

churrasco

n
/ chù'rä.skō /
Sp

beef broiled on a spit over an open fire or grilled under an oven flame.
At the barbecue the whole family feasted on the churrasco that Dad cooked.

chutney

n
/ 'chətnē /

Prakrit > Hindi
a condiment that has the consistency of jam and is made of acid fruits with added raisins, dates, and onions and seasoned to taste with spices and vinegar.
Spicy or sweet chutney is sometimes eaten with Indian meals containing curry.

chymous

adj
/ 'kīməs /
Gk + Ecf

of or relating to the semifluid mass of partly digested food resulting from the action of gastric juice.
One of the coroner's less pleasant tasks is testing chymous material.

cicada

n
/ sə'kādə /
L

any insect of the family Cicadidae—called also “locust.”
The male cicada produces sound by vibrating miniature “drumheads” on the lower surface of its abdomen.

cicerone

n
/ .sɪsə'rɒnē /
L > It

one who acts as a guide to or shows the sights to.
At the end of the tour, Maria praised her cicerone as being very knowledgeable and articulate.

Ciceronian

adj
/ .sɪsə'rɒnēən /

L name
resembling the Roman orator Cicero in oratorical or literary qualities.
Beulah's Ciceronian bombast about Destiny and Youth impressed the audience.

ciguatera

n
/ .sēgwə'terə /
Taino > Sp

poisoning caused by eating fish or mollusks with flesh toxic to man.
Although she contracted ciguatera in June, Constance could not return to work until November.

cilantro

n
/ sə'lantrō /
L > Sp

leaves of coriander used as a flavoring or garnish.
In Janet's opinion, the best part of the fresh salsa was the chopped cilantro.

cincture

v
/ 'sɪŋ(k)chə(r) /
L

girdle with or as if with a belt or band.
For the Halloween party, Evelina chose to cincture her gypsy costume with a spangled belt.

cinematographer

n
/ .sɪnəmə'tægrəfə(r) /
Gk

a motion-picture camera operator.
Darina won the award for outstanding cinematographer at last year's Montreal Film Festival.

cinnabar

n
/ 'sɪnəbär /
Gk > L&F

artificial red mercuric sulfide used principally as a pigment.
The orange color of rubber gaskets is often created by the addition of cinnabar.

cinnamon

n
/ 'sɪnəmən /
? > Gk > L > F > E

a culinary spice prepared from the bark of certain tropical trees.
Akbar likes cinnamon in his hot chocolate.

cioppino

n
/ chə'pē.nō /
It

a dish of fish and shellfish cooked in tomato sauce and usually seasoned with wine, spices, and herbs.
After an afternoon at the beach, Beverly stopped at a local restaurant for cioppino and coffee.

circinate

adj
/ 'sərs'n.āt /
L

rounded in outline : characterized by or having the form of a flat coil of which the apex is the center.
The retracted tongue of a butterfly forms a circinate coil.

circuit

n
/ 'sərkət /
L > F

the complete path of an electric current.
The average electrical house circuit carries about 30 amperes.

circuitous

adj

/ ˌsərˈkyuədəs /

L

being a circular or winding course : indirect, roundabout.

As we drove through the mountains, the road took an increasingly circuitous route

circumambulate

v

/ ˌsɜrkəmˈambyə.lāt /

L

wander about at leisure without definite purpose or as a result of indirection.

Her first day in London, Connie decided to circumambulate instead of taking a guided tour.

circumlocution

n

/ ˌsɜrkəmlōˈkyushən /

L

the use of an unnecessarily large number of words to express an idea.

The attorney's circumlocution caused one of the jurors to doze off.

circumstantial

adj

/ ˌsɜrkəmzˈtanchəl /

L + Ecf

belonging to, consisting of, influenced by, or dependent on conditions, facts, or events accompanying others.

The report contains strong circumstantial evidence of wrongdoing by the governor.

cirrhosis

n

/ səˈrɔsəs /

Gk + Lcf

[has homonym and near homonym: sorosis and xerosis] a chronic progressive disease of the liver.

The damage caused by cirrhosis is irreversible.

cislunar

adj

/ sisˈlünə(r) /

L + L

of or relating to the space between Earth and the Moon or the Moon's orbit.

The space enthusiast talked often about the practicalities of setting up a colony in the cislunar region.

cistern

n

/ ˈsɪstə(r)n /

L > F > E

[has homonym: sistern] an artificial reservoir or tank for holding or storing water or other liquids.

Three weeks into the drought, the farm's cistern ran dry.

citadel

n

/ ˈsɪdədəl /

L > It > F

a fortress that commands a city both for control and defense; broadly : a strong fortress.

The citadel had three separate walls around it so that defenders could retreat again and again to a position of safety.

citronella

n

/ ˌsɪtrəˈnelə /

F > L

a yellowish essential oil with lemonlike odor obtained from either of two grasses and used especially as an insect repellent.

Candles containing citronella were kept burning on the picnic table.

civitas

n

/ ˈkɛwɛ.tɪs /

L

a body of people constituting a politically organized community.

The concept of civitas remains strong in many small towns.

clandestine

adj

/ klanˈdestən /

L

marked by, held in, or conducted with secrecy and concealment.

Mike and Sally made clandestine preparations for their mom's surprise birthday party.

claque

n

/ ˈklak /

F

[has homonym: clack] an opera hat with a collapsible crown.

As the gentleman entered the opera house, he doffed and flattened his claque.

claustrophobia

n

/ ˌklɔstrəˈfɒbiə /

Gk + Gk

abnormal dread of being in closed or narrow spaces.

Herman's claustrophobia keeps him from flying on crowded airplanes.

clavicle

n
/ 'klavəkəl /
L

a bone in man situated just above the first rib on either side of the neck and having the form of a narrow elongated S.

Garth wore shoulder pads to football practice to protect his clavicle.

claviger

n
/ 'klavəjə(r) /
L

one that keeps the key or keys : custodian, warden.

Because she had forgotten her key, Marsha needed to locate the claviger, Mr. Carl, to open her classroom door.

clematis

n
/ 'klemədəs /
Gk

a plant of a genus of opposite-leaved slightly woody vines or erect herbs having elongate plumose styles.

The clematis is cultivated in North America for its attractive flowers.

clemency

n
/ 'klemənsē /
L

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

tendency to be mild and compassionate.

Emma supposed she must say more before she would be entitled to Mr. Knightley's clemency.

clepsydra

n
/ 'klepsədrə /
Gk > L

an instrument designed to measure time by the flow of a quantity of water.

For his science project Kerry designed and built a clepsydra.

clerisy

n
/ 'klerəsē /
L > G

the well-educated or learned class : intelligentsia.

Many believe that laws should be readily understood by the general public, not solely by an elite clerisy.

clientele

n
/ 'klīən'tel /
L > F

a body of patrons or customers.

Bill hopes to enlarge the clientele of the shoe store.

clinician

n
/ klə'nishən /
Gk > F

one who directs, is closely allied with, or works in or through a clinic or with clinical methods.

At the hospital a clinician drew a vial of Harry's blood to test for diabetes.

clinqant

adj
/ 'kliŋkənt /
F

glittering especially with gold decoration : showily ornate.

The theater lobby in its clinqant splendor cast dazzling reflections from every gleaming surface.

clique

n
/ 'klik /
F

[alternate pronunciation has homonym: cleek] a narrow exclusive circle or group of people.

Sofia didn't want to be part of the popular clique because she thought they were the most boring kids in school.

cloche

n
/ klōsh /
L > F

[alternate pronunciation has homonym: closh] a woman's small helmetlike hat usually with deep rounded crown and very narrow brim.

At the Thatchers' wedding Margaret looked smashing in her white ostrich-feather cloche.

clodhopper

n
/ 'kläd.häpə(r) /
E + E

a large heavy shoe.

The thump of Archie's clodhopper hitting the floor announced that he was going to bed.

clothe

v
/ 'klōth /
E

put garments on.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton stressed that she did not propose petitioning the legislature to clothe every woman in male attire.

cloudy

adj
/ 'klaüdē /
E

made or consisting of fog, mist, or haze.

The mountain with its cloudy veil inspired Sven's painting.

cluse

n
/ 'klüz /
L > F

[has homonym: clues] a narrow gorge cutting transversely through an otherwise continuous ridge.

Although Brian studied the trail map carefully, he found no mention of the cluse that barred his way.

cnemial

adj

/ 'nēmēəl /

Gk + E

relating to the shin or shinbone.

