /  
F

a Parisian shopgirl.

*In the novel, Marie was a midinette who worked as a seamstress during the 1890s.*

**mien**

n  
/ 'mēn /  
L > F > E

[has homonym: mean] the air or bearing of a person.

*Fame and fortune did not alter Cindy's humble mien.*

**mignonette**

n  
/ .minyə'net /  
F

an annual plant native to North Africa that has long racemes of fragrant yellow or greenish white flowers.

*Lord Bateman sent seeds of mignonette to England in 1742 and called it mignonette, although it was not known by that name in France at the time.*

**migraine**

n  
/ 'mī.grān /  
Gk > L > F

a condition marked by recurrent severe headache often with nausea and vomiting.

*Karen's doctor found out that her migraine was due to a food allergy.*

**mikado**

n  
/ mə'kää(˚)dō /  
Jpn

an emperor of Japan.

*The Mikado is one of Gilbert and Sullivan's best-loved operettas.*

**milacre**

**mildewed**

**militancy**

**militia**

n  
/ mə'lishə /  
L

a reserve unit of the armed forces.

*Captain Weston's military career began when he entered his county's militia.*

**millennialism**

**millennium**

n  
/ mə'lenēəm /  
L

a period of 1,000 years.

*In his "Four Freedoms" speech, Franklin D. Roosevelt stressed that his vision was not that of a distant millennium.*

**millinery**

**millionaire**

**mimic**

v  
/ 'mimik /  
Gk > L  
copy or imitate very closely especially in external characteristics (as voice, gesture, or manner).  
*Christie has learned to mimic Grandma so well on the telephone that she can fool the whole family.*

**mimicry**

**minacious**

adj  
/ mə'nāshəs /  
L  
of a menacing or threatening character.  
*Though the butler seemed minacious, he was not the culprit.*

**minaret**

**minatory**

adj  
/ 'minə.tōrē /  
L  
having a menacing quality : expressive of or conveying a threat.  
*In a minatory tone, Mrs. Sampson asked the boys what they planned to do about her broken window.*

**minestrone**

n  
/ .minə'strōnē /  
L > It  
a rich thick vegetable soup with dried beans, macaroni, vermicelli, or similar ingredients sometimes topped with grated cheese.  
*Steve crumbled oyster crackers into his minestrone.*

**miniascape**

n  
/ 'minēə.skāp /  
L > It > L  
a dish garden made with dry or other plant materials that do not require water.  
*A miniascape makes an interesting host or hostess gift.*

**miniature**

adj  
/ 'min(ē)ə.chū(ə)r /  
L > It  
being or represented on a small scale.  
*The miniature productions of architects' dream houses were all made out of children's building blocks.*

**miniaturize**

**minstrel**

**minuscular**

adj  
/ mə'nəskyələ(r) /  
L  
very small in size or importance.  
*A minuscular speck of dirt on Alison's frock was enough to infuriate her.*

**minutia**

**mirage**

**Miranda**

adj  
/ mə'randə /  
American name  
of, relating to, or being the legal rights of an arrested person to have an attorney and to remain silent so as to avoid self-incrimination.  
*At the time of arrest, each person must be advised of his Miranda rights.*

**mirrored**

v  
/ 'mirə(r)d /  
L > F > E + Ecf  
reflected.  
*The moonlight was mirrored in the smooth surface of the pond.*

**misanthropic**

adj  
/ .mis'n'thräpik /  
Gk + Ecf  
marked by a hatred or contempt for humankind.  
*The moral corruption the policeman witnessed caused him to become a misanthropic cynic.*

**miscellanea**

n pl  
/ .misə'lānēə /  
L  
a collection of assorted objects.  
*Among the miscellanea on Ernie's bookshelf were five textbooks on world history and a complete set of the works of Shakespeare.*

**miscellaneous**

**miscellany**

**mischief**

n  
/ 'mis(h)chəf /  
F > E  
action or conduct that annoys or irritates without causing or meaning to cause serious harm.  
*Hearing the puppy's thumping and barking, Erica went to investigate the mischief he was creating.*

**mischievous**

**miscible**

adj  
/ 'misəbəl /  
L  
[Note: Pronouncer should provide definition of this word.] capable of being mixed in any ratio without separation of two phases—used especially of fluids.  
*Oil and kerosene are miscible, but carbon tetrachloride and water are not.*

**miscreant**

n  
/ 'miskrənt /  
L > F > E  
one who behaves criminally or viciously.  
*Some miscreant dumped a bucket of paint in Herb's convertible.*

**misdemeanor**

n  
/ .misdə'mēnə(r) /  
E + L > F > E  
a crime less than a felony.  
*The trespasser was arrested and charged with a misdemeanor.*

**misericordia**

**misfeasance**

**misogynistic**

adj  
/ mə.səjə'nistik /  
Gk

relating to or given to a hatred of women.

*The soprano complained that only a critic with misogynistic cruelty could have written the review.*

**misogyny**

**misonicism**

n  
/ .misə'nē.izəm /  
Gk + Gk

a hatred or intolerance of something new or changed.

*Because of his mom's misonicism, Brian still does not have a computer in his home.*

**misopedist**

n  
/ .misə'pēdəst /  
L + Ecf

one who hates children.  
*W. C. Fields was a famed misopedist.*

**misprision**

n  
/ mə'sprizhən /  
L > F > E

the active or passive concealment of treason or felony from the prosecuting authorities by one not guilty of those crimes.

*Congressman Walters was charged with misprision of felony in the election fraud.*

**misshapen**

adj  
/ mis(h)shāpən /  
E

having an ugly or deformed shape.  
*The misshapen pumpkin made a fierce-looking jack-o'-lantern.*

**missionary**

**mistassini**

n  
/ .mistə'sēnē /  
Canadian geog name

a dwarf primrose of northern and alpine America.  
*Ava saw a mistassini growing in a rock crevice.*

**mistletoe**

n  
/ 'misəl.tō /  
E

any of various American plants of the genus Phoradendron that grow on deciduous trees.

*Lance earned extra Christmas money selling mistletoe at the mall.*

**mitigate**

v  
/ 'midə.gāt /  
L

make less severe, cruel, intense, painful.

*The general interceded to mitigate the soldier's punishment.*

**mitrailleuse**

**mixology**

**mneme**

**mnemonic**

**mnestic**

adj  
/ 'nestik /  
Gk  
of or relating to memory or the persistent effect of past experience of the individual.  
*Granny spends much of her time reminiscing and performing other mnestic activities.*

**modicum**

n  
/ 'mädəkəm /  
L > F  
a small portion : a limited quantity or amount.  
*Bernie displayed not even a modicum of modesty as he bragged about his hole in one.*

**modiste**

**mohair**

n  
/ 'mō.ha(a)(ə)r /  
Ar > It > E  
any of various fabrics or yarns made wholly or in part of the hair of the Angora goat.  
*For her birthday Linda got a matching scarf and sweater, both made of mohair.*

**moiety**

n  
/ 'mōiədē /  
L > F > E  
a share paid by the government to an informer out of duties and penalties collected because of the individual's help.  
*The whistleblower received a moiety of the large fine imposed upon his employer for supplying faulty engine parts to the military.*

**molasses**

n  
/ mə'lasəz /  
L > Pg  
the thick dark to light brown syrup that is separated from raw sugar in sugar manufacture.  
*Mollie always adds molasses to beans before baking them.*

**molecule**

**molecules**

**molinary**

adj  
/ 'mälə.nerē /  
L  
of or relating to a mill or the process of grinding.  
*Elsworth's firm specializes in the manufacture of molinary equipment.*

**mollify**

**monadnock**

n  
/ mə'nad.näk /  
New Hampshire geog name  
a hill or mountain of resistant rock surmounting an eroded plain.  
*The familiar shape of the monadnock was a landmark for travelers.*

**monarch**

**monastery**

n  
/ 'mä'nə.sterē /  
G > L > E  
a house of religious retirement or of seclusion from the world for persons under religious vows.  
*Last fall Stan attended a retreat at a monastery near Bardstown, Kentucky.*

**monetary**

adj  
/ 'mä'nə.terē /  
L  
of or relating to money or to the instrumentalities and organizations by which money is supplied to the economy.  
*So many Americans are active investors that even a slight change in interest rates can have serious monetary repercussions.*

**mongoose**

n  
/ 'mä'ŋ.güs /  
Dravidian? > Prakrit > Hindi  
an agile keen-sighted grizzled brown and black mammal of India that is about the size of a ferret and feeds on snakes and rodents.  
*The mongoose is an active, bold predator.*

**mongrel**

n  
/ 'mä'ŋ.grəl /  
E  
an animal or plant resulting from the interbreeding of two or more breeds or strains.  
*Jeff's dog is a friendly mongrel named Mutt.*

**monocle**

n  
/ 'mä'nəkəl /  
L  
[has homonyms: monacal, monachal] an eyeglass for one eye.  
*The villain wore a tuxedo, a top hat, and a monocle.*

**monocoque**

**monolith**

n  
/ 'mä'n.lith /  
Gk  
something resembling a single great stone.  
*Sir Larry is considered a pillar of strength by his friends and a hulking obstinate monolith by his enemies.*

**monomachy**

**monomaniacal**

adj  
/ .mä'nə'mə'nīəkəl /  
Gk + Gk + Ecf  
relating to, characterized by, or affected with such concentration on a single object or idea as to suggest mental derangement.  
*Stuart's obsession with racing cars seems almost monomaniacal to his friends.*

**mononucleosis**

n  
/ .mä'nō.n(y)ük'lē'ōsəs /  
Gk + L  
an acute infectious disease associated with Epstein-Barr virus and characterized by fever, swelling of the lymph nodes, and an increase in the number of lymphocytes in the blood.  
*Morgan had to spend several weeks in bed after contracting mononucleosis.*

**monopoly**

**monotonous**

adj  
/ mə'nät'nəs /  
Gk  
having no change or variety : wearisomely uniform.  
*The lecturer's monotonous tone put half the audience to sleep.*

**monotony**

**monsoon**

n  
/ män'sün /  
Ar > Pg > D  
a periodic wind especially in the Indian Ocean and in southern Asia.  
*The monsoon brought thunderstorms that blanketed the city with a dust cloud and then flooding rains.*

**monstrosity**

n  
/ mänz'träsədē /  
L  
an object of terrifying size or force or complexity.  
*The atom bomb is the greatest monstrosity of the 20th century.*

**monstrous**

adj  
/ 'mä'nztrəs /  
L > F > E  
having extraordinary and often overwhelming size : unusually and unpleasantly huge.  
*The tourists in South America were terrified and sickened by the monstrous flying cockroach.*

**moppet**

**moraine**

n  
/ mə'rān /  
F  
an accumulation of earth and stones carried and finally deposited by a glacier.  
*A push moraine is carried ahead of an advancing glacier, whereas a lateral moraine is deposited at the side of a glacier as it moves.*

**morass**

**moratorium**

n  
/ .mə'rə'tōrēəm /  
L  
a suspension of activity : a temporary ban on the use or production of something.  
*Environmentalists demanded a moratorium on the mining operation until its potential effects on the ecosystem could be evaluated.*



**morceau**

n  
/ mɔr'sɔ /  
F

[Note: Could be confused with more so. Also, plural of word can be similarly pronounced.] a short literary or musical piece.

*Natasha entertained the partygoers with a lively morceau on the violin.*

**mordacious**

**mores**

n pl  
/ 'mɔ(,)rɔz /  
L

[has homonym: morays] the fixed customs or folkways of a particular group which are morally binding upon all members of the group and necessary to its welfare and preservation.

*Some religious groups have developed a society of their own with distinct and strict mores.*

**moribund**

adj  
/ 'mɔrə(,)bænd /  
L

being in a state of suspended activity or arrested growth : dormant.

*After being more or less moribund for years, interest in spirituality has revived.*

**mormorando**

adj  
/ .mɔ(r)mə'rɔn(,)dɔ /  
L > It

in a murmuring manner—used as a direction in music.

*At first Ralph thought his CD player was broken, but then he realized he was listening to a mormorando passage.*

**morose**

adj  
/ mə'rɔs /  
L

marked by or expressive of gloom.  
*The basketball team was morose after losing in the state finals.*

**Morpheus**

n  
/ 'mɔrfēəs /  
Gk

something that induces or prolongs sleep.

*Tim cannot recall exactly what Morpheus caused Rip van Winkle to sleep for 20 years.*

**mortar**

n  
/ 'mɔrdər /  
L > F > E

something that binds or holds together.

*Sam watched as the bricklayer expertly set the bricks into the hardening mortar.*

**mortarboard**

n  
/ 'mɔrdər,bɔ(ə)rd /  
L > F > E + E

an academic cap consisting of a closely fitting headpiece with a broad flat projecting square top.

*Lamont adjusted his mortarboard as he joined the procession to begin the commencement program.*

**mortgage**

n  
/ 'mɔrgij /  
L > F > E

a binding obligation.

*Sarah found a signed copy of the mortgage in Richard's desk.*

**mosaic**

**mosaicist**

n  
/ mɔ'zæəsɪst /  
L > It > F > E

a designer who creates surface decoration by inlaying small pieces of variously colored material.

*An expert mosaicist decorated the altar of the new church.*

**mosquito**

n  
/ mə'skɛd(,)ɔ /  
L > Sp

any of numerous two-winged flies that have a rather narrow abdomen and usually a long slender rigid proboscis with which they puncture the skin of animals to suck the blood.

*Dr. Walter Reed proved that the yellow fever virus is carried by the mosquito.*

**mosquitoey**

**mostaccioli**

n  
/ .mɔstət'chɔlē /  
It

a pasta in the form of a short tube with oblique ends.

*It was the usual banquet fare: mostaccioli and roast beef.*

**motley**

adj  
/ 'mətlē /  
E

composed of a haphazard and incongruous mixture of heterogeneous elements.

*Each guest drew a gift from the motley assortment in the grab bag.*

**moulage**

n  
/ mü'ləzh /  
F

an impression (as of a tire mark or tooth print) made for use as evidence in a criminal investigation.

*At the scene of the crime, detectives were able to make a moulage of the tire marks left by the criminal's car.*

**mountain**

n  
/ 'maʊntɪn /  
L > F

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a vast number or quantity : pile, slew.  
*Mrs. Johnson assigned her students a mountain of homework that was due the day after the holiday break.*

**mountebank**

n  
/ 'maʊntəbɑŋk /

It  
an entertainer (as a juggler or magician) employed by a quack to attract a crowd.

*The charlatan used a mountebank to entice crowds into the tent.*

**mourn**

**moussaka**

n  
/ mü'säkə /

Turkish > Gk  
a dish of ground meat (as lamb) and sliced eggplant or potatoes often topped with a seasoned sauce.  
*Dimitrio's restaurant serves the best moussaka in the area.*

**mousse**

n  
/ 'müs /  
L > F

[has homonym: moose] a frothy dessert; especially : a dessert of sweetened and flavored whipped cream, or thin cream and gelatin, frozen without stirring.  
*Michael ordered chocolate hazelnut mousse for dessert, but Vera ordered just coffee.*

**mousseline**

**mozambique**

**mozzarella**

n  
/ .mätsə'relə /

It  
a moist white rubbery unsalted cheese.  
*Mozzarella is used in many Italian foods.*

**mucedine**

**mucilage**

**mucilaginous**

adj  
/ .myüsə'lajənəs /

L  
relating to or resembling a liquid adhesive of low bonding strength.  
*Billy's mother told him to wash the mucilaginous remains of his peanut butter and jelly sandwich from his face and hands.*

**mufti**

n  
/ 'mäftē /

Ar  
civilian dress when worn by one in military service.  
*The general ambled down the street unrecognized in mufti.*

**mugient**

adj  
/ 'myüjēənt /

L  
making a lowing sound : bellowing.  
*In mid-April the mugient herds of cattle are turned out to pasture.*

**mugwump**

n  
/ 'mägwəmp /

Natick  
one who is undecided or neutral (as in politics) often as a result of an inability to make up one's mind.  
*William is too much a mugwump to ever realize his ambition to hold elective office.*

**mugwumpery**

**mulberry**

n  
/ 'mə.lberē /  
Gk > L > F > E

a tree or shrub that bears a fruit resembling a raspberry.  
*The Nelsons planted a mulberry in their backyard.*

**mulch**

**mullion**

**multifarious**

adj  
/ .mältə'fa(a)rēəs /

L  
having multiplicity : having great diversity or variety.  
*The multifarious activities at the Hands-On Museum make it a place that everyone can enjoy.*

**multiplication**

n  
/ .mältəplə'kāshən /

L  
a mathematical operation commonly indicated by ab that repeats b as many times as there are units in a.  
*The fourth grade class was learning the process of multiplication of whole numbers.*

**multipotent**

**multitudinous**

adj  
/ .mältə'tüdənəs /

L + Ecf  
existing in great numbers.  
*Multitudinous varieties of wildflowers grow on Sand Mountain.*

**mummery**

n  
/ 'məməre /

F  
a performance given by actors in a pantomime.  
*Costumed actors performed a comic mummery in the school auditorium.*

**municipally**

**munificence**

n  
/ myü'nifəsən(t)s /

L  
a giving or bestowing with extraordinary liberality : lavish generosity.  
*Hazel's uncle, known widely for his munificence, hosted an elaborate dinner for her bat mitzvah.*

**murenger**

n  
/ 'myúrənjə(r) /  
L > F > E  
one in charge of the wall of a town and its repairs.  
*When city walls served as fortresses, the murenger was responsible for the security of the citizens.*

**murrain**

**musciform**

adj  
/ 'məsə.fɔrm /  
L  
resembling moss.  
*Rosa's new hat has a musciform texture.*

**muscle**

**musculature**

n  
/ 'məskyələ.chú(ə)r /  
L  
the muscles of an animal that are related to each other and function together.  
*Dissection of the frog revealed its underlying musculature.*

**muskmelon**

n  
/ 'məsk.melən /  
Skt > Per > Gk > L > F > E + Gk > L  
the usually sweet odorous edible melon that is the fruit of a trailing or climbing Asiatic herbaceous vine.  
*The muskmelon was one of the foods that Columbus introduced to the New World.*

