

abatement

n

/ ə'bātment /

L > F

the act or process of reducing in degree or intensity.

The city council passed a law allowing periodic bans on the burning of wood, paving the way for further pollution abatement.

abiogenic

adj

/ ˌæ.bi.ɒ'jenik /

Gk + Gk + Gk

not produced by the action of living organisms.

Randy explained to the group that rock formations are completely abiogenic.

absent

adj

/ 'absənt /

L > F > E

not existing in a place.

Zebra mussels were at one time totally absent from the Great Lakes.

absolution

n

/ ˌabsə'ljuʃən /

L

a rite, ceremony, or form of words in which a remission of sins is pronounced, proclaimed, or prayerfully implored by a priest or minister.

Father O'Malley performed the rite of absolution on behalf of the thief who had just made his confession.

abstractum

n

/ abz'traktəm /

L

an entity considered apart from any particular object or specific instance.

Virtue is an abstractum.

accommodating

adj

/ ə'kämə.dādiŋ /

L + Ecf

disposed to be helpful or obliging.

The accommodating chef prepared the dish exactly as the diner asked.

ace

v
/ 'æs /

L > F > E

make (a hole in golf) in one stroke.
The golfer knew that he must ace the hole if he wanted to have a chance at the championship.

acquisition

n
/ ,ækwə'zɪʃən /

L

the act or action of obtaining.
The principal stated that the students' main goal should be the acquisition of knowledge.

acromegaly

n
/ ,ækrə'megəli /

Gk + Gk

a chronic disease of adult life that is characterized by a gradual and permanent enlargement of the flat bones (as the lower jaw) and of the hands and feet, abdominal organs, nose, lips, and tongue.
The circus giant was obviously afflicted with acromegaly.

actinide

n
/ 'æktə.nɪd /

ISV

a chemical element of the series of heavy radioactive metallic elements of increasing atomic number considered to begin with actinium or thorium and end with lawrencium.
Timmy won the contest by correctly identifying plutonium as an actinide.

adhesion

n
/ əd'hɛzhən /

L

the molecular attraction exerted between the surfaces of bodies in contact.
Water in a glass container is pulled upward by adhesion where its upper surface contacts the glass, which results in the formation of a meniscus.

adjoining

adj
/ ə'jɔɪnɪŋ /

L > F > E

touching or bounding at some point or on some line.
The Sampson family plans to build a summer home on the two adjoining lake lots they recently purchased.

adobo

n
/ ə'dɒbɒ /

Gmc > F > Sp

a dish of Spanish origin consisting of meat (as chicken or pork) marinated in a spicy sauce, browned, and then simmered in the marinade.
Annmarie's favorite dish at the restaurant is the chicken adobo.

adonize

v
/ 'adɒn.ɪz /

Gk name

beautify—usually used of a man.
Gram assured Grandpa that he needed nothing to adonize himself.

adoptee**adorned**

v
/ ə'dɔ(ə)rnd /

L > F > E

decorated : added to the pleasantness, attractiveness, splendor, or beauty of.

His shoes were polished, his nails were clean, his hat was well brushed, and a white handkerchief adorned his breast pocket.

adrenal

adj
/ ə'drɛnəl /

L

adjacent to the kidneys; specifically : relating to or derived from endocrine glands located near the kidneys.

Janna formed a support group for people who have Addison's disease, Cushing's syndrome, and other adrenal diseases.

adret**adroitly**

adv
/ ə'drɔɪt.lē /

F + Ecf

in a manner that is dexterous in the use of the hands.

The magician adroitly pulled a silver dollar out of Mort's right ear.

adscription

n
/ ɒdʒ'krɪpʃən /

L

[Note: Could be confused with ascription.] the quality or state of being added, annexed, or bound.
The adscription of the colony to the empire was protested by the native residents.

aerodromics

n pl
/ .a(ə)rə'drɒmɪks /

Gk

the science or art of flying aircraft.

Jim watched a video about the Wright brothers on the first day of his course in aerodromics.

aerolithology

n
/ .a(ə)rə(,)li'thɒləjə /

Gk + Gk + Gk

the science that deals with meteorites.

Experts in aerolithology were elated when five more meteorites from Mars were found in early 2002.

aerometer

n
/ a(ə)'ræmədə(r) /

Gk > F

an instrument for ascertaining the weight or density of air or other gases.

Stanley calibrated the old aerometer in his lab.

aeronautic

adj
/ .arə'nɒdɪk /

Gk > L

of or relating to the science that deals with the operation of aircraft.
The United States and Russia have been cooperating in aeronautic research.

Aesir

n pl
/ 'æsɪr /

ON

the chief gods of pagan Scandinavia.

Although the Norse Aesir aged like mortal beings, they could become young again by eating magic fruit.

Aesopian

adj
/ ē'sɒpēən /

Gk name

conveying an innocent meaning to an outsider but a concealed meaning to an informed member of a conspiracy or underground movement.

Fearful that the inmates would use Aesopian language in their communication, the warden placed each of them in solitary confinement.

affection

n
/ ə'fekʃən /

L

kind feeling : tender attachment.

A deep bond of affection soon developed between the boy and his dog.

affluent

n
/ 'a:flüənt /

L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. Also, word could be confused with effluent.] a stream or river flowing into a larger river or into a lake : a tributary stream.

The affluent responsible for the lake's pollution is the creek that runs beside the packing plant.

aggraded

v
/ ə'grādəd /

L

filled with loose material that results directly from rock disintegration or abrasion.

Silt had aggraded the river bed for at least a hundred miles.

agribusiness

n
/ 'agrə,biznəs /

L + E

a combination of the producing operations of a farm, the manufacture and distribution of farm equipment and supplies, and the processing, storage, and distribution of farm commodities.

Agribusiness in Great Britain was profoundly affected by the foot-and-mouth epidemic of 2001.

aition

n
/ 'idē.än /

Gk

[has near homonyms: Idaeian, Idean, idaein, idein] a narrative devised to explain the origin of a religious observance.

One familiar example of an aition is the story of Passover.

algebra

n
/ 'aljəbrə /

Ar > L

a branch of mathematics in which arithmetic relations are generalized and explored by using letter symbols to represent numbers, variable quantities, or other mathematical entities.

The guidance counselor encouraged George to wait one more year before taking algebra to fulfill his math requirement.

alias

n
/ 'ælɪəs /
L

an assumed name.

To avoid publicity the movie star used an alias when registering at the hotel.

alison

n
/ 'æləsən /

common name > E

[Note: Could be confused with alyssum.] a plant of a genus of European and Asiatic herbs having small usually yellow flowers.

Bernice added an alison to her bouquet.

alkaline

adj
/ 'alkəlɪn /
Ar > L > E + Ecf

of, relating to, or having the properties of a substance having marked basic properties; especially : relating to a hydroxide or carbonate of an alkali metal (as sodium or potassium).

Having identified the mystery substance as alkaline, Olympia proceeded to the next lab exercise.

alkane

n
/ 'alkān /
ISV

any of a series of saturated hydrocarbons derived from fat (as methane).

Methane is the simplest alkane and is a major by-product of the termite digestive system.

allergenic

adj
/ ,alə(r)'jenɪk /
Gk > G

of or relating to a substance that produces an exaggerated or pathological reaction marked by sneezing, respiratory embarrassment, itching, and skin rashes.

Eating too many tomatoes caused Horace's allergenic reaction.

allotropic

adj
/ ,alə'trɒpɪk /
Gk > ISV

[Note: Could be confused with allotropic.] of, relating to, or exhibiting the phenomenon of the existence of a substance in two or more different modifications.

Diamonds and graphite are two native allotropic forms of carbon.

alloy

n
/ 'alɔɪ /
F

a substance composed of two or more metals intimately mixed and united usually by being fused together and dissolving in each other when molten.

Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc.

Almighty

n
/ ɔl'mɪdē /

E
God.

The congregation decided they needed only a simple one-room building in order to worship the Almighty with appropriate humility.

aloft

adv
/ ə'lɔft /
ON > E

high up into the air.

Mike's kite went aloft with ease on the windy afternoon.

amass

v
/ ə'mas /
L > F + Gk > L > F

collect into a mass : bring together.

Laura accused her little brother of trying to amass a collection of spiders and snakes just to annoy her.

amine

n
/ ə'mēn /
ISV

any of a class of basic compounds derived from ammonia by replacement of hydrogen by one or more univalent hydrocarbon radicals or other nonacidic organic radicals.

Aniline, the simplest aromatic amine, is a toxic compound used in dyes.

ammoniac

adj
/ ə'mōnē.ək /
Gk > L > E

containing or having the properties of a colorless gaseous alkaline compound of nitrogen and hydrogen.

Gigi never could stand the ammoniac odor when she washed windows.

amphoteric

adj
/ .əmfə'terik /
Gk > ISV

capable of reacting chemically either as a base or as an acid.

Ysadora determined that aluminum oxide is amphoteric because it reacted with hydrochloric acid and sodium hydroxide, a base.

angels

n pl
/ 'anjəlz /
Gk > L > F > E

supernatural spirits commonly depicted as being winged and serving as God's messengers and divine intermediaries and as special guardians of an individual or nation.

Thomas Jefferson believed that man had found no angels in the forms of kings to govern him.

anhydrous

adj
/ 'an.hīdrəs /
Gk

destitute of water.

Sodium carbonate is an anhydrous salt that is used in making soap, soap powders, glass, and paper.

animation

n
/ .anə'māshən /
L

a series of drawings each of which shows a successive position of a figure or other object, the drawings being on film so the projection of the film produces a picture in which the objects drawn seem to move in a lifelike and realistic manner.

The history class viewed an animation depicting how the pyramids were probably constructed.

animism

n
/ 'anə.mizəm /
L

attribution of conscious life and a discrete indwelling spirit to every material form of reality, often including belief in the continued existence of individual disembodied spirits.

Voodoo as practiced in Haiti is a combination of animism and Roman Catholic ritual, in which a supreme god rules a large group of lesser spirits.

anionic

adj
/ 'a.nī.ənik /
Gk

relating to or consisting of negatively charged atoms or groups of atoms.

By gaining an electron, a chlorine atom becomes anionic.

antacid

n
/ .ant'asəd /
L + L

[Note: Could be confused with antiacid.] an agent that counteracts or neutralizes acidity.

For some reason, the voice on television saying "A major function of an antacid is to neutralize hydrochloric acid in gastric juice" kept running through Lorraine's mind.

Antaeon

adj
/ an'tēən /

Gk name
possessed of superhuman strength with suggestions of human qualities.

Marc cannot decide whether Superman or Wonder Woman is his favorite Antaeon figure.

ante

n
/ 'antē /
L

[has homonyms: anti, auntie, aunty] a poker stake usually arbitrarily fixed and usually put up before the deal to build the pot.

Each player in the lunchtime poker game put a nickel on the table as an ante.

aporematic**appeal**

n
/ ə'pēl /
L > F > E

an application or reference (as to a recognized authority) for corroboration, vindication, or decision.

Janice's appeal to reason swayed even her most emotional opponents

appertain

v
/ .apə(r)'tān /
L > F > E

belong either as something appropriate or as a part, possession, right, or attribute.

Puerto Rico is one of several islands that appertain to the United States

appoint

v
/ ə'pɔɪnt /
L > F > E

assign, designate, or set apart by authority.

The prom committee's chairman failed to appoint a cleanup crew.

appraiser

n
/ ə'prāzə(r) /
F > E

one that sets a value on property.

The appraiser set the value of Tim's piano at \$1200.

appreciative

adj
/ ə'prēshədɪv /
L

having or showing an expression of gratitude.