Bud suffered a cnemial injury while quarterbacking in the game last night.

coacervate

n

/ ,kōə'sərvət /

L

an aggregate of colloidal droplets held together by electrostatic attractive forces.

The chemist referred to the aggregation of liquid particles in an emulsion as a coacervate.

coadjutor

n

/ ,kōə'jüdə(r) /

L > F > E

one who works together with another usually in a somewhat subordinate position : assistant.

Offended by being called a "lackey," Marcus prefers to be called a "coadjutor."

coagulate

v

/ kō'agyəlāt /

L

curdle, clot.

Hemophiliacs lack a protein needed to help blood coagulate.

coalesce

v

/ ,kōə'les /

L

unite by growth into one body.

The nervous host hoped that the tight little groups of guests would coalesce into a real party.

coalescence

n

/ ,kōə'les'n(t)s /

L

a growing together or union in one body, form, or group.

Rain is the result of the coalescence of water droplets within a cloud.

coalition

n

/ ,kōə'lishən /

L > F + Ecf

the temporary alliance of distinct parties, persons, or states to achieve a common purpose.

Representatives from a coalition of labor unions met with the multinational corporation's lawyers in an attempt to work out a new contract.

coaration

n

/ ,kōə'rāshən /

L

cooperative tilling of soil as practiced by early village communities.

The villagers found that coaration was the most efficient system for cultivating the land.

cochineal

n

/ 'kächə'nēl /

Sp > F

a red dyestuff consisting of the dried bodies of the cochineal insect.

Before the introduction of synthetic dyes, cochineal was commonly used in textile production.

cochleariform

adj

/ ,kōklē'a(a)rə'fōrm /

Gk > L + Ecf

shaped like a spoon.

Jacques theorized that the cochleariform bone was used in prehistoric times as a spoon.

cocoon

n

/ kə'kūn /

L > Prov > F

a silky or fibrous protective encasement created by a larval insect for shelter during the pupal stage.

Ricky found the cocoon of a moth clinging to a branch of an oak tree.

codeine

n

/ 'kō(,)dēn /

Gk + F

a crystalline alkaloid usually made from morphine but feebler in action.

The patient was given codeine to kill the pain.

codicil

n

/ 'kädəsəl /

L > F

a legal instrument made subsequently to a will and modifying it in some respects.

Robert had his lawyer draw up a codicil to clarify a few ambiguities in his will.

coelostat

n

/ 'sēləstat /

L > ISV + GK > ISV

a device consisting of a flat mirror that is turned slowly by a motor to reflect the Sun continuously into a fixed telescope.

Professor Merkle plans to use a coelostat to photograph the movements of planetary bodies.

coeval

adj

/ kō'ēvəl /

L + Ecf

of the same or equal age or antiquity.

Nearly the same in mass and brightness, the stars were thought to be coeval.

cogitate

v
/ 'kəjətāt /

L
ponder on or meditate upon.
Greta liked to cogitate on the tricks she could play on her big brother.

cognizant

adj
/ 'kəgnəzənt /
L > F > E

aware : perceiving with a degree of controlled thought or observation.
Watching television commercials can make viewers more cognizant of fads and fashions.

cognomen

n
/ kəg'nōmən /
L

one's family name : surname.
The cognomen "Crane" fit the physical attributes of the tall, lank, long-armed, and shovel-footed Ichabod, whose whole frame most loosely hung together.

cognoscitive

adj
/ kəg'näsədɪv /
L + Ecf

having the power of knowing.
Lillian explained to her friends that her cognoscitive ability was innate, something like a sixth sense.

coincidental

adj
/ kō:ɪnsə'dentl /
L

characterized by the concurrence of events between which there is no causal connection.
It was purely coincidental that the electricity went off just as the guests began to arrive for the surprise party.

cointise

n
/ kwan'tēz /
F > E

a scarf worn on a lady's headdress or as a token of favor on a knight's helmet.
Sir Agravaine proudly displayed the bright red cointise.

colic

n
/ 'kəlɪk /
Gk > L > F > E

acute abdominal pain in man or animals.
Last spring Sam's horse had colic.

collabent

adj
/ kō'ləbənt /
L

sunken or falling in : collapsing in the middle.
Orville poked the collabent anthill with a stick.

collaborator

n
/ kə'ləbərədə(r) /
L

[has near homonym: collaborateur]
one that works jointly with others.
Sir William Gilbert was Arthur Sullivan's collaborator for many operettas.

collage

n
/ kə'ləʒh /
Gk > LF + Fcf

an artistic composition of fragments of printed matter and other materials pasted on a picture surface.
Sabrina spent weeks finishing a large collage of a Paris street scene.

collate

v
/ kə'lāt /
L

arrange or assemble (paper, sheets, or forms) according to an orderly system.
Edith's favorite feature of the new copier was its ability to collate documents.

collateral

adj
/ kə'lədərəl /
L > F > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] placed or regarded as side by side : parallel, coordinate, or corresponding in position, order, time, or significance.
Mexico's Sierra Madre Oriental and Occidental mountain ranges are collateral.

college

n
/ 'kəlɪj /
L

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an organized group of persons engaged in a common pursuit, having a common duty or role and sometimes a charter or special rights and privileges.
Pope John Paul II was 58 years old when the College of Cardinals elected him to lead the Roman Catholic Church.

colliery

n
/ 'kəlɪərə /
E

[has near homonym: colory] a coal mine and the buildings connected with it.
The colliery around which the village was built closed when its reserves of coal were exhausted.

colloquy

n
/ 'kälək wē /
L

high-level serious discussion.
Listeners in the gallery must remain silent during the legislators' colloquy.

collusion

n
/ kə' lüz hən /
L

secret agreement : secret cooperation for a fraudulent or deceitful purpose.
For acting in collusion with an enemy agent, the nuclear scientist was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

cologne

n
/ kə' lōn /
G name > F

a perfumed liquid composed of alcohol and certain aromatic oils.
The taxi driver sprayed expensive cologne in his cab every evening.

colonelcy

n
/ 'kərn' l sē /
L > It > F + Ecf

the office, rank, or commission of a colonel.
Nathan announced that he was being considered for a colonelcy in the infantry.

colophon

n
/ 'kälə fən /
Gk

an identifying mark, emblem, or device used by a printer or publisher sometimes on the title page, cover, shelfback, or jacket.
The publisher decided on the figure of a Russian wolfhound as its colophon.

coloratura

n
/ kələ rə' tūrə /
L > It

[Note: Could be confused with colorature.] the florid ornamentation in vocal music (as runs, trills, arpeggios).
Barry thinks that he would enjoy opera music more if it did not contain so much coloratura.

colossal

adj
/ kə' lās əl /
Gk > L > F
characterized by extremely great bulk, extent, force, strength, power, or effect.
The new stadium is a colossal building seating about a hundred thousand people.

comediienne

n
/ kə. mē dē' en /
Gk > F

[Note: Could be confused with comedian.] an actress who plays in dramas of light and amusing character and typically with a happy ending.
Lucille Ball was America's favorite comedienne during the 1950s.

comet

n
/ 'kämət /
Gk

a celestial body that consists of a fuzzy head usually surrounding a bright nucleus and that has an orbit varying in eccentricity.
The vaunted Kohoutek comet proved to be a great disappointment for stargazers.

commemorate

v
/ kə' mem ə rāt /
L

call to remembrance as by speech, writing, or ceremony.
Every year on December seventh, ceremonies are held to commemorate those who died during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

commendable

adj
/ kə' mend ə bəl /
L

worthy of praise.
Jim received several scholarships as a result of his commendable academic performance.

commensurate

adj
/ kə' men(t)s(ə)rət /
L
corresponding in size, extent, amount, or degree : proportionate.
The want ad stated that salary would be commensurate with experience.

commercial

adj
/ kə' mər shəl /
L > F + Ecf
from the point of view of profit : having profit as the primary aim.
Leila was determined that her jewelry store would be a commercial success.

commercialize

v
/ kə' mər shə. līz /
L > F + Ecff
make use of for profit-seeking purposes.
The Hopi denounced those who would commercialize their religious dances and ceremonies.

commination

n
/ ˌkæmə'næʃən /
L

[Note: Could be confused with combination.] an instance or the action of announcing, warning of, or threatening punishment or vengeance.

The president ended his speech with a severe commination against the rebels.

commiseration

n
/ kə'mizə'ræʃən /
L

the feeling or showing of sorrow or the expression of condolence for the wants or distresses of another.

Aunt Betsy sighed and moralized with true and steady commiseration.

commitment

n
/ kə'mitmənt /
L

the consignment or sentencing to confinement (as in a prison or mental hospital).