**muslin**

n  
/ 'məzlən /  
Iraq geog name > Ar > It > F  
[has near homonym: Muslim] a plainwoven cotton fabric that is used bleached or unbleached for sheeting, embroidery, or other purposes.  
*The simple look of tab curtains made of unbleached muslin is perfect for Barbara's den.*

**mussitation**

n  
/ .məsə'tāshən /  
L  
movement of the lips as if in speech but without accompanying sound.  
*The cameras picked up the speller's mussitation as she pondered the word.*

**mutinous**

**muumuu**

n  
/ 'mü.mü /  
Hawaiian  
a loose dress with gay colors and patterns, worn chiefly in Hawaii.  
*Pandora bought a red flowered muumuu during her trip to Maui.*

**myasthenia**

n  
/ .mīəs'thēnēə /  
Gk > L  
muscular debility.  
*Keith was informed that his myasthenia was brought on by overexertion and would disappear with rest.*

**mycophagous**

adj  
/ mī'käfəgəs /  
Gk  
feeding on fungi.  
*Because they are mycophagous, ladybugs are good for gardens.*

**myelopathy**

n  
/ .mīə'läpəthē /  
Gk  
a disease or disorder of the spinal cord or the bone marrow.  
*After the accident Ursula's dog had to be treated for myelopathy.*

**myopia**

n  
/ mī'öpēə /  
Gk  
nearsightedness.  
*Kyle's myopia was first apparent when he had trouble reading what was on the chalkboard at school.*

**myrmecologist**

n  
/ .mərmə'käləjəst /  
Gk  
a specialist in the scientific study of ants.  
*The myrmecologist told the reporter that his interest in ants began when he had been given an ant farm at the age of seven.*

**myrmidon**

n  
/ 'mərmədän /  
Gk  
a follower or subordinate who unquestioningly or pitilessly executes orders : hireling.  
*Although the mayor always speaks civilly to everyone, his myrmidon can be ruthless in criticizing opponents.*

**myrrh**

n  
/ 'mər /  
Semitic > Gk > L > E  
a yellow to reddish brown aromatic bitter gum resin that is obtained from various trees of East Africa and Arabia.  
*In medieval Europe myrrh was rare and precious.*

**mysticity**

**mythologem**

**mythomania**

**nabob**

n  
/ 'nä.bäb /  
Ar > Hindi  
man of great wealth.  
*The Hollywood nabob rarely traveled without his personal chef, secretary, and masseur.*

**nacelle**

n  
/ nə'sel /  
L > F  
an enclosed shelter on an aircraft for an engine or sometimes for the crew.  
*The cramped, stifling nacelle gave Rico an attack of claustrophobia.*

**nadir**

n  
/ 'nādə(r) /  
Ar > F > E  
the point of the celestial sphere that is directly opposite the zenith and vertically downward from the observer.  
*There was no way for Amos to see the Moon, since it was at the nadir.*

**naiad**

n  
/ 'nāəd /  
Gk  
one of the nymphs believed by the ancient Greeks and Romans to live in and give life to lakes, rivers, springs, and fountains.  
*Glenda came upon a statue of a naiad by the lake.*

**naiant**

**nainsook**

n  
/ 'nān.sūk /  
Skt > Hindi  
a soft lightweight cotton fabric in plain weave and various finishes that is used especially for clothing and curtains.  
*Janet's new summer blouse is made of nainsook.*

**naology**

n  
/ nā'äləjē /  
Gk  
a study of sacred edifices.  
*With her background in architecture and naology, Shauna is just the right person to help restore the old cathedral.*

**napalm**

v  
/ 'nā.pām /  
Iranian > Gk > L + L > F  
attack with bombs made with a highly flammable jellied fuel composed of gasoline and a mixture of aluminum soaps as a thickener.  
*The decision to napalm enemy territory had more ramifications than the intended destruction of vegetation.*

**narcissus**

n  
/ nār'sisəs /  
Gk > L  
any plant of the genus Narcissus of which the flowers have a short corona and are usually borne separately.  
*The common daffodil is a type of narcissus.*

**narcoleptic**

adj  
/ .närkə'leptik /  
Gk  
of, relating to, or affected with a transient compulsive tendency to attacks of deep sleep usually of unknown causes.  
*Steve becomes narcoleptic whenever he is under great stress.*

**narcoticism**

n  
/ nār'käd.ə.sizəm /  
Gk  
addiction to habit-forming drugs.  
*The police sergeant lectured Zakia's class about the dangers of narcoticism.*

**narrate**

v  
/ 'nɑ.rāt /  
L  
tell or recite the happenings of (a story).  
*Jacob volunteered to narrate the slide show.*

**narrative**

adj  
/ 'nɑrədɪv /  
L  
having the form of a story.  
*A ballad is a poem that has several distinct characteristics, including a strong narrative element.*

**narthex**

n  
/ 'när.theks /  
Semitic? > Gk  
a vestibule leading to the nave of a church.  
*The bridal party lined up in the narthex and waited for the cue to proceed down the church's center aisle.*

**nasal**

adj  
/ 'nāzəl /  
L  
of or relating to the nose.  
*Juno's nasal inflammation caused considerable discomfort and made it hard for her to breathe.*

**nascent**

adj  
/ 'nās'nt /  
L  
undergoing the process of being born : beginning to exist.  
*The Boston Tea Party revealed nascent revolutionary tendencies among the American colonists.*

**nastaliq**

**nasturtium**

n  
/ nə'stərshəm /  
L  
any of several herbs having showy variously colored spurred flowers.  
*The nasturtium will add color to a drab landscape design.*

**natal**

**natator**

**natatorium**

n  
/ .nādə'tōrēəm /  
L  
a place for swimming; especially : an indoor swimming pool.  
*William Randolph Hearst built an ostentatious natatorium at his California mansion.*

**naupathia**

n  
/ nò'pathēə /  
Gk  
seasickness.  
*Several spells of naupathia made Joni's cruise an experience she hopes never to repeat.*

**nausea**

n  
/ 'nōshə /  
Gk > L  
a feeling of discomfort in the stomach usually associated with an urge to vomit.  
*A bout of nausea kept Denise from enjoying the ferry ride.*

**nauseate**

**nauseous**

adj  
/ 'nōshəs /  
L  
causing a sensation of discomfort in the stomach and an urge to vomit.  
*The smell emanating from the swamp was nauseous.*

**nautical**

**nautilus**

n  
/ 'nōd'ləs /  
Gk > L  
any of several cephalopod mollusks of the southern Pacific and Indian oceans that produce a spiral chambered shell.  
*Frank keeps a polished shell of a nautilus in his bookcase.*

**nebula**

n  
/ 'nebyələ /  
L  
any of many immense bodies of highly rarified gas or dust in interstellar space.  
*The astronomer identified the Horsehead Nebula on the chart.*

**nebulous**

adj  
/ 'nebyələs /  
L  
vaguely defined, poorly grasped, or dimly realized.  
*Melissa's nebulous fears about the future interfered with her enjoyment of the present.*

**necessary**

**necklace**

**necromancy**

n  
/ 'nekrəmən(t)sē /  
Gk > L > F > E  
the art or practice of magically conjuring up the souls of the dead.  
*Abraham Lincoln was interested in necromancy, and his wife held séances in the White House.*

**nectar**

**nectarine**

n  
/ 'nektərēn /  
Gk > L + Ecf  
a peach that has a smooth-skinned fruit.  
*Jason prefers a nectarine to a common peach.*

**nefarious**

adj  
/ nə'fa(a)rēəs /  
L  
heinously or impiously wicked : detestable.  
*The murderer's crimes were considered so nefarious that he was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.*

**negative**

**neglect**

**negligent**

**negotiable**

adj  
/ nə'gōsh(ē)əbəl /  
L  
that can be converted into cash or the equivalent value.  
*Leah wondered if the old bills she found in the trunk were still negotiable.*

**negotiate**

**negotiator**

**negus**

**neigh**

**nematocyst**

n  
/ nə'mədə'sist /  
Gk + Gk  
one of the minute stinging organs of coelenterates (as corals, sea anemones, and jellyfishes) used in catching prey.  
*Each nematocyst of the jellyfish contains a spiral-coiled thread tipped with a toxin-bearing barb that can be ejected into the skin.*

**nemesis**

n  
/ 'neməsəs /  
Gk  
a formidable and usually victorious rival or opponent.  
*The Tigers were defeated by the first-rate pitching of their old nemesis.*

**nemoral**

adj  
/ 'nem(ə)rəl /  
L  
of, relating to, or inhabiting a wood or grove.  
*Doris collected a basketful of nemoral mushrooms.*

**nenuphar**

n  
/ 'nenyə'fär /  
Skt > Per > Ar > L  
water lily; especially : Egyptian lotus.  
*The nenuphar is a common motif in Egyptian art.*

**neologism**

n  
/ nə'älə'jizəm /  
Gk > F  
a new word, usage, or expression.  
*Nelson encountered a neologism in almost every paragraph of the computer article.*

**neomenia**

**neon**

adj  
/ 'nē.än /  
Gk

of, relating to, or resembling the reddish glow of neon lamps.  
*Even though Tim was wearing neon swimming trunks, his mom had trouble spotting him on the crowded beach.*

**neophyte**

n  
/ 'nē.ə.fīt /  
Gk

a new convert; especially : a convert to the Christian faith in the early church.  
*In just three years St. Cyprian of Carthage went from being a neophyte to being the bishop of Carthage.*

**neossology**

n  
/ .nē.ä.'sä.lə.jē /  
Gk

the study of young birds.  
*The student of neossology was thrilled to receive a baby parrot for his birthday.*

**nepenthe**

n  
/ nə'pen(t)thē /  
Gk

something capable of causing oblivion of grief and suffering.  
*The old man sought respite and nepenthe from bad memories.*

**nephalism**

n  
/ 'nef.ə.lizəm /  
Gk

total abstinence from alcoholic beverages.  
*In Muslim countries nephalism is a way of life for many people.*

**nephelognosy**

n  
/ .nef.ə.'lägnəsē /  
Gk + Gk

scientific observation of clouds.  
*Satellite photos of cloud formations and movements have been a great aid in the field of nephelognosy.*

**nephelometer**

n  
/ .nef.ə.'lämə.də(r) /  
G + G

an instrument for measuring cloudiness.  
*The nephelometer has been proved useful in detecting and measuring air pollution.*

**nephew**

**nephology**

**nephrectomy**

n  
/ nə'frektə.mē /  
Gk

the surgical removal of a kidney.  
*Barry's kidney was so diseased that his physician recommended a nephrectomy.*

**nepotism**

n  
/ 'nep.ə.tizəm /  
L > It > F

favoritism shown to relatives (as by giving them positions because of their relationship rather than on their merits).  
*Most employees resent nepotism because it reduces motivation for advancement via hard work.*

**nescience**

**nescient**

adj  
/ 'nesh(ē)ənt /  
L

exhibiting or characterized by lack of knowledge or awareness : ignorant.  
*George's nescient response to the question about the plot demonstrated that he had not read the book.*

**nettlesome**

adj  
/ 'ned.ə'səm /  
E + E

causing vexation : irritating.  
*The city's traffic situation was nettlesome to the visitors from the small town.*

**neuralgia**

n  
/ n(y)'ü.'ral.jə /  
Gk

an acute paroxysmal pain radiating along the course of one or more nerves usually without demonstrable changes in the nerve structure.  
*Garret's neuralgia was so painful that he sought relief from a chiropractor.*

**neurasthenic**

adj  
/ .n(y)'ü.ras'thenik /  
Gk

affected with a syndrome characterized by easy fatigability, by worrying and depression, and often by headache and digestive and circulatory problems.  
*The neurasthenic patient complained of being bored, neglected, and depressed.*

**neurokyme**

**neurological**

adj  
/ .n(y)'ü.rə'lä.jəkəl /  
Gk

of or relating to the scientific study of the nervous system.  
*Dr. Will is a specialist in the treatment of neurological disorders.*

**neurotic**

**neuston**

**neutercane**

n  
/ 'n(y)'ü.də(r).kän /  
L + Taino > Sp

a subtropical cyclone that is usually less than 100 miles in diameter and that draws energy from sources common to both the hurricane and the frontal cyclone.  
*The weather bureau is tracking the neutercane to see if it develops into a hurricane.*

**neutral**

**neutralize**

v  
/ 'n(y)ütrə.līz /  
L + Ecf  
make chemically neither acid nor base.  
*Scientists used nitric acid to neutralize the magnesium hydroxide that had formed on the space capsule tape when it came in contact with seawater.*

**newel**

**newspaporial**

**nexus**

n  
/ 'neksəs /  
L  
a connected group or series.  
*A nexus of events led to the overthrow of the government and the exile of the king.*

**nicety**

n  
/ 'nīsədē /  
F > E  
a dainty, delicate, or elegant thing or feature.  
*Dad considered a meal at a posh restaurant to be a nicety of good living.*

**niche**

n  
/ 'nich /  
L > F  
a place suitable for the capabilities or merits of a person.  
*Wendy felt she had found her niche at school in the student government association.*

**nickelodeon**

n  
/ .nikə'lōdēən /  
G? > Sw + F > G  
a theater affording a motion-picture exhibition or a variety show for an admission price of five cents.  
*The silent movies at the nickelodeon were usually enhanced by piano music.*

**nicotinism**

n  
/ 'nikətē.nizəm /  
F name + cff  
the effect of the excessive use of tobacco.  
*Patients who suffer from nicotinism exhibit lung and heart problems.*

**nictitant**

**nidicolous**

adj  
/ nī'dikələs /  
L  
living in a nest; especially : sharing the nest of another kind of animal.  
*Many insects are nidicolous, sharing the nests of birds who sometimes eat their larvae.*

**nidificate**

v  
/ 'nidəfə.kāt /  
L  
build a nest.  
*While recuperating, Jan watched the robin gather bits of string and small twigs to nidificate in the maple tree outside the bedroom window.*

**nidifugous**

adj  
/ nī'difyəgəs /  
L  
leaving the nest soon after hatching.  
*Because they are relatively highly developed when they hatch, ducks and chickens are nidifugous.*

**nidor**

n  
/ 'nī.dō(ə)r /  
L  
[Note: Alternate pronunciation has homonym: niter/nitre.] a strong smell : reek.  
*The nidor of the hot grease warned Della that she should lower the temperature.*

**nidorous**

adj  
/ 'nīdərəs /  
L  
smelling of or like burning or decaying animal matter.  
*The sailors were repulsed by the nidorous bilge water.*

**niece**

**niggardly**

adj  
/ 'nigə(r)dlē /  
Scand > E  
characterized by a reluctance to part with money : tightfisted.  
*The wealthy banker was best known for his niggardly spending habits.*

**nightingale**

n  
/ 'nīt'n.gāl /  
E  
a thrush common in Great Britain that is noted for the sweet song of the male often heard at night during the breeding season.  
*Haley was awakened by a nightingale singing outside her bedroom window.*

**nightmare**

n  
/ 'nīt.ma(a)(ə)r /  
E  
a frightening dream accompanied by anxiety or terror.  
*Cara's nightmare was caused by the ghost stories told around the campfire.*

**nihilism**

n  
/ 'nīə.lizəm /  
L + Ecf  
a viewpoint that all traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that all existence is consequently senseless and useless.  
*The rock star's lyrics were criticized for advocating a bleak nihilism.*

**nimiety**

n  
/ ni'miədē /  
L

excess, redundancy.  
*Usually Caleb's writing is concise, but his most recent essay is a glowing example of nimiety.*

**nimious**

adj  
/ 'nimēəs /  
L

[Note: Could be confused with niveous.] excessive, extravagant.  
*Oscar, who could barely afford to rent a costume for the masked charity ball, found the whole thing oppressively nimious.*

**nineteenth**

**ninetieth**

**nisei**

n  
/ 'nē.sā /  
Jpn

a son or daughter of Japanese immigrant parents who is born and educated in the United States.  
*Tomoko is the only nisei in her family; all her siblings were born in Japan.*

**nitidity**

n  
/ ni'tidədē /  
L + Ecf

the quality or state of being bright, glossy, or lustrous.  
*The moon's nitidity helps owls find their prey.*

**nitrogen**

n  
/ 'nītrəjən /  
Gk

a colorless tasteless odorless element that as a diatomic gas is relatively inert and constitutes 78 percent of the atmosphere by volume and occurs as a constituent of all living tissues.  
*Lightning causes the oxidation of nitrogen to nitric oxide, which is rained out as nitrate.*

**niveau**

n  
/ nē'vō /  
F

[Note: Plural form is pronounced similarly.] a level (as of existence or achievement) especially in a progression.  
*Ben's tennis class is at the intermediate niveau.*

**niveous**

adj  
/ 'nivēəs /  
L

of, relating to, or resembling snow.  
*The niveous landscape looked most inviting to the cross-country skiers.*

**nobiliary**

adj  
/ nō'bilē.ērē /  
L > F > E + Ecf

of or relating to the nobility.  
*By threat of force the king quelled the nobiliary squabbles.*

**nobly**

**nocent**

**nociceptor**

n  
/ 'nōsē.septə(r) /  
L

a part of the body that transmits to the central nervous system injurious or painful stimuli.  
*The spicy salsa activated each nociceptor on Michelle's tongue, bringing her to tears.*

**nocive**

adj  
/ 'nōsiv /  
L

harmful, injurious.  
*The laboratory assistant wore a mask to protect himself from nocive fumes.*

**noctivagant**

adj  
/ nāk'tivəgənt /  
L

going about in the night : night-wandering.  
*The bat, being a noctivagant mammal, has inspired many legends.*

**nocturnal**

adj  
/ nāk'tərnəl /  
L > F

active at night.  
*Some zoos have special habitats for nocturnal animals.*

**nocuous**

**nodule**

**noegenesis**

**noisome**

adj  
/ 'nōisəm /  
E

offensive to the senses : noxious, harmful, unwholesome, destructive.  
*A noisome odor emanated from the plastics factory.*

**nomenclature**

n  
/ 'nōmən.klāchə(r) /  
L

the collective names given to or borne by places in a particular region or area.  
*The nomenclature of Boston streets confused Ling when she first arrived.*

**nominal**

adj  
/ 'nāmənəl /  
L

of, relating to, or being a word that is otherwise characteristically an adjective or adverb but that takes a noun construction in a given context.  
*A good example of a nominal word is good in "the good die young."*



**nominee**

n  
/ .nämə'nē /  
L + Ecf

a person named or proposed for an office, duty, or position.