The appreciative guest sent a thank-you note to her host.

approbatory**April**

n
/ 'āprəl /
Etruscan? > L

the fourth month of the Gregorian calendar.

Afternoon showers occur frequently in many states during the month of April.

aqueous

adj

/ 'ækwēəs /

L

made from, with, or by means of water.

Pat set up the lab for the next experiment, which dealt with electrolysis of an aqueous solution of sodium chloride.

arachnoid

adj

/ ə'ra:k.nɔɪd /

Gk > L

of, relating to, or characterizing a large class of arthropods including scorpions, spiders, mites, and related forms.

Celia noted several arachnoid features on the bug she found in her sandbox.

are

n

/ 'a(a)(ə)r /

L > F

[has homonym: air] a metric unit of area equal to the area of a square 10 meters long on each side : 100 square meters.

The new office has floor space of almost 1 are.

argument

n

/ 'ɑ:rgyəmənt /

L

an act or process of contending or disagreeing in words : disputation.

Patrick Henry's famous impassioned speech focused on how ten years of argument with England had been in vain.

armada

n

/ ər'mädə /

L > Sp

a fleet of warships.

Harry referred to his collection of model warships as his "armada."

armor

n

/ 'ɑ:rmər /

L

the usually metal defensive covering worn in combat in the medieval period.

Martin could not understand how a medieval knight could mount a horse while wearing a suit of armor.

army

n

/ 'ɑ:rmē /

L > F > E

a great number : vast multitude.

Lance joked that his mom had bought enough snacks to feed an army of guests.

arpent

n

/ 'ɑ:rpənt /

Gaulish > L > F

a unit of land area still used in certain French sections of Canada and the United States equal to about 0.85 acre.

Henri started his farm on less than 1 arpent of land.

arrestee

n

/ ,ɑ:re'stē /

L > F > E

one who is under arrest.

The arrestee demanded to see his lawyer before answering any questions.

Arthurian

adj

/ ər'thʊrɪən /

E name

of, relating to, or characteristic of the legends or romances built around King Arthur and his knights.

The quest for the Holy Grail is Greg's favorite part of Arthurian legend.

aryl

n

/ 'arəl /

G? > ISV

a univalent aromatic radical (as phenyl or tolyl) derived from an arene by removal of one hydrogen atom from a carbon atom of the nucleus.

Natty wrote down that any member of a group that contains one or more fused benzene rings is an aryl, but he remained confused about the concept.

aspic

n

/ 'aspɪk /

F

a savory jelly made from fish or meat stock thickened with gelatin and seasoned and used cold to garnish meat or fish or to make a mold of meat, fish, or vegetables.

Ella's main course was garnished with aspic cut into heart shapes.

assassination

n

/ ə'sasən'æʃən /

Ar > L

act of murdering (a usually prominent person) violently.

Theodore Roosevelt assumed the presidency following the assassination of President William McKinley.

assignment

n

/ ə'sɪnmənt /

L > F

a specified amount of work or a definite task or mission prescribed by authority or undertaken as though so prescribed.

Several students complained about the assignment that was due the day after spring break.

assize

n

/ ə'sɪz /

L > F > E

a statute or ordinance regulating weights and measures or the weight, measure, proportions of ingredients, or price of articles sold in the market.

Predna's silver jewelry was produced in strict accordance with the local assize.

assuasive

adj

/ ə'swāsɪv /

L

having a pleasantly soothing quality or effect : calming.

The background music in the dentist's office did not have an assuasive effect on Stella.

astral

adj

/ 'astrəl /

Gk

of or relating to the stars.

The story of Juno and the baby Hercules is an astral myth about the origin of the Milky Way.

astride

adv

/ ə'strɪd /

E + E

with one leg on each side.

Frieda set her son John astride the pony.

astrologer

n
/ ə'strɒləʒə(r) /
Gk > L > F

one that practices divination that treats of the supposed influences of stars upon human affairs and of foretelling terrestrial events by their positions and aspects.

Nancy Reagan consulted an astrologer before setting up the president's daily schedule.

Atlas

n
/ 'atləs /
Gk name

one who bears a heavy burden : chief supporter : mainstay.

Without Dr. Cunningham as the Atlas of the conservation project, support gradually waned.

attuned

v
/ ə'tjuːnd /
L + L > E

brought into harmony or accord.

The horse demonstrated that it was attuned to its rider's desires.

Augean

adj
/ ɔː'ʃeɪn /
Gk name

extremely difficult and usually very distasteful.

Cleaning the rat-infested shed was an Augean task indeed.

autogenous

adj
/ ɔː'tɔːjənəs /
Gk

of origin within or from oneself.

Mrs. Griffin received an autogenous transplant in which some of her own bone marrow was extracted, cleansed of leukemia cells, and then reinjected.

aviation

n
/ ,ævɪ'eɪʃən /
L

aircraft manufacture, development, and design.

The sophisticated safety measures in modern aviation make air travel safer than road travel.

Aztec

n
/ 'az.tek /
Nahuatl > Sp

a Nahuatl people that founded the Mexican empire conquered by Cortez in 1519.

The shimmering golden mask was a superb example of the art of the Aztec.

Babelization

n
/ ,bæbələ'zæʃən /

Assyr-Bab > Bible name

the process of confusing through the mingling of markedly different languages and cultures.

The Babelization of speech in the big city made it difficult for the visitors to get the information they needed.

background

n
/ 'bak.graʊnd /
E + E

a position away from that which holds the center of attention.

Darby's parents stayed in the background during her party.

backhoe

n
/ 'bæk.həʊ /
E + E

an excavating machine in which the bucket is rigidly attached to a hinged stick on the boom and is drawn toward the machine in operation.

Slim manned the backhoe while Jed directed him from the ground.

backspin

n
/ 'bæk.spɪn /
E

a backward rotary motion imparted especially to a ball that causes the ball on touching the ground or some other surface to recoil, bounce backward, stop dead, or roll forward only a short distance.

Tommy used backspin to position the cue ball for the next shot.

badly

adv
/ 'bæd.lɪ /
E

poorly, faultily, defectively.

Roscoe says his car runs badly but will make it to Cicero.

baku

n
/ 'bä(.)kü /
Philippine name

a hat made of a fine lightweight straw made of fibers from the talipot palm.

Tony was wearing a baku as he got off the airplane after his trip to the Philippines.

baldmoney

n
/ 'bɔld.mənɪ /
E

any of several plants of the genus *Gentiana*.

The baldmoney likes the sun but doesn't thrive in rich soil.

ballabile

n
/ bæ'læbəlɪ /
It

a dance in classic ballet performed by the corps de ballet by itself or with the principal dancers.

The ballet ended with a ballabile that included many young dance students.

balletic

adj
/ bæ'ledɪk /
Gk > L > It > F

[has near homonym: balladic]
relating to or resembling ballet.

The Russian ice dancers performed a balletic program to win the Olympic gold medal.

ballroom

n
/ 'bɔl.rʊm /
Gk > L > F > E

a large room for dances.

Karin's birthday party was held in the ballroom of the Plaza Hotel.

ballyhoed

v
/ 'bælɪ.hʊd /
unknown

drummed up interest in by means of exaggerated, flamboyant publicity.

Every mile or two along the highway there were large signs that ballyhoed the popular amusement park.

balm

n
/ 'bæm /
Gk > L > F > E

a spicy odor.

The garden sent out radiance and balm into the air.

balmacaan

n
/ balmə'kan /
Scot geog name

a loose boxy overcoat made of rough wool and with raglan sleeves, a short turnover collar, and a closing that may be buttoned to the throat.

As Sherlock Holmes crossed the moors, Dr. Watson followed closely, wrapped in a warm balmacaan.

band

n
/ 'bænd /
Gmc > Prov > E

[has homonym: banned] a body of armed individuals : gang.

Al Capone's band of outlaws had a hideout in the northern woods of Wisconsin.

banquette

n
/ ban'ket /
Gmc > Prov > F

[has homonym: banquet] a raised way or foot bank along the inside of a parapet on which soldiers are posted to fire upon the enemy.
The battle plan called for the archers to stand on the banquette and fire upon the approaching enemy.

barn

n
/ 'bärn /
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a unit of area used in nuclear physics for measuring cross section.
Zirconium has an absorption cross section of only 0.18 barn for low-energy neutrons.

basic

adj
/ 'bäsik /
Gk > L > F > E

of, relating to, or characteristic of a compound capable of reacting with an acid to form a salt, its aqueous solutions if it is water-soluble having an acrid brackish taste and turning litmus blue.
The textbook stated that basic substances felt slippery and tasted bad, but the students were forbidden to touch or taste the chemicals in the lab.

batter

n
/ 'badə(r) /
E

[has homonym: badder] a mixture (as for cake or waffles) that consists of flour, liquid, and other ingredients and is thin enough to pour or drop from a spoon.
Gordon mixed batter for waffles while Julie sliced fruit and made bacon.

battlement

n
/ 'bad'lmənt /
Celt > L > F > E + Ecf

a parapet that consists of alternate solid parts and open spaces that is used in fortified buildings for defense.
The soldiers on the west battlement had been bribed to ignore the advancing enemy.

bawcock

n
/ 'bò,käk /
F > E

a fine fellow.
"How art thou today, good bawcock?" inquired Theo.

bayadere

n
/ 'bī(y)ə.di(ə)r /
L > Pg > F

a fabric made with a design of horizontal stripes in strongly contrasted colors.
Leslyn planned to use the remnant of bayadere for a wall hanging.

beachhead

n
/ 'bēch.hed /
unknown + E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an initial advance position or foothold to be used as vantage ground for extending to new areas.
The general discussed with the president his selection of Site A as the beachhead for the invasion.

beaming

adj
/ 'bēmiŋ /
E

marked by or expressive of extreme and unreserved joy, happiness, or satisfaction.

The beaming actress thanked the audience profusely for applauding.

bearskin

n
/ 'be(ə)r.skɪn /
E + E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an often large full-dress military hat made of the skin of a bear.

The palace guard adjusted his saber and bearskin before reporting for duty.

beastly

adj
/ 'bēstlē /
E

[Note: Could be confused with bestially, beastily, beastlily.] very nasty : abominable.

The mountain climbers were stymied in their attempt to reach the summit because of the beastly weather.

beaver

n
/ 'bēvə(r) /
E

a large semiaquatic rodent having webbed hind feet and a broad flat tail, feeding chiefly on bark and twigs.

Thanks to the adaptations of its teeth, the beaver has a remarkable ability to cut down trees for food and building mats.

bedchamber

n
/ 'bed.chāmbə(r) /
E + Gk > L > F > E
bedroom.

The ladies of the bedchamber were the only ones who ever saw the queen without her wig.

beetle

n
/ 'bēd·l /
E

[has homonym: beadle] any of various insects resembling those in the order Coleoptera.

Both a cockroach and a ladybug may be called a "beetle."

befallen

v
/ bə'fɒlən /
E

taken place especially as if by prompting of destiny or fate.

Sandro would have been a rich man, if not for the fortune that has befallen him.

begonia

n
/ bə'gɒniə /
F name

a plant of a large genus of succulent herbs native to the tropics but widely cultivated with asymmetrical leaves and flowers succeeded by capsular fruit.

Aunt Betsy planted a pink begonia beside Grandmother's grave.

beletter

v
/ bə'ledə(r) /
E + L > F > E

decorate the name of (a person) by appending abbreviations of official or academic rank.

Horace looks forward to the day he can beletter his name with M.D.

belief

n
/ bə'lēf /
E

trust in religion : persuasion of the validity of religious ideas.

