

VOCABULARY

Abate	to lessen in intensity or degree
Aberration	something not typical; a deviation from the standard
Abjure	to renounce or reject solemnly; to recant; to avoid
Abscond	to depart clandestinely; to steal off and hide
Aberrant	deviating from the norm (noun form: <i>aberration</i>)
Abstemious	sparing or moderate, especially in eating and drinking
Abstinent	abstaining; voluntarily not doing something
Abstract	theoretical; lacking substance (the opposite of concrete)
Abstruse	hard to understand or grasp
Acclaim	praise; applause; admiration
Accolade	an expression of praise, an award or honor
Accrete	to increase by growth or addition
Acerbic	having a sour or bitter taste or character; sharp; biting
Acquiesce	to give in; to agree
Acumen	keen, accurate judgment or insight
Acute	sharp; shrewd
Adulation	excessive praise; intense adoration
Adulterate	to reduce purity by combining with inferior ingredients
Adumbrate	to foreshadow vaguely or intimate; to suggest or outline sketchily; to obscure or overshadow
Advocate	to speak in favor of; to support; one that pleads the case of another
Aesthetic	dealing with, appreciative of, or responsive to art or the beautiful
Aggrandize	to increase in intensity, power, influence, or prestige
Alacrity	eager and enthusiastic willingness
Alchemy	a medieval science aimed at the transmutation of metals, esp. base metals into gold (an <i>alchemist</i> is one who practices alchemy)
Alleviate	to lessen; to relieve, usually temporarily or incompletely; to make bearable
Allocate	to distribute; assign; allot
Allusion	an indirect reference to something else, especially something in literature; a hint

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Amalgamate	to combine several elements into a whole (noun form: <i>amalgamation</i>)
Amass	to accumulate
Ambiguous	unclear in meaning; confusing; capable of being interpreted in at least two similarly plausible ways
Ambivalent	undecided; blowing hot and cold
Ambulatory	able to walk; walking
Ameliorate	to make better or more tolerable
Amenable	agreeable; responsive to suggestion
Amiable	friendly
Amity	friendship
Anachronism	something or someone out of place in terms of historical or chronological context
Anarchy	absence of government or control; lawlessness; disorder
Anathema	a solemn or ecclesiastical (religious) curse; accursed or thoroughly loathed person or thing
Anecdote	a brief, entertaining story
Animated	alive; moving
Animosity	resentment; hostility; ill will
Anodyne	soothing; something that assuages or allays pain or comforts
Anomaly	an aberration; an irregularity; deviation from the normal order, form, or rule; abnormality (adj. form: <i>anomalous</i>)
Antipathy	firm dislike; dislike; hatred
Antiseptic	free from germs; exceptionally clean
Apathy	lack of emotion or interest
Apocryphal	of doubtful origin; false
Apogee	farthest or highest point; culmination; zenith
Apostate	one who abandons long-held religious or political convictions
Apotheosis	deification; glorification to godliness; an exalted example; a model of excellence or perfection
Appease	to soothe; to pacify by giving in to
Apprehensive	worried; anxious
Approbation	an expression of approval or praise

Arbiter	one who decides; a judge
Archaic	outdated; associated with an earlier, perhaps more primitive, time
Arduous	strenuous, taxing; requiring significant effort
Arid	extremely dry; unimaginative; dull
Arrogant	feeling superior to others; snooty
Articulate	speaking clearly and well
Ascetic	hermitlike; one who practices rigid self-denial, esp. as an act of religious devotion
Asperity	severity, rigor; roughness, harshness; acrimony, irritability
Asseverate	to aver, allege, or assert
Assiduous	hardworking; busy; diligent
Assuage	to soothe; to ease or lessen; to appease or pacify
Astringent	having a tightening effect on living tissue; harsh; severe; something with a tightening effect on tissue
Astute	perceptive; intelligent
Atrophy	to waste away from lack of use
Audacious	daring and fearless; recklessly bold (noun form: <i>audacity</i>)
Augment	to add to; to increase; to make bigger
Augury	omen, portent
Auspicious	favorable; promising; pointing to a good result
Austere	without adornment; bare; severely simple; without much money; ascetic (noun form: <i>austerity</i>)
Authentic	real
Authoritarian	like a dictator
Avarice	greed, esp. for wealth (adj. form: <i>avaricious</i>)
Aver	to state as a fact; to declare or assert
Axiom	a universally recognized principle; a self-evident rule or truth; a widely accepted saying (adj. form: <i>axiomatic</i>)
Axiomatic	taken as a given; possessing self-evident truth (noun form: <i>axiom</i>)
Baleful	menacing; harmful
Banal	unoriginal; ordinary
Bastion	stronghold; fortress; fortified place
Beget	to cause or produce; to engender
Belittle	to make to seem little