Tony's sentence included commitment to the state penitentiary for at least five years.

commodious

adj
/ kə'mɒdɪəs /
L > F > E + Lcf + Ecf

large or roomy and convenient.

Leo and his family rented a modest but commodious villa in Spain.

commute

v
/ kə'myüt /
L

travel back and forth regularly or frequently.

For his work, Horst must commute daily between Philadelphia and New York.

comparatively

adv
/ kəm'parədɪvli /
L

nearly, approximately.

"Well, approximately yes," he replied; "that is, comparatively no."

compelled

v
/ kəm'peld /
L

forced by physical necessity.

Artie was compelled to hold his breath while swimming under water.

compendium

n
/ kəm'pendɪəm /
L

a work treating in brief form the important features of a whole field of knowledge or subject matter category.

Eileen is writing a compendium of investment information for small company shareholders.

competency

n
/ 'kæmpədənsē /
L

the quality or state of being functionally adequate.

The prospective student questioned the competency of the professor.

complement

n
/ 'kæpləmənt /
L

a finishing or consummating part, integral, or component.

The earrings made the perfect complement to Anjali's ensemble.

comprehend

v
/ ˌkæmprə'hend /
L > E

see the nature, significance, or meaning of.

Although he had read every word of Moby Dick, Stu failed to comprehend it.

compunction

n
/ kəm'pʌŋ(k)ʃən /
L

normal human regret, pity, or anxiety : remorse.

The children showed no compunction about having eaten the entire cake before dinner.

comradeliness

n
/ 'kæm.rædlɪnəs /
L > Sp > F + Ecff

a spirit of friendly familiarity and goodwill.

The comradeliness of her shipmates put Mrs. Stein at ease.

concatenate

v
/ kən'kædə.nāt /
L

link together : unite in a series or chain.

The professor told the class to write a program that would concatenate two or more files.

concentrate

v

/ 'kän(t)sən.trät /

L + Ecf

bring all one's powers, faculties, or activities to bear : focus.

*Anthony couldn't concentrate on the reading material because he was sick.***concentric**

adj

/ kən'sentrik /

L

having a common center (as circles one within another).

*Shane stared at the concentric circles of the dart board for so long that he seemed to be hypnotized.***concept**

n

/ 'kän.sept /

L

thought, idea, notion.

*Julie's concept of an entertaining movie was not the same as her younger brother's.***concerto**

n

/ kən'cherd(,)ō /

L > It

a virtuoso piece for solo instrument or voice and orchestra that usually has three contrasting movements.

*A violin concerto by Vivaldi concluded the orchestra's program.***concession**

n

/ kən'seshən /

L

the admitting of a point claimed in argument; especially : the voluntary yielding of a disputable contention.

*Concession was out of the question, but it was time to appear to forget that they had ever quarreled.***conch**

n

/ 'känk /

Gk > L

[has homonym: conk] any of various large spiral-shelled marine gastropod mollusks.

*Herbert recoiled when he saw conch on the menu of the Caribbean restaurant.***conchiform**

adj

/ 'känkə.förm /

Gk > L > ISV

shell-shaped.

*Mom keeps her jewelry in a conchiform box.***conchitic**

adj

/ kän'kidik /

Gk

composed of shells.

*The professor brought in a piece of conchitic limestone so students could examine the mollusk shells in it.***concierge**

n

/ kō'syerzh /

L > F

an attendant at the entrance of a building : doorkeeper.

*The concierge took note of the mysterious man's comings and goings at the hotel.***conciliate**

v

/ kən'silē.ät /

L

win over from a state of hostility or distrust : appease.

*The new king hoped to conciliate his subjects by doing them all the good in his power.***concinnity**

n

/ kən'sinədə /

L

harmony or fitness in the adaptation of parts to a whole or to each other.

*After reading through the writer's first draft, the editor praised the writer for her consistency and concinnity of style.***concoct**

v

/ kən'käkt /

L

put together : devise, fabricate.

*Mom overheard the boys concoct a story to explain the broken window.***concomitant**

adj

/ kən'kämədənt /

L

occurring along with or at the same time as and with or without causal relationship.

*Mr. Simmons noted that his son's poor grades in algebra were concomitant with the start of the basketball season.***concordat**

n

/ kən'kòr.dat /

L > F

a compact between a national government and a religious group establishing terms of agreement concerning matters of mutual interest.

Bonaparte and Pope Pius VII signed a concordat that the state of France should protect and acknowledge the Roman Catholic Church.

concurrency

n
/ kən'kərən(t)s /
L

[has homonym: concurrents]
agreement in opinion.

Frank agreed to it, but with so quiet a "Yes," as inclined Emma almost to doubt his real concurrence.

concussion

n
/ kən'kəʃən /
L

a smart or hard knock, blow, or collision; also : the shock of such a blow.

When Amy slipped on the ice she nearly suffered a concussion.

condemn

v
/ kən'dem /
L

[has near homonym: contemn]
pronounce as ill-advised, reprehensible, wrong, or evil.

Often custom justifies an action that years later it will condemn.

condescended

v
/ kändə'sendəd /
L > F > E + Ecf

stooped or bent to action or speech less formal or dignified than is customary in one's social rank.

The rajah condescended to seat himself on a rug under the tree.

condiment

n
/ kändəmənt /
L > F > E

something usually pungent, acid, salty, or spicy added to or served with food to enhance its flavor or to give added flavor : seasoning.

Mustard is the condiment usually served on hot pastrami sandwiches.

condor

n
/ 'kän.dó(ə)r /
Quechua > Sp

a very large American vulture having the head and neck bare and being one of the largest and most powerful of flying birds.

Of all the birds of prey at the zoo, the Andean condor is Alison's favorite.

conduit

n
/ 'kän(.)düət /
F > E

a natural or artificial channel through which water or other fluid passes or is conveyed.

Grandfather showed Logan the conduit that irrigated his large garden.

confetti

n pl
/ kən'fedē /
L > It

tiny colored paper disks or paper streamers so made as to scatter readily when thrown.

Ticker tape and confetti swirled like snow over the crowded street.

confiscate

v
/ 'känfə.skāt /
L

seize by or as if by public authority.

After a two-hour wait, the border guard decided not to confiscate Brenda's antique necklace.

conflagration

n
/ känflə'grāʃən /
L

a large disastrous fire involving numerous buildings.

Sixty fire trucks were called in to battle the conflagration.

confluence

n
/ 'kän.flüən(t)s /
L

the place of meeting of two streams.

Martina agreed to meet Lynn at the confluence of Rogers Creek and the Little Red River.

conga

n
/ 'kängə /

African geog name
a Cuban dance of African origin involving three steps followed by a kick and performed by a group in single file.

When he was a child, Jimmy loved to dance the conga.

congenial

adj
/ kən'jēnyəl /
L

characterized by friendly sociability.

Paul and Linda appreciated the restaurant's congenial atmosphere.

conglob

v
/ kən'glōb /
L

form into a ball.

Time-lapse photos showed how clouds conglob.

conglomerate

n
/ kən'gläm(ə)rət /
L

a mixture gathered from various sources : a composite mass.

Father called his specialty "Irish stew," but it was really more like a conglomerate of indeterminate substances.

coniferous

adj

/ kŏ'nif(ə)rəs /

(Gk + L) > L + Ecf

bearing cones.

A covering of coniferous trees keeps some mountains green all winter.

Connecticut

adj

/ kə'nedəkət /

Mohican? > American geog name of or from the state of Connecticut.

Ichabod Crane is a famous character of Connecticut lore.

connivery

n

/ kə'niv(ə)rē /

L + Ecf

the practice of cooperating secretly, especially in a wrongful act.

Allen suspects Brenda of connivery in the mysterious sale of the mansion.

connoisseur

n

/ kənə'sü(ə)r /

L > F

one who is an expert in a subject; especially : one who understands the details, technique, or principles of an art and is competent to act as a critical judge.

The connoisseur who judged the culinary creations is a chef at a five-star restaurant.

connote

v

/ kə'nōt /

L

arouse as an inseparably associated idea or feeling : imply, suggest.

Eli wonders if sending a dozen long-stemmed roses to Gretchen might connote what he finds difficult to say.

connubial

adj

/ kə'n(y)übēəl /

L

of or relating to marriage or the marriage state.

Susan and Stuart spent their honeymoon in a state of connubial contentment.

conquistador

n

/ kŏn'k(w)ēstədō(ə)r /

L > Sp

conqueror; specifically : any one of the leaders in the Spanish conquest of America, especially of Mexico and Peru, in the 16th century.