Jennifer's belief has been unshakable through many unforeseen bumps in the road of life.

bellowing

v
/ 'be(·)lɔiŋ /
E

emitting a loud deep hollow prolonged sound.

"Stop bellowing," Mr. Jenkins said sharply. "Do you want the entire school to hear you?"

bellyband

benjamin

n
/ 'benjəmən /
F > E

a balsamic resin that is obtained from various trees of the genus *Styrax* that is used chiefly in treating irritations of the skin.
Zach smeared a dollop of benjamin on his mosquito bite.

benumbed

v
/ bə'nʌmd /
E

deprived of sensation or feeling.
The skiers returned to the lodge to warm their benumbed fingers and toes.

berserk

adj
/ bər'zɜrk /
ON

marked by a display of violent erratic behavior indicative of extreme excitement or agitation and suggestive of sudden mental unbalance.

Jake almost went berserk when the last concert tickets were sold to the person in line just ahead of him.

Bible

n
/ 'bɪbəl /

Phoenician geog name > Gk
a book containing the sacred writings of a religion.
The Koran is the Muslim Bible.

biblical

adj
/ 'bɪbləkəl /
Gk

of, relating to, derived from, or in accord with the Bible.
Camp Joseph's guidelines are biblical, although the counselors rarely ever mention the Bible.

bibliotherapy

n
/ ,bɪblə'therəpē /
Gk + Gk

the use of selected reading materials as curative facilitators in medicine and in psychiatry; also : guidance in the solution of personal problems through directed reading.
The child psychologist spoke to the parent group about the effectiveness of bibliotherapy.

bicaudate

adj
/ bɪ'kɔːdāt /
L

having or terminating in two tails.
Tommy paid two dollars at the fair to see a bicaudate salamander.

billabong

n
/ 'bɪləbɒŋ /
Australian native name
a backwater caused by overflow from a river and forming a stagnant pool.
Jill's postcard from Australia pictured an emu standing by a billabong.

billycan

n
/ 'bɪlɪkən /
Australian > E
[Note: Could be confused with billiken.] a cylindrical container having a set-in lid and a wire bail and often used for outdoor cooking.
Arlene accidentally knocked over the billycan, scattering the coals and starting a small fire.

biosensor

n
/ 'bi:ɒ.sən(t)sə(r) /
Gk + L

a device sensitive to a physical or chemical stimulus and transmitting information about a life process.

The technicians checked and rechecked every biosensor on board the space station.

birder

n
/ 'bɜːdə(r) /
E

an observer or identifier of wild birds in their natural surroundings.

Uncle Hayden is so avid a birder that he never goes anywhere without binoculars and his notebook.

birdlime

n
/ 'bɜːd.lɪm /
E + E

an extremely adhesive substance formerly used to trap small birds by smearing twigs where the birds are accustomed to perch.

Marvin begged the gardener not to use birdlime to get rid of the burgeoning sparrow population.

bisect

v
/ 'biː.sekt /
L

divide into two usually equal parts.

The teacher taught the class how to use a compass to bisect a line.

bitter

adj
/ 'bɪdə(r) /
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: bidder.] distasteful to the mind : distressing to contemplate.

Larry had to accept the bitter fact that all his houseplants were dying.

blackmail

n
/ 'blæk.məl /
E + ON > E

extortion of money by threats especially of subjecting someone to criminal prosecution or revealing something injurious to his or her reputation.

Blackmail was originally protection money that Scottish chieftains forced farmers and small landowners to pay for protection against plunder.

blanch

v
/ 'blæŋtʃ /
F > E

scald or parboil (foods) in boiling water or steam in order to remove the skin from, whiten, or stop enzymatic action in.

Jessica's cooking teacher told her to blanch and peel the tomatoes before adding them to the sauce.

blancmange

n
/ blæ'mænj /
F + L > F

a dessert made from gelatinous or starchy substances and milk usually sweetened, flavored, and shaped in a mold.

A touch of anisette is the secret to Cassandra's blancmange.

bleak

adj
/ 'blɛk /
E

lacking in warmth or kindness : cheerless, grim.

The bleak environmentalist warned of pollution's impact on life on Earth.

blindfold

v
/ 'blɪn(d).fəʊld /
E

cover the eyes of with or as if with a bandage.

Club members insisted that Demetrius blindfold his little brother before taking him to their secret hideout.

blithesome

adj

/ 'blɪθsəm /

E + EcF

lively in voice, manner, or appearance : cheery, merry.

*The blithesome lottery winner gushed that she had just booked a Caribbean cruise.***blockhead**

n

/ 'blæk'hed /

D > F > E + E

a dull and stupid person.

*Clara called Kory a "blockhead" for believing everything said in commercials.***bloodless**

adj

/ 'blʌdləs /

E

lacking or apparently lacking blood.

*Martha's face went bloodless with fright at the sight of her brother Joe's Halloween costume.***blooming**

adj

/ 'blʊmɪŋ /

E

flowering.

*A blooming azalea sits on the cedar chest in Paul's house.***blowhole**

n

/ 'bləʊ.həl /

E + E

a nostril in the top of the head of a whale or other cetacean.

*The whale gave one spout through its blowhole, took in fresh air, and was down again.***boater**

n

/ 'bɔːdə(r) /

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a man's stiff straw hat with a flat crown, ribbon band, and straight brim.

*Grandpa reminisced about when he attended Fourth of July picnics wearing his white linen suit and a boater.***boiling**

adj

/ 'bɔɪlɪŋ /

L > F > E

bubbling from the action of heat.

*The boiling blue and yellow liquids in the lab fascinated young Lucinda.***bolivar**

n

/ bɒ'lɪ.vər /

S Amer name

the basic monetary unit of Venezuela.

*Drew recently added a drachma, a ruble, and a bolivar to his currency collection.***bolt**

n

/ 'bɔlt /

E

a rod or heavy pin designed to fasten two or more objects together or to hold one or more objects in place, often having a head at one end and a screw thread cut upon the other end.

*Ever earthquake-conscious, Becky used a large bolt to fasten the heavy bookcase to the wall.***bond**

n

/ 'bænd /

E

a mechanism by means of which atoms, ions, or groups of atoms are held together in a molecule or crystal.

The fact that the length of the bond between atoms can be calculated flabbergasted Tenacity.

bondsman

n
/ 'bän(d)zmən /
E

[Note: Plural form is pronounced identically. Also, has near homonym: bondman.] one who assumes legal liability for another's debt, default, or failure to do a duty.

The defendant was released from jail after a bondsman posted his bail.

bookish

adj
/ 'bükish /
E

of or relating to books.

The result of Hilda's bookish life is that every available wall of her home is lined with books.

bookworm

n
/ 'bük.wərm /
E + E

one unusually devoted to reading or studying books.

Vanessa was a bookworm when she was in elementary school but recently started showing more interest in extracurricular activities.

boondockers

n pl
/ 'bün.däkə(r)z /
Tag?

field shoes.

After a long day of planting corn, Horace was relieved to get out of his boondockers.

bootlegger

n
/ 'büt.legə(r) /
F > E + ON > E

one who illegally manufactures, sells, or transports for sale especially alcoholic liquor.

Government agents followed the bootlegger to his secret still and destroyed it.

borane

n
/ 'bō.rān /
ISV

a compound of boron and hydrogen.

The simplest borane is called "diborane" and has 12 valence electrons.

boric

adj
/ 'bōrik /
L > F

of, relating to, or derived from a high-melting trivalent metalloid element that is known both in an extremely hard shiny black crystalline form and in the form of a greenish yellow or brown amorphous powder.

Boric acid is used industrially to make Pyrex.

borsholder

n
/ 'bó(r)s.höldə(r) /
E

a parish officer in Great Britain corresponding to the petty constable.

William Dalton was appointed borsholder of Keston in 1790.

bounty

n
/ 'baüntē /
L > E

a reward, premium, or subsidy especially when offered or given by the government.

The state offered a \$5000 bounty for the apprehension of the escaped convict.

bowgrace

n
/ 'baü.grās /
F > E

a fender of rope or waste for protecting a ship from injury by floating ice.

Captain Armstrong ordered the deckhand to reattach the bowgrace to the ship's prow.

bowler

n
/ 'bɔlə(r) /

E name

a stiff felt hat with a dome-shaped crown and a rather narrow rolled brim—called also “derby.”

Until recent times a proper English gentleman wouldn't leave home without his bowler and brolly.

brad

n
/ 'bræd /

E

a slender wire nail with a small deep round head.

Ricardo used a brad to attach the moulding.

brainstorm

v
/ 'bræn.stò(ə)rəm /

E + E

find a solution for a specific problem by amassing spontaneously occurring ideas.

Henley's group decided to brainstorm in the morning session and evaluate the produced ideas in the afternoon session.

brandy

n
/ 'brændē /
D

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word could be confused with barani.] a trampoline and tumbling stunt in which the performer does a front somersault with a half twist.

The crowd went wild as Chris executed a perfect brandy.

brassy

adj
/ 'brasē /

E

of the color of brass, a usually yellow alloy of copper with zinc or formerly tin.

The brassy color of Mrs. Gilbert's hair could not possibly be natural.

breaker

n
/ 'brākə(r) /
F > Sp > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: braker.] a small water cask especially for use in a lifeboat.

The first thing the survivors did was to ration the water in the breaker.

breastplate

n
/ 'brɛst.plāt /
E + Gk? > L > F > E

a metal plate protecting the torso as defensive armor.

The knight with the broken collarbone struggled painfully out of his breastplate.

bridegroom

n
/ 'brɪd.ɡrʊm /

E

a man just married or about to be married.

The bridegroom wiped frosting from his mouth and smiled for the photographer.

bridge

n
/ 'brɪdʒ /
E

any of various widely differing card games for four players in two partnerships.

Barb and Ray invited their neighbors over to play bridge and watch videos.

briskly

adv
/ 'brɪsklē /
F? + Ecf

in a quick, energetic manner.

Because of the cold Sam walked briskly to the store.

brisque

n
/ 'brɪsk /
F

[has homonym: brisk] an ace or a ten in certain card games in which the ten ranks between the ace and the king.

Emily needed a brisque to take the trick and win the game.

broadcast

n

/ 'brɒd.kɑst /

E + ON > E

a single radio or television program.

*Dad always stops whatever he is doing in order to listen to the news broadcast.***broil**

v

/ 'brɔɪl /

L? > F > E

cook by direct exposure to radiant heat (as on a grill over live coals or beneath a gas flame or electric coil).

*Sharon brought two salmon steaks to broil on Gary's hibachi.***brokenhearted**

adj

/ ,brɒkən'hɑ:dəd /

E + E

having the spirits depressed : crushed by grief or despair.

*Broke and brokenhearted, the prodigal son returned to ask his father's forgiveness.***broker**

n

/ 'brɒkə(r) /

F > AF > E

an agent who for a fee or commission negotiates contracts of purchase and sale between buyers and sellers.

*Pat's grandfather was a cotton broker who lost a fortune in the Crash of '29.***brood**

n

/ 'brʊd /

E

[has homonym: brewed] the offspring of the same hen especially if nearly of the same age.

*Tim selected the largest chick from the brood for a pet.***brooklime**

n

/ 'brʊ.klɪm /

E

[Note: Could be confused with geographical name Brookline.] any of certain aquatic or semiaquatic plants of the genus Veronica.

*American brooklime can be found along stream banks, swamps, clear ponds, and springs.***brownstone**

n

/ 'braʊn.stɒn /

E + E

a reddish brown sandstone used for building.

*The house faced with brownstone was built about 75 years ago.***buff**

adj

/ 'bʌf /

Gk > L > It > F

of a light to moderate yellow color.