*The president's nominee for the Supreme Court had to be approved by a Senate committee.*

**nomological**

**nonagenarian**

n  
/ .nänəjə'nerēən /  
L + Ecf

a person who is 90 or more and less than 100 years old.

*Ernestus bragged that he was the only nonagenarian at the rock concert.*

**nonchalance**

n  
/ .nänshə'län(t)s /  
F

a display or air of jaunty unconcern or indifference.

*Sarah reacted with nonchalance when her neighbors complained about her unruly dog.*

**nonchalant**

**nondescript**

adj  
/ .näändə'skript /  
L

lacking distinguishing characteristics.

*Because he was utterly nondescript, Virgil was the perfect infiltrator.*

**nonmetal**

**nonpareil**

adj  
/ .nänpə'rel /  
L > F

having no equal : peerless.

*Tom's lack of common sense overshadowed his nonpareil intellect.*

**nonplus**

v  
/ nän'pləs /  
L

cause to be at a loss as to what to say, think, or do.

*Vince's aggressive interviewing technique tends to nonplus inexperienced candidates.*

**nonsense**

**nonuple**

adj  
/ 'nä.n(y)üpəl /  
L > F

consisting of nine : being nine times as great or as many.

*There was a nonuple increase in the rate of traffic citations after the new regulations went into effect.*

**noontide**

**normocyte**

**nosocomial**

adj  
/ .näəsə'kōmēəl /  
L

originating or taking place in a hospital.

*Since implementing its new disinfection protocol, the hospital has seen a 40 percent drop in nosocomial infections.*

**nostalgia**

n  
/ nə'stalj(ē)a /  
Gk > L

homesickness.

*Theo was overcome with nostalgia at the sight of a McDonald's in Istanbul.*

**nostril**

n  
/ 'nästrəl /  
E

either of the outer openings of the nose.

*In some cultures, a pierced nostril adorned with a ring is considered attractive.*

**nostrum**

n  
/ 'nästrəm /  
L

a remedy or medicine of secret composition recommended by its preparer but usually lacking general repute or acceptance.

*Mr. Sherwood insists that his nostrum will cure warts within a week.*

**notabilia**

**notarize**

**notoriety**

n  
/ .nōdə'riədē /  
L

the condition of being an object of wide or general attention, interest, and comment for something reprehensible or scandalous.

*A red convertible enhanced Thurmon's notoriety.*

**nougat**

n  
/ 'nügət /  
L > Prov > F

a confection of nuts or fruit pieces in a sugar paste.

*Lynn's boyfriend gave her a box of chocolates filled with hazelnut nougat.*

**novemdecillion**

**novice**

n  
/ 'nävəs /  
L > F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] one who has entered a religious house for a trial period.

*The film The Nun's Story stars Audrey Hepburn as a young novice who eventually becomes a nurse in Africa.*

**noxious**

adj  
/ 'näkshəs /  
L

harmful or destructive to man or to other organisms.

*Emma is studying the noxious effects of gasoline fumes.*

**noxiously**

**noyade**

**nuance**

n  
/ 'n(y)ü.än(t)s /  
L > F

minute variation : delicate gradation : subtle distinction.

*The music critic took notes on every nuance of the performance.*

**nubbin**

**nubilous**

adj  
/ 'n(y)übələs /  
L

cloudy, foggy, misty.

*Trade wind clouds are constantly piling up in nubilous traffic jams.*

**nuchal**

adj  
/ 'n(y)ükəl /  
Ar > L + Ecf  
of or relating to the nape, the back part of the neck.  
*Midge's new necklace gave her a nuchal rash.*

**nuciform**

adj  
/ 'n(y)üsə.förm /  
L

like a nut in shape.

*Preston gave Anna a box of nuciform chocolate candies.*

**nuclear**

**nugacity**

**nugatory**

adj  
/ 'n(y)ügətörē /  
L

having little or no consequence : worthless.

*The prize Jeff won at the carnival was just a nugatory plastic trinket.*

**nugget**

n  
/ 'nägət /  
unknown  
a lump; especially : a lump of gold.  
*Adrian kept a gold nugget as a good-luck charm.*

**nuisance**

n  
/ 'n(y)üs'n(t)s /  
L > F > Ar > E  
something that is disagreeable or troublesome : annoyance.  
*The barking dogs in Jeff's backyard were a nuisance he could not ignore.*

**nullibicity**

n  
/ .nələ'bisədē /  
L + Ecf  
the quality or state of being nowhere.  
*Natalie accused the state of putting freedom and basic rights into nullibicity.*

**numb**

**numerology**

**numinous**

adj  
/ 'n(y)ümənəs /  
L + Ecf  
dedicated to or hallowed by association with a deity : sacred.  
*A soft light seemed to glow from the numinous vessel on the altar.*

**numismatist**

n  
/ n(y)ü'mizmədəst /  
L  
a specialist in the study of coins : a coin collector.  
*When Emery wanted to know the value of a coin, he showed it to his neighbor, who was a numismatist.*

**nummary**

**numnah**

**nunchaku**

n  
/ nün'chäk(ü) /  
Jpn dialect  
a weapon of Japanese origin made of two hardwood sticks joined at their ends by a short length of rawhide, cord, or chain.

*Eli insists that a nunchaku with a Bruce Lee image would make his martial arts paraphernalia complete.*

**nuncupation**

n  
/ .nəŋkyə'päshən /  
L  
an oral will.  
*While the sailor was ill aboard ship, he made a nuncupation in which he bequeathed his property to his mother.*

**nuncupative**

adj  
/ 'nəŋkyə'pādīv /  
L  
stated verbally : oral—used chiefly of a will.  
*The terms of Grandpa's nuncupative will were not contested by the family.*

**nuptiality**

n  
/ .nəpshē'alədē /  
L  
the marriage rate.  
*Nuptiality usually increases dramatically in June.*

**nurture**

**nurturer**

**nutrient**

**nutrition**

**nutritiously**

adv

/ n(y)ü'trishəslē /

L + Ecf

in a manner that promotes growth and development.

*Judging from the kinds of foods that George likes, it is not going to be easy to get him to eat nutritiously.*

**nyala**

n

/ 'nyälə /

Tsonga&Venda

an antelope of southeastern Africa with vertical white stripes on the sides of the body and with shaggy hair along the male underside.

*The nyala thrives in the heaths and forests of the Ethiopian highlands.*

**nyctalopia**

n

/ .niktə'löpēə /

Gk

a defect of vision characterized by reduced visual capacity in faint light or at night.

*Nyctalopia may be corrected by vitamin therapy.*

**nymph**

**nystagmus**

n

/ nə'stagməs /

Gk

a rapid involuntary oscillation of the eyeballs occurring normally with dizziness during and after bodily rotation or abnormally after injuries.

*Bart suffered from nystagmus for several days following the boxing match.*

**oakenshaw**

**oakum**

**oarlock**

**oasis**

n

/ ō'āsəs /

Hamitic? > Gk > L

a small isolated fertile area that is surrounded by general barrenness and typically marked by trees or other greenery and that has a water supply.

*The caravan rested for two days at the oasis.*

**obdurate**

adj

/ 'äbd(y)ərət /

L

resistant to persuasion or softening influences : unyielding.

*Fritz is maintaining an obdurate opposition to the new highway bypass.*

**obedient**

adj

/ ō'bēdēənt /

L > F > E

submissive to the restraint, control, or command of authority.

*The toddler was not very obedient and even seemed to enjoy being defiant.*

**obeisance**

n

/ ō'bās'ən(t)s /

L > F > E

an attitude of respect : deference, homage.

*Josh demonstrated his obeisance for the famous professor by writing down her every word.*

**obeisant**

adj

/ ō'bās'ənt /

F

servile, obsequious.

*By the third course, the waiter's obeisant behavior was starting to get on Tara's nerves.*

**obelisk**

n

/ 'äbəlisk /

Gk

an upright four-sided monolithic pillar that tapers as it rises and terminates in a pyramid.

*The Washington Monument is a world-famous obelisk.*

**obese**

**obesity**

**obfuscate**

**obfuscatory**

adj

/ äb'fəskə.tōrē /

L

tending to make difficult of comprehension or interpretation.

*Oleg found the obfuscatory language in his apartment lease infuriating.*

**obituary**

**objective**

n

/ əb'jektiv /

L

a lens or system of lenses that forms an image of the object in the focal plane of an eyepiece (as in a telescope).

*The light-gathering power of a telescope is a function of the diameter of its objective.*

**objurgation**

**objurgatory**

adj

/ əb'jərgə.tōrē /

L

expressing sharp reprimand.

*The mayor sent an objurgatory letter to the negligent department head.*

**obligatory**

**oblique**

adj  
/ ə'blɪk /  
L

neither perpendicular nor parallel : having a slanting direction or position.

*All triangles have at least one oblique side.*

**obliquity**

n  
/ ə'blikwədē /  
E > F > L + Ecf

the angle between the planes of Earth's equator and orbit.

*Seasonal changes in temperature are due to the obliquity of Earth's orbital path.*

**obliterative**

**oblivion**

**obloquy**

n  
/ 'äbləkwe /  
L

a strongly and often intemperately condemnatory utterance.

*Mr. Willett recited the names of the pranksters with uncharacteristic obloquy.*

**obmutescence**

n  
/ 'äbmyə'tes'n(t)s /  
L

a becoming or keeping silent.

*To ensure the press's obmutescence regarding the case, the judge issued a gag order.*

**obnounce**

**obreptitious**

adj  
/ 'ä.brep'tishəs /  
L

done or obtained by trickery or by concealing the truth.

*The undercover agent passed the obreptitious information to his superiors.*

**obrogate**

**obsecration**

n  
/ 'äbsə'krāshən /  
L

a supplicatory prayer mentioning in its appeal things or events held to be sacred.

*"Through thy victory over death, O Lord, deliver us" is an obsecration.*

**obsequious**

adj  
/ əb'sɛkwēəs /  
L > E

meanly or servilely attentive.

*Marshall tends to be obsequious toward Mrs. Kirby.*

**obsessive**

**obsolescence**

**obsolete**

**obstacle**

n  
/ 'äbz(,)tikəl /  
L

something that hinders progress : hindrance.

*Carrie believes there is no obstacle she cannot overcome in her quest to become an Olympian.*

**obstetrician**

n  
/ 'äbz.te'trishən /  
L

a physician or veterinarian specializing in birth and its antecedents and sequels.

*The obstetrician often relied more on instincts and old-fashioned psychology than he did on his medical expertise.*

**obstetrics**

**obstinate**

adj  
/ 'äbztənət /  
L

pertinaciously adhering to an opinion, purpose, or course.

*Franklin has missed at least two promotions because he is so obstinate about doing things his own way.*

**obstreperous**

adj  
/ əbz'trep(ə)rəs /  
L

stubbornly defiant : resisting control or restraint often with a show of noisy disorder.

*The noisy diner was asked to leave but became obstreperous and had to be escorted out of the restaurant.*

**obtenebrate**

v  
/ 'äb'tenə.brät /  
L

darken by or as if by shadowing.

*As the storm approaches, dark clouds obtenebrate the valley.*

**obtrusive**

**obtundent**

adj  
/ 'äb'təndənt /  
L

blunting irritation or lessening pain.

*Aspirin is used for its obtundent as well as its antipyretic qualities.*

**obviate**

**ocarina**

n  
/ 'äkə'rēnə /  
L > It

a simple wind instrument or toy of the flute class having a mouthpiece and fingerholes.

*Professor Miller unearthed a four-hole ocarina used by the ancient Mayas.*

**occasion**

**occasionally**

adv  
/ ə'kāzhən'lē /  
L

now and then : here and there.

*The Spelling Bee replied, "Years ago I was just an ordinary bee minding my own business, smelling flowers all day, and occasionally picking up part-time work in people's bonnets."*

**occipital**

adj  
/ äk'sipəd'1 /

L  
of or relating to the back part of the head of a vertebrate or an insect.  
*In the accident Mr. Stein's occipital bone was fractured.*

**occision**

n  
/ äk'sizhən /

L  
an act or instance of slaughtering.  
*Ecologists are protesting the wholesale occision of sea turtles within national boundaries.*

**occlude**

**occlusion**

n  
/ ə'klüzhən /

L  
the front formed by a cold front overtaking a warm front and lifting the warm air above Earth's surface.  
*As the advancing cold air met the warm front, a cold occlusion developed that caused the temperature to drop.*

**occult**

**occultation**

n  
/ ä(,)kəl'tāshən /

L > E  
the shutting off of the light of a celestial body by the intervention of some other celestial body.  
*A solar eclipse is the occultation of the Sun by the Moon.*

**occurrence**

**occurring**

**ocellus**

n  
/ ō'seləs /

L  
one of usually three simple eyes in an insect located in a triangle between the compound eyes.  
*A single ocellus can do no more than detect light, but more than one grouped together can produce an image of the surrounding area.*

**ocelot**

n  
/ ō'səlät /  
Nahuatl > F

a medium-sized American wildcat ranging from Texas to Patagonia and having a tawny yellow or grayish coat that is dotted and striped with black.  
*The ocelot appears in Aztec stone carvings.*

**ochlophobia**

n  
/ äklə'fōbēə /

Gk  
morbid fear of crowds.  
*Alice never attended rock concerts because of her ochlophobia.*

**ochlophobist**

**octane**

**octavo**

**octogenarian**

**octopus**

**oculauditory**

**oculogyric**

adj  
/ äkyəlō'jirik /  
L + Gk > L

relating to or involving circular movements of the eyeballs.  
*The silent movie comedian specialized in oculogyric close-ups.*

**oddment**

**odious**

**odium**

**odograph**

n  
/ ōdə'graf /

Gk  
an instrument for automatically plotting the course and distance traveled by a vehicle.  
*Now that Carlos has a car equipped with a Global Positioning System receiver, an odograph is the logical next step.*

**odontoloxia**

n  
/ ō.däntə'läksēə /

Gk  
irregularity of the teeth.  
*Odontoloxia can usually be corrected with braces.*

**odyssey**

n  
/ 'ädəsē /

Gk  
a long wandering or series of adventurous journeys.  
*When he talks about his odyssey, André means the summer he spent working his way across Europe.*

**oeuvre**

n  
/ 'äv(r) /

L > F  
a substantial body of work constituting the lifework of a writer, an artist, or a composer.  
*The poet won the award not for any particular work, but for his oeuvre.*

**officiousness**

**ogle**

**ogre**

n  
/ 'ögə(r) /  
L > F

a hideous giant represented in fairy tales and folklore as feeding on human beings : monster.  
*Jason wrote a tale about an ogre who lived under a bridge and feasted on every tenth person who crossed.*

**ohm**

n  
/ 'ōm /

G name  
[has homonyms: aum, om] the practical meter-kilogram-second unit of electric resistance that is equal to the resistance of a circuit in which a potential difference of 1 volt produces a current of 1 ampere.  
*Michael was confused by the Greek symbol for omega in his textbook until he realized that it was the abbreviation for an ohm.*

**oilcloth**

n  
/ 'oɪl.klɒθ /  
Gk > L > F > E + E  
cotton cloth coated with a dull or glossy finish made of oil, clay, and colored pigment to make the cloth waterproof.  
*A kitchen stove, a table covered with oilcloth and two chairs could be seen from the doorway.*

**ointment**

**okapi**

n  
/ ɔ'kæpi /  
African name  
an African animal that is related to the giraffe but has a relatively short neck and solid reddish coat with black and cream rings on its legs.  
*In Zaire the meat of the okapi is a favorite food of the Pygmies.*

**oleaginous**

adj  
/ ɔ'leɪ'æjənəs /  
Gk > L > F  
characterized by smooth courteousness or sickly sentimentality.  
*Grandpa was too smart to be taken in by oleaginous salesmen.*

**oleander**

n  
/ 'ɔ'leɪ.ændə(r) /  
L  
an ornamental evergreen shrub that has narrow leaves and clusters of fragrant white to red flowers.  
*The sweet aroma of the oleander wafted through the window.*

**oleiculture**

**olericulture**

n  
/ 'ælərə.kəlchə(r) /  
L + Ecf + L  
a branch of horticulture that deals with the production, storage, processing, and marketing of vegetables.  
*As a college subject, olericulture is generally divided into market gardening and truck farming.*

**olfactory**

adj  
/ ɔ'fakt(ə)rē /  
L  
of, relating to, or connected with the sense of smell.  
*Humans have relatively weak olfactory abilities compared to many other animals.*

**oligarchic**

adj  
/ ɔ'lə'gɑrkɪk /  
Gk  
of, relating to, characteristic of, or supporting a group or organization that is controlled by a privileged few.  
*A society dominated by large-scale oligarchic organizations eventually develops an oligarchic political regime.*

**oligarchy**

n  
/ ɔ'lə.gɑrkē /  
Gk + Gk  
government by the few.  
*Over the years, the tiny state's government eroded from a democracy to an oligarchy.*

**oligophrenia**

n  
/ ɔ'ləgə'frēnēə /  
Gk  
mental deficiency.  
*Although afflicted with oligophrenia, Cynthia was capable of taking care of herself in her home.*

**ombrometer**

n  
/ ɔm'bræmədə(r) /  
Gk + Gk  
an instrument for measuring the quantity of precipitation that falls at a given place and time.  
*Precipitation in the area was studied by collecting data from radar scans and an ombrometer.*