Mr. Sanchez found the helmet of a conquistador deep in the canyon.

consanguinity

n

/ kənsən'gwinədə /

L

the quality or state of being related by blood.

Consanguinity has historically been of great importance in determining who sits on the various thrones of Europe.

conscience

n

/ 'kəntʃən(t)s /

L

the sense of right or wrong within the individual.

In this country everyone has a right to exercise individual conscience and judgment on all matters of public interest.

conscientious

adj

/ kəntʃē'enchəs /

L

governed by the dictates of the sense of right or wrong : honest, scrupulous.

Janice was very conscientious about telling the truth.

consciousness

n

/ 'kəntʃəsənəs /

L + Ecf

intuitively perceived knowledge of something in one's inner self.

With a sort of sneering consciousness, Tyler admitted that he had nothing to say that would be entertaining to anyone.

consecrate

v

/ 'kənsəkrāt /

L

make or declare sacred or holy.

The bishop will consecrate the new chapel next Sunday.

consensus

n

/ kən'sen(t)səs /

L

collective opinion : the judgment arrived at by most of those concerned.

The Booster Club's consensus was that popcorn would sell better than cotton candy.

consortium

n

/ kən'sŏrsh(ē)əm /

L

[has near homonym: consortium]

an organization of persons having a common interest.

Several organizations joined the consortium that fosters inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of society.

conspiracy

n
/ kənz'pɪrəsē /

L
an illegal, treasonable, or treacherous plan to harm or destroy another person, group, or entity.
The commissioner charged that the entire industry was in conspiracy to keep out competition.

constabulary

n
/ kənz'tabyələre /

L
a body of policemen (as of a particular town, district, country).
The local constabulary was out in force at the Halloween celebration.

constellation

n
/ kənztə'ləshən /

L
any one of 88 arbitrary configurations of stars or an area of the celestial sphere covering one of these configurations.
Rani found it difficult to see a scale in the constellation Libra.

construe

v
/ kənz'tru /

L > E
explain the sense or intention of often to one's own satisfaction or according to or in conformity with a given set of circumstances.
Paul tried to construe the situation in the best possible light.

consuetude

n
/ 'kən(t)swət(y)üd /

L
social usage : custom, habit.
The practice of men opening doors for women has fallen from consuetude.

consummate

adj
/ 'kən(t)səmət /

L
of the very highest or finest : supremely excellent.

Marie was worried that her son would ruin the party, but he behaved like a consummate gentleman.

contemplate

v
/ 'kəntəm.plāt /

L
carefully and intently think about something : ponder.

The board of directors will contemplate the proposal from the rival company.

contemptible

adj
/ kən'tem(p)təbəl /

L
meriting scorn and condemnation as paltry, mean, base, or vile.
Though most people viewed the accused man as a contemptible being, Sister Agatha pitied him and tried to reach out to him.

contiguous

adj
/ kən'tɪgyəwəs /

L
touching or connected throughout.
Mr. Wallace understands but resents higher shipping costs for U.S. customers living in states outside the contiguous 48.

contingencies

n pl
/ kən'tɪnjənsēz /

L
possible future events or conditions or unforeseen occurrences that may necessitate special measures.
Setting the date of the family reunion involved considering the contingencies and conveniences of about 100 people.

contraband

n
/ 'kəntrəbænd /

L > It
goods or merchandise the importation, exportation, or sometimes possession of which is forbidden.
On the teacher's desk sat the contraband taken from students during the day.

contrapuntal

adj
/ .kəntrə'pəntəl /

It
of, relating to, or according to the rules of melodic part writing.
J. S. Bach was a master of contrapuntal melody.

contrariety

n
/ .kəntrə'rɪədē /

L
the quality or state of being in opposition or disagreement.
Amanda was becoming impatient with her two-year-old son's contrariety.

contretemps

n
/ kō'trətä /

F + L > F
an inopportune embarrassing occurrence : mishap, mischance.
Jeremy moved steadily from blunder to contretemps to embarrassment.

contrition

n
/ kən'trɪshən /

L
consciousness of guilt or sin giving rise to humility and sorrow.
In the warmth of true contrition she would call upon Miss Bates the very next morning, and it should be the beginning, on her side, of a regular, equal, kindly relationship.

controversy

n
/ 'kɑntrəvɜrsē /

L
a difference marked especially by the expression of opposing views : dispute.

Most television talk shows seem more interested in creating controversy than in trying to resolve it.

contumacy

n
/ kən't(y)üməsē /

L > E
stubborn resistance to authority; specifically : willful contempt of court.

In the Middle Ages contumacy could be punished by excommunication and the loss of civil rights.

contusion

n
/ kən't(y)üzhən /

L
a bruise caused by external violence.

The contusion on Wayne's shoulder began to fade nine days after his accident.

conundrums

n pl
/ kə'nəndrəmz /

unknown
riddles based on some fanciful or fantastic resemblance between things quite unlike and forming a puzzling question whose answer is or involves a pun.

Mr. Elton was invited to contribute any really good conundrums to Emma's collection of riddles of every sort.

convection

n
/ kən'vekshən /

L
the circulatory motion that occurs in a fluid at a nonuniform temperature owing to the variation of its density and the action of gravity.

In the tropics, strong convection draws warm air high into the sky.

convergent

adj
/ kən'verjənt /

L
tending to move toward one point or each other.

The crowds leaving the stadium became convergent on their way to the subway entrance.

conversant

adj
/ kən'versənt /

L
familiar or acquainted by use or study : well-informed.

Sabendra is conversant in the latest movements in European art.

convertible

n
/ kən'verdəbəl /

L
an automobile having a top that may be folded back, lowered, or removed.

Thelma and Louise enjoyed cruising the highway in Louise's convertible.

convivial

adj
/ kən'vivēəl /

L
fond of good company and festivity.

The convivial lodge owners enjoyed socializing with their guests.

convivially

adv
/ kən'vivēəlē /

L + Ecf
in a manner that is fond of good company and festivity.

Though the hostess felt ill and wanted to leave the party, she behaved convivially.

coordinate

adj
/ kō'örd(°)nət /

L
equal in rank, quality, or significance.

The United States attempts to keep the branches of government coordinate.

Copernican

adj
/ kō'pərnəkən /

Pol name
of, relating to, or being the astronomic system of Copernicus in which the Sun is taken as the center of the planets.

The Copernican view of the solar system was originally regarded as heretical.

copious

adj
/ 'kōpēəs /

L
present in large quantity : plentiful, abundant, lavish.

Patrick took copious notes during the lecture.

coquetry

n
/ 'kōkətrē /

F
effort or action intended to attract admiration, gallantry, or affection without responsive feeling.

The princess used coquetry as a tool as a carpenter uses a hammer.

coracle

n
/ 'kɔrəkəl /

W
a small boat made by covering a wicker frame with hide or leather.
Ted rowed an old coracle to the small island in the lake.

cordillera

n
/ .kò(r)d'ɪl'ɛrə /

L > Sp
a group of mountain ranges forming a mountain system of great linear extent.
The Andean cordillera extends along the west coast of South America.

corduroy

n
/ 'kò(r)də.rɔi /

F > E name
a cut-pile fabric with vertical ribs or wales, usually made of cotton.
His worn trousers of corduroy were three inches too short.

coriander

n
/ .kɔr'ændə(r) /

L
an Old World herb whose ripened dried fruit is used for flavoring especially of pickles, curries, confectioneries, and liquor.
Jane almost always uses coriander to season her stew.

cormorant

n
/ 'kɔrm(ə)rənt /

L > F > E
any of various dark-colored web-footed seabirds.
In parts of eastern Asia the cormorant is domesticated by fishermen.

cornice

n
/ 'kɔrnəs /
Gk > L > It > F

the typically molded and projecting horizontal member that crowns an architectural composition.
Here and there among the ruins of the great palace, a cornice or part of a column remained intact.

corniculate

adj
/ kò(r)'nikyələt /

L
having horns or small horn-shaped processes.
In some species of animals, only the males are corniculate.

cornucopia

n
/ .kò(r)n(y)ə'kɔpēə /

L
a curved goat's horn from the mouth of which fruit and ears of corn overflow, emblematic of abundance—called also “horn of plenty.”
Robert placed various kinds of rolls in the basket shaped like a cornucopia and set it in the center of the table.

corollary

n
/ 'kɔrəl.ɪrē /

L
a proposition that follows upon one just demonstrated and that requires no additional proof.
After proving the theorem, Mr. Barnes showed how the corollary logically followed.