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Bellicose	belligerent, pugnacious, warlike
Belligerent	combative; quarrelsome; waging war
Benefactor	a generous donor
Beneficent	doing good
Benevolent	kind; good-hearted; generous
Benign	gentle; not harmful; kind; mild
Bereave	to deprive or leave desolate, especially through death
Bias	prejudice; tendency; tilt
Blasphemy	irreverence; an insult to something held sacred; profanity
Blithe	carefree; cheerful
Bolster	to provide support or reinforcement
Bombastic	pompous; grandiloquent (noun form: <i>bombast</i>)
Brawn	bulk; muscles
Brevity	briefness
Brook	to bear or tolerate; to put up with something
Burgeon	to grow rapidly or flourish
Bucolic	rustic and pastoral; characteristic of rural areas and their inhabitants
Cacophony	harsh, jarring, discordant sound; dissonance (adj. form: <i>cacophonous</i>)
Cajole	to deceptively persuade someone to do something he or she doesn't want to do
Calumniate	to slander, to make a false accusation; <i>calumny</i> means slander, aspersion
Candid	honest; frank
Canon	an established set of principles or code of laws, often religious in nature (adj. form: <i>canonical</i>)
Canonical	following or in agreement with accepted, traditional standards (noun form: <i>canon</i>)
Capricious	inclined to change one's mind impulsively; erratic, unpredictable
Captious	disposed to point out trivial faults; calculated to confuse or entrap in argument
Castigation	severe criticism or punishment (verb form: <i>castigate</i>)
Catalyst	a substance that accelerates the rate of a chemical reaction without itself changing; a person or thing that causes change
Caustic	like acid; burning or stinging; causing corrosion
Cavil	to find fault without good reason

Celerity	speed, alacrity; think <i>accelerate</i>
Censure	to criticize severely; to officially rebuke
Chary	wary; cautious; sparing
Chicanery	trickery or subterfuge
Chimera	an illusion; originally, an imaginary fire-breathing she-monster
Chronology	an order of events from earliest to latest
Circumlocution	an indirect expression; use of wordy or evasive language
Coalesce	to come together as one; to fuse; to unite
Coda	a passage concluding a composition (in music)
Cogent	appealing forcibly to the mind or reason; convincing
Cognizant	perceptive; observant
Complacent	smug; self-satisfied; pleased with oneself; contented to a fault
Complaisance	the willingness to comply with the wishes of others (adj. form: <i>complaisant</i>)
Compliant	yielding; submissive
Comprehensive	covering or including everything
Conciliatory	making peace; attempting to resolve a dispute through goodwill
Concise	brief and to the point; succinct
Condescend	to stoop to someone else's level, usually in an offensive way; to patronize
Condone	to overlook; to permit to happen
Congenial	agreeably suitable; pleasant
Conjoin	to join or act together
Conjure	to summon or bring into being as if by magic
Connoisseur	an informed and astute judge in matters of taste; expert
Consensus	unanimity or near unanimity
Conspicuous	standing out; obvious
Contempt	reproachful disdain
Contentious	argumentative; quarrelsome; causing controversy or disagreement
Contiguous	sharing a border; touching; adjacent
Contrite	regretful; penitent; seeking forgiveness (noun form: <i>contrition</i>)
Contumacious	stubbornly rebellious or disobedient