*Cedric chose buff paper for his résumé.***bunch**

n

/ 'bʌnʃ /

E

aggregate, cluster; especially : an aggregate of things of the same kind existing as a natural group or considered together.

Jason selected the largest bunch of grapes he could find and put it in his dad's grocery cart.

bundle

n
/ 'bʌndl /
D > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a shipping unit of about 125 pounds that is used in papermaking.
Rick bargained to reduce the shipping rate by 25 cents per bundle.

Bunraku

n
/ bʌn'rä(,)kü /
Jpn

Japanese puppet theater featuring large costumed wooden puppets, onstage puppeteers, and a chanter who speaks all the lines.
Bunraku features four-foot-high dolls adroitly manipulated by black-clad puppeteers in full view of the audience.

bunt

v
/ 'bʌnt /
Gmc > F > E

block or push (the ball) in a game of baseball within the infield by meeting it with a loosely held bat and no swing.
The team coach told Jackson to bunt the next pitch.

burble

v
/ 'bɜːbəl /

imit E
become turbulent.
In the wind-tunnel tests, Hans could see the air burble off the left wing.

burning

adj
/ 'bɜːnɪŋ /
E

on fire.
Al backed his chair away from the heat of the burning campfire.

bushels

n pl
/ 'bʊʃəlz /
E

units of dry capacity used in the United States, each equal to 2,150.42 cubic inches.
By his reckoning, Herman had hauled over 10,000 bushels of leaves by the end of the fall.

cack

n
/ 'kæk /

unknown
a baby's heelless shoe with a soft leather sole.
The shoe clerk recommended a size 3 cack for Amanda's three-month old boy.

cadences

n pl
/ 'kæd'ɪn(t)səz /
L > It > E

the modulated and rhythmic recurrences of any sound, especially the sounds of nature.
Mary whispered in Jean's ear so quietly that her words sounded merely like broken cadences of breathing.

calash

n
/ kə'lash /
Czech > G > F

a large hood worn by women in the 18th century.
Priscilla's calash was made of green silk and was supported by whalebone hoops.

Calinago

n
/ kalə'nä(,)gō /
Carib > Sp

a native of the Lesser Antilles.
The guide for the couple's island tour was a Calinago.

caller

n
/ 'kòlə(r) /
ON > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has near homonym: collar.] one that makes the calls for a square dance.

Don is the senior square dance club's favorite caller.

Callisaurus

n
/ ,kalə'sòrəs /

Gk
a small genus of lizards (family Iguanidae).

The gridiron-tailed lizard is a member of the genus Callisaurus living in the southwestern United States.

calorimetric

adj
/ ,kalərə'metrik /
(L + Gk) > F
of or relating to the measurement of quantities of heat.
The lab manual explained how to make a calorimetric device using two Styrofoam cups and a thermometer.

calzone

n
/ kal'zōn /

L > It
a baked or fried turnover of pizza dough stuffed with various fillings usually including cheese.

Jenna's calzone was so large that it nearly covered the entire plate.

camcorder

n
/ 'kam.kò(r)də(r) /
L > E + L > E

a small portable videocassette camera and recorder combined.
Jessica borrowed her neighbor's camcorder to make a tape for her parents.

Camelot

n
/ 'kamə.lät /

E name
a time, place, or atmosphere of idyllic happiness.
The assassination of President Kennedy is sometimes referred to as "the end of Camelot."

camisa

n
/ kə'mēsə /
Gmc > L > Sp

a woman's embroidered blouse with loose sleeves.
Jeri practiced her Spanish while bargaining for a colorful camisa.

cancan

n
/ 'kan.kan /

F
a woman's dance of French origin characterized by high kicking usually while holding up the front of a full ruffled skirt.

There used to be many clubs in Paris where the cancan was performed.

cannoli

n pl
/ kə'nōlē /

L > It
tubes of pastry fried in deep fat and filled with a sweetened mixture of ricotta cheese, cream, and flavoring.

Aunt Carla's cannoli are so good that an Italian restaurant offered to buy her recipe.

cantatrice

n
/ ,kəntə'trēchē /
L > It > F

[Note: One of plural forms is pronounced similarly.] a woman singer; especially : an opera singer.
The cantatrice sang most poignantly when she bid goodbye in her death scene.

car

n
/ 'kär /

L > G or D > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a large live-box for keeping fish or lobsters alive.

Sherman tossed the lobster into the car and continued fishing.

carbide

n
/ 'kär.bīd /

L + ISVcf

a binary compound of carbon with a more electropositive element.

Carbon combines with metals to form several kinds of carbide, some of which are used in metal-cutting tools.

carga

n
/ 'kärgə /

Sp

a unit of weight usually of a value about equal to 300 pounds used in Mexico and certain other Spanish-American countries.

Juan ordered a carga of rice from his vendor.

carstone

n
/ 'kär.stōn /

E

a firmly cemented ferruginous sandstone found in the British isles.

Carstone, once a traditional English building material, is now used largely for constructional fill.

cartload

n
/ 'kärt.lōd /

ON > E + E

one third of a cubic yard (as of dirt).

Every spring, Glennis goes to the tree nursery and buys a cartload of dirt for her garden.

casement

n
/ 'kāsmənt /
F? > E

a window sash that opens on hinges.

The imprisoned princess chipped away at the mortar surrounding the iron bars set in the casement.

Cassandra

n
/ kə'sandrə /

Gk name

one who prophesies misfortune or disaster.

Mary's accurate intuition about impending adversity makes her a Cassandra whose warnings should be heeded.

caste

n
/ 'kast /

L > Pg

[has homonym: cast] one of the hereditary classes into which the society of India is divided in accordance with a system fundamental in Hinduism.

Members of the Brahman caste have the exclusive right to become Hindu priests.

catawba

n
/ kə'tɒbə /
Choctaw

a very dark to blackish red.

When Morton added a layer of indigo paint to his red Volkswagen, the resulting color could only be called "catawba."

catch

n
/ 'kætʃ /
L > F > E

[has near homonyms: cache, cash, ketch] something that is taken in or as if in a trap; especially : the total quantity trapped at one time.

The commercial fishing boat returned to the harbor with an unusually good catch.

cate

n
/ 'kæt /
L > F > E

[has homonym: kate] a dainty or choice food : delicacy.

Some consider caviar a cate; others disdainfully refer to it as "fish eggs."

catenate

v
/ 'kædə.nāt /
L

connect in a series of links or ties.

"The ability of carbon to catenate is discussed on page 743 of your textbook," the lab technician said condescendingly.

Catholic

adj
/ 'kæθ(ə)lɪk /
Gk > L > F

of, relating to, or being a body of Christians belonging to any of various churches claiming historical continuity from the ancient undivided Christian Church.

Roger and Theresa are planning a Catholic wedding with a full mass.

cationic

adj
/ 'kæd.i.ənɪk /
Gk > ISV

relating to or consisting of positively charged atoms or groups of atoms.

Sodium atoms can easily lose an electron and thus become cationic.

cense

v
/ 'sen(t)s /
L

perfume.

During the ceremony, the priests cense the altar.

cesspool

n
/ 'ses.pül /
L > F > E

an underground catch basin that is used where there is no sewer.

A contractor determined the best location for the farmhouse's cesspool.

chain

n
/ 'tʃeɪn /
L > F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a unit of length equal to 66 feet.

According to the original survey, Lynette's property has a total frontage of 1 chain.

charm

n
/ 'chärm /
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a flock of finches.

The largest finch flew out of the charm and alighted on the chimney.

charterhouse

n
/ 'chärdə:häus /
F > E

a monastery for members of an austere religious order founded by St. Bruno in 1084.

Monks leave the charterhouse once a week to take a long walk.

chelate

v
/ 'kē.lāt /

Gk
combine with (a metal) so as to form a ring of usually five or six atoms in which a central metallic ion is held in a coordination complex by one or more groups, each of which can attach itself to the central ion by at least two bonds.

Lead poisoning is usually treated with agents such as EDTA or BAL that chelate with lead to form a stable complex of ions.

cherry

adj
/ 'cherē /
Gk > L > F > E

[has homonym: chary] of a variable color averaging a moderate red that has a hint of yellow.
Santa is often portrayed with cherry cheeks.

chessman

n
/ 'ches.man /
F&L > E

[Note: Could be confused with plural form of word.] one of 32 pieces used in chess.

Sasha's cat knocked over a chessman as she jumped up on the board.

chesstree

n
/ 'ches.trē /
F > E

a piece of wood with a pulley or pulleys bolted in the topside of an antiquated ship.

Elmo wrapped the line around the chesstree to keep from tripping on it as he swabbed the deck.

Chicano

n
/ chi'känō /
Sp

[Note: Could be confused with Chicana.] a male American of Mexican descent.

Rodrigo is proud to be a Chicano.

chickling

n
/ 'chikliŋ /
L > F > E

the grass pea of Europe cultivated for seeds and forage.

Seeds of the chickling can be made into paste balls, put in curry, or boiled and eaten like legumes.

Chinarra

n
/ chə'närə /

Amerind > Sp

an Indian people comprising a major subdivision of the Concho group.

The small museum was devoted to the culture of the Chinarra.

chiral

adj

/ 'kī(ə)rəl /

Gk

of, relating to, or being a molecule that is nonsuperimposable on its mirror image.

Ray tried to explain why chiral compounds are called “optically active” and what they do to light that passes through them.

chlorella

n

/ klə'relə /

Gk > L

any of the nonmotile unicellular green algae of the genus *Chlorella*.

In the ponds studied, the chlorella proved to be the most efficient photosynthetic organism.

chockablock

adv

/ 'chäkə.bläk /

unknown + D > F > E

in a crowded or overflowing manner.

Condos and cabins were built chockablock along the tiny beach.

choucroute

n

/ shük'rüt /

F + G > F

sauerkraut.

Elena ordered a bratwurst covered with choucroute.

christened

v

/ 'kris'nd /

Gk > L > E

received or initiated into a Christian church by the rite of baptism.

The priest christened the Jensens' new baby Theodore.

Christian

n

/ 'kris(h)chən /

Gk > L

one who believes or professes or is assumed to believe in Jesus Christ and the truth as taught by him.

When Marie was baptized a Christian, she decided to read the Bible daily.

chroma

n

/ 'krōmə /

Gk

the color dimension on the Munsell scales that correlates most closely with saturation.

The aspect of color known as “chroma” refers to its vividness.

chromic

adj

/ 'krōmik /

Gk

of, relating to, or derived from a blue-white usually hard and brittle metallic element that is resistant to corrosion and is used chiefly in alloys and in electroplating.

Mr. McGonigle corrected Stan's diagram of the structure of chromic acid to include four oxygen atoms.

chronicles

n pl

/ 'kränəkəlz /

Gk > L > F

historical accounts of facts or events that are arranged in order of time and usually without analysis or interpretation.

In his chronicles the geologist describes the many expeditions he took to study volcanos.

church

n

/ 'chərch /

E

a building set apart for public especially Christian worship.

The church of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul was built in the sixth century A.D.

cinereal

adj

/ sə'nirēəl /

L

gray tinged or shaded with black—
used especially in technical
descriptions in biology.

*The cinereal plumage of the vulture
made it look as if it had fallen in an
ashpit.*

circumambient

adj

/ ,sərkəm'ambēənt /

L

surrounding, encompassing.

*The circumambient fog made
driving extremely difficult.*

cis

adj

/ 'sis /

L

[has homonym and near homonym:
sis and cyst] having or
characterized by certain atoms or
groups on the same side of the
molecule.