coronach

n
/ 'kɔrənək /

ScGael&IrGael
a lamentation for the dead as sung or played on the bagpipes in Scotland and Ireland : dirge.
The mournful coronach could be heard throughout the valley.

coronary

adj
/ 'kɔrən.ɪrē /

L
of or involving the blood vessels of the heart; broadly : of or relating to the heart.
A blockage in a coronary artery caused Tom's heart attack.

coroner

n
/ 'kɔrənə(r) /

L > F > AF > E
a public officer whose principal duty is to inquire into the cause of any death which there is reason to suppose is not due to natural causes.
The job of coroner combines elements of medicine and detective work.

coronet

n
/ .kɔrə'net /

Gk > L > F
a small or lesser crown usually signifying a high rank below that of a sovereign.
The princess happily let her young cousin try on the coronet.

corporeal

adj
/ kò(r)'pɔrēəl /

L
having, consisting of, or relating to a physical material body : not spiritual.
It's very difficult for Mrs. O'Connor to think in a corporeal way.

corpulent

adj
/ 'kò(r)pyələnt /

L
having a large bulky body.
Mike and Edie laughed at the corpulent gorilla as it stuffed bananas into its mouth.

corpuscle

n
/ 'kɔ(r).pəsəl /

L
a living cell that is somewhat isolated and not aggregated into continuous tissues.

In the science fiction movie, a white corpuscle attacked the tiny ship as it traveled through the bloodstream.

corral

v
/ kə'ral /

L > Sp
[has homonym: chorale] round up and drive (livestock) into a pen.
With the help of his dog, Jerry managed to corral the herd.

correspond

v
/ .kɔrə'spænd /

L
communicate with a person by exchange of letters.
Mason and his friends correspond frequently by e-mail.

corroborate

v
/ kə'rɒbərət /

L
provide evidence of the truth of : confirm.
Without a witness to corroborate his alibi, Zorba remained the chief suspect in the robbery case.

corrugated

adj
/ 'kɔrə.gətəd /

L
having a ridged or furrowed surface.
The corrugated sand dune looked like a work of art.

coruscate

v
/ 'kɔrə.skāt /

L
gleam with intermittent flashes : glitter, sparkle.

The flickering light from Trudy's lantern made the cave walls coruscate.

corybantic

adj
/ .kɔrə'bantik /

Gk
like or in the spirit of the attendants or priests of the nature goddess Cybele noted for wildly emotional processions and rites; specifically : wild, frenzied.
At the rock concert many fans engaged in corybantic dancing.

corymb

n
/ 'kɔrɪm(b) /

Gk > L > F
a flower cluster in which the flower stalks arise at different levels on the main axis and reach about the same height, forming a somewhat flat-topped cluster.
Each corymb of Queen Anne's lace by the porch has a bumblebee on it.

cosmogensis

n
/ .kæzmɔ'ʒenəsəs /

Gk
a part of the science of astronomy that deals with the origin and development of the universe.
Contrary to his expectations, Lionel's study of cosmogenesis made him more religious.

cosmopolite

n
/ kəz'məpə.lɪt /

Gk
one that is at home in every country.
Although she considered herself a cosmopolite, Sharon still couldn't get used to driving on the left side of the road.

coterie

n
/ 'kɔdərə /

F
an intimate often exclusive group of persons having a binding common interest or purpose : clique.
Phyllis and her coterie arrived fashionably late for the gallery opening.

cotyledon

n
/ .kæd'ɪlɛd'n /

Gk > L
the first leaf or one of the first pair or whorl of leaves developed by the embryo in seed plants and in ferns and related plants.
Mr. Pittman drew a fern cotyledon on the blackboard.

couchant

adj
/ 'kaʊçənt /

F
lying down with the head up.
The coat of arms depicted a couchant lion.

coulisse

n
/ kü'lɛs /

F
a side scene of the stage in a theater or the space between the side scenes.
The path depicted in the coulisse led the eyes to the center stage.

couloir

n
/ kü'lwär /

L > F
a deep gorge.
Lance hiked along the stream at the bottom of the couloir.

counsel

n
/ 'kaʊn(t)səl /
L > F > E

[has homonym: council] advice, direction.

Mr. Knightley shared unpleasant truths with Emma and proved himself her friend by very faithful counsel.

countenance

n
/ 'kaʊnt(ə)nən(t)s /
L > F > E

the expressive appearance of one's face : look, expression.

The department store Santa's countenance set Loretta at ease.

countervail

v
/ 'kaʊntər,vāl /
L > F > E

oppose or exert force against : counteract.

Miles built a low wall around his sloping garden to countervail erosion.

coup

n
/ 'kū /
F

a sudden decisive exercise of localized or concentrated force unseating the personnel of a government.

The dictator was ousted by a military coup.

courier

n
/ 'kʊrɪə(r) /
L > It > F

[has homonym: currier] one who carries messages, news, or information either with urgent haste or in accordance with a regular schedule.

Jaime worked as a courier after school to earn money for a new car.

couture

n
/ kʊ'tu:(ə)r /
L > F

the business of designing, making, and selling fashionable expensive custom-made women's clothing.

At the Paris fashion shows Carolyn talked to several young designers who were just starting out in couture.

covenant

n
/ 'kəvənənt /
L > F > E

an agreement that is usually formal, solemn, and intended as binding.

The book of Genesis describes Noah's covenant with God that saved his family from the Great Flood.

covey

n
/ 'kəvɛ /
L > F > E

a small flock or number of birds of the same kind—used typically of partridges and certain related birds.

The hunter aimed at the covey of quail flying over the pasture.

coyote

n
/ kɪ'ɒd(,)ē /
Nahuatl > Sp

a small wolf native to the western part of North America and well established northward in Alaska and eastward at least as far as New York state.

The lone male coyote kept to the edges of the pack for many days before being accepted into the group.

cozened

v
/ 'kəzənd /
L > It

obtained by artful wheedling or tricky dishonesty.

The crooked lawyer cozened the life's savings of several of his clients.

credenza

n
/ krə'denzə /
L > It

a sideboard, buffet, or bookcase without legs whose base rests flat on the floor.

Robin's CDs are on the second shelf of the credenza.

credulity

n
/ krə'd(y)ʊlədē /
L

belief or readiness of belief especially on slight or uncertain evidence.

Marco's personality was a strange mixture of shrewdness and credulity.

creekology

n
/ krē'käləjē /
ON > E + Gk

any method of searching for oil based on a limited knowledge of geology and practiced especially by wildcat prospectors.

Doug, who was known for his nose for oil, attributed his success to creekology.

crenate

adj
/ 'krē.nāt /
L

having the margin cut into rounded scallops.

The crenate leaves on Freda's specimen gave her a clue as to its classification.

creophagy

n
/ krē'äfəjē /
Gk

the use of flesh as food.

After visiting a slaughterhouse, Stephanie was repulsed by creophagy and became a vegetarian.

crepitant

adj
/ 'krepədənt /
L

having or making a crackling sound : crackling.

The boys rolled and tumbled in the pile of crepitant leaves.

crepuscular

adj
/ krə'pəsk(y)ələ(r) /
L + Ecf

active in the twilight.

Darnel blurted out "firefly" when the teacher asked for an example of a crepuscular insect.

crecendo

n
/ krə'shen(ɪ)dō /
L > It

the peak of a gradual increase (as in physical or emotional force or intensity).

As soon as his boat sailed out of the harbor, Angus realized that the wind was nearing a crescendo.

cresecent

n
/ 'kresənt /
L > F > E

the shape or figure defined by a convex and a concave edge.

The moon's silvery crescent disappeared as the eclipse reached totality.

crecive

adj
/ 'kresiv /
L

increasing, growing.

The crecive vines traveled up the trellis.

crecograph

n
/ 'kreskəgrəf /
L + Ecf + Gk

an instrument for making perceptible the growth of plants.

The crecograph can magnify small plant movements as much as ten million times.

cribbage

n
/ 'kribij /
E

a card game for two and sometimes three or four players each of whom is dealt six cards one or two of which are discarded before play to form an extra hand for the dealer.

Kathy and her cousins are ferociously competitive when they play cribbage.

cribral

adj
/ 'kribrəl /
L

of or relating to a sieve : perforated.
The mouths of certain whales contain a cribral structure for collecting food.

cricetid

n
/ krə'sēdəd /
Slav > L

any of a family of small rodents including lemmings, voles, and hamsters.