**ombrophilous**

adj  
/ ɔm'brəfələs /  
Gk  
capable of withstanding or thriving in the presence of much rain.  
*After three days of rain, Kathy hoped that her garden plants were ombrophilous.*

**ombrophobous**

adj  
/ ɔm'brəfəbəs /  
Gk  
incapable of withstanding long-continued rain.  
*Ombrophobous plants would perish in a Seattle garden.*

**ombudsman**

n  
/ 'ɔm.bʊdzmən /  
Sw  
[Note: Plural form is pronounced identically.] one that investigates complaints (as from students or customers), reports findings, and helps to achieve equitable settlements.  
*The college hired a special ombudsman to investigate widespread charges of unfair grading practices.*

**omega**

**ominous**

adj  
/ 'ɔmənəs /  
L  
indicative of future misfortune or calamity : causing anxiety and fear.  
*For an instant there was an ominous stillness, quieter and more silent than ever before, as if even the air was holding its breath.*

**omissible**

**omission**

n  
/ ɔ'mɪʃən /  
L  
the act of failing to insert, include, or name.  
*Katie refused to believe that Joe's omission of her name on the guest list was accidental.*

**omitted**

v  
/ ɔ̄'midəd /  
L

left out.  
*Harry Nebuchadnezzar Schwartz usually omitted his middle name when he filled out forms.*

**omnibus**

adj  
/ 'äm'nə'bəs /  
L

of, relating to, or providing for many things or classes at once : containing or including many items.  
*Ursula purchased an omnibus edition of Shakespeare's works, which was bound in leather.*

**omnigenous**

**omnilegent**

adj  
/ äm'nɪləjənt /  
L

reading or having read everything : characterized by encyclopedic reading.  
*The omnilegent student was a valued member of the academic team.*

**omnipotence**

n  
/ äm'nɪpədən(t)s /  
L

almighty or unlimited power.  
*With an attitude of omnipotence, the government presumed that it could take any land it wanted.*

**omnipotent**

**omniscience**

**omniscient**

adj  
/ äm'nɪʃənt /  
L

having infinite awareness, understanding, and insight : knowing all things.  
*In most monotheistic religions, God is understood to be both omniscient and all-powerful.*

**omnivorous**

**onager**

n  
/ 'änəjə(r) /  
Gk > L > E

an Asian wild ass that usually has a broad dorsal stripe.  
*Although the onager looks like a donkey, it runs as swiftly as a horse.*

**oncology**

n  
/ .äŋ'käləjē /  
Gk

the study of tumors.  
*Ed is focusing on oncology in his medical studies and is particularly interested in pancreatic cancer.*

**oneiric**

**onerous**

adj  
/ 'änərəs /  
L > F > E

that involves, imposes, or constitutes much oppressive or irksome work, effort, difficulty, or responsibility.  
*Ron grudgingly completed the onerous task of cutting and stacking the firewood.*

**oniomania**

**onion**

**onionskin**

**onlooker**

**onomastics**

n pl  
/ .änə'mastɪks /  
Gk

the science or study of the origins and forms of proper names of persons or places.  
*A book on onomastics explained that the name Donald is a Scottish Gaelic word meaning "world ruler."*

**onomatope**

n  
/ 'änəmətōp /  
Gk

a word formed in imitation of natural sounds.  
*Tim found the onomatope kaboom in today's comic strip.*

**onomatopoeia**

**onslaught**

n  
/ 'ön.slət /  
D > E

an especially fierce attack.  
*The Britons were unable to withstand the onslaught of the Saxons.*

**ontogeny**

n  
/ än'täjənē /  
Gk + Gk

the biological development or course of development of an individual organism.  
*The role of brain ontogeny in Alzheimer's disease requires that an autopsy be performed to obtain a definitive diagnosis.*

**onus**

n  
/ 'önəs /  
L

burden.  
*Caring for her six children was an onus for the young widow.*

**onychosis**

n  
/ .änə'kōsəs /  
Gk

[has near homonym: onchoses] a disease of the nails.  
*Even though he had only a mild onychosis, Eric was not allowed to work in the lab.*

**onyx**

adj  
/ 'änɪks /  
Gk

of the color jet black.  
*The teacher told the schoolchildren that space looks onyx from the shuttle.*

**oometer**

n  
/ ˈoʊmədətə(r) /  
Gk + Gk

an instrument for measuring eggs.  
*Mr. Horton uses an oometer to determine which eggs go in which cartons.*

**oophagous**

adj  
/ ˈoʊfəgəs /  
Gk

living or feeding on eggs—used of insects or reptiles.  
*Oophagous insects help control the bug population.*

**opacity**

n  
/ ˈɒpəsədē /  
L > F

the quality or state of a body that renders it impervious to the rays of light : lack of transparency or translucency.  
*The envelope's opacity made it impossible for Garnet to see if there was a check inside.*

**opah**

**opalescent**

**opaque**

adj  
/ ˈɒpāk /  
L

impervious to the rays of visible light : not transparent or translucent.  
*The Dornans hung an opaque window shade in their son's nursery.*

**opeidoscope**

n  
/ ˈɒpīdəskōp /  
Gk

an instrument using light rays, a flexible membrane, and a mirror to exhibit the vibratory motions caused by sounds.  
*Mr. Peterson used a simple opeidoscope to compare the sounds of musical instruments.*

**operettist**

**ophelimity**

**ophicleide**

**ophiolatry**

n  
/ ˌɒfiˈælətrē /  
Gk

the worship of or the attribution of divine or sacred nature to snakes.  
*Before the rise of monotheism, ophiolatry in one form or another was nearly universal among ancient peoples.*

**ophthalmic**

**ophthalmology**

**opiate**

**opine**

v  
/ ˈɒpīn /  
L > F

state as an opinion.  
*There are some things humans think they know, and some that they merely opine.*

**opodeldoc**

**opossum**

n  
/ əˈpäsəm /  
Algonquian

[Note: Could be confused with possum.] an omnivorous largely nocturnal and arboreal mammal that has a prehensile tail and an abdominal pouch to which the young are transferred at birth.  
*Arnold caught the opossum eating the cat's food.*

**oppidan**

adj  
/ ˈɒpədən /  
L

of or relating to a town or to town as opposed to country.  
*The painter sold his oppidan scenes of market day on the sidewalk, earning just enough to live on.*

**opportune**

adj  
/ ˌɒpətə(r)ˈtiːn /  
L > F > E

fit, suitable, or convenient for a given purpose.  
*We could not have chosen a more opportune spot for a picnic than the shore of Lake Walcott.*

**opportuneness**

**opposite**

n  
/ ˈɒpəzət /  
L

the person occupying the position across from one's own in square dancing.  
*Daniel's opposite in the square dance is a better dancer than he.*

**opposition**

n  
/ ˌɒpəˈzɪʃən /  
L

a configuration in which one celestial body is opposite another in the sky.  
*The Moon, when full, is said to be in opposition to the Sun.*

**opprobrious**

adj  
/ əˈprɒbrɪəs /  
L > F > E  
conveying or intending to convey disgrace.  
*The principal denounced the vandals in opprobrious terms.*

**opprobrium**

**oppugn**

v  
/ əˈpyuːn /  
L

challenge the accuracy, propriety, probity, or other quality of.  
*The newspaper had a tendency to oppugn the actions of Congress in its editorials.*



**optimistic**

adj  
/ ˈɒptəˈmɪstɪk /  
L > F + Ecff

anticipating the best.  
*Jackie remained optimistic about winning the national spelling bee.*

**option**

**opulent**

adj  
/ ˈɒpyələnt /  
L

exhibiting or characterized by wealth or affluence.  
*Leather wall covering is one feature of the room's opulent décor.*

**opusculum**

n  
/ ˈɒpəskyələm /  
L

a minor work (as of literature).  
*Although critics regarded Jerome's first novel as an opusculum, it has steadily risen on the best-seller lists.*

**oracle**

**orally**

**orator**

n  
/ ˈɒrədə(r) /  
L

one distinguished for skill and power in public speaking.  
*Daniel Webster was an eminent 19th-century orator.*

**orbital**

n  
/ ˈɒ(r)bədəˈl /  
L

a solution of the Schrödinger wave equation describing a possible mode of motion of a single electron in an atom or molecule.  
*There is theoretically no outer limit to the orbital of an electron.*

**orchard**

n  
/ ˈɔːrçərd /  
L + E

a plantation or enclosure containing fruit trees, nut-bearing trees, or sugar maples.  
*In the orchard were bare fruit trees growing in the winter-browned grass.*

**orchestra**

n  
/ ˈɒ(r)kəstrə /  
Gk

a large group of players of musical instruments including typically strings, woodwinds, brasses, and percussion organized especially for performing one of the larger forms of concert music or for accompanying an oratorio or other dramatic work.  
*The orchestra dazzled the audience with its performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.*

**orchid**

n  
/ ˈɔːrkɪd /  
Gk > L

a distinctive and often brightly colored tropical flower with three petals.  
*Many varieties of the orchid can be found in Hawaii.*

**orchidaceous**

adj  
/ ˈɔːrkəˈdāshəs /  
Gk > L + Ecf  
expressing or characterized by a showy or ostentatious quality.  
*Today's journalists generally eschew orchidaceous writing.*

**ordeal**

**ordination**

n  
/ ˈɒ(r)dɪˈnāshən /  
L  
the act or state of being admitted into the Christian ministry.  
*At her ordination Heather delivered a sermon on the 23rd Psalm.*

**ordnance**

n  
/ ˈɔːrdnən(t)s /  
F

[has homonym and near homonym: ordinance and ordonnance] military supplies including weapons, ammunition, and combat vehicles.  
*As quartermaster, Sergeant Russo was responsible for all of the ordnance on the base.*

**orfeverie**

n  
/ ɔːrfevrəˈrē /  
F

goldsmith's or jeweler's work : jewelry.  
*Dave carefully looked over the orfeverie, trying to decide what his wife would like for her birthday.*

**organ**

**oriel**

n  
/ ˈɔːrēəl /  
L? > F > E

[has homonym and near homonym: oriole and aureole] a large bay window of semihexagonal or semisquare plan projecting from the face of a wall and supported by a corbel or bracket.  
*Megan set her chair in the pleasantly sunny oriel and sat down to read.*

**orifice**

n  
/ ˈɔːrəfəs /  
L > F

the mouth or opening of something.  
*Each sprinkler head had an orifice of one-half inch.*

**oriflamme**

**origami**

n  
/ ɔːrəˈgämə /  
Jpn

the art or process of Japanese paper folding.  
*After only a few hours of studying origami, Veronica was creating paper cranes by the dozen.*

**original**

**oriole**

**orison**

n  
/ 'ɔːrəsən /  
L > F > E  
prayer.  
*The pastor designated time in the service for a silent orison for the hostages.*

**ormolu**

n  
/ 'ɔː(r)mə.lü /  
F  
brass made to imitate gold and used in mounts for furniture and for other decorative purposes.  
*The large mirror's frame was decorated with ormolu.*

**ornithopter**

**orofacial**

adj  
/ ɔːrə'fæʃəl /  
L  
of or relating to the mouth and face.  
*Roseanne underwent plastic surgery to correct orofacial abnormalities.*

**orotund**

adj  
/ 'ɔːrətənd /  
L  
unduly full and strong in delivery or style : pompous, bombastic.  
*The more nervous Jeff gets while giving a speech, the more orotund his delivery becomes.*

**orphan**

n  
/ 'ɔːrfən /  
Gk > L  
a child without parents.  
*Oliver Twist is a famous fictional orphan.*

**orphanage**

**orrery**

n  
/ 'ɔːrərē /  
E name  
an apparatus that illustrates the relative positions and motions of bodies in the solar system.  
*Sheila fashioned a crude orrery out of coat hangers and Styrofoam.*

**orthodox**

adj  
/ 'ɔː(r)θə.däks /  
Gk + Gk  
marked by conformity to doctrines or practices especially in religion that are held as right or true by some authority, standard, or tradition.  
*In orthodox Jewish synagogues, men and women are seated separately.*

**orthoepy**

n  
/ 'ɔː(r)θə.wepē /  
Gk > L  
the study of the pronunciation of a language.  
*Differences between the English spoken in the United States and that spoken in England is a topic of orthoepy familiar to many linguists.*

**orthogonal**

**orthographize**

**oscillating**

**oscillatory**

adj  
/ 'äsələtōrē /  
L  
characterized by the action of swinging or moving backward and forward like a pendulum.  
*The oscillatory motion of the airplane caused Deborah to become airsick.*

**oscilloscope**

n  
/ ə'silə.skōp /  
L + Gk > L  
an instrument in which the variations in a fluctuating electrical quantity appear as a visible wave form on the fluorescent screen of a cathode-ray tube.  
*The technician used an oscilloscope to help him pinpoint the problem.*

**oscitation**

**osculatory**

adj  
/ 'äskyələ.tōrē /  
L  
of, relating to, or characterized by kissing.  
*Julie had no idea Shaun was talking about kissing when he asked if she would help him refine his osculatory skill.*

**osmosis**

n  
/ äz'mōsəs /  
Gk  
the flow or diffusion that takes place through a semipermeable membrane typically separating either a solvent and a solution or a dilute solution and a concentrated solution.  
*An experiment using red dye gave a dramatic demonstration of osmosis.*

**osprey**

n  
/ 'äsprē /  
L > F > E  
a large hawk that is a dark brown color above and mostly pure white below and feeds on fish that it captures by hovering and diving.  
*Because of its preferred diet, the osprey is also called a "fish hawk."*

**ossicle**

n  
/ 'äsəkəl /  
L  
any of certain small bones.  
*The sports doctor told Nate that an ossicle in his left ear had been damaged by the blow from his opponent.*

**ossuary**

**ostensible**

adj  
/ ă'sten(t)səbəl /

L  
professing genuineness and sincerity but often concealing the real aspects behind a plausible facade.

*Mr. Elton's ostensible reason for stopping by was to ask whether Mr. Woodhouse's party could be made up in the evening without him.*

**ostentatiously**

**osteoclasia**

**osteoporosis**

n  
/ ă'stēpərə'rōsəs /  
Gk + L

a condition characterized by decrease in bone mass with decreased density and enlargement of bone spaces producing porosity and fragility.

*Diane's doctor recommended increasing her calcium intake to prevent osteoporosis.*

**ostracism**

**ostracize**

**ostrich**

**otalgia**

n  
/ ɔ'talj(ē)ə /  
Gk

pain in the ear : earache.  
*Otalgia is more common in children than in adults.*

**otherwise**

adv  
/ ă'θə(r),wīz /  
E

in a different way or manner : differently.

*Bret told us to always back up our work; otherwise, we would be sorry.*

**otitis**

n  
/ ɔ'tīdəs /  
Gk > L

inflammation of the ear.  
*Jeff's earache was diagnosed as a symptom of otitis of the middle ear.*

**otolaryngology**

n  
/ ɔ'də.larən'gäləjē /  
G

a branch of medicine that deals with the ear, nose, and throat and their disorders and diseases.  
*When Hazel's sore throat persisted, her family physician recommended an appointment with a specialist in otolaryngology.*

**otomycosis**

n  
/ ɔ'də.mī'kōsəs /  
Gk

disease of the ear produced by the growth of fungi in the external auditory canal.  
*Jane's otomycosis proved resistant to treatment.*

**ottoman**

n  
/ ă'dəmən /  
Turk name > It > F  
an overstuffed footstool.

*Andrew spilled orange juice all over the ottoman.*

**oubliette**

n  
/ ă'blē'et /  
L > F

a dungeon with an opening only at the top and often a concealed pit below the floor.  
*Every medieval French castle Karen visited on the tour had an oubliette.*

**ourselves**

**outlet**

**outrageous**

adj  
/ ăut'rājəs /  
F

extravagant, fantastic.  
*The sophomores created an outrageous float for the homecoming parade.*

**ouzo**

**ovation**

**overbearance**

**overcompensate**

**override**

**overriding**

**overt**

**overweening**

adj  
/ ɔ'və(r)'wēniŋ /  
E

unduly confident.  
*Elaine's overweening pretensions fell flat when it was revealed that she could not even speak French.*

**oviparous**

adj  
/ ɔ'vipərəs /  
L

producing eggs that develop and hatch outside the maternal body.  
*The platypus is an oviparous mammal.*

**ovoid**

**oxbow**

**oxen**

**oxidation**

**oximeter**

**oxlip**

**oxydactyl**

adj

/ ˈɒksəˈdaktl /

Gk + Gk

having slender tapered digits.

*The glove was made for a delicate, oxydactyl hand.*

**oxygen**

n

/ ˈɒksəjən /

Gk > F

a nonmetallic element that is normally a colorless odorless tasteless nonflammable gas, is the most abundant of the elements on Earth, and occurs in air and water, in most common rocks and minerals, and in a great variety of organic compounds.

*Oxygen is the second most abundant element in Earth's atmosphere.*

**oxylophyte**

n

/ ɒkˈsɪləˌfɪt /

Gk

a plant that prefers or is restricted to an acid soil.

*Sphagnum moss, which grows in bogs, is a common oxylophyte.*

**oxymoron**

n

/ ˌɒksəˈmɔːrən /

Gk

a combination for epigrammatic effect of contradictory or incongruous words.

*Dexter feels that the phrase jumbo shrimp is an oxymoron.*

**oyez**

v

/ ɔːˈyā /

F

—used by criers of courts as a command to secure silence and attention before a proclamation.

*“Oyez, oyez, oyez!” yelled the crier as the judge entered the courtroom.*

**oyster**

n

/ ˈɔɪstə(r) /

Gk > L > F > E

a marine bivalve mollusk found along seacoasts or in the mouths of rivers.

*Dad would not eat an oyster.*

**ozonic**

**ozonosphere**

**pabulum**

n

/ ˈpəbʊləm /

L

rudimentary or sentimental writing.

*The famous poet's early works were pure pabulum.*

**pachinko**

n

/ pəˈtʃɪŋ(,)kō /

Jpn

a Japanese gambling device resembling a pinball machine but with automatic payoff as in a slot machine.