*Greg said that cis isomers and
trans isomers were molecules made
of the same combination of atoms,
but in different configurations and
often with very different properties.*

clasp

n

/ 'klasp /

E

a releasable catch for holding
together two or more objects or
complementary parts of something.

*Sharon struggled impatiently with
the ornate clasp on the small box
that Jamal gave her.*

clearing

n

/ 'kliriŋ /

E

a tract of land made free of wood
and brush.

*The deer moved among the trees at
the edge of the clearing.*

cleave

v

/ 'klēv /

E

adhere firmly, loyally, and
unwaveringly.

*The minister said that even though
doubt was a natural human failing,
believers must still cleave to the
doctrines of the church.*

clingy

adj

/ 'kliŋē /

E

having a strong emotional
attachment or dependence.

*Dylan was nervous and clingy
when his mother took him to his
new kindergarten.*

cloak

n

/ 'klōk /

L > ON > F

something resembling or
suggesting an outer garment.

*The princesses decided, "Words
and numbers are of equal value,
for, in the cloak of knowledge, one
is warp and the other woof."*

clog

n

/ 'kläg /

E

[Note: The definition provided is
not the one most commonly
associated with this word.] a heavy
shoe, sandal, or overshoe having a
thick typically wooden sole.

*The thick-soled clog is the
precursor of the modern tap shoe.*

clogger

n
/ 'klägə(r) /

E
one who performs a dance with a clattering rhythm while wearing clogs.

Skip is a clogger and performs every year at the state fair.

cloister

v
/ 'klöistə(r) /

L > F > E
confine in or as if in an enclosed space : seclude from the world.

Brenda knew the property manager would disapprove of her new puppy, but she couldn't cloister Muffin in her apartment any longer.

cluster

n
/ 'kləstə(r) /

E
a number of similar things grouped together in association or in physical proximity.

Several people who lived in the cluster of houses near the chemical plant have serious health problems.

coalmouse

n
/ 'kɔl.maüs /

E
a small greenish gray European bird with a black cap and white patch on the neck.

The coalmouse looked around suspiciously before flying off.

cofeature

n
/ kɔ'fēchə(r) /

L > E + L > F > E
a presentation in a program (as in an entertainment) accompanying but usually subordinate in interest to a main attraction.

Kerry thought that the cofeature was more interesting than the feature presentation.

cognate

adj
/ 'käg.nāt /

L
of a language : related by descent from the same recorded or assumed ancestral language.

An 18th-century judge named William Jones revealed that ancient Sanskrit is actually cognate with Western European languages.

coherent

adj
/ kɔ'hirənt /

L
having the quality of holding together firmly.

Marcello cooked the risotto for so long that it came out of the pan in a single coherent lump.

coincidence

n
/ kɔ'in(t)sədən(t)s /

L
the concurrence of events or circumstances appropriate to one another or having significance in relation to one another but between which there is no apparent causal connection.

By coincidence, Mary's wedding date is the same day her cousin plans to get married.

cold

adj
/ 'kɔld /

E
having a temperature notably below that compatible with human comfort.

The house grew so cold with the heat cut off that Eric moved into the garage, which had a kerosene heater.

collared

adj

/ 'kälərd /

L

[has homonym: collard] wearing, having, or depicted with a band, strip, or chain worn or placed around the neck.

Several collared men stood holding farm implements in the old daguerreotype.

collywobbles

n pl

/ 'kälē.wäb'lz /

(L + G)? > E?

a slight intestinal disturbance accompanied by abdominal cramps.

Bruno came down with the collywobbles after the pie-eating contest.

commensurable

adj

/ kə'mezh(ə)rəbəl /

L + L > F > E + L > Ecf

[Note: Could be confused with commensurable.] equal in size, extent, amount, or degree.

Iron has disadvantages almost commensurable with its virtues.

commutation

n

/ ,kämyə'tāshən /

L

change of a legal penalty or punishment to a lesser one.

At the last minute the governor called in his commutation of the prisoner's death sentence to life imprisonment.

companion

n

/ kəm'panyən /

L > It > D?

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a structure with frames and sashes formerly incorporated into the deck of a vessel to admit light to a cabin or lower deck.

A large wave crashed into the companion and startled the crew members below.

comportment

n

/ kəm'pōrtmənt /

F

manner of bearing : deportment, demeanor.

The mysterious woman, who claimed to be a princess, had a regal comportment and a very tasteful wardrobe.

Compositae

n pl

/ kəm'pāzətē /

L

a very large family of herbs, shrubs, and trees considered to constitute the most highly evolved plants and characterized by florets arranged in dense heads that resemble single flowers.

Plants in the Compositae can be as small as a dandelion and as large as a sunflower.

compress

v
/ kəm'pres /

L
reduce the volume of by or as if by pressure : make hard or solid.

At the vitamin factory the children were shown a machine that could compress the ingredients into a pill in less than a second.

conciliating

adj
/ kən'silē.ādīŋ /

L
tending to become or try to become friendly.

Jane's fears will completely wear off when she gets a little acquainted with Mrs. Elton's family, for there is nothing in their manners but what is highly conciliating.

concrete

n
/ 'kɒn.krēt /

L > E
a hard strong building material.
The dog walked on the concrete before it set, leaving its paw prints.

condescension

n
/ ,kændə'senchən /

L
an act or instance of assuming an air of superiority (as to one inferior or less fortunate).
With dry condescension Mr. Blain describes the natives as "primitive" and "uncivilized."

conepate

n
/ ,kɔnə'pədə /

Nahuatl > Sp
hog-nosed skunk.
Hernandez was the first naturalist to classify the conepate and other skunks in Mexico.

confection

n
/ kən'fekshən /

L
[has near homonym: convection]
delicacy; usually : a preparation of fruits, nuts, roots, or other morsels with sugar.
Turkish delight is a chewy confection often flavored with finely chopped nuts and rosewater.

confinement

n
/ kən'fɪnmənt /

L > F
the act of restraining or state of being restrained within a limited area.

After three years' confinement, the convict was released on parole.

Confucian

adj
/ kən'fyūshən /

Chin name
[has near homonym: confusion] of or relating to the Chinese philosopher Confucius or his teaching or followers.
Most Westerners' knowledge of Confucian thought is nonexistent or limited to a few spurious quotations.

confusing

adj
/ kən'fyūziŋ /

L
misleading, perplexing.
"Everything is so confusing and all your words only make things worse," he said.

congealed

v
/ kən'jeld /

L > F > E
made viscid or of a consistency like jelly.
The impudent soldier's punishment was to clean the congealed grease from the wall behind the cookstoves.

fajitas

n pl

/ fə'hētəz /

AmerSp

marinated strips of beef or chicken or sometimes shrimp grilled or broiled and served usually with a flour tortilla and various savory fillings (as sautéed peppers, guacamole, and sour cream).

Joshua made a special dinner of chicken fajitas for his Spanish tutor.

fasting

n

/ 'fastɪŋ /

E

the act of abstaining from food especially for an unusual time and often as a form of religious observance or for therapeutic purposes.

Bernadette hoped to reach a new communion with God through regular prayer and occasional fasting.

fearful

adj

/ 'fi(ə)rfəl /

E

full of fear, alarm, awe, concern, or apprehension.

When surgery was advised, the fearful patient decided to seek a second opinion.

feis

n

/ 'fesh /

IrGael

an Irish folk festival featuring games and competitions and usually traditional Irish music and dancing.

Kelly and Heather performed dances in the feis sponsored by the Irish-American Club.

fellow

n

/ 'fe(,)lō /

ON > E

[has homonym: fellow] a graduate student in an American university who is granted money to continue research usually in preparation for an advanced degree and often with certain teaching duties.

Robert, a senior fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, will be the first speaker at the symposium.

ferric

adj

/ 'ferik /

L

of, relating to, or containing iron.

Amy's report on the uses of iron included a section on ferric chloride, which is used in treating industrial wastes and in etching, among other things.

convention

n
/ kən'venchən /

L
a practice in bidding or playing that by agreement between partners in certain card games (as bridge) conveys some information not necessarily deducible by logic.
Doris and Henry played bridge using a convention of their own devising.

conversion

n
/ kən'vɜrzhən /

L
a change in one's religious orientation marked also by a concomitant change in belief.
The conversion of St. Paul on the road to Damascus was a favorite topic of Renaissance painters.

cooncan

n
/ 'kūn.kən /
Sp&E

[Note: Could be confused with conqian.] a game of rummy played by two or more with two packs of cards including two jokers.
After losing ten games of cooncan in a row, Troy threw up his hands in despair and quit.

coonskin

n
/ 'kūn.skɪn /

Algonquian + E
a cap made of the skin or pelt of the raccoon.
The frontiersman wore a coonskin with the tail hanging down his back.

coppernose

n
/ 'kəpə(r)nōz /
L > F > E

an inflamed nose such as that of acne rosacea or that sometimes produced by habitual drunkenness.
W. C. Fields was famous for his misanthropy and his coppernose.

cord

n
/ 'kɔ(ə)rd /
Gk > L > F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: chord.] a unit of quantity of wood equal to a stack 4 x 4 x 8 feet or 128 cubic feet.
After splitting a cord of firewood, Ray went inside for some hot oatmeal.

cordwinder

n
/ 'kɔrd.wɪndər /
F > E

shoemaker.
Alvin is the best cordwinder in town, yet his prices are reasonable.

corgi

n
/ 'kɔrgē /
W

a short-legged long-backed dog with foxy head belonging to either of two Welsh varieties.
The Pembroke Welsh corgi in the photo with Queen Elizabeth II is one of four such dogs she owns.

corky

adj
/ 'kɔrkē /
L > Ar > E

peculiar to or suggestive of a beverage spoiled by corking.
Sarnak rejected the corky wine and told the waiter to bring another bottle.

correctional

adj
/ kə'rekshən'l /
L

dealing with or charged with the treatment of offenders through a program involving penal custody, parole, and probation.
After his conviction for counterfeiting, Matt had to serve several years in a correctional facility.

correlative

adj

/ kə'relədɪv /

L

of paired words or expressions :
regularly used together but
typically not adjacent to each other.
*The teacher devoted an entire
period to subject-verb agreement
when correlative conjunctions are
used.*

corundum

n

/ kə'rʌndəm /

Skt > Tamil

aluminum oxide occurring in nature
in massive form and as variously
colored rhombohedral crystals
including the gems ruby, sapphire,
oriental amethyst, oriental emerald,
and oriental topaz.

*Ruby can't believe that all the
different forms of corundum,
including the gem she was named
after, contain the material from
which aluminum foil is made.*

cossack

n

/ 'kɑ:sək /

Turk > Russ&Ukrainian

a member of a favored military
caste of Russian frontiersmen and
border guards in Czarist Russia
who played an important part in
Russian expansion.

*The museum's hat display included
one worn by a cossack who was an
ancestor of Mr. Kuban, the curator.*

couching

n

/ 'kɑ:ʃɪŋ /

L > F > E

a style of embroidery in which a
flat or raised design is made by
threads or cords fastened down by
small stitches at regular intervals.

*The bodice of the queen's gown
was decorated with satin threads
and golden couching.*

coulis

n

/ kju:'li /

F

[has near homonyms: coolie,
cooly, coolly, coulee, coulie] a
thick sauce made with pureed
vegetable or fruit and often used as
a garnish.

*For dessert, Kathy ordered a
chocolate torte with raspberry
coulis.*

coulometric

adj

/ 'kju:lə'metrik /

F name + Gk

of or relating to chemical analysis
performed by determining the
amount of a substance released in
an electrolysis by measuring the
amount of electrical charge used.