The hamster is an example of a cricetid that is kept as a pet.

crimson

n
/ 'krimzən /
Ar > Sp > E

any of several deep or vivid reds or purplish reds of rather indefinite range.

The sun was dropping slowly from sight, and stripes of purple and orange and crimson and gold reached upward from the distant hills.

crinoline

n
/ 'krinələn /
L > It > F

a full stiff skirt or underskirt.

The crinoline that Andrea wore in the pageant made her knees itch.

crocheting

v
/ krō'shāɪŋ /
F + Ecf

working with needlework consisting of the interlocking of looped stitches formed with a single thread and a hooked needle.

Marie sat nearby crocheting and tried to take a friendly interest in the game.

cromlech

n
/ 'kräm.lek /
W

a circle of monoliths usually enclosing a dolmen or mound.

Inspired by their study of Stonehenge, Mr. Akala's fifth-grade class built a cromlech on the playground.

cronyism

n
/ 'krɔ̃nē.izəm /
Gk + Ecf

partiality to familiar friends especially as evidenced in the appointing of political hangers-on to office without due regard for their qualifications.

When the mayor appointed his best friend head of the police department, he was accused of cronyism.

croquet

n
/ krɔ̃'kɑ̃ /
F

a game in which players drive wooden balls with mallets through a series of wickets set out on a lawn in a particular order.

Erica and her friends played croquet in the churchyard.

crotchety

adj
/ 'krächədə̃ /
F > E

subject to whims, crankiness, or ill temper.

Not getting enough sleep usually makes Trudy crotchety in the morning.

croup

n
/ 'krüp /
imit

a spasmodic laryngitis in infants and children characterized by episodes of difficult breathing and hoarse cough.

Mrs. Dowling hoped Everett's sore throat wouldn't develop into croup.

croupier

n
/ 'krüpē.ɑ̃ /
F

an employee of a gambling casino who watches, collects, and pays bets and assists the dealer in charge of the table.

The croupier tossed two more \$100 chips onto Daphne's growing pile.

croustade

n
/ krü'städ /
Prov > F

a crisp shell (as of toasted or fried bread) in which to serve food.

Louise didn't know whether or not she was supposed to eat the croustade in which her salad was served.

crucible

n
/ 'krüsəbəl /
L

a vessel or melting pot that is used for melting and calcining a substance (as metal and ore) which requires a high degree of heat.

Clyde began the experiment by dumping the collected samples into a crucible.

cruciferous

adj
/ krü'sif(ə)rəs /
L + Ecff

belonging to or having the characteristics of the mustards or related plants.

Cruciferous vegetables are an excellent source of beta carotene.

cruller

n
/ 'krələ(r) /
D

a small sweet cake made of a rich egg batter formed into twisted strips and fried brown in deep fat.

Olive couldn't decide whether to order a cruller or an éclair with her coffee.

Crusade

n
/ krü'sād /
F

an expedition undertaken for a declared religious purpose.

The first Crusade to reclaim Jerusalem for Christians began in 1096.

crustacean

n
/ ,krə'stāshən /
L

an animal belonging to a large class of Arthropoda comprising the majority of the marine or freshwater arthropods (as lobsters, shrimps, crabs, and barnacles).

Our team's mascot is Crusty the Crustacean, a ten-pound Maine lobster.

cryology

n
/ krī'äləjē /
Gk

the study of snow and ice.

In cryology, students learn how glaciers grow, shrink, advance, and retreat.

cryophorus

n
/ ,krī'äfərəs /
Gk > L

an instrument that illustrates the freezing of water by its own evaporation.

The cryophorus was made of glass in the form of a tube connecting two globes partially filled with liquid.

cryptographer

n
/ krip'tägrəfə(r) /
Gk

one that practices the art of preparing or reading messages in a form intended to prevent their being read by those not privy to secrets of the form.

An inveterate cryptographer, Rico enjoys searching ordinary writing samples for hidden messages.

cryptonym

n
/ 'kriptənim /
Gk

a secret name.

Each person in our club was given a cryptonym known only to the other members.

crystal

adj
/ 'kristəl /
Gk

consisting of or resembling quartz that is transparent or nearly so and that is either colorless or only slightly tinged.

Once inside, they hurried down a long hallway, which glittered with crystal chandeliers.

crystosphere

n
/ 'kristəsfi:n /
Gk

a buried sheet of ice under the tundra of North America formed by the freezing of spring water.

The geologist measured the thickness of the crystosphere.

cubic

adj
/ 'kyübik /
Gk > L > F

relating to a crystal form that consists of six similar, mutually perpendicular faces.

Gold crystallizes in a cubic structure with a density of 19.4 grams per cubic centimeter.

cucaracha

n
/ .kükə'rächə /

Mexican song
a Mexican ballroom and nightclub dance.

Determined to win the state ballroom dance title, Joan and Marlon practiced their cucaracha for weeks.

cuchifrito

n
/ .küchi'frədō /
Sp

a deep-fried cube of pork.

When Lane wasn't looking, Stephanie popped a cuchifrito into the dog's mouth.

cuckoo

n
/ 'kü(,)kü /
E imitative

[has homonym: kuku] a familiar European bird that is noted for its characteristic two-syllabled whistle and for its habit of laying its eggs in the nests of other birds for them to hatch.

The cuckoo in the aviary sounded just like Grandmother's clock.

cucurbit

n
/ kyü'kərbət /
L > F > E

(Note: Dictionary designates as attributive.) a many-seeded fleshy fruit plant with a hard rind (such as squashes, pumpkins, and certain gourds).

The cucurbit is probably put to a wider variety of uses than is any other fruit family.

cudgel

n
/ 'kəjəl /
E

a short heavy stick used as an instrument for punishment or a weapon.

A nightstick is one kind of cudgel.

culgee

n
/ 'kəl.gē /
Per > Hindi

a jeweled plume worn in India on the turban.

Professor Singh happily loaned his grandfather's culgee to the museum.

culinary

adj
/ 'kəl.nerē /
L

of or relating to the kitchen or cookery.

The early colonists used herbs for both culinary and medicinal purposes.

culminant

adj
/ 'kəlmənənt /
L

being at greatest altitude or on the meridian.

The Sun casts the shortest shadows when it is culminant.

culpable

adj
/ 'kəlpəbəl /
L

meriting condemnation or censure especially as criminal or as conducive to accident, loss, or disaster.

The property owner was guilty of culpable negligence in the accident involving an uncovered manhole.

culprit

n
/ 'kəlpɾət /
L > AF

one who is guilty of a crime or other wrongdoing.

The detectives devised a plan to capture the culprit.

cultivation

n
/ ˌkʌltəˈvʌʃən /
L

the art or process of farming.
Frigid weather conditions and barren soil make cultivation of tundra almost impossible.

culturati

n pl
/ ˌkʌlchəˈrɪd(ɪ) /
Gk + Lcf

people intensely interested in the artistic and intellectual aspects or content of human activity.
The scheduled performance by "The Three Tenors" generated excitement among the city's culturati.

cumbersome

adj
/ ˈkʌmbə(r)səm /
F > E + Ecf

of an excessive size, shape, or length : unwieldy.
Emrick dragged his cumbersome duffel bag by its strap.

cumbrous

adj
/ ˈkʌmbrəs /
E

giving trouble : vexatious.
A swarm of cumbrous gnats followed the hikers all day long.

cummerbund

n
/ ˈkʌmə(r)bʌnd /
Per > Hindi

a waistband worn in place of a vest with men's dress clothes.
The bride wanted the groom's cummerbund to match the pale pink of her flowers.

cuneiform

adj
/ kyü'nēə.förm /
L + L

written in characters composed of strokes having the form of a wedge or arrowhead.
The cuneiform Code of Hammurabi is the most complete record of ancient Babylonian law in existence.

cupressineous

adj
/ ˌk(y)üprə'sinēəs /
Gk > L + Ecf

relating to or resembling the cypress.
The wood of cupressineous trees is usually light, moderately hard, and very durable.

curator

n
/ kyə'rādə(r) /
L

one in charge of the exhibits, research activities, and personnel of a museum, zoo, or other place of exhibit.
Eric interviewed the curator of marine mammals at the aquarium.

curiousness

n
/ ˈkyürēəsnəs /
L > F > E + Ecf

the quality of being inquisitive.
Dickon's round eyes were full of eager curiousness but he said not a word.

curmudgeon

n
/ (ɪ)kər'məjən /
unknown

a crusty, ill-tempered, or difficult and often elderly person.
Fiona's dad called her grandfather a "cantankerous old curmudgeon."

current

adj
/ ˈkərənt /
L

[has homonyms: courant, currant]
presently elapsing.
In the current fiscal year Cornucopia College enjoys a slight budget surplus.

curriculum

n
/ kə'rikyləm /
L

the whole body of courses offered by an educational institution or one of its branches.
The school is planning to add Latin to its curriculum next year.

curtain

n
/ ˈkɜrtɪn /
L > F > E

the screen separating the stage from the auditorium of a theater.
The law states that the theater curtain must be made of fireproof material.

curtilage

n
/ ˈkɜrdʒɪj /
F > E

a yard, courtyard, or other piece of ground included within a fence surrounding a dwelling house.
The police searched the house and the curtilage for any clues relating to the robbery.

curvature

n
/ ˈkɜrvə.tʃü(ə)r /
L

the act or state of deviating from a straight line or course typically with a rounded gradual effect.
The curvature of the brick path gave the garden a pleasing informality.

custard

n

/ 'kəstə(r)d /

L > Prov > E

a sweetened mixture of milk and eggs that is baked, boiled, or frozen.