*Since the 1950s, playing pachinko has been a favorite pastime among the youth of Japan.*

**pachyderm**

n

/ ˈpækəˌdɜːm /

Gk > F

one of a group of thick-skinned mammals (as an elephant or rhinoceros).

*When the circus came to town, it usually featured at least one pachyderm.*

**pacificator**

**pacifist**

**paddock**

**padishah**

n

/ ˈpædəˌʃɑː /

Per

a powerful important personage : mogul.

*George Lucas is a padishah of motion picture epics.*

**paella**

n

/ pəˈelə /

L > F > Catal

a saffron-flavored stew containing rice, chicken, seafood, and various vegetables.

*Paella can be an expensive dish to prepare because saffron threads are so costly.*

**pageant**

**pageanteer**

n

/ ˌpeɪnti(ə)r /

L + Ecf

an actor or other performer in a spectacle.

*The pageanteer startled Benji by leaping onto the table.*

**pageantry**

n

/ ˈpeɪntri /

L > E

colorful, rich, or splendid display.

*Rachel could not wait to see the pageantry of the medieval festival.*

**pagination**

**pagoda**

n

/ pəˈɡɔːdə /

Skt > Pg

a Far Eastern structure resembling a tower that is often richly decorated and typically has projecting roofs that curve upward between each story and that is erected usually as a temple or memorial.

*The tour guide claimed that 1000 pounds of gold went into the decoration of the ornate pagoda.*

**pajamas**

n

/ pəˈdʒæməz /

Hindi

loose clothing designed for sleeping and relaxation.

*Danielle received some flannel pajamas for Christmas.*

**paladin**

n  
/ 'palədɪn /  
L > It > F  
a champion of a medieval prince : a legendary hero.  
*A medieval prince could be challenged to a duel, but his paladin would do the actual fighting.*

**palatable**

adj  
/ 'palədəbəl /  
Etruscan? > L > E + Ecf  
agreeable to the palate or taste : savory.  
*Mom poured cheese over the spinach to make it more palatable.*

**palatial**

**palatially**

adv  
/ pə'liʃhəl /  
L + Ecff  
in a manner suitable for a palace.  
*The new hotel was palatially surrounded by high stone walls with elaborate bronze gates.*

**palaver**

n  
/ pə'lavə(r) /  
Gk > L > Pg  
profuse, idle, or worthless talk : chatter.  
*Dean left when the seminar discussion degenerated into palaver.*

**palazzo**

**paleontology**

n  
/ ,pālɛ'æn'täləj /  
Gk > F  
a science that deals with the life of past geological periods, is based on the study of fossil remains of plants and animals, and gives information especially about the chronology of the history of Earth.  
*Theo traces his interest in paleontology back to his discovery of fossils in his yard when he was a young boy.*

**palilalia**

n  
/ ,palə'lālɪə /  
Gk > L  
a speech defect marked by abnormal repetition of syllables, words, or phrases.  
*Palilalia is a symptom of some mental disorders.*

**palimpsest**

n  
/ 'paləm(p).sɛst /  
Gk  
a parchment, tablet, or other portion of writing material that has been used twice or three times after the earlier writing has been erased.  
*Special equipment will help determine whether the old parchment Colin found is a palimpsest.*

**palindrome**

n  
/ 'palɪn.drɒm /  
Gk  
a word, verse, or sentence that reads the same backward or forward.  
*Ada struggled to contrive a palindrome centered around her own name.*

**palladium**

n  
/ pə'lādɪəm /  
Gk > L  
something that affords effectual protection or security.  
*Many consider the Second Amendment to be the palladium of democracy.*

**pallbearer**

n  
/ 'pɒl.beərə(r) /  
L > E+E  
an attendant at a funeral who helps carry the coffin.  
*Each pallbearer wore a carnation in his lapel.*

**pallescent**

**pallesthesia**

**palliate**

v  
/ 'palɪ.ət /  
L  
moderate the intensity of : lessen.  
*For many prisoners, books palliate the boredom of isolation from society.*

**palliative**

**pallor**

n  
/ 'palə(r) /  
L  
abnormal paleness.  
*The pallor of Julian's stage makeup gave his girlfriend a fright.*

**palmyra**

n  
/ pəl'mɪrə /  
L > Pg  
a tall fan palm that is native to Africa but widely cultivated in India.  
*The palmyra made a stately addition to Ramu's garden.*

**palooka**

n  
/ pə'lʊkə /  
unknown  
an inexperienced or incompetent boxer.  
*The boxing manager told his fighter to box like a palooka for one round, then come out swinging hard.*

**palpability**

**palpable**

adj  
/ 'pɒlpəbəl /  
L  
easily perceptible by the mind : obvious, manifest.  
*The injustice of the situation was palpable to even the least fair-minded individual present.*

**palpebral**

adj  
/ 'pɒlpəbrəl /  
L

[has near homonym: palpable] of, relating to, or located on or near the eyelids.

*Mike's palpebral spasms were alleviated when he was treated with a muscle relaxant.*

**palpitant**

adj  
/ 'pɒlpədənt /  
L

trembling, quivering, throbbing.

*Darryl jabbed his fork into the palpitant pudding.*

**palpitation**

n  
/ 'pɒlpə'tāshən /  
L

an abnormally rapid beating of the heart when excited by violent exertion, strong emotion, or disease.

*Ron could feel the palpitation in his chest as he approached Marie to ask her out on a date.*

**palustrine**

adj  
/ pə'ləstrən /  
L

living or thriving in a marshy environment.

*The alligator is an excellent palustrine hunter.*

**palynology**

**pamphlet**

**pamphleteer**

n  
/ 'pam(p)flə'ti(ə)r /  
Gk > L name + Ecf

a writer of pamphlets attacking something or urging a cause.

*Thomas Paine made a name for himself in colonial America as a pamphleteer.*

**panacea**

**panacean**

adj  
/ ,pənə'sēən /  
Gk > L + Ecf

having the properties of a remedy for all ills and difficulties.

*Advertisements for the new pain medicine suggest that it has panacean qualities.*

**panache**

n  
/ pə'nash /  
L > It > F

dash or flamboyance in style or action.

*The novel's great strength is the splendidly depicted panache of the protagonist.*

**panary**

**pancreatitis**

n  
/ ,pʌŋkrēə'tid-əs /  
Gk > L

inflammation of the gland that produces insulin.

*The physician recommended immediate surgery for Gordon's acute pancreatitis.*

**pandiculation**

n  
/ pan.dikyə'lāshən /  
L

a stretching and stiffening especially of the trunk and extremities (as when fatigued and drowsy or after waking from sleep).

*A cat usually extends its claws during pandiculation.*

**panegyric**

n  
/ ,pənə'jirik /  
Gk > L

an oration or writing expressing praise.

*Walt Whitman composed a famous panegyric on the occasion of Abraham Lincoln's death.*

**panelist**

**panettone**

n  
/ ,pänə'tōnē /  
L > It

a usually yeast-leavened holiday bread containing raisins and candied fruit peels.

*Tad received a panettone in the mail from his Italian grandmother.*

**panickiness**

n  
/ 'pənəkēnəs /  
Gk > E

the quality or state characterized by or resulting from sudden overpowering fright.

*In her panickiness in calling for an ambulance, Gretchen forgot to give the street address.*

**panoramic**

**pantomime**

n  
/ 'pantəmīm /  
Gk > L

a dramatic performance using no dialogue.

*The sixth-grade class put on a pantomime of the story "Androcles and the Lion."*

**papacy**

**paparazzi**

n pl  
/ ,pəpə'rätsē /  
It name

free-lance photographers who aggressively pursue celebrities in order to take candid photographs.

*Many people still blame the paparazzi for their apparent role in the death of Princess Diana.*

**papeterie**

**paprika**

n  
/ pə'prēkə /  
Gk > Serb > Hung

a condiment consisting of the dried finely ground pods of various cultivated sweet peppers.

*Paprika has been a prized export of Hungary for centuries.*

**papyrus**

**parable**

n  
/ 'parəbəl /  
L

a usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle.  
*Ella's Sunday school teacher began every class with a parable.*

**parabolize**

**parachute**

**paraclete**

n  
/ 'parəklēt /  
Gk

[Note: Could be confused with parrakeet.] one called to aid or support : an advocate.  
*The popular senator was hailed as a paraclete of civil rights.*

**paradigm**

n  
/ 'parədīm /  
Gk

an outstandingly clear or typical example or pattern.  
*The paradigm of sin and salvation underlies much of 17th-century English poetry.*

**paradise**

**parador**

**paradox**

n  
/ 'parədäks /  
Gk

a statement or sentiment that is seemingly contradictory or opposed to common sense and yet perhaps true in fact.  
*The homework assignment was to write an essay on the following paradox: "To guarantee freedom of religion, the government must be free from religion."*

**paragraph**

**parallel**

adj  
/ 'parələl /  
Gk

extending in the same direction and everywhere equidistant.  
*The parallel lines of the railroad tracks tipped off analysts to the location of the munitions plant.*

**paralogize**

v  
/ pə'raləjīz /  
Gk

reason falsely : draw conclusions not warranted by the premises.  
*Although James tends to paralogize, he is so eloquent that his listeners often overlook his faulty reasoning.*

**paramedic**

**paramount**

adj  
/ 'parəmaunt /  
L > F > AF

superior to all others (as in power, position, or importance).  
*Victor holds the paramount seat on the library's board of directors.*

**paranoia**

n  
/ ,parə'nɔi(y)ə /  
Gk

a tendency on the part of individuals or of groups toward suspiciousness and distrustfulness of others that is based not on objective reality.  
*Paranoia of government eavesdropping caused members of the militia to encrypt their communications.*

**paraparesis**

n  
/ ,parəpə'rēsəs /  
Gk

partial paralysis affecting the lower limbs.  
*Kent's paraparesis was caused by a skateboarding accident.*

**parapet**

n  
/ 'parəpət /  
L > It

a rampart raised upon or above the main wall in a permanent fortification.  
*The princess walked along the parapet every evening at dusk, watching for the return of her beloved.*

**paraph**

n  
/ 'parəf /  
Gk > L

a flourish at the end of a signature sometimes used as a sort of rude safeguard against forgery.  
*Delia always signs her name with an elaborate paraph ending in a smiley face.*

**paraphernalia**

n pl  
/ ,parəfə(r)'nālɪə /  
Gk > L

articles of equipment.  
*Mark lugged all his photographic paraphernalia to every spelling bee.*

**paraphrasable**

adj  
/ 'parəfrāzəbəl /  
Gk + Ecf

capable of being restated in another form usually for clearer and fuller exposition.  
*The teacher asked the students if the meaning of the poem was paraphrasable.*

**parasite**

**parasol**

n  
/ 'parəsəl /  
L > It > F

a lightweight umbrella used as a sunshade.  
*Georgina decided to splurge on an antique parasol even though she knew she'd never actually use it.*

**parcel**

**pare**

**parenthesize**

**parfait**

n  
/ pɑr'fɑ /  
L > F  
a cold dessert consisting of alternating layers of fruit, syrup, ice cream, and whipped cream.  
*Following a light lunch, Carmen ordered a parfait of tropical fruits.*

**pariah**

n  
/ pə'riə /  
Tamil  
a person despised or rejected by society : outcast.  
*The candidate became a pariah to his party, and many members refused to be seen with him.*

**parietal**

adj  
/ pə'riəd'ɪl /  
L > F  
of, relating to, or located in the upper posterior part of the head.  
*The X ray revealed no damage to Hernando's parietal bone.*

**parity**

n  
/ 'pærədē /  
L  
[has homonym: parody] the quality or state of being equal : close equivalence or resemblance.  
*American automobile manufacturers believe they have achieved parity with their foreign competitors.*

**parkin**

**parlance**

n  
/ 'pɑrlən(t)s /  
F  
idiom, phraseology.  
*In educational parlance the new high school is a "magnet school."*

**parley**

n  
/ 'pɑrlē /  
L > F  
[has homonym: parlay]  
conversation, discussion.  
*Mr. Elton and Harriet had a very interesting parley about what could be done and should be done.*

**parliament**

**parochial**

adj  
/ pə'rɒkēəl /  
L > F > AF > E  
of or relating to a church parish.  
*Five of Susan's friends attended parochial schools.*

**parodist**

**parody**

n  
/ 'pærədē /  
Gk  
[has homonym: parity] a writing in which the language and style of an author or work is closely imitated for comic effect or in ridicule.  
*The Battle of the Frogs and the Mice is a Hellenistic parody of the Iliad.*

**paroxysm**

n  
/ 'pærək.sizəm /  
Gk  
a sudden, violent, and uncontrollable action or occurrence of emotion.  
*When Jeff unknowingly sat on the whoopie cushion, Al burst into a paroxysm of laughter.*

**paroxysmal**

adj  
/ .pærək'sizməl /  
Gk > L > F  
marked or accompanied by sudden attacks or spasms (as of a disease).  
*Mike's whooping cough was treated with antibiotics in its early paroxysmal stage.*

**parquet**

n  
/ pɑr'kɑ /  
F  
a patterned flooring.  
*Terry had expensive parquet installed in the foyer.*

**parsimony**

**parsnip**

n  
/ 'pɑrsnɪp /  
L > F > E  
a biennial plant with yellow flowers and a long, thick, sweet, white root used as a vegetable.  
*Jake yanked a parsnip from his garden.*

**parterre**

n  
/ pɑr'te(ə)r /  
L > F  
the part of the floor of a theater behind the orchestra.  
*For the season premiere, the seats in the parterre were reserved for the stockholder of the opera company.*

**parthenogenesis**

n  
/ .pɑrθənə'dʒenəsəs /  
Gk  
reproduction that involves development of a gamete without fertilization.  
*Parthenogenesis occurs commonly among some stick insect species.*

**partridge**

n  
/ 'pɑtrɪj /  
L > F > E  
any of several game birds belonging to the same subfamily as the bobwhite.  
*A partridge fluttered out of the tall grass and startled Katrina.*



**parturition**

n  
/ ˌpɑːrdəˈrɪʃən /  
L  
the action or process of giving birth to offspring.  
*In some cultures, women return to manual labor within hours of parturition.*

**pasigraphy**

**pasimology**

n  
/ ˌpasəˈmäləjē /  
Gk? + Gk + Gk  
the study of gestures as a means of communication.  
*Native American sign language is one means of communication studied in pasimology.*

**pasqueflower**

**pasquinade**

n  
/ ˌpaskwəˈnād /  
It > F  
a lampoon or satire usually having a political significance.  
*The president's misadventure quickly became the subject of an editorial pasquinade.*

**passemblerie**

**passenger**

**passerine**

adj  
/ ˈpasərən /  
L  
of or relating to the largest order of birds including more than half of all living birds and consisting chiefly of songbirds of perching habits.  
*Mr. Perrault, an avid birder, told us that passerine birds have a maximum life-span of about ten years in the wild.*

**pasteurization**

**pasteurize**

v  
/ ˈpas(h)chəˈrīz /  
F name + Ecf  
subject to heating long enough to kill disease-causing microorganisms.  
*Dairies pasteurize milk before delivering it to stores.*

**pastiche**

n  
/ paˈstēsh /  
It > F  
a usually incongruous medley of different styles and materials : hodgepodge.  
*Jordan considers the design for the new library a pretentious pastiche.*

**pasture**

n  
/ ˈpas(h)chə(r) /  
L > F > E  
land that is used for the grazing of animals.  
*Every morning the cows returned to the grassy pasture.*

**patache**

**patella**

n  
/ pəˈtelə /  
L  
kneecap.  
*Shelby bumped her patella against the bottom of the desk when she stood up too quickly.*

**pathos**

n  
/ ˈpɑːthəs /  
Gk  
an element in experience or in artistic representation evoking pity or compassion.  
*The actress was highly praised for the pathos she evoked in her death scene.*

**patois**

n  
/ ˈpɑːtwä /  
F  
a dialect other than the standard or literary dialect.  
*Parisians considered the French spoken in the English court to be a patois.*

**patriarch**

n  
/ ˈpɑːtrēːärk /  
Gk  
a man regarded as father or founder (as of a race, science, religion, or class of people).  
*In many religious circles Adam is considered to be the patriarch of the human race.*

**patrician**

adj  
/ pəˈtrɪʃən /  
L  
of, relating to, or characteristic of gentle or noble birth or of breeding and cultivation.  
*Escorting Cassie to her debutante ball is a patrician experience Rob will never forget.*

**patrikin**

**patriot**

n  
/ ˈpɑːtrēət /  
Gk > L > F  
a person who loves his country and defends and promotes its interests.  
*The foreign spy convinced others that he was a flag-waving patriot.*

**patronymic**

**patzer**

n  
/ ˈpɑːtsə(r) /  
G  
an inept chess player.  
*When Drew won the chess game so easily, he jokingly called his opponent a "patzer."*

**paucispiral**

**paucity**

n  
/ 'pɔsədē /  
L

a small number : fewness.  
*The choir suffered from a paucity of male voices.*

**paunchiness**

**paupiette**

n  
/ pɔ'pyet /  
F

a thin slice of meat or fish wrapped around a filling (as of forcemeat).  
*At the new restaurant Carol enjoyed a veal paupiette stuffed with ham and cheese.*

**pavement**

**pavilion**

n  
/ pə'vilyən /  
L > F > E

a large often sumptuous tent.  
*The servants scurried to set up the queen's pavilion before the Sun went down.*

**pavonine**

adj  
/ 'pavə.nīn /  
L

of, relating to, or resembling the peacock.  
*Audrey cooled herself by waving a pavonine fan.*

**paysanne**

adj  
/ pā'zan /  
F

prepared (as with diced root vegetables) in country or simple style.  
*Errol served a paysanne sauce with the tenderloins.*

**peaceable**

adj  
/ 'pēsəbəl /  
L > F > E + Ecf

marked by freedom from war, strife, hostilities, or disorder.  
*Aggressive doctrines are incompatible with any peaceable administration of the government.*

**pearlescent**

**peccadillo**

n  
/ ,pekə'di(,)lɔ /  
L > Sp

a slight offense or petty fault.  
*The defense lawyers lost the case when they tried to classify high treason as a "minor peccadillo."*