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Conundrum	a puzzle; a riddle
Convention	a generally agreed-upon practice or attitude
Conventional	common; customary; unexceptional
Correlate	to find or show the relationship of two things
Corroborate	to confirm; to back up with evidence
Convolved	complex or complicated
Credulous	tending to believe too readily; gullible (noun form: <i>credulity</i>)
Cryptic	mysterious; mystifying
Culpable	deserving blame; gullible (noun form: <i>culpability</i>)
Cynic	one who deeply distrusts human nature; one who believes people are motivated only by selfishness
Cynicism	an attitude or quality of belief that all people are motivated by selfishness (adj. form: <i>cynical</i>)
Dearth	smallness of quantity or number; scarcity; a lack
Debacle	violent breakdown; sudden overthrow
Debauchery	corruption by sensuality; intemperance; wild living
decorous	in good taste; orderly
Decorum	polite or appropriate conduct or behavior (adj. form: <i>decorous</i>)
Deference	submission to another's will; respect; courtesy
Deleterious	harmful
Demur	to question or oppose
Denouement	an outcome or solution; the unraveling of a plot
Denounce	to speak out against; to condemn
Deplete	to use up; to reduce; to lessen
Depravity	moral corruption
Deride	to ridicule; to laugh at contemptuously
Derision	scorn, ridicule, contemptuous treatment (adj. form: <i>derisive</i> ; verb form: <i>deride</i>)
Descry	to discriminate or discern
Desecrate	to profane a holy place (the opposite is consecrate)
Desiccate	to dry out or dehydrate; to make dry or dull
Desuetude	disuse
Desultory	random; aimless; marked by a lack of plan or purpose
Deter	to prevent; to stop; to keep from doing something
Diaphanous	transparent, gauzy
Diatribes	a harsh denunciation

Didactic	intended to teach or instruct
Diffident	timid; lacking in self-confidence
Digress	to go off the subject
Dilettante	one with an amateurish or superficial interest in the arts or a branch of knowledge
Diligent	hardworking
Dirge	a song of grief or lamentation
Disabuse	to undeceive; to set right
Disavow	to deny
Discernment	insight; ability to see things clearly
Discomfit	to confuse, deject, frustrate, deceive
Discord	disagreement (the opposite of concord)
Discordant	conflicting; dissonant or harsh in sound
Discourse	to converse; to formally discuss a subject
Discretion	cautious reserve in speech; ability to make responsible decisions (adj. form: <i>discrete</i>)
Discriminate	to differentiate; to make a clear distinction; to see the difference
Disdain	arrogant scorn; contempt
Disinterested	free of bias or self-interest; impartial
Disparage	to slight or belittle; to say uncomplimentary things about, usually in a somewhat indirect way
Disparate	fundamentally distinct or dissimilar; incompatible
Dispassionate	without passion; objective; neutral
Dissemble	to disguise or conceal; to mislead
Disseminate	to scatter or spread widely
Dissent	disagreement
Dissonant	inharmonious; in disagreement
Divergent	differing in opinion; deviating
Diverse	varied
Divert	to change the direction of; to alter the course of; to amuse
Divulge	to disclose something secret
Doggerel	comic, loose verse
Dogmatic	arrogantly expressing a rigid opinion based on unproved or improvable principles (noun form: <i>dogma</i>)
Drone	to talk on and on in a dull way
Dubious	doubtful; uncertain

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Ebullience	the quality of lively or enthusiastic expression of thoughts and feelings (adj. form: <i>ebullient</i>)
Eccentric	departing from norms or conventions; a little kooky; irregular
Eclectic	composed of elements drawn from various sources;
Economical	frugal; thrifty
Efface	to erase; to rub away the features of
Effluvium	a disagreeable or noxious vapor; an escaping gas
Effrontery	extreme boldness; presumptuousness
Elaborate	detailed; careful; thorough
Elegy	a mournful poem, esp. one lamenting the dead (adj. form: <i>elegiac</i>)
Eloquent	well-spoken, expressive, articulate (noun form: <i>eloquence</i>)
Elusive	hard to pin down; evasive
Emollient	soothing, esp. to the skin; making less harsh; mollifying; an agent that softens or smoothes the skin
Empirical	based on observation or experiment
Emulate	to strive to equal or excel, usually through imitation
Encomium	glowing and enthusiastic praise; panegyric, tribute, eulogy
Endemic	characteristic of or often found in a particular locality, region, or people
Enervate	to weaken; to reduce in vitality
Engender	to create; to produce
Enhance	to make better; to augment
Enigma	mystery
Enigmatic	mysterious; obscure; difficult to understand (noun form: <i>enigma</i>)
Ennui	dissatisfaction and restlessness resulting from boredom or apathy
Enthrall	to thrill
Ephemeral	brief; fleeting
Equivocate	to use ambiguous language with a deceptive intent (adj. form: <i>equivocal</i>)
Erratic	unpredictable or wandering
Erudite	very learned; scholarly (noun form: <i>erudition</i>)
Eschew	to shun or avoid