*Because an aqueous sodium
chloride solution can contain
several species that can be oxidized
and reduced, Anna used
coulometric analysis.*

counterclockwise

adv

/ ,kaʊntə(r)'kläk,wɪz /

L > F > E + L > F > D > E + E

in a direction opposite to that in
which the hands of a clock rotate.

*Fay never can remember whether
turning the jar lid counterclockwise
tightens or loosens it.*

counterpane

n

/ 'kaʊntə(r),pān /

L > F > E

bedspread.

*Aretha received a silk and linen
counterpane as a wedding present.*

couple

n

/ 'kʌpəl /

L > F > E

two or an indefinite number of.

*George's lunch consisted of a
couple of apples and a candy bar.*

course

n
/ 'kɔ(ə)rs /
L

[has homonym: coarse] policy chosen.

Though he did not know what course others would take, for Patrick Henry the choice was simple: liberty or death.

courtyard

n
/ 'kɔrt,yärd /
L > F > E + E

a court or enclosure adjacent to or attached to a house, castle, palace, or other building.

The king was pacing in the courtyard when the messenger breathlessly announced the birth of the prince.

cram

v
/ 'kram /
E

study intensively or under pressure especially for an examination.

Helga planned ahead so that she would not have to cram on Thursday night for Friday's midterm.

crawl

v
/ 'krɔl /
ON > E

[has homonym: kraal] move, progress, or advance slowly or laboriously.

The soldiers were forced to crawl across a minefield to escape the enemy.

criminology

n
/ ,krimə'näləjē /
L + Gk

the scientific study of crime as a social phenomenon, of criminal investigation, of criminals, and of penal treatment.

Many police officers take courses in criminology and penology at community colleges.

critic

n
/ 'krɪdɪk /
Gk

one who engages often professionally in the analysis, artistic evaluation, or appreciation of works of art (as literary or dramatic works).

Although the critic enjoyed the play as a whole, he wasn't too pleased with some of the acting.

critical

adj
/ 'krɪdɪkəl /
Gk + Ecf

relating to, indicating, or being a state in which or a measurement or point at which some quality, property, or phenomenon suffers a finite change or undergoes drastic alteration.

Every substance has a critical temperature above which its gas form cannot be made to liquefy.

croquettes

n pl
/ krɔ'kɛts /
F

small cone-shaped or rounded masses consisting usually of minced fowl, meat, or vegetable coated with egg and bread crumbs and fried in deep fat.

On Friday nights Minnie always makes salmon croquettes.

crown

n
/ 'kraʊn /

Gk > L > F > E

a royal or imperial headdress or cap of sovereignty : a diadem.

Eric's teacher asked him what Shakespeare meant by the line "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown."

crushed

v
/ 'krʌʃt /

Gmc > F > E

completely subdued in spirits.

Kate was crushed with sorrow when her pet cat met an untimely death.

cult

n
/ 'kʌlt /

L

a religion regarded as unorthodox or spurious.

The police were warned that the leaders of the doomsday cult might have been storing explosives.

cumuli

n pl
/ 'kyümyə.lī /

L

massy cloud forms having a flat base and rounded outlines often piled up like mountains and commonly appearing in the early afternoon on warm days.

Tracy filled the sky of her painting with cumuli.

cumulonimbus

n
/ .kyümyə.lɔ̃'nimbəs /

L

thundercloud.

As Stephanie drove down Interstate 80, she could see a dark cumulonimbus approaching from the west.

cupid

n
/ 'kyüpəd /

L name

a naked usually winged infantile figure representing the Roman god of love and often holding a bow and arrow.

Julia pasted a red cupid on a doily and slipped it in Tony's locker.

curbstone

n
/ 'kərb.stɔ̃n /

E > F > L + E

a stone set along a margin as a limit and protection.

Chris always managed to hit the curbstone when he parked the car on the street.

curling

n
/ 'kɜrlɪŋ /

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a game developed in Scotland in which two teams of four persons each send stones spinning over a stretch of ice about 42 yards long toward a target circle.

Angus has loved curling all his life and is the star player on his team.

cusps

n
/ 'kʌsp /

L

point, apex.

Teddy attached a bright red tassel to the cusp of the dunce cap.

cutting

adj
/ 'kʌdɪŋ /

E

[has homonym: cudding] given to or designed for cutting, severing, or dividing.

The nicks in the planer's cutting blades annoyed Matt and made it impossible to get a smooth board.

Cycladic

adj

/ sə'kladik /

Gk

of or relating to the pre-Mycenaean culture that prevailed in the Cyclades islands.

The peoples of the Cycladic civilization were seafarers who developed maritime trade with Asia Minor and North Africa before 1000 B.C.

Cyclops

n

/ 'sɪ.kləps /

Gk

one of a race of giants in Greek mythology with a single eye in the middle of the forehead.

Kirk found a mask that would help make him a perfect Cyclops at the masquerade party.

cylindrical

adj

/ sə'lɪndrəkəl /

Gk > F > E

relating to or having the form or properties of a tube.

The caterpillar looked like a small, cylindrical accordion, with pleats running around its circumference and spaced evenly along its axis.

cytochrome

n

/ 'sɪd̩.krəm /

Gk + Gk

any of several respiratory pigments that occur in animal and plant cells and play a major role in intracellular oxidations.

Enzymes of cytochrome help to detoxify cells and break down fat.

ddancery

n

/ 'dɑn(t)s(ə)rē /

L? > F > E + Ecf

a place of entertainment providing facilities for dancing.

Our neighborhood dancery has country line dancing every Tuesday.

danseur

n

/ dæ'n'sər /

L? > F

a male ballet dancer.

The director chose a tall, graceful danseur for the part of Siegfried in Swan Lake.

danza

n

/ 'dæn(t)sə /

L? > F > Sp

a formal, stately dance.

The bewigged actors in the commedia dell'arte began a slow danza on the stage.

dappled

v

/ 'dɑpəld /

E

marked or variegated with spots or patches of a different shade or color.

The lion was dappled with patterns from the tangle of branches.

dashi

n

/ 'dæʃ(ə) /

Jpn

[has near homonyms: dasi, dassie]

a fish broth made from dried bonito.

Yasuko added some miso paste and scallions to the dashi.

daunted

v

/ 'dɒntəd /

L > F > E

sapped of courage : discouraged, intimidated.

Even the experienced kayakers were daunted by the river's treacherous rapids.

deadened

v
/ 'ded'nd /
E

[Note: Could be confused with dead end.] impaired in vigor, force, activity, or sensation.

A dental patient's pain can be effectively deadened by a local anesthetic.

deathly

adj
/ 'dethlē /
E

like or having the characteristics of death.

A deathly stillness fell over the audience as Dracula descended on his next victim.

debouch

v
/ də'büş /
L > F

march out into open ground.

Major Kipling ordered the three regiments to debouch from the ravines.

decade

n
/ 'de.kād /
Gk > L > F > E

a period of any ten years.

Carla claims she is going to let her hair grow for a decade without cutting it.

dechlorinate

v
/ də'klōrənāt /
Ecf + Gk > ISV

remove chlorine from.

The gardener was advised to dechlorinate the tap water before using it to water certain plants.

decide

v
/ də'sīd /
L > F > E

arrive at a choice or a solution.

Jeri couldn't decide what she wanted for dessert, so she asked the waiter for his recommendation.

decisive

adj
/ də'sīsv /
L

having the power or quality of resolving : conclusive.

Many historians say that the siege of Saratoga was the decisive battle of the Revolutionary War.

declaim

v
/ də'klām /
L > E

speak pompously, noisily, or theatrically.

While in London, Sarah spent her Sundays at Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park listening to various orators declaim about a variety of subjects.

decoction

n
/ də'kākshən /
L

a liquid preparation made of a medicinal plant boiled in water.

In ancient times, a decoction of medicinal herbs was often the only treatment available for internal injuries.

decuple

v
/ 'dek(y)əpəl /
L > F > E

make or become ten times as much or as many.

No one would ever have dreamed that the company's worth would decuple in two years.

deglaze

v
/ dē'glāz /
Ecf + E

dissolve the small particles of sautéed meat remaining in (a pan) by adding a liquid and heating.

The chef explained that when making a meat gravy, one should first deglaze the pan with water or broth.

degree

n
/ dā'grē /
L > F > E

a 360th measure for arcs and angles.

A miscalculation of only 1 degree on the reentry angle of the spacecraft could drastically change fuel consumption levels.

delighted

adj
/ dā'līdād /
L > F > E

highly pleased : gratified, joyous.

The delighted visitors couldn't help laughing at the monkey's antics.

demanding

adj
/ dā'mandīŋ /
L > F > E

unremittingly severe or difficult in making requests.

Although the guests were extremely demanding, Joyce enjoyed working at the Ritz.

demigod

n
/ demē.gād /
L + E

a mythological divine or semidivine being (as the offspring of a deity and a mortal) thought to possess less power than a god.

The hero Gilgamesh was a demigod in ancient Babylonian mythology.

demoralized

v
/ dā'mōrəlīzd /
L

weakened in courage, fortitude, or spirit.

The employees became demoralized when company layoffs were announced.

dendroid

adj
/ 'den.drōid /
Gk

resembling a tree in form.

Andy brought back a dendroid coral specimen from Bora Bora.

denominations

n pl
/ dā.nāmə'nāshənz /
L

religious groups or communities of believers called by the same name.

Children of other denominations were excused from attending mass at the Roman Catholic school.

denotatum

n
/ .dēnō'tādəm /
L

an actually existing object referred to by a word, sign, or linguistic expression.

The denotatum of the word tree is a large woody plant having branches and leaves.

density

n
/ 'den(t)sədē /
L

the mass of a substance per unit volume.

Jorge calculated what the density of a bubble of gas at the bottom of the lake would be.

deposition

n
/ depə'zishən /
L

testimony taken down in writing under oath or affirmation.

The psychiatrist's deposition was presented to the judge and jury as evidence of the defendant's mental condition.

deprogram

v
/ dē'prō,gram /
L + Gk > L

dissuade or try to dissuade from convictions usually of a religious nature often with the use of force.

Sharon's parents hired a specialist in cult psychology to deprogram her after her rescue from the People's Temple at Jonestown.

deserts

n pl
/ 'dezə(r)ts /
L

regions in which the vegetation is so scanty as to be incapable of supporting any considerable population.

The class included Antarctica in its study of deserts.

designer

n
/ dā'zīnə(r) /
L > F

one who plans and directs the fashioning of theatrical stage settings, costumes, and ballet settings.

The designer outdid himself with the lavish sets for the new opera.

destine

v
/ 'destɪn /
L

direct and impel inescapably on a fixed course.

The family's money and ambition seemed to destine each newborn child to a career in politics.

destined

v
/ 'destɪnd /
L > F > E

preordained.

Despite his birth, the Prince did not believe he was destined to attain the throne.

detainer

n
/ dā'tānə(r) /
L > AF

a writ authorizing the keeper of a prison to continue to keep a person in custody.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service sent the warden a detainer with instructions to hold a prisoner for deportation proceedings.

detention

n
/ dā'tenʃən /
L

a holding in custody.

The suspect was in detention until his alibi could be checked.

devil

v
/ 'devəl /
Gk > L > E

chop (food) fine and mix with hot seasoning or sauce usually after cooking.

Georgia planned to devil a dozen hard-boiled eggs for the potluck.

devotions

n pl

/ də'vɒʃhənz /

L

prayers or service of worship usually intended for private nonliturgical services.

Jordan read a pamphlet of daily devotions while waiting for her appointment with the pastor.

dexter

adj

/ 'dekstə(r) /

L

being or relating to the side of a heraldic shield at the right of the person wearing it.