**peccant**

adj  
/ 'pekənt /  
L

guilty of a moral offense : sinning, corrupt.  
*The council members railed against the peccant mayor.*

**peculiar**

**pecuniary**

adj  
/ pə'kyünē.ērē /  
L

taking the form of or consisting of money.  
*Margaret values her grandmother's engagement ring for its sentimental rather than its pecuniary worth.*

**pedagogue**

n  
/ 'pedə.gājəst /  
Gk

a specialist in education.  
*It didn't take a pedagogue to know the school was overcrowded.*

**pedantic**

adj  
/ pə'dantik /  
L? > It > F + Ecf  
excessively meticulous.  
*Frazier's pedantic approach bored the few remaining audience members.*

**pedestrian**

adj  
/ pə'destrēən /  
L

marked by drabness or dullness : commonplace.  
*The critic wrote the play off as a pedestrian imitation of Shakespeare.*

**pedicure**

**pedodontist**

n  
/ ,pēdō'däntəst /  
Gk

a specialist in the branch of dentistry that is concerned with the dental care of children.  
*The pedodontist recommends that infants and toddlers not be allowed to fall asleep with a bottle of milk or juice in their mouths.*

**peevishly**

adv  
/ 'pēvəshlē /  
E

in a manner marked by ill temper.  
*There, you see," he said peevishly; "I'm even afraid to make a positive statement.*

**peirastic**

adj  
/ pī'rastik /  
Gk

fitted for trial : experimental.  
*The new drug has been approved only for peirastic use with patients who volunteer to take it.*

**pejorative**

adj  
/ pə'jörədɪv /  
L

having a tendency to make or become worse : depreciatory, disparaging.  
*The critic's pejorative comments angered the entire cast.*

**pelagic**

**pelican**

**pelisse**

n  
/ pə'lēs /  
L > F

[has homonym: police] a woman's loose lightweight cloak with wide collar and fur trimming.  
*Grandmother's old pelisse was a perfect costume for our production of A Christmas Carol.*

**pellagra**

**pellucid**

**pemphigoid**

**penchant**

n  
/ 'penchənt /  
L > F  
a strong leaning or attraction;  
broadly : liking.  
*While traveling overseas, Brad developed a penchant for Turkish coffee.*

**penicraft**

**pendulum**

n  
/ 'penjələm /  
L  
a body suspended from a fixed point so as to swing freely to and fro under the action of gravity and commonly used to regulate the movements of clockwork and other machinery.  
*Trina stops the grandfather clock's pendulum each evening so that the chimes will not ring during the night.*

**penguin**

**penicillin**

n  
/ ,penə'silən /  
L  
a mixture of antibiotic relatively nontoxic acids produced especially by molds of the genus *Penicillium*.  
*When penicillin did not cure Frankie's ear infection, the doctor prescribed a different antibiotic.*

**peninsula**

n  
/ pə'nin(t)s(ə)lə /  
L  
a portion of land nearly surrounded by water and connected with a larger body by an isthmus.  
*Florida is actually a very large peninsula.*

**penitence**

n  
/ 'penədən(t)s /  
L  
sorrow for sins or faults.  
*Because of Ella's true penitence, her best friend was quick to forgive her for her breach of confidence.*

**penitentiary**

n  
/ ,penə'tench(ə)rē /  
L > E  
a public institution in which offenders against the law are confined for detention or for punishment, discipline, and reformation and in which they are generally compelled to labor.  
*The judge sentenced the bank robber to 25 years in the state penitentiary.*

**pennant**

n  
/ 'penənt /  
L  
a flag or banner.  
*Whenever the queen was in residence, her pennant was raised on the palace flagpole.*

**pentathlon**

n  
/ pen'tath.län /  
Gk  
a contest in the modern Olympic Games involving participation by each contestant in horseback riding, shooting, fencing, swimming, and running.  
*Miguel is practicing four hours a day for the upcoming pentathlon.*

**pentecostys**

**penumbra**

n  
/ pə'nəmbərə /  
L  
a shadow cast (as in an eclipse) where the light is partly but not wholly cut off by the intervening body.  
*Bert caused a penumbra on the screen when he walked in front of the slide projector.*

**penurious**

**penury**

n  
/ 'penyəre /  
L  
scantiness.  
*Jane cited the penury of intelligent conversation at the children's table as her reason for wanting to sit with the adults in the main dining room.*

**peony**

n  
/ 'pēənē /  
E  
any of a genus of perennial often double-flowered plants with large pink, white, red, or yellow showy flowers.  
*Ben placed a brightly colored peony in a tall vase.*

**perambulate**

v  
/ pə'rambyələt /  
L  
travel over or through especially on foot.  
*Sid and Amy often perambulate the park on sunny days.*

**perceive**

**perceptible**

**percipient**

**percnosome**

n  
/ 'pərknəsəm /  
Gk  
a small body occurring in the androcyte of a fern.  
*Under the microscope, the dark shape of the percnosome was clearly visible.*

**percolate**

v  
/ 'pərkələt /  
L  
prepare by causing (a liquid) to pass through (as coffee) in order to extract the essence.  
*Sal did not allow enough time to percolate his coffee before he had to go to work.*

**percussor**

n  
/ pə(r)'kəsə(r) /  
L

a small hammer with a rubber head used as a diagnostic tool by physicians.  
*Dr. Goldman tested Paula's reflexes with a percussor.*

**peregrinate**

v  
/ 'perəgrə.nāt /  
L

travel on foot : walk, tour.  
*Nicki hopes to peregrinate across England in the fall.*

**peremptory**

adj  
/ pə'rem(p)t(ə)rē /  
L

putting an end to or precluding a right of action, debate, or delay.  
*Mr. Stone interrupted Cindy's wrong answer by raising his hand in a peremptory gesture.*

**perennate**

v  
/ 'perə.nāt /  
L

live over from season to season : persist.  
*Ornamental banana trees will seldom perennate outdoors north of the subtropics.*

**perennial**

adj  
/ pə'renēəl /  
L

continuing or lasting through several years—used specifically of a plant that dies back seasonally and produces new growth from a part that lives over from season to season.  
*The garden is bare of flowers because the perennial plants have been cut down for their winter rest.*

**perezone**

**perfervid**

adj  
/ ,pər'fərvəd /  
L

extremely or excessively fervent : zealous, impassioned.  
*In front of the Capitol a man was giving a perfervid speech on the evils of national taxation.*

**perfidious**

**perfidy**

**perforate**

**pergelisol**

n  
/ pər'jeləsəl /  
L

permanently or perennially frozen ground : permafrost.  
*Chan's theory is that there are large oil deposits beneath the pergelisol.*

**perigee**

n  
/ 'perə(,)jē /  
Gk

the point in the orbit of a satellite of Earth that is nearest to the center of Earth.  
*As the communications satellite neared perigee, its signal became stronger.*

**perinatal**

**peripatetic**

adj  
/ ,perəpə'tedɪk /  
Gk

performed or performing while moving about : itinerant.  
*Adrian spent an exciting three years as a peripatetic journalist before settling in Chicago.*

**peripety**

n  
/ pə'ripədə /  
Gk > F

a sudden or unexpected reversal of circumstances or situation in a literary work.  
*The peripety in the last act of the play stunned the audience.*

**peripheral**

adj  
/ ,pə'rɪf(ə)rəl /  
Gk

located away from a center or a central portion.  
*Although Kerry's main interest lies in literature, she has peripheral interests in art history and psychology.*

**periphery**

n  
/ pə'rɪf(ə)rē /  
Gk

the external boundary or surface of any body or area.  
*Many villages dotted the periphery of the extinct volcano.*

**periphrasis**

n  
/ pə'rɪfrəsəs /  
Gk

the use of a longer phrasing in place of a possible shorter and plainer form of expression.  
*Frustrated by the document's endless periphrasis, Ludwig threw up his hands in despair.*

**perishable**

adj  
/ 'perəʃəbəl /  
L > F > E + Ecf

subject to quick deterioration or spoilage except under proper conditions (as of temperature or moisture content).  
*The advent of refrigeration changed the way perishable foods are packaged.*

**peristalsis**

n  
/ ,perə'stɔlsəs /  
Gk

successive waves of involuntary contraction passing along the walls of the intestine and forcing the contents onward.  
*Disruption of peristalsis can lead to digestion problems.*

**perjury**

n  
/ 'pɜːrj(ə)rē /  
L > AF > E

the voluntary violation of an oath.  
*One thing is certain after the testimony: Either Mr. Jakes or Mr. Cleveland has committed perjury.*

**perlustrate**

**permanence**

**permeable**

**permeate**

v  
/ 'pɜːrmē.āt /  
Gk

spread or diffuse through.  
*Igor wiped up the spill immediately, lest the smell of formaldehyde permeate the room.*

**pernicious**

adj  
/ pə(r)'nishəs /  
L

highly injurious or destructive : deadly.  
*The doctors finally eradicated the pernicious infection from the patient's lungs.*

**peroration**

n  
/ .pɜːrə'rāshən /  
L

a flowery, highly rhetorical speech.  
*Trudy's peroration was lost on her audience at the school board meeting.*

**perpendicular**

**perpetual**

adj  
/ pə(r)'pech(əw)əl /  
L > F > E

everlasting, eternal.  
*Shawna expected to enjoy perpetual bliss in heaven.*

**perplexing**

adj  
/ pə(r)'pleksɪŋ /  
L

that causes an agitated or confused mental condition.  
*Silvio found English grammar terribly perplexing.*

**perquisite**

n  
/ 'pɜːrkwəzət /  
L

a privilege, gain, or profit incidental to an employment in addition to regular salary or wages.  
*A perquisite attractive to many business executives is unlimited use of a cellular telephone.*

**persecute**

v  
/ 'pɜːsə.kyüt /  
L

harass in a manner to injure, grieve, or afflict usually because of some difference of opinion.  
*The revolutionary extremists vowed to persecute the peasants who would not support their cause.*

**perseverance**

n  
/ .pɜːsə'virən(t)s /  
L

continued or steadfast pursuit or prosecution of an undertaking or aim.  
*After much perseverance, Frank induced the most upright female mind in creation to stoop in charity to a secret engagement.*

**persevere**

**persiflage**

n  
/ 'pɜːsə.flāzh /  
F

frivolous bantering talk : a frivolous and somewhat derisive manner of treating a subject.  
*As the teams moved up and down the court, both benches kept up a constant stream of persiflage.*

**persillade**

adj  
/ .pɜːsē'äd /  
F

dressed with or containing parsley.  
*Marina's dinner guests enjoyed a flavorful sea bass in a persillade sauce.*

**persimmon**

n  
/ pə(r)'sɪmən /  
Algonquian

a medium-sized tree of the southern and eastern United States with hard fine-grained wood, oblong leaves, and bell-shaped flowers followed by an orange several-seeded berry that is edible when fully ripe but usually extremely astringent when unripe.  
*Leroy's mouth puckered when he bit into an unripe persimmon.*

**personification**

**personnel**

**perspicacious**

adj  
/ .pɜːspə'kāshəs /  
L + Ecf

of acute mental vision or discernment.  
*The chairman attributed the company's record profits to perspicacious management.*

**perspicuity**

**perspiration**

**persuade**

**pertinacious**

adj  
/ .pɜːt'n'āshəs /  
L

stubbornly unshakable.  
*There was something mysterious in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion.*

**pertinent**

**pertinently**

**perusal**

n  
/ ˌpəˈrüzəl /  
L? > E + E

the action of reading through or over with some attention and typically for the purpose of discovering or noting one or more specific points.  
*The legal advisor's perusal of the proposed contract identified many points of concern.*

**pervasive**

adj  
/ pə(r)'vāsiv /  
L + Ecf

that permeates or tends to permeate.  
*The turkey farm had a pervasive odor that clung to clothes.*

**pervicacious**

**perwitsky**

**pessimist**

n  
/ ˈpɛsəməst /  
L > F  
one inclined to put the least favorable construction on actions and happenings, to emphasize adverse aspects, conditions, and possibilities, or to anticipate the worst possible outcome.  
*Being a pessimist made keeping friends very difficult for Mark.*

**pestilence**

n  
/ ˈpestələn(t)s /  
L  
a contagious or infectious epidemic disease that is virulent and devastating.  
*Pestilence has historically been one of society's main causes of death.*

**pestle**

n  
/ ˈpɛsəl /  
L > F > E  
a usually club-shaped implement for pounding or grinding substances especially in a mortar.  
*Grandma bought a brass mortar and pestle from an antique dealer.*

**petchary**

**petechia**

**petrogeny**

n  
/ pəˈträjənē /  
Gk + Gk  
the science of the origin of rocks.  
*A vacation trip to the Grand Canyon sparked Lauren's interest in petrogeny.*

**petroleum**

**petulance**

**petulant**

adj  
/ ˈpɛchələnt /  
L  
characterized by temporary or capricious ill humor : peevish.  
*The striking ballplayers were characterized as spoiled, petulant, and self-obsessed.*

**petunia**

n  
/ pəˈtūnyə /  
L > F  
a common garden plant with funnel-shaped flowers of many colors and patterns.  
*Russell pulled a purple petunia from the flower bed.*

**phaeton**

n  
/ ˈfæɪtən /  
Gk > L  
[has near homonym: Phaëthon] an open automobile with two cross seats, usually four doors, and a folding top.  
*Charles almost bought the 1931 Rolls Royce phaeton at the auction.*

**phalacrosis**

n  
/ ˌfaləˈkrōsəs /  
Gk  
baldness.  
*Phalacrosis is an inherited characteristic.*

**phalanx**

n  
/ ˈfālənks /  
Gk  
a group or body in close formation.  
*Sarah craned her neck in wonder as the phalanx of military jets flew over in tight formation.*

**phansigar**

**pharaoh**

n  
/ ˈfe(,)rō /  
Egypt > Heb > Gk > L  
a ruler of ancient Egypt.  
*Tutankhamen is one pharaoh whose name most people recognize.*

**pharisaical**

adj  
/ ˌfərəˈsāəkəl /  
Aram > GK > L + E  
making an outward show of piety and morality but lacking the inward spirit : hypocritical.  
*Cardinal Newman spoke of the vast numbers of pharisaical individuals among baptized Christians.*

**pharmaceutical**

**pharos**

n  
/ ˈfārəs /  
Gk  
a lighthouse or beacon to guide seamen.  
*Leland said the restaurant acted like a pharos for all those at sea off the tip of the island.*

**pharynx**

**phase**

n  
/ 'fāz /  
Gk

[has homonyms: fays, faze] a homogeneous, physically distinct, and mechanically separable portion of matter that is present in a nonhomogeneous physical-chemical system and that may be either a single compound or a mixture.

*Water exists in the solid phase as ice, in the liquid phase as water, and in the gaseous phase as vapor or steam.*

**pheasant**

n  
/ 'fezʰnt /  
Gk > L > F > AF > E

any of numerous large, often long-tailed, and brilliantly colored Old World birds with legs adapted for running and scratching the ground where most of their food (as seeds or worms) is found.

*After a morning of hunting, Larry returned with a pheasant, two rabbits, and a wild duck.*

**phenomenon**

n  
/ fə'ni:mə.nən /  
Gk > L

an observable fact or event.

*The civil rights movement began as a startling phenomenon to many complacent Americans.*

**pheon**

**phew**

**phial**

**philatelist**

**philately**

n  
/ fə'ladʰlē /  
Gk > F

[has near homonym: flatly] stamp collecting.

*Philately can be an excellent inexpensive hobby.*

**philippic**

**philistine**

adj  
/ 'filəstēn /  
Heb > Gk

of, relating to, or characterized by crass materialism and insensitivity to aesthetics.

*Nineteenth-century essayists derided the English middle class as being vulgar and philistine.*

**phillumenist**

n  
/ fə'lümənəst /  
Gk > L + Ecf

one who collects matchbooks or matchbox labels.

*The phillumenist kept a fire extinguisher near his prize collection.*

**philology**

**philomath**

**philosopher**

**phlebitis**

n  
/ flə'bidəs /  
Gk + Lcf  
inflammation of a vein.

*If phlebitis is not treated early, a blood clot can form in the inflamed vein.*

**phlebotomize**

**phlegm**

**phlegmatic**

adj  
/ fleg'madik /  
Gk

calm, composed, undemonstrative.  
*Phlegmatic game-show contestants are usually not as entertaining as those who show excitement.*

**phloem**

n  
/ 'flō.em /  
Gk > G

a complex tissue in the vascular system of higher plants functioning chiefly in distributing food materials but also in support and storage.

*Mr. Cartwright pointed out the xylem and the phloem on the newly cut tree.*

**phlox**

n  
/ 'fläks /  
Gk > L

any plant of a genus of American herbs having red, purple, white, or variegated flowers.

*Dean planted phlox along the sidewalk.*

**phonasthenia**

n  
/ .fōnəs'thēnēə /  
Gk

weakness or hoarseness of voice.

*After the football game some of the cheerleaders complained of phonasthenia.*

**phosphoresce**

v  
/ .fäs'fə'res /  
Gk > L > F

glow especially in the dark.

*Emmet's jigsaw puzzle will phosphoresce after being exposed to a strong light source.*

**photogenic**

**photogrammetry**

**photograph**

**photophygous**

adj  
/ fō'täfəgəs /  
Gk + Gk + Ecf

preferring or thriving in shade.