Lemon custard is Harold's favorite dessert.

custody

n

/ 'kəstədē /

L > E

charge or control (as of a suspect) exercised by a person or an authority.

The suspect was kept in police custody until she provided an incontrovertible alibi.

cutaneous

adj

/ kyü'tānēəs /

L

of or relating to the skin.

Cutaneous sensation includes feeling cold, heat, contact, and pain.

cuticle

n

/ 'kyüdəkəl /

L

an external membranous or hardened noncellular investment secreted by the outer surface of the body (as in arthropods).

Because expansion cannot occur in the chitinous cuticle, the growing insect must periodically shed its covering.

cyanosis

n

/ .sīə'nōsəs /

Gk

a bluish or purplish discoloration (as of skin) due to deficient oxygenation of the blood.

Cyanosis may result from pneumonia, asphyxiation, heart failure, or heart anomalies.

cybernetics

n pl

/ .sībə(r)'nediks /

Gk

the comparative study of the automatic control system formed by the nervous system and brain and by mechanical-electrical communication systems and devices (as computers or thermostats).

Bertha's new robotics software promised to revolutionize cybernetics.

cyclical

adj

/ 'sīkləkəl /

Gk

of, relating to, or belonging to a regularly recurring succession of events or phenomena.

Mr. Ramirez explained the cyclical phases of the Moon to the science class today.

cyclogenesis

n

/ .sī(ə)klō'jənəsəs /

Gk

the process of development or intensification of a rotating storm system.

Satellites have greatly improved the monitoring of cyclogenesis.

cyclonic

adj

/ sī'klänik /

Gk

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a rotating storm.

Cyclonic disturbances known as hurricanes usually occur during the summer and fall.

cygnet

n

/ 'sīgnət /

Gk > L > F > E

a young swan.

Six-year-old Abby, openly contemptuous of the fairy tale, patiently explained to her mother that there's no way an ugly duckling can turn into a swan—only a cygnet can.

cynegetics

n pl

/ .sīnə'jediks /

Gk

the art of hunting.

Mrs. White began her talk about cynegetics with a recording of melodies played on hunting horns.

cynology

n

/ sə'näləjē /

Gk

[has homonym: sinology]

scientific study of the dog

especially in respect to its natural history.

Having a coyote as a childhood pet gave Rick an early interest in cynology.

cynophilist

n

/ sə'näfələst /

Gk

[Note: Could be confused with form of sinophil/sinophile.] a dog fancier : one that is favorably disposed toward dogs.

Although Leon considered himself a cynophilist, he did not trust the pit bull terrier.

cynosure

n

/ 'sīnəshü(ə)r /

Gk

a center of attraction or interest.

The student union, with its billiard tables, bowling alley, and snack bar, is a cynosure for freshmen during orientation week.

Cytherean

adj

/ .sīthə'rēən /

Gk > L + Ecf

of or relating to the goddess Venus or to the planet Venus.

The Cytherean atmosphere has a high concentration of sulfuric acid.

cytology

n
/ sɪ'täləʒi /
Gk + Gk

[has homonym: sitology] the branch of biology concerned with the study of cells as vital units with reference to their structure, function, multiplication, pathology, and life history.

For differentiating between benign and malignant lesions, cytology offers a more precise method of diagnosis than does the use of X rays.

dachshund

n
/ 'däks.hünt /
G + G

a small dog of a breed of German origin having long drooping ears, commonly a short sleek coat, and the legs short in comparison with the body length.

Chloe has a brown dachshund named "Oscar."

dacquoise

n
/ dāk.wäz /
F

a dessert made of baked layers of nut meringue with a filling usually of buttercream.

The hotel dessert buffet included a chocolate-pecan dacquoise.

dactylogram

n
/ dakt'ilə.gram /
Gk + Gk

an impression taken from a finger : fingerprint.

Calvin used a magnifying glass to examine the loops and whorls in a dactylogram of his index finger.

dactyloscopy

n
/ daktə'läskəpē /
Gk

identification by comparison of fingerprints.

Dactyloscopy indicated that the suspect's fingerprints are indeed on the murder weapon.

daedal

adj
/ 'dēd'əl /
Gk

ingeniously formed or working : like a maze : intricate.

The children's quiz show led its contestants through a daedal journey of stunts and questions.

daffodils

n pl
/ 'däfə.dilz /
D + L > F > D

plants having flowers that have a large corona elongated into a trumpet.

These flowers blooming in the snow are daffodils and snowdrops.

dahlia

n
/ 'dalyə /
Sw name > L

a plant of a genus of tuberous-rooted herbs having rayed flower heads.

The brightly colored flowers of the dahlia can be six inches in diameter.

daiquiri**dais**

n
/ 'dāəs /
L > F > E

a platform raised usually above the floor of a hall or large room to give distinction or prominence to those occupying it.

A round dais was exactly in the center of the room.

Daliesque

adj
/ 'dälē'esk /
Sp name

resembling or suggesting the paintings of the Spanish surrealist artist Dali.

The poster showed a Daliesque face with feathers poking out of each nostril.

Damoclean

adj
/ ,damə'klēən /
Gk name + Ecf

involving imminent danger.

Retrieving the car keys from the piranha tank was a Damoclean task indeed.

danseuse

n
/ dän'sə(r)z /
F

a female ballet dancer.

Denise was advised that being a danseuse was as exhausting as it was rewarding.

Dantesque

adj
/ ,dän'tesk /

It name

of, relating to, or resembling the Italian writer Dante or his writings.

The Dantesque image of a soul in torture repulsed Regina.

dashing

adj
/ 'dashiŋ /
E imit + Ecf

vigorously active : spirited.

The dashing actor was the talk of the party.

dawdler

n

/ 'dɔd(ə)lə(r) /

unknown + Ecf

one who wastes time in idle
lingering.*Lauren was such a dawdler that
she often missed the school bus.***dazzling**

v

/ 'daz(ə)liŋ /

ON > E + Ecf

overpowering with brightness :
shining.*Morgan took great satisfaction in
dazzling his neighbors with his
Christmas light display.***dearth**

n

/ 'dɜrθ /

E

scarcity : lack of a present
necessity.*The general realized that his army
was suffering from a dearth of self-
confidence.***debacle**

n

/ də'bækəl /

L > OProv > F

a sudden breakdown : collapse.

*Craig reads everything he can find
regarding the Wall Street debacle
of 1929.***debenture**

n

/ də'benʃə(r) /

L

a writing or certificate signed by a
public officer as evidence of a debt
or of a right to demand or receive a
sum of money.*Uncle John treasures the debenture
issued by the Confederate
government, even though it is
actually worthless.***debouchment**

n

/ də'bʊʃmənt /

F

a mouth or outlet especially of a
river.*The river's debouchment had to be
dredged because the sediment was
a hazard to navigation.***debridement**

n

/ də'brēd.mə̃ /

F

the surgical removal of lacerated,
devitalized, or contaminated tissue.*The doctor explained to the
firefighter why debridement was
the best treatment for his second-
degree burns.***debris**

n

/ də'brē /

F

the remains of something broken
down or destroyed.*Scattered debris lies where
majestic homes stood before last
week's tornado.***decedent**

n

/ də'sēd̃nt /

L

a dead person; especially : a person
who has recently died.*The relatives of the decedent
gathered for the reading of the will.***deceitful**

adj

/ də'setfəl /

E + Ecf

dishonest.

*The Better Business Bureau warned
Jasper of the awning company's
deceitful business practices.***deceive**

v

/ də'sēv /

L > F > E

cause to believe the false : delude.