The coat of arms had, among other things, a dexter motto.

dhole

n

/ 'dɒl /

Kanarese?

[has homonym: dole] a fierce wild dog of India that hunts in packs and may attack even large fierce animals (as the tiger).

Because of the russet color of its coat, the dhole is often called the red dog.

diamagnetic

adj

/ .dɪə.məg'netɪk /

Gk > ISVcf + Gk > L > F

having negative magnetic susceptibility.

Atoms with an odd number of electrons cannot be diamagnetic.

diatomic

adj

/ .dɪə'tæmɪk /

Gk + Gk

having two of the the smallest particles of an element that enter into the composition of molecules.

Hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, and the halogens exist as diatomic molecules.

diffract

v

/ dɪ'frækt /

L

break or separate (as light) into parts.

In 1912 Max von Laue suggested that a crystal lattice should be able to diffract X rays.

diligent

adj

/ 'dɪləjənt /

L > F > E

characterized by steady, earnest, attentive, and energetic application and effort in a pursuit or study.

Despite his diligent study habits, Horatio always panics at exam time.

dimer

n

/ 'dɪmər /

Gk + Gk

a compound formed by the union of two molecules of a simpler compound.

A molecule of acetic acid can form a dimer with another acetic acid molecule held together by two hydrogen bonds.

dimetrodon

n

/ dɪ'metrədɒn /

Gk

a genus of North American Lower Permian reptiles comprising terrestrial carnivores of moderate size distinguished by a crest or dorsal sail.

Dinosaur buff that she is, Amy insists upon being a dimetrodon for Halloween.

diminution

n

/ .dɪmən(y)ʊʃən /

L

the act, process, or an instance of diminishing : decrease.

By controlling his appetite and exercising, Frank hoped to see a diminution in his weight.

dioptr

n
/ di'äptər /
Gk

a unit of measurement of the refractive power of a lens equal to the reciprocal of the focal length in meters.

Barb's optometrist had to explain what a diopter was before being able to convince her that she needed reading glasses.

dipsomania

n
/ dipsə'mānēə /
Gk + Gk

an uncontrollable often periodic craving for alcoholic liquors.
The actor's portrayal of the pain of dipsomania won him universal accolades.

disarmament

n
/ dis'ärməmənt /
L > F

the laying aside or depriving of weapons; especially : the reduction of a military establishment to some minimum set by some specified authority.

The disarmament of the defeated aggressor nation must be complete.

discerned

v
/ də'sərnd /
L

sensed or came to know or recognize mentally especially something that is obscure.

Nancy's quick eye soon discerned the rabbit's nest in the long grass.

discouraged

v
/ də'skərijd /
F

deprived of courage or confidence : disheartened, dejected.

Dad became discouraged when he couldn't figure out how to program the VCR.

discover

v
/ də'skəvə(r) /
L > F > E

obtain for the first time sight or knowledge of.

"What you learn today, for no reason at all, will help you discover all the wonderful secrets of tomorrow."

disembowel

v
/ ,disəm'báu(ə)l /
L + L + L > F > E

take out the entrails of : eviscerate.
The tour of the meat packing plant will not include the step where the workers disembowel the animals.

disenable

v
/ ,disə'nābəl /
L + L + L

deprive of a power, right, or privilege.

Conviction of a felony will disenable an American citizen of the right to vote.

disheartened

v
/ dis'härt'nd /
L + E

deprived of courage and hope : discouraged, dejected.

After a long drought the disheartened farmer reluctantly decided to sell his land.

disingenuous

adj
/ ,disən'jenjəwəs /
L

lacking in candor or frankness; often : giving a false appearance of simple frankness.

The senator's disingenuous answers did not satisfy the press.

dislocated

v
/ 'dis(ɪ)lɒ.kədəd /
L + L

put out of place, as put (a body part) out of order by moving a bone away from its normal connections with another bone or other bones.

Becky dislocated her shoulder when she took a bad fall off her bicycle.

disproportionate

v
/ disprə'pɔːrʃənət /
L

subject a substance to transformation into two or more dissimilar substances usually by a process involving simultaneous oxidation and reduction.

Heat will disproportionate hydrogen peroxide into water and oxygen.

dissociative

adj
/ də'sɔːs(h)ɪ.ədɪv /
L

of, relating to, or tending to cause the process by which a chemical combination breaks up into simpler constituents.

The dissociative energy required to break the bond between the atoms in a hydrogen molecule is much higher than that required to break the bond between atoms in a chlorine molecule.

distillation

n
/ distə'læʃən /
L

the process of driving off gas or vapor from liquids or solids by heating and condensing to liquid products.

The petroleum industry uses distillation on a large scale to separate the various components of crude oil.

distressed

adj
/ dɪ'strest /
L > F > E

afflicted with trouble, pain, or grief.
When his factory burned down, the distressed owner resolved to build a new one.

diva

n
/ 'dɛvə /
L > It

the leading or the principal female singer in an opera or concert organization.

The little-known diva became nationally famous after her performance in La Boheme.

diverge

v
/ dɪ'vɜːj /
L

move or extend in different directions from a common point.

Deep in the forest two dangerous paths diverge from the main road.

divine

adj
/ dɪ'vaɪn /
L

of or relating to God : proceeding from God.

The Torah teaches that every person must be treated with respect because all are created in the divine image.

docudrama

n
/ 'däkyü.drämə /
L + Gk

a drama for television, motion pictures, or theater dealing freely with historical events and especially those of a recent and controversial nature.

The docudrama deals with the trial of a scientist accused of espionage.

does

n pl
/ dōz /
E

[has homonym: doze] the females especially when adult of any of the various mammals of which the male is called "buck" (as most deer, antelope, goat, rabbit, and rat).

Bobby got three rabbits at Easter: two does and a buck.

dogleg

n
/ 'dōgleg /
E + ON > E

a golf hole having an angled fairway that offers the player a choice of following the fairway or risking a shot across the rough.

When he came to the dogleg, Doug teed up to shoot across the rough.

dogma

n
/ 'dōgmə /
Gk

a doctrine or body of doctrines of theology and religion formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed by a church.

The dogma of papal infallibility marks one of the greatest differences between the Catholic and Protestant churches.

doneness

n
/ 'dōnnəs /
E

[has homonym: dunness] the condition of being cooked to the desired degree.

Patrick checked the roast beef for doneness before serving it to his guests.

Doppler

adj
/ 'däplə(r) /

Austrian name

of, relating to, or utilizing a shift in frequency caused by motion between the source of electromagnetic waves and the observer.

In Doppler navigation the change of frequency of reflected radar waves is used to give information on velocity and position

dowlas

n
/ 'daüləs /

F geog name > E

a coarse linen cloth used widely in the 16th and 17th centuries and manufactured originally in Brittany but later especially in northern England and Scotland.

The long coat, typical of the period, was lined with dowlas.

down

n
/ 'daün /
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an undulating generally treeless upland with sparse soil.

The shape of the horse carved in chalk on the down could be seen for miles.

downbeat

adj

/ 'daʊn.bēt /

E + E

pessimistic, gloomy, unhappy.

Tom has just finished reading a novel about downbeat characters in an urban slum area.

dozen

n

/ 'dəʒn /

L > F > E

a group of 12.

Carly packaged a dozen of her freshly baked cookies and took them to her next-door neighbor.

drab

adj

/ 'drab /

Celt > L > F

of the lifeless color of drab cloth, which is dull brown or gray.

The embroidered figures are now a faded drab color, a far cry from their original red and green splendor.

dragnet

n

/ 'drag.net /

ON > E + F

a network of measures for apprehension (as of criminals).

The state police set up a dragnet to find the escaped convicts.

dramatization

n

/ .draməd-ə'zāshən /

Gk > L

an act, process, or product of rewriting or adapting a story or incident for theatrical presentation.

The author was not at all pleased with the recent television dramatization of his novel.

dream

v

/ 'drēm /

E

have ideas or images in the mind while asleep.

After the horror film, Carlo knew he would dream about spiders all night.

dribble

v

/ 'dribəl /

E?

[has near homonym: drivel] propel and maintain control of (a ball or puck) by successive slight taps or bounces with hand, foot, or stick.

The coach told Becky to dribble the basketball up and down the court without looking at it.

drifting

adj

/ 'driftɪŋ /

E

disposed to move aimlessly.

Drifting loners were rounded up as suspects after the shooting.

drilling

n

/ 'driliŋ /

L > G > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a strong durable cotton fabric in twill weave made in various weights for clothing, interior decoration, and industrial uses.

Civil War tents were sometimes made from drilling.

drollery

n

/ 'drɔɪ(ə)rē /

F

whimsical humor.

The writer's anecdotes were noted not so much for their hilarity as for their charming drollery.

droopy

adj

/ 'drü.pē /

E

gloomy, dejected.

When feeling tired and droopy, Sarah usually treats herself to lunch at her favorite restaurant.

drove

n
/ 'drɒv /
E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] a crowd or group of people especially when acting, following, or moving in concert or in a docile manner as if in a herd.

The drove of students heading to the playground is participating in a fire drill.

duel

n
/ 'd(y)üəl /
L

[has homonym: dual] a prearranged formal combat with deadly weapons fought between two persons in the presence of witnesses usually as a result of an injury done or an insult given by one to the other.

Alexander Hamilton, first secretary of the Treasury of the United States, was killed in a duel with Aaron Burr.

dumplings

n pl
/ 'dʌmplɪŋz /
E?

small masses of leavened dough cooked by boiling or steaming.

Jutta insisted on finding a restaurant in Munich where they could eat dumplings.

dun

adj
/ 'dʌn /
E

[has homonym: done] having a dull, drab color.

The dun cloth was so unappealing to the eye that not one yard from the bolt was sold.

duo

n
/ 'd(y)ü(,)ɔ /
L

a group of two : pair.

The Penguin frequently referred to Batman and Robin as "the dynamic duo" in the television series.

duple

adj
/ 'd(y)üpəl /
L

in music : having two or a multiple of two beats per measure.

Marches are written in duple time.

duplex

n
/ 'd(y)üpleks /
L

something having two parts or elements (as a two-family house).

Kelly and her family live in one part of the duplex; her grandparents live in the other part.

dutifully

adv
/ 'd(y)üdəf(ə)lē /
F > E + Ecff

in a manner having respect for one's own moral obligations.

Henrietta had dutifully memorized the poem the evening before.

dynast

n
/ 'dī.nast /
Gk

a ruler over a state; especially : a hereditary ruler.

The dynast of Jordan is King Abdullah.

dysphonia

n
/ də'sfɒnēə /
Gk

impairment of the voice manifested by hoarseness or other defects of phonation due to organic, functional, or psychic causes.

Mark is a speech therapist specializing in the treatment of dysphonia.

eagerly

adv

/ 'ɛgə(r)l̩ /

E

with urgent desire or enthusiasm.

*His thoughts darted eagerly about as everything looked new—and worth trying.***earthly**

adj

/ 'ɜrθl̩ /

E

relating to actual human life on Earth : realistic, factual, worldly.

*Richard's earthly concerns about his checkbook put a damper on his dreams.***eatage**

n

/ 'ɛdɪj /

E

right of using grassland for pasturage.

*Mr. Bosco granted eatage to his neighbor, Farmer Voss.***ebbet**

n

/ 'ɛbət /

E

the common green newt of the eastern United States.

*On a hike through Everglades National Park, Joey pointed out a small ebbet sitting on a rock.***ebonize**

v

/ 'ɛbənɪz /

Gk > L > E + Ecf

make black or stain black in imitation of ebony.