*Ferns and hostas are photophygous plants often used in gardens.*

**photosynthesis**

n  
/ ˌfōdō'sin(t)thəsəs /  
Gk + Gk  
synthesis of chemical compounds with the aid of light.  
*Photosynthesis in plants provides them with necessary carbohydrates.*

**phraseology**

n  
/ ˌfrāzē'äləjē /  
Gk > L  
choice of words : vocabulary.  
*The candidate's careful phraseology avoided any hint of controversy.*

**phrasing**

n  
/ ˈfrāziŋ /  
Gk > L  
style of expression : wording.  
*In writing poetry, phrasing is critically important.*

**phrenology**

n  
/ frə'näləjē /  
Gk + Gk + Ecf  
the study of the conformation of the skull as indicative of mental faculties and traits of character.  
*Phrenology enjoyed great popular appeal well into the 20th century but has been wholly discredited by scientific research.*

**phylactery**

n  
/ fə'lakt(ə)rē /  
Gk  
either of two small square leather boxes containing slips inscribed with scriptural passages and traditionally worn by Jewish males during morning prayer.  
*Milton explained that a phylactery is worn as a reminder to keep the laws of Judaism.*

**phylliform**

adj  
/ ˌfiləˈfōrm /  
Gk + Ecf  
having the shape of a leaf.  
*Every fall, phylliform silhouettes adorn the windows of Mrs. Gaskin's classroom.*

**phylloporous**

adj  
/ fə'läf(ə)rəs /  
Gk + Gk  
producing leaves : leaf-bearing.  
*Softwoods come from coniferous trees, while hardwoods come from phylloporous trees.*

**phylon**

**physically**

adv  
/ ˈfizək(ə)lē /  
Gk + Ecff  
in respect to the body.  
*It was physically impossible for the campers to hike another mile.*

**physician**

**physicist**

n  
/ ˈfizəsəst /  
Gk  
a specialist in the science of matter and energy and their interactions.  
*The physicist explained how a laser is used to read what is recorded on a compact disc.*

**physics**

**physiognomy**

n  
/ ˌfizē'ä(g)nəmē /  
Gk  
the technique or art of discovering temperament and character from outward appearance (as from facial features).  
*The artist's careful study of physiognomy showed up in his brilliant caricatures of politicians.*

**physique**

**phytocoenosis**

n  
/ ˌfidōsē'nōsəs /  
Gk  
the whole body of plants occupying a particular habitat.  
*William studied the effects of acid rain on the Adirondack phytocoenosis.*

**phytophilous**

adj  
/ fī'täfələs /  
Gk + Gk + Ecf  
living or feeding on plants.  
*The forest fire deprived many phytophilous animals of their habitat and food.*

**pianissimo**

**piazza**

n  
/ pē'azə /  
L > It  
an arcaded and roofed gallery that often surrounds an open court.  
*The tourists ran to the abandoned monastery's piazza when the rain started pouring down.*

**pica**

n  
/ ˈpikə /  
ML  
[has homonym: pika] a size of type equivalent to 12 point.  
*Part of Katie's proofreading job was to add another line of pica to pages that had enough space.*

**picaresque**

adj  
/ ˌpikə'resk /  
Sp  
relating to or being a type of prose fiction in which the principal character is a rogue or vagabond and the narrative is a series of incidents or episodes.  
*In a typical picaresque novel, the hero has many adventures.*

**picayune**

adj  
/ ˌpikē'yün /  
L > Prov > F  
of little value : paltry, measly.  
*The other players chided the halfback for his picayune contribution to the team.*



**piccalilli**

n  
/ 'pikəl.lilē /  
unknown  
a relish of chopped vegetables and pungent spices.  
*Wanda put a dab of piccalilli in her tuna salad.*

**piccata**

n  
/ pə'kädə /  
F > It  
thin slices of meat (as veal) sautéed and served in a lemon and butter sauce.  
*Julia served veal piccata and asparagus at Jack's birthday dinner.*

**piccolo**

**pickle**

v  
/ 'pikəl /  
D? > E  
[has homonyms: pickel, picol, picul, pikel, pikol] steep in a solution of salt or vinegar for preservation.  
*Every year, the Johnsons pickle enough onions to give a jar to everyone in the neighborhood.*

**picnicking**

**pictorialism**

**picturesque**

**pidan**

n  
/ pē'dän /  
Chinese  
[has near homonym: piton] duck eggs preserved in brine to which lime, ashes, and tea are added.  
*Art's grandmother makes authentic pidan.*

**piecemeal**

adv  
/ 'pē.smē(ə)l /  
Gaulish > L > F > E + E  
one piece at a time : little by little.  
*The magazine published the novel piecemeal for several weeks.*

**piety**

**pigeon**

n  
/ 'pijən /  
L > F > E  
[has homonym: pidgin] a bird having a stout body with rather short legs and smooth and compact plumage.  
*A pigeon fluttered about the eaves of the old barn.*

**pignorate**

**pilaster**

n  
/ pə'lastə(r) /  
Gk > L > It > F  
an upright architectural member that is structurally a vertical support but architecturally treated as a column that usually partially projects from the wall and may be load-bearing or merely applied as surface decoration.  
*The architect explained that because the pilaster was merely a decoration, removing it for the room's renovation would be permissible.*

**pillar**

**pillory**

n  
/ 'pilərə /  
F > E  
a device formerly used for the public punishment of wrongdoers that consists of a wooden frame with holes in which the head and hands can be locked.  
*Pam took a snapshot of Julian standing by a pillory in the reconstructed colonial village.*

**piloncillo**

n  
/ .pəlɔn'sē(ɪ)(y)ō /  
Sp  
unrefined sugar especially when molded into cones or sticks.  
*Rosita grated piloncillo into a bowl of custard.*

**pinioned**

**pinnacle**

n  
/ 'pinəkəl /  
L  
a lofty mountain peak.  
*The clouds obscured the pinnacle from the view of those in the valley below.*

**pinnigrade**

adj  
/ 'pinə.grād /  
L  
walking by means of fins or flippers.  
*The seal and the walrus are pinnigrade animals.*

**pinocytosis**

**pintle**

**pioneer**

adj  
/ .piə'ni(ə)r /  
F  
of, relating to, or characteristic of early settlers or their time.  
*Julie worked last summer in a restored pioneer village.*

**pious**

adj  
/ 'piəs /  
L  
devout.  
*The pious Jewish historian saw in Israel's exile God's punishment for sin.*

**piquancy**

n  
/ 'pēkənsē /  
F + Ecf  
the quality of being agreeably stimulating to the palate : pleasantly tart.  
*Colette especially liked the piquancy of Cajun cuisine.*

**piqued**

v  
/ pēkt /  
F  
[has homonyms: peaked, peeked] excited or aroused by a provocation, challenge, or rebuff.  
*The envelope sealed with sealing wax piqued Helen's curiosity.*

**pirouette**

n  
/ˌpɪrəˈwet/  
F

a full turn on the toe or ball of one foot in ballet.

*The pirouette is one of the most striking movements in a dancer's repertoire.*

**piscatorial**

**pistachio**

n  
/pəˈstʌʃiəˌoʊ/  
Gk > L > It

the edible green seed of a small tree of southern Europe and Asia Minor.

*Patricia placed a pistachio on each parfait.*

**piston**

n  
/ˈpɪstən/  
L > It > F

the part of an engine that is forced back and forth inside a cylinder due to combustion.

*Kyle learned to identify a piston in the automobile repair class.*

**pitcher**

**piteous**

adj  
/ˈpɪd̩iəs/  
E

arousing or deserving pity or compassion.

*The piteous kitten stood shivering in the snow.*

**pitiable**

**piton**

**pittance**

n  
/ˈpɪt̩n(t)s/  
L > F > E

a usually small often barely sufficient portion, amount, or allowance.

*Gloria was tired of working long hours for a pittance.*

**pityriasis**

n  
/ˌpɪd̩iˈrɪəsəs/  
Gk

one of several skin diseases marked by the formation and peeling of scales.

*Uncle Nick's pityriasis prevents him from sleeping well.*

**pivot**

n  
/ˈpɪvət/  
L > F

a person or thing on or around which something turns or depends : central point.

*The pivot of controversy is Roberta's questionable handling of public funds.*

**pivotaly**

**pizzeria**

n  
/ˌpɪt̩səˈrɪə/  
L > It + Itcf

An establishment (as a bakery, restaurant, shop) where pizzas are made and sold.

*Hank waited tables in the pizzeria on weekends.*

**pizzicato**

adv  
/ˌpɪtsəˈkɑːd̩(̩)oʊ/  
It

played by plucking with the fingers.

*The score called for the violins to play the passage pizzicato.*

**placable**

**placatory**

**placebo**

**placet**

n  
/ˈplæsət/  
L

an expression of approval or vote of assent.

*The commander got the placet of the other generals for his coup d'etat.*

**plagiarism**

**plagiarize**

v  
/ˈplæjəˌrɪz/  
L + EcF

present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

*Simon knew that it would be better not to turn in an essay at all than to plagiarize.*

**plaintiff**

n  
/ˈplāntɪf/  
L > F > E

[has near homonym: plaintive] one who commences a personal action or lawsuit to obtain a remedy for an injury to one's rights.

*The plaintiff was suing the hospital for negligence because he suffered bacterial infection after surgery.*

**planetarium**

**plangi**

**plantar**

**planxty**

**plasticize**

**platinum**

**platypus**

n  
/ˈplad̩əpəs/  
Gk

a small egg-laying aquatic mammal of southern and eastern Australia and Tasmania having a fleshy bill resembling that of a duck, dense blackish brown fur, five-toed webbed feet, and a broad flattened tail.

*Cindy has asked for a pet platypus for her birthday.*

**plauditory**

**plaustral**

**playwright**

n  
/ 'plā.rīt /  
E + E  
a person who writes a composition arranged for enactment (as by actors on a stage) and intended to portray life or character or to tell a story through the actions and usually dialogue of the enactors.  
*The playwright based his drama on the struggles between gangs in the ghetto.*

**pleach**

**pleiad**

n  
/ 'plēəd /  
Gk > F  
[has near homonym: plead] a group of illustrious or brilliant persons or things usually seven in number.  
*The maestro named a pleiad of pianists who were once his pupils.*

**plenilune**

n  
/ 'plēnəlūn /  
L > E  
the time of full Moon.  
*Zeke will begin planting after the plenilune.*

**plenipotentiary**

**pleonasm**

n  
/ 'plēənəzəm /  
Gk  
iteration or repetition in speaking or in writing : the use of more words than those necessary to denote mere sense.  
*Mr. Miller gave the phrase true facts as an example of a pleonasm to be avoided.*

**plethora**

n  
/ 'plēthərə /  
Gk  
excess, profusion.  
*The jury retired to consider the plethora of evidence presented in court.*

**pleurisy**

n  
/ 'plūrəsē /  
Gk > L > F > E  
inflammation of the membrane lining the chest cavity and enveloping the lungs.  
*Pleurisy, causing fluid to accumulate in Zachary's chest cavity, further complicated his pneumonia.*

**pleuston**

n  
/ 'plüstən /  
Gk  
small but macroscopic floating organisms that form mats or layers on or near the surface of a body of water.  
*The mat of pleuston floating in the swamp consists mostly of green algae.*

**plexus**

n  
/ 'pleksəs /  
L  
an intricately interwoven combination of elements or parts in a cohering structure.  
*The transportation board carefully mapped out the plexus of commuter paths across the city.*

**plover**

n  
/ 'pləvə(r) /  
L > F > E  
any of numerous shore-inhabiting birds having a short hard-tipped bill and a stout compact build.  
*Taylor could see that the plover circling over the tennis court had spotted upper plumage.*

**plucky**

adj  
/ 'pləkē /  
E + Ecf  
having or marked by courage : spirited, brave, resolute.  
*Henry was plucky enough to get back on his bicycle although he had just fallen for the seventh time.*

**plumage**

n  
/ 'plūmij /  
L > F > E  
the entire clothing of feathers of a bird.  
*The plumage of the male peacock is more colorful than that of the female.*

**plummet**

**plurality**

n  
/ plū'ralədē /  
L  
a number of votes cast for a candidate in a contest of more than two candidates that is greater than the number cast for any other candidate but not more than half the total votes cast.  
*Because all three candidates have strong voter support, the number of votes cast for the winner will probably be a plurality, not a majority.*

**plutology**

n  
/ plū'täləjē /  
Gk + Gk  
the scientific study of wealth : theoretical economics.  
*Jeremy is using his expertise in plutology to study emerging democracies.*

**pluvioscope**

n  
/ 'plüvēə.sköp /  
L + Gk > L  
rain gauge.  
*Johnny ordered a pluvioscope from the scientific catalog.*

**pneumatic**

adj  
/ n(y)ü'mad:ik /  
Gk  
[has homonym: neumatic] adapted for holding compressed air : inflated with air.  
*The development of the pneumatic tire was a major advance for the bicycle.*

**pneumatography**

**poetaster**

n  
/ 'pōəd.astə(r) /  
L  
a writer of worthless or inferior verses.  
*The poetaster spewed out poem after poem, each worse than the last.*

**pogonip**

n  
/ 'pägə.nip /  
Paiute  
a dense winter fog containing frozen particles that is formed in deep mountain valleys of the western United States.  
*The dense pogonip leaves a sheath of frost crystals on every shrub and blade of grass.*

**poignant**

adj  
/ 'pōin(y)ənt /  
L > F > E  
painfully sharp with regard to the feelings : piercing, keen.  
*Emma's distress was not poignant enough to keep her from falling asleep, and she awoke feeling somewhat more hopeful.*

**poinciana**

n  
/ .pōin(t)sē'anə /  
F name + Lcf  
an ornamental tropical tree or shrub having bright orange or red flowers.  
*While in southern Florida, Jake was impressed by the fiery flowers of the poinciana.*

**poinsettia**

n  
/ pōin'sedēə /  
American name  
a showy Mexican and South American plant with tapering scarlet petallike leaves that surround small yellow flowers.  
*The delivery woman brought a poinsettia to Karen's door.*

**poise**

**poised**

adj  
/ 'pōizd /  
L > F > E + Ecf  
marked by easy composure of manner or bearing.  
*The poised skater performed her routine with great precision and self-assurance.*

**poisonous**

adj  
/ 'pōiz(ə)nəs /  
L > F > E + Ecf  
having the qualities or effects of a toxin.  
*The mushrooms looked and tasted great but were devastatingly poisonous.*

**polemic**

adj  
/ pə'lemik /  
Gk  
of, relating to, or of the nature of a controversial discussion or argument.  
*Try as he might, Rupert could not prevent the conversation from turning into a polemic debate.*

**polemology**

n  
/ (.)pōlə'mäləjē /  
Gk + Gk > E  
the study of war.  
*In polemology, military and naval strategies are studied and discussed.*

**poliomyelitis**

n  
/ .pōlēō.miə'lidəs /  
Gk  
an acute infectious viral disease characterized by fever, motor paralysis, and atrophy of skeletal muscles often with permanent disability and deformity.  
*Up to about 40 years ago, poliomyelitis often meant a lifetime on crutches or in an iron lung.*

**poliosis**

n  
/ .pōlē'ōsəs /  
Gk  
loss of color from the hair.  
*One of the effects of the disease was poliosis.*

**politesse**

n  
/ .pälə'tes /  
L > F  
formal and cultivated politeness.  
*The ambassador greatly enjoyed the diplomatic world of pomp and politesse.*

**pollen**

n  
/ 'pälən /  
L  
the fine, dustlike mass of grains produced by seed plants.  
*Many hay fever sufferers are bothered by ragweed pollen.*

**pollutant**

n  
/ pə'lütənt /  
L  
any substance that makes the air or water impure or unclean.  
*Ethylene gas is a pollutant associated with industrial manufacturing and automobile exhaust.*

**pollute**

**poltergeist**

n  
/ 'pōltə(r)gīst /  
G  
a noisy and usually mischievous ghost.  
*Our favorite Halloween story is about a poltergeist who tormented the tenants of a house in which there had previously been a murder.*

**poltroon**

**polychrest**

**polychromatic**

adj  
/ˌpɒləkrəˈmædɪk/  
Gk

showing a variety or a change of colors : multicolored.  
*It is not unusual for people to drive by Sarah's house simply to admire its polychromatic brickwork.*

**polydactyly**

n  
/ˌpɒləˈdæktəlē/  
Gk + Gk

the condition of having more than the normal number of toes or fingers.  
*The Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum on Key West is home to approximately 60 cats, about half of which exhibit polydactyly.*

**polygamous**

**polyphagism**

n  
/pəˈlɪfəˌdʒɪzəm/  
Gk

the habit of feeding on a variety of plants or animals.  
*By feeding various kinds of foods to the insects, the researcher could discover which ones exhibited polyphagism.*

**polysyllabic**

adj  
/ˌpɒləsəˈlæbɪk/  
Gk > L + Ecf

having three or usually four or more units of spoken language.  
*Martha often uses polysyllabic words to impress her teachers.*

**pomaceous**

**pomade**

n  
/pəˈmæd/  
L > It > F

a perfumed ointment.  
*Mr. Underwood was partial to sweet-smelling pomade.*

**pomegranate**

n  
/ˈpɒm(ə)ˌɡrænət/  
L > F > E + L

a thick-skinned several-celled reddish berry that is about the size of an orange and has many seeds in a crimson acid pulp.  
*The bright red splotches on Julia's hands testified to her having eaten a pomegranate.*

**pomological**

adj  
/ˌpɒməˈlɒdʒɪkəl/  
Gk > L

of or relating to the science of the cultivation of fruits.  
*Certainly in the pomological sense, one bad apple eventually spoils the whole bunch.*

**pompadour**

n  
/ˈpɒmpəˌdɔ(ə)r/  
F name

a man's style of hairdressing in which the hair is combed back so as to stand up straight.  
*Chuck spent an hour in front of the mirror preening his pompadour.*

**pompous**

**pontificalibus**

**pontificate**  
v  
/pənˈtɪfəkət/  
L

deliver oracular utterances or dogmatic opinions.  
*Randy proceeded to pontificate for five minutes on the dangers of listening to loud music.*

**populous**

**porcelain**

n  
/ˈpɔrs(ə)lən/  
L > It > F

[has near homonym: purslane] a hard, fine-grained, white ceramic ware that has a hard paste body, is fired at a high temperature, and is used especially for table and ornamental wares.  
*Many old houses have doorknobs made of porcelain.*

**porcine**

**porphyry**

n  
/ˈpɔ(r)fərē/  
Gk > L

an Egyptian rock consisting of feldspar crystals embedded in a dark red or purple groundmass much used by the ancient Romans.  
*At the archaeological dig Carlo unearthed a broken urn made of porphyry.*