*Cara's forgery of her mother's
signature did not deceive the
principal.***decelerate**

v

/ dē'selə.rāt /

L

lessen the speed of : slow down.

*Reversing engine thrust is used to
decelerate jets upon landing.***decibel**

n

/ 'desə.bel /

L + Scottish-American name
a unit for measuring the relative

loudness of sounds equal

approximately to the smallest

degree of difference of loudness

ordinarily detectable by the human
ear.*Differences of one decibel can be
important to a recording engineer.***deciduous**

adj

/ də'sijəwəs /

L

falling off or shed at the end of the
growing period, at certain seasons,
or at certain stages of development.*Deciduous trees drop their leaves
each fall.*

decimate

v
/ 'desə.māt /
L

select by lot and kill every tenth person of.
The terrorist promised to decimate the group of hostages every half hour until his demands were met.

deciphered

v
/ də'sɪfə(r)d /
L + Ar > L > F > E

made out, read, or interpreted despite obscuration.
When one considers the variety of handwriting, and of bad handwriting, too, that must be deciphered, it increases the wonder that so seldom a letter is delivered to the wrong person.

decistere

n
/ 'desə.sti(ə)r /
F

a metric unit of capacity equal to 1/10 cubic meter.
Caleb bought a decistere of lime for his front lawn.

declamatory

adj
/ də'klamətərē /
L

marked by rhetorical effect or display : stilted.
Minna's declamatory sermon alienated many of her listeners.

declivate

adj
/ də'kli.vāt /
L

inclining downward : sloping.
Mary Ann slid down the declivate roof of the playhouse.

decompose

v
/ .dɛkəm'pōz /
L > F

separate or resolve into constituent parts or elements or into simpler compounds.
Mr. Landry asked the students whether they knew any compounds other than methanol which decompose into carbon dioxide and water.

decorous

adj
/ 'dekərəs /
L

marked by propriety and good taste.
Lucia was surprised to find that the disc jockey was as decorous off the air as he was volcanic while on the air.

decorticate

v
/ dɛ'kò(r)dəkāt /
L

remove the bark, husk, or other outer covering from.
Sharp front teeth allow squirrels to decorticate hickory nuts.

decoupage

n
/ .dɛkū'pāzh /
F

the art of decorating surfaces by applying cutouts and then coating them with several layers of a finish such as lacquer or varnish.
Aunt Hazel's interest in arts and crafts was kindled by a free class in decoupage.

decuman

adj
/ 'dekyəmən /
L

(of a wave) : extremely large.
That decuman wave that took the ship fore and aft swept the life raft off the deck.

decussate

adj
/ 'dekəsət /
L

shaped like an X.
Each wing of the moth had a decussate marking.

defeasible

adj
/ də'fēzəbəl /
F + Ecf

capable of being or liable to being voided, annulled, or undone.
When a family adopts a baby, several requirements have to be met; otherwise the adoption is defeasible.

defendant

n
/ də'fendənt /
L > F

a person required to make answer in an action or suit in law or equity or in a criminal action.
When the foreman of the jury read the verdict of "not guilty," the defendant embraced his attorneys.

defervescence

n
/ .dɛ(,)fər'ves'ən(t)s /
L

the subsidence of a fever.
Antonio's mother was relieved to note the signs of defervescence in her son.

deficiency

n
/ də'fɪʃənsē /
L

the quality or state of lacking some quality, faculty, or characteristic necessary for completeness.
Scurvy is caused by a deficiency of vitamin C in the diet.

definite

adj

/ 'def(ə)nət /

L

free of all ambiguity, uncertainty, or obscurity.

*Dad sounded quite definite when he told us to turn off the TV.***dehiscence**

n

/ də'his'n(t)s /

L + Ecf

the bursting open of a capsule or pod at maturity.

*In dry weather, dehiscence of some seed pods occurs prematurely.***deipnosophist**

n

/ dɪp'nəsəfəst /

Gk

a person skilled in table talk.

*Clint's reputation as a deipnosophist makes him an ideal dinner guest.***delectable**

adj

/ də'lektəbəl /

L

deliciously flavored.

*JoAnne selected Black Forest cake from the delectable dessert offerings.***deleterious**

adj

/ .delə'tirēəs /

Gk

hurtful, destructive.

*The museum did not permit flash photography because of the possible deleterious effects on the paintings.***deleteriously**

adv

/ .delə'tirēəslē /

Gk + Ecf

in a hurtful or destructive manner.

*It seems that every day we are reminded that smoking affects the body deleteriously.***delicacy**

n

/ 'deləkəsē /

L

something pleasing to eat that is accounted rare or luxurious.

*Caviar is considered a delicacy.***delicatessen**

n

/ .deləkə'tes'n /

F > G

a store where ready-to-eat food products (as cooked meats and prepared salads) are sold.

*Marta stopped at the delicatessen to buy some cold cuts for our lunch.***delicious**

adj

/ də'lishəs /

L

appealing to one of the bodily senses, especially that of taste.

*Judith said the fudge was the most delicious she had ever tasted.***delinquent**

n

/ də'liŋkwənt /

L

a transgressor against duty or law.

*The police referred to Harold as a "delinquent" when he was found on the street after curfew.***deliquesce**

v

/ .delə'kwes /

L

become soft or liquid with age.

*After a couple of weeks in the refrigerator, lettuce begins to deliquesce.***delirious**

adj

/ də'lirēəs /

L

affected with frenzied excitement or wild enthusiasm.

*The delirious fans rushed onto the field to congratulate the champions.***delitescent**

adj

/ .delə'tesənt /

L

lying hidden : obfuscated, latent.

*The psychiatrist tried to discover the delitescent significance of his patient's dreams.***deltiology**

n

/ .deltē'äləjē /

Gk

the hobby of collecting postcards.

*Jodie got started in deltology just last year but already has postcards from over 100 countries.***deluge**

n

/ 'del(ɪ)yüj /

L > F > E

a drenching rain : downpour.

*The children were caught in a deluge as they waited for the school bus.***demagoguery**

n

/ 'deməgäg(ə)rē /

Gk + Ecf

the principles or practices of rabble-rousers.

Economic hardship often gives rise to demagoguery.

demarcate

v
/ də'märkāt /
Gmc > It > Sp

mark by bounds.

Sol used fishing line to demarcate his half of the room from his brother's.

demeanor

n
/ də'mēnə(r) /
L > F > E

behavior toward others : outward manner.

The vice-president's icily serious demeanor was fodder for the late-night talk shows.

demesne

n
/ də'mān /

F
[has near homonym: domain] legal possession of land as one's own.

The earl vowed to defend his demesne at any cost.

demijohn

n
/ 'demējän /
F + F name > E
a narrow-necked bottle of glass or stoneware that is enclosed in wickerwork and has one or two wicker handles.

Water glugged from the demijohn as Emily emptied it on the lawn.

demitasse

n
/ 'demētas /
L > F > E + Per > Ar > F
a small cup of coffee usually taken black.

Nathan sipped nervously at a demitasse while he waited for his attorney.

democracy

n
/ də'mäkrəsē /
Gk > L
a government by the people : rule of the majority.

Cara could not imagine what her life would be like if it were governed not by a democracy but instead by the whims of a few people.

demography

n
/ də'mägrəfē /
Gk
the statistical study of the characteristics of human populations especially with reference to size and density, growth, distribution, migration, and vital statistics.

Beth's interest in demography led her to a career in advertising.

demulcent

adj
/ də'məlsənt /
L

soothing, softening.

The pharmacist told Boris that a demulcent syrup would be best for his sore throat.

demurs

n pl
/ də'mərz /
L

difficulties in making up one's mind : indecisions.

Harriet's message was unequivocal, containing no doubts or demurs.

dengue

n
/ 'deŋ(,)gē /
African? > Sp

[has homonym: dinghy] an acute infectious disease characterized by sudden onset, headache, racking joint pain, and a rash and caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitoes.

The African village was quarantined after an outbreak of dengue.

denizen

n
/ 'denəzən /
L > F > E

a dweller in a certain place or region.

Melvin asked a local denizen for directions.

denouement

n
/ ,dānü'mäⁿ /
L > F

the final outcome, result, or unraveling of the main dramatic complication in a play or other work of literature.

The loose ends of the plot were neatly tied up in the surprising denouement.

dentifrice

n
/ 'dentəfrəs /
L

a powder, paste, or liquid used in cleaning the teeth.

John decided to use a dentifrice containing baking soda.