*Garth used shoe polish in one of his many attempts to ebonize the figurine.***economics**

n pl

/ ɛkə'nämiks /

Gk > L

a social science that studies the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities.

*Melissa signed up for economics in hopes that she would learn more about what causes a recession.***ecosystem**

n

/ 'ɛkō.sistəm /

Gk

an ecological community considered together with the nonliving factors of its environment as a unit.

*The fact that his diesel tank was an ecosystem in itself came home to Ray when the algae clogged fuel filter after fuel filter.***eddyroot**

n

/ 'ɛd̩.rüt /

Afr > E

a plant of the Pacific islands that is grown throughout the tropics for its edible starchy tuberous rootstocks.

*Eddyroot can be made into poi, a thin, pasty mass of fermented taro starch.***edifices**

n pl

/ 'ɛdəfəsəs /

L

buildings; especially : large or massive structures (as churches or government buildings).

*Among the most beautiful edifices in our nation's capital is the National Cathedral.***effuse**

v

/ e'fyüz /

L

flow out : emanate.

*Christy was not surprised to see hostility and criticism effuse from the defeated candidate.***eight**

adj

/ 'ɛt /

E

[has homonym: ate] being one more than seven in number.

Nan didn't learn the facts about Santa Claus until she was eight years old.

elastic

adj
/ ə'lastik /
Gk > L

capable of recovering size and shape after deformation.

Even the dog got a Christmas gift, an elastic rubber toy.

electrochemical

adj
/ ə'lektro.keməkəl /
Gk + Gk

of or relating to the science dealing with the relation of electricity to chemical changes.

Mr. Thorvald explained that the order of elements in the electrochemical series shows their tendency to displace the ions of other elements in the series.

electrocution

n
/ ə.lektro'kyüşən /
Gk > L

the act of killing or putting to death by electric current.

In 1890 New York became the first state to execute criminals by electrocution.

electrograph

n
/ ə'lektrograf /
Gk

a device used for the etching or transfer of pictures or designs by electrolytic means.

An electrograph was used to transfer the picture onto a metal plate for printing.

eleven

adj
/ ə'levən /
E

being one more than ten in number.

If a football team has more than eleven players on the field when the ball is snapped, the team receives a penalty.

eliminable

adj
/ ə'limənəbəl /
L

capable of being removed or excluded.

It seems that the more eliminable political candidates are those who spend less on their campaigns.

elsewhither

adv
/ 'el(t)s.hwɪθə(r) /
E

to some or any other place in a different direction or toward a different objective.

Marcus never missed a day of work in the factory, but his soul was aimed elsewhither.

embalment

n
/ əm'bämmənt /
F > E + Ecf

the act or process of preparing a body for burial by injecting into the arterial system and body cavities a preservative and disinfectant fluid (as a solution of formaldehyde).

Because the bodies of the earthquake victims were going to be cremated, there was no need for embalment.

embattled

v
/ əm'badəld /
F > E

made strong : strengthened, as furnished with resistant power.

Surrounded by a stone wall, the embattled fortress survived the attack.

emendation

n
/ (i)ē.men'dāshən /
L

[Note: The base of this word could be confused with amend.] the word or the matter substituted for incorrect or unsuitable matter in a work that has been altered.

There was at least one emendation written in the margin of every page in the manuscript.

emigration

n
/ ˌemə'græʃən /
L

[has near homonym: immigration]
departure from a place of abode,
natural home, or country for life or
residence elsewhere.

*Sylvia never tired of hearing about
her great-grandparents' emigration
from Poland.*

emmeleia

n
/ ˌemə'liə /
Gk

a solemn and stately dance used in
ancient Greek tragedy.

*The dancers performed the
emmeleia with grave mournful
gestures.*

empower

v
/ ɒm'pəʊ(ə)r /
L > Ecf + L > F > E

give faculties or abilities to :
enable.

*The teacher frequently tells her
students that a good education will
empower them to be whatever they
wish to be.*

empty

adj
/ 'em(p)t̩ /
E

containing nothing.

*An empty box in the corner was a
perfect place to keep Rowena's new
ferret.*

enact

v
/ ə'nækt /
L > E + L > E

make into a law; especially :
perform the last aspect of
legislation upon (a bill) that gives
the validity of law.

*Today's vote will, in all
probability, enact the bill.*

enalid

n
/ 'en'li:d /
Gk + ISV

[has near homonym: annelid] a
submerged marine plant.

*Eelgrass is a common enalid found
along the North Atlantic coast.*

endothermic

adj
/ 'endəθərmik /
Gk + Gk

characterized by or formed with
absorption of heat.

*The decomposition of mercury
oxide at high temperature is an
example of an endothermic
process.*

enepidermic

adj
/ ˌen.ɛpə'dərmik /
Gk + Gk + Gk

applied to the unbroken skin for
medicinal purposes.

*Dan feared that he would have to
get an injection when it became
obvious that the enepidermic
medication was not curing his rash.*

engineering

n
/ ˌenjɪ'nɪrɪŋ /
F > E

the science by which the properties
of matter and the sources of energy
in nature are made useful in
structures, machines, and products.

*Terry is studying engineering and
has a special interest in the branch
concerned with the production of
tools, machinery, and their
products.*

enjambéd

adj
/ ɒn'jæmɪd /
F

marked or characterized by the
continuation in prosody of the
sense in a phrase beyond the end of
a verse or couplet.

*Haroldur's analysis of the
enjambéd lines was enlightening.*

enlightened

adj
/ ɒn'li:t̩nd /
L + E + Ecff

freed from ignorance and
misinformation.

*The professors claimed to be an
enlightened group of individuals.*

enorganic

adj

/ ˌenɔ(r)'ɡanɪk /

Gk + Gk

[Note: Could be confused with inorganic.] arising within or inherent in the organism : intrinsic.
Ian tried to write an essay describing the difference between enculturated and enorganic forms of ignorance.

erstwhile

adj

/ 'ɜrst.hwɪl /

E + E

having been at some past time.
John recognized his erstwhile gym teacher as the runner leading the pack in the Boston Marathon.

espagnole

n

/ ˌɛspən'yɔl /

F

[has near homonym: Spanish word Español] a foundation sauce made of stock thickened with flour browned in fat with added seasonings to taste.
David's steak came with a tarragon-flavored espagnole.

establishment

n

/ ə'stæblɪʃmənt /

L > F > E

the act of bringing into existence, creating, founding, or setting up.
The establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency has brought many advantages but also a good deal of controversy.

epidemiology

n

/ ˌɛpə.dɛmɪ'ɒlədʒi /

Gk

a science that deals with the incidence, distribution, and control of disease in a population (as of animals or plants).
Sean's knowledge about polio and the history of the Salk vaccine reflects his strong interest in epidemiology.

ergophobe

n

/ 'ɜrgə.fəʊb /

Gk + Gk

one suffering from fear of or aversion to work.
Willy, a self-proclaimed couch potato, claims to be an ergophobe.

ester

n
/ 'estə(r) /

G

[has homonym: Esther] any of a class of compounds that are usually fragrant liquids if sufficiently volatile, several of which are found in essential oils and synthesized especially for use in artificial fruit essences.

Scientists have identified the ester that is responsible for the aroma of pineapples.

ethanol

n
/ 'ethə.nəl /

ISV

a colorless volatile flammable liquid formed by fermentation.

Breath analyzers subject ethanol to an orange yellow substance that changes into a green substance depending on how much ethanol is present.

ethology

n
/ e'thɒləjē /

Gk + Gk

a scientific study of animal behavior.

Jane's desire to save endangered animals led her to take several courses in ethology.

Euterpean

adj
/ yū'tɜrpēən /

Gk name

relating to the muse Euterpe or to music.

Shana had a wave of Euterpean inspiration and wrote the lyrics to five songs in one evening.

evaporate

v
/ ə'væpə.rāt /

L

undergo conversion from a liquid state into a gas.

As liquid in a closed jar begins to evaporate, molecules move from liquid to vapor.

even

adj
/ 'ēvən /

E

being any member of a sequence of positive integers beginning with two and counting by twos : being always exactly divisible by two.

When an even number is multiplied by either an even number or an odd number, the result is always an even number.

exacting

adj
/ ig'zæktɪŋ /

L + Ecf

tryingly or unremittingly severe in making demands or requiring the fulfilling of obligations.

Trudy's exacting standards for herself were never fully met.

excursus

n
/ ik'skɜrsəs /

L

an incidental discussion.

While editing the manuscript, Gloria turned a long excursus into a short footnote.

execution

n
/ ˌɛksəˈkyʊʃən /

L
a putting to death as a legal penalty.
In some states, murder of a police officer is punishable by execution.

exobiology

n
/ ˌɛk(ɪ)sɒ(ɪ)bɪˈɒləʒi /

Gk
a branch of the science of life concerned with the search for life outside Earth and its atmosphere and with the effects of extraterrestrial environments on living organisms.
Many of NASA's programs in exobiology have focused on life on Mars.

exothermally

adv
/ ˌɛksəˈθɜːməli /

Gk
in a manner characterized by or formed with evolution of heat.
When a bombardier beetle squeezes a gland in its abdomen, it releases a solution that reacts exothermally with an enzyme to produce an audible detonation and discharge.

expansive

adj
/ ɪkˈspæn(t)sɪv /

L + Ecf
having considerable extent.
The lecturers were directed to choose expansive topics of broad interest.

exposition

n
/ ˌɛkspəˈzɪʃən /

L
a part of a composition (as of music or drama) in which the theme or subject is presented.
The first movement begins with a lively exposition of the theme that is repeated several times throughout the symphony.

expressionism

n
/ ɪkˈspreshənɪzəm /

L
a theory or practice of presenting the subjective or subconscious thoughts and emotions of characters, the struggle of abstract forces, or the inner realities of life by techniques that include abstraction, distortion, and symbolism.
Dramatic lighting and distorted images exemplified expressionism in early black-and-white movies.

exsiccosis

n
/ ˌɛksəˈkɒsəs /

L
insufficient intake of fluids or the state of bodily dehydration produced thereby.
During their desert survival course, the Marines learned how to avoid exsiccosis.

extant

adj
/ ˈɛkstənt /

L
[has near homonym: extent]
currently or actually in existence.
Some scientists believe that they can use cloning to bring back creatures that are no longer extant.

fajitas

n pl

/ fə'hētəz /

AmerSp

marinated strips of beef or chicken or sometimes shrimp grilled or broiled and served usually with a flour tortilla and various savory fillings (as sautéed peppers, guacamole, and sour cream).

Joshua made a special dinner of chicken fajitas for his Spanish tutor.

fasting

n

/ 'fastɪŋ /

E

the act of abstaining from food especially for an unusual time and often as a form of religious observance or for therapeutic purposes.

Bernadette hoped to reach a new communion with God through regular prayer and occasional fasting.

fearful

adj

/ 'fi(ə)rfəl /

E

full of fear, alarm, awe, concern, or apprehension.

When surgery was advised, the fearful patient decided to seek a second opinion.

feis

n

/ 'fesh /

IrGael

an Irish folk festival featuring games and competitions and usually traditional Irish music and dancing.

Kelly and Heather performed dances in the feis sponsored by the Irish-American Club.

fellow

n

/ 'fe(,)lō /

ON > E

[has homonym: fellow] a graduate student in an American university who is granted money to continue research usually in preparation for an advanced degree and often with certain teaching duties.

Robert, a senior fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, will be the first speaker at the symposium.

ferric

adj

/ 'ferɪk /

L

of, relating to, or containing iron.

Amy's report on the uses of iron included a section on ferric chloride, which is used in treating industrial wastes and in etching, among other things.