**porpoise**

n  
/ˈpɔrpəs/  
L > F > E

a small, friendly whale with teeth and a short, rounded snout and that somewhat resembles a dolphin.  
*Miles saw a porpoise at the aquarium.*

**porridge**

n  
/ˈpɔrɪdʒ/  
F > E

a soft food made by boiling grains or legumes in milk or water until thick.  
*The campers were extremely hungry, and each consumed a large bowl of porridge.*

**porringer**

**portcullis**

n  
/ pɔrt'kʌləs /  
F > E

a large grating of iron bars or heavy timbers suspended by chains over the gateway of a fortified place and lowered between grooves to prevent passage.  
*The guard quickly lowered the portcullis after the king and his knights had passed through the gate.*

**portentous**

adj  
/ pɔr'tentəs /  
L

of, relating to, or constituting something that foreshadows a coming event : ominous.  
*Oliver's dream proved portentous.*

**portiere**

**portmanteau**

n  
/ pɔrt'mant(ə) /  
L > F

a large traveling bag.  
*The clown removed an enormous pumpkin from his portmanteau.*

**portraiture**

**possessed**

v  
/ pə'zest /  
L

influenced or controlled by something (as an evil spirit or a passion).  
*During the race the winning horse ran as if he were possessed by a demon.*

**possessor**

**posset**

v  
/ 'päsət /  
E

[has near homonym: posit] pamper with delicacies.  
*Aunt Mimi expects everyone to posset Pedro, her chihuahua.*

**postern**

n  
/ 'pɔstə(r)n /  
L > F > E

a back door or gate.  
*The thief escaped through the postern without being detected.*

**posthumous**

adj  
/ 'päschəməs /  
L  
published after the death of the author.  
*Ironically, the novelist's posthumous works were his most popular.*

**postprandial**

adj  
/ ,pɔs(t)'prandēəl /  
L > E  
of, relating to, or occurring in the period after a meal.  
*After the huge dinner, George and Barbara decided to take a leisurely postprandial walk.*

**posttension**

v  
/ pɔs(t)'tençən /  
L + L  
apply stress to (reinforcing steel) after concrete has set.  
*The construction crew will posttension the steel in the columns.*

**posture**

n  
/ 'päschə(r) /  
L  
characteristic position or bearing of the body.  
*A dancer's posture is as important in ballroom dancing as it is in ballet.*

**potamology**

**potassium**

n  
/ pə'tasēəm /  
L  
an element of the alkali metal group.  
*Bananas and potatoes are good dietary sources of potassium.*

**potatoes**

n pl  
/ pə'tādōz /  
Taino > Sp  
the edible starchy tubers of plants of the genus Solanum and species tuberosum.  
*For dinner Harry made roast beef and baked potatoes.*

**potentate**

n  
/ 'pɔt'n.tāt /  
L  
one who possesses great power or sway : ruler.  
*Barry acts more like a potentate than a leader in his role as class president.*

**potpourri**

n  
/ ,pɔpə'rē /  
F  
a jar of flower petals mixed with spices and used for scent or perfume.  
*Stella kept a potpourri on her kitchen windowsill.*

**poultice**

n  
/ 'pɔltəs /  
L  
a soft mass usually heated and spread on cloth for application to inflamed areas to supply moist warmth, relieve pain, or act as a counterirritant.  
*Aunt Julia's remedy for rashes or skin problems of any sort is a mustard poultice.*

**poultry**

**pourboire**

n  
/ pürb'wär /  
L > F  
a tip or gratuity.  
*When he checked out of the hotel, Jonathan left a pourboire for the chambermaid.*

**pourparler**

**poussette**

v  
/ pü'set /  
F

swing in a semicircle hands joined with one's partner.  
*The caller instructed the couples to poussette before changing partners.*

**poussin**

n  
/ pü'sa<sup>n</sup> /  
L > F

a young chicken of about one pound weight for table use : a small broiler.  
*Celeste was not sure how to season and cook a poussin, so she consulted a cookbook by Julia Child.*

**praline**

n  
/ 'prä.lēn /  
F name

a round patty of creamy brown sugar containing pecan meats.  
*The praline is a favorite candy of the southern United States.*

**precaution**

**precedent**

n  
/ 'presədənt /  
L

something done or said that may serve as an example or rule to authorize or justify a subsequent act of the same or an analogous kind.  
*As far as Sasha knew, the decision to allow a girl to play on the football team was without precedent.*

**precibal**

adj  
/ prä'sibəl /  
L

occurring before meals.  
*The host graciously proposed a precibal toast to the guest of honor.*

**precinct**

n  
/ 'prä.sɪŋ(k)t /  
L > E

a part of a territory (as a city) having definite bounds or functions and often established for administrative purposes.  
*In this precinct voters cast their ballots at the middle school.*

**preciosity**

**precipice**

n  
/ 'presəpäs /  
L

a very steep, perpendicular, or overhanging place (as the face of a cliff).  
*Just looking down from the precipice made Gloria dizzy.*

**precipitately**

**precisionist**

**precocious**

**precocity**

n  
/ prä'käsədə /  
L

exceptionally early or premature development; especially : early development of the mental powers.  
*The precocity of five-year-old Stella becomes evident after just a few minutes of talking with her.*

**preconceive**

**precursor**

n  
/ prä'kərsər /  
L

one that precedes another in an office or process : forerunner.  
*Greek geometry was the precursor to modern calculus.*

**precursory**

**predator**

n  
/ 'predədə(r) /  
L

an animal that preys on or devours other animals for its food.  
*An insect may be of value because it is a predator on another insect that is a pest to humans.*

**predecessor**

n  
/ 'predəsəsə(r) /  
L

one who comes before in order of time; especially : a person who has previously occupied a position or office to which another has succeeded.  
*The employees are hoping that the new CEO is more labor-friendly than his predecessor.*

**predestine**

**predilection**

n  
/ ,pred'lekshən /  
L

inclination, liking, preference.  
*Moira has a predilection for bittersweet chocolate.*

**preeminent**

adj  
/ ,prä'emənənt /  
L

having paramount rank, dignity, or importance : first, outstanding, supreme.  
*The attorney introduced her expert witness as the preeminent researcher in his field.*

**preen**

v  
/ 'prēn /  
E

trim or dress with or as if with the beak or the tongue.  
*Kitty liked to sit and preen herself in the afternoon sun.*

**prefatorily**

**preferential**

**prejudicial**

adj  
/ˌpreɪdʒəˈdɪʃəl/  
L > E

leading to premature judgment or unwarranted opinion.  
*The jury was sequestered in order to prevent exposure to any prejudicial material.*

**preliminary**

n  
/prɪˈlɪmənəri/  
L

something introductory or preparatory.  
*As a preliminary to a video there is usually a warning regarding its use.*

**premonition**

n  
/ˌpreməˈnɪʃən/  
L

anticipation of an event without conscious reason.  
*Yolanda had a premonition that she would win the lottery.*

**prepollent**

**preposterous**

**prerogative**

n  
/prɪˈrɒɡədɪv/  
L

a special right or privilege belonging to a person, group, or class of individuals.  
*It is the prerogative of the president of the United States to have Air Force One at his disposal.*

**presage**

**presbyter**

**prescience**

n  
/ˌpreʃ(ə)ns(ɪ)əs/  
L

the human faculty or quality of being able to anticipate the occurrence or nature of future events : foresight.  
*In 1955 the city authorities had the prescience to set aside land for a future park site.*

**prescient**

adj  
/ˌpreʃ(ə)nt/  
L

having foreknowledge : characterized by foresight.  
*Carrie seemed unusually prescient as she sat smugly under her umbrella on what was once a clear afternoon.*

**presentient**

adj  
/preˈsentʃənt/  
L

apprehensive in advance : feeling or perceiving beforehand.  
*Kate was presentient of her lost dog's return.*

**prestidigitation**

**prestidigitator**

n  
/ˌprestəˈdɪdʒɪtədə(r)/  
L&F&It

a performer of sleight of hand.  
*The prestidigitator mystified the children by making cards appear and disappear.*

**presumably**

adv  
/preˈz(y)ʊməbl̩/  
L

by reasonable assumption : probably.  
*Mrs. Janko is presumably going to the Christmas party this year.*

**pretentious**

adj  
/preˈtɛnʃəs/  
L > F

making or possessing claims (as of excellence, superiority, greatness).  
*The pretentious candidate found little support among the common people.*

**preterition**

n  
/ˌpreɪtəˈrɪʃən/  
L

the act or an instance of passing by or over without mention, notice, or attention.  
*"I won't even mention his lesser crimes," cried the orator in preterition.*

**prevalent**

**prevaricate**

v  
/preˈvɑːrəkət/  
L

deviate from the truth : speak equivocally or evasively : lie.  
*Emmy tends to prevaricate whenever the teacher questions her behavior.*

**primaveral**

**primordial**

adj  
/prɪˈmɔ(ɪ)dēəl/  
L

existing at or from the beginning : first created or developed : earliest, primeval.  
*Blake's story depicted a creature emerging from the primordial ooze.*

**principal**

adj  
/ˈprɪn(t)səpəl/  
L

[has homonym: principle] most important, consequential, or influential.  
*The map showed principal roads, towns and cities, and locations of historic sites.*

**pristine**

adj  
/ˈprɪstɪn/  
L

belonging to the earliest period or state.  
*The antique chest was in pristine condition.*

**private**



**privilege**

n  
/ 'priv(ə)liʒ /  
L

a peculiar or personal advantage or right.

*Mr. Neng grants his neighbors the privilege of fishing in his pond.*

**proaulion**

n  
/ prō'òlēən /  
Gk

a portico or colonnade that opens into the narthex of a church or temple.

*Pine garlands adorned the proaulion.*

**proboscis**

n  
/ prō'bāsəs /  
Gk > L

the flexible conspicuously long snout of some animals; especially : the trunk of an elephant.

*An elephant's proboscis can support great weight.*

**probouleutic**

**proceed**

**procellous**

adj  
/ prō'seləs /  
L

stormy.

*There are many dangers for a small boat on a procellous sea.*

**proclivity**

n  
/ prō'klivədə /  
L

an inclination or predisposition toward something.

*After spending a couple of days in Las Vegas, Conan decided he had no proclivity for gambling.*

**procrustean**

adj  
/ prō'krəstēən /  
Gk name > L

marked by complete disregard of individual differences and by violent forcing into conformity with something.

*The principal's procrustean attitude left no room for a student government at the school.*

**proctor**

**procumbent**

**procurable**

**prodigal**

adj  
/ 'prädəgəl /  
L + Ecf

given to reckless extravagance.

*Victor has written a memoir of his prodigal youth in Europe.*

**prodigious**

adj  
/ prə'dijəs /  
L

extraordinary in bulk, extent, quantity, or degree : enormous, immense.

*The public works crews were complimented for coping with this year's prodigious job of snow plowing.*

**producible**

**profiterole**

**profligacy**

n  
/ 'präfləgəsē /  
L

reckless wastefulness and extravagance.

*Arno's profligacy during his sophomore year caused him to forfeit his scholarship.*

**profuse**

adj  
/ prə'fyüs /  
L

overly plentiful : bountiful.

*Buttons on the entertainer's suit were so profuse that not another one could be placed anywhere.*

**progenitor**

n  
/ prō'jenədə(r) /  
L

an ancestor in the direct line : forefather.

*Tad assumed his unusual height was inherited from a particularly tall progenitor.*

**progeny**

**prognosis**

n  
/ präg'nōsəs /  
Gk

the act or art of foretelling the course of a disease.

*Although the patient's surgery was touch and go, Dr. Symm's prognosis was for complete recovery.*

**prognostication**

**prolegomenon**

n  
/ ,prōlə'gämənən /  
Gk

a reading or group of readings or intellectual exercises leading to further understanding, development, or advance in knowledge or technique in a subject matter field.

*Dr. Taylor's course in art history constituted a carefully planned prolegomenon for students who would be choosing art as their major.*

**proliferation**

**prolific**

adj  
/ prə'lifək /  
L > F

occurring or existing in large numbers : abundant, profuse.  
*The article's prolific footnotes hampered rather than aided Tina's comprehension.*

**prolix**

adj  
/ 'prɒ.liks /  
L

given to verbosity and diffuseness in speaking or writing : long-winded.  
*Quentin's prolix style was not well suited to a short-answer exam.*

**prolutory**

**promenade**

n  
/ .prämə'nād /  
L > F

a leisurely walk or ride especially in a public place for pleasure, display, or exercise.  
*After the meeting Gilda and Jaime took a promenade down Main Street.*

**prominent**

**promontory**

n  
/ 'prämən.tɔrē /  
L

a high point of land projecting into a body of water.  
*The architect designed a home that blended in with the rocky promontory.*

**promulgate**

v  
/ 'präməl.gāt /  
L

make known (as a decree, a dogma) by open declaration : proclaim.  
*The high school principal attempted to promulgate the attendance policy many times, but the seniors mostly ignored him.*

**pronounceable**

adj  
/ prə'naun(t)səbəl /  
L > F > E + Ecf

capable of being pronounced.  
*A word that Dr. Cameron finds easily pronounceable could tie your tongue into knots.*

**propaedeutic**

adj  
/ .prɒpē'd(y)üdik /  
Gk  
needed as preparation for learning or study.

*Reading is a propaedeutic skill.*

**propaganda**

n  
/ .präpə'gandə /  
L

dissemination of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.  
*In 1941 President Roosevelt warned that the democratic way of life was being assailed by secret spreading of poisonous propaganda.*

**propagate**

v  
/ 'präpə.gāt /  
L

cause to spread out and affect a greater number or greater area : foster the spread of.  
*Chris uses e-mail to propagate news among his friends.*

**propensity**

n  
/ prə'pen(t)sədē /  
L

a natural inclination.  
*Most cats have a propensity to be curious.*

**propinquity**

n  
/ prɒ'pɪŋkwədē /  
L

nearness in place : proximity.  
*The roots of the trees in close propinquity to the new sidewalk will soon ruin it.*

**propitiate**

**propitious**

adj  
/ prə'pɪshəs /  
L > E

being of good omen : auspicious, encouraging, favorable.  
*Ray's perfect score on his science test was a propitious start for the new school year.*

**propolis**

n  
/ 'präpələs /  
Gk > L  
a brownish resinous material of waxy consistency collected by bees from the buds of trees and used as a cement.  
*A honeycomb is constructed from beeswax and propolis.*

**proposition**

n  
/ .präpə'zɪshən /  
L  
a project, plan, undertaking, or situation requiring some action.  
*The highway superintendent presented his proposition for spring street repair to the mayor.*

**proprietor**

**propulsion**

**prorogue**

v  
/ prɒ'rɒg /  
L > F  
defer, postpone.  
*Parliament decided to prorogue discussion of the bill until after the election.*

**prosatour**

n  
/ .prɒzə'tər /  
L > It > F  
a writer of prose.  
*Scott's fountain pen belonged to a famous prosateur of the 19th century.*

**proscenium**

n  
/ prə'stʃɛnɪəm /  
Gk

the wall that separates the stage from the auditorium in a modern theater.

*An apron stage juts out from the proscenium.*

**prosciutto**

n  
/ prə'shju:t(ɪ) /  
L > It

dry-cured spiced ham.

*Melon slices wrapped in prosciutto make a classic appetizer.*

**proselyting**

v  
/ 'prəsə'litiŋ /  
Gk

recruiting members for an institution, team, or group especially by the offer of special inducements.

*Though it does not engage in proselyting, the college usually turns out fine basketball teams.*

**prosody**

n  
/ 'prəsədē /  
Gk

the study of versification.

*The prosody of Horace's first ten odes was Humbert's downfall on the exam.*

**prospectus**

n  
/ prə'spektəs /  
L

a preliminary printed statement describing a business or other enterprise and distributed to potential buyers, investors, or participants.

*According to the prospectus, the scooter market increased threefold in the last year.*

**prospicience**

n  
/ prə'spɪʃən(t)s /  
L

the act of looking forward : foresight.

*Qualities associated with leadership usually include prospicience.*

**protean**

adj  
/ 'prəʊdēən /  
Gk name

[has near homonym: protein]

readily assuming different shapes or forms.

*An amoeba is a protean organism.*

**protocol**

n  
/ 'prəʊdə.kəl /  
Gk + Gk

a rigid long-established code prescribing complete deference to superior rank and strict adherence to due order of precedence and precisely correct procedure.

*Lieutenant Griffin was censured for violating protocol after he got up in the middle of the meal without excusing himself.*

**protuberant**

**provincial**

adj  
/ prə'vɪnʃəl /  
L

exhibiting the ways and manners of a province or rural district : unsophisticated.

*Katie's open midwestern friendliness was labeled "provincial" by the snooty big city dwellers.*

**provost**

n  
/ 'prəʊ.vɒst /  
L > E

a high-ranking administrative officer of an American university.

*Professor Myers met with the provost to discuss the new curriculum.*

**prohess**

n  
/ 'praʊəs /  
F > E

distinguished bravery : gallantry.

*The knight's prowess on the battlefield was surpassed only by the king's.*

**prudent**

**prytanis**

**psalmody**

n  
/ 'sɑ:l(m)ədē /  
Gk

the act, practice, or art of singing sacred songs in worship.

*Although the New England Puritans did away with church organs and instruments, they kept their psalmody.*

**psilanthropy**

n  
/ sɪ'lan(t)θrəpē /  
Gk + Gk

a doctrine of the merely human existence of Christ.

*A well-known subscriber to psilanthropy was Thomas Jefferson, who regarded Jesus as a great moral teacher but not as a divine being.*

**psilosis**

n  
/ sɪ'lɒsəs /  
Gk

a falling out of hair.

*Jerome's psilosis was a side effect of chemotherapy.*

**psoriasis**

**psychedelic**

adj  
/ ,sɪkə'delɪk /  
Gk + Gk

very bright in color.

*Kate showed Mary a psychedelic Peter Max poster she had saved as a memento of the '60s.*