Esoteric	intended for or understood by a small, specific group; peculiar
Eulogy	a speech honoring the dead (verb form: <i>eulogize</i>)
Euphony	pleasant sound (the opposite is cacophony)
Evanescent	tending to disappear like vapor; vanishing; scarcely perceptible
Exacerbate	to make worse or more severe
Excoriate	to censure scathingly, to upbraid
Exculpate	exonerate; to clear of blame
Execrate	to denounce, to feel loathing for, to curse, to declare to be evil
Exegesis	critical examination, explication
Exemplary	outstanding; setting a great example
Exemplify	to serve as an example of
Exhaustive	thorough; complete
Exigent	urgent, pressing; requiring immediate action or attention
Exonerate	to remove blame
Exorbitance	an exceedingly large amount
Expedient	providing an immediate advantage; serving one's immediate self-interest
Expedite	to make faster or easier
Expiate	to atone or make amends for
Exposition	expounding or explaining; explanatory treatise
Extemporaneous	improvised; done without preparation
Extirpate	to destroy, to exterminate, to cut out, to excise
Extol	to praise
Extraneous	irrelevant; extra; unnecessary; unimportant
Exuberant	extremely joyful or vigorous; profuse in growth
Facetious	playful; humorous; not serious;
Facilitate	to make easier
Fallacious	false
Fallacy	an invalid or incorrect notion; a mistaken belief (adj. form: <i>fallacious</i>)
Fanatic	one who is extremely devoted to a cause or idea
Fastidious	meticulous; demanding
Fatuous	silly, inane; foolish
Fawn	to flatter or praise excessively

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Feasible	able to be done
Fecund	fertile; productive
Fervent	greatly emotional or zealous (noun form: <i>fervor</i>)
Fervor	passion
Fickle	capricious; whimsical; unpredictable
Filibuster	intentional obstruction, esp. using prolonged speech-making to delay legislative action
Flag	to weaken; to slow down
Flagrant	shocking; outstandingly bad
Flaunt	to show off; to display ostentatiously
Flippant	frivolously shallow and disrespectful
Flout	to show contempt for, as in a rule or convention
Forbear	to refrain from; to abstain
Fortuitous	happening by accident or chance
Foster	to promote the growth or development of
Fractious	quarrelsome, rebellious, unruly, refractory, irritable
Frenetic	frantic; frenzied
Frivolous	not serious; not solemn; with levity
Frugal	economical; penny-pinching
Fulminate	to loudly attack or denounce
Fulsome	excessive, insincere and disgusting
Furtive	marked by stealth; covert; surreptitious; secretive
Futile	hopeless; without effect
Gainsay	to deny; to speak or act against
Garner	to gather and store; to earn
Garrulous	pointlessly talkative; talking too much
Genial	cheerful and pleasant; friendly; helpful
Genre	an artistic class or category
Germane	relevant to the subject at hand; appropriate in subject matter
Gerrymander	to divide a state or county into election districts to gain political advantage
Glib	marked by ease or informality; nonchalant; lacking in depth; superficial
Goad	to urge forcefully; to taunt someone into doing something
Grandiloquence	pompous speech or expression (adj. form: <i>grandiloquent</i>)

Gravity	seriousness (secondary meaning)
Gregarious	sociable; outgoing; enjoying the company of other people
Guile	cunning; duplicity
Gullible	overly trusting; willing to believe anything
Hackneyed	rendered trite or commonplace by frequent usage; banal (a cliché is a hackneyed expression)
Halcyon	calm and peaceful
Harangue	to deliver a pompous speech or tirade; a long, pompous speech
Hedonism	devotion to pleasurable pursuits, esp. to the pleasures of the senses (a <i>hedonist</i> is someone who pursues pleasure)
Heed	to listen to
Hegemony	the consistent dominance of one state or ideology over others
Heresy	an opinion violently opposed to established beliefs
Heretical	violating accepted dogma or convention (noun form: <i>heresy</i>)
Hermetic	impervious to external influence; airtight
Heterodox	unorthodox, heretical, iconoclastic
Hindrance	an obstruction; an annoying interference or delay
Homeostasis	the tendency of an organic system to maintain internal stability
Hone	to sharpen
Hubris	overbearing presumption or pride; arrogance
Hyperbole	an exaggerated statement, often used as a figure of speech (adj. form: <i>hyperbolic</i>)
Hypothetical	uncertain; unproven
Iconoclast	one who attacks or undermines traditional conventions or institutions
Idiom	a peculiar expression
Idolatrous	given to intense or excessive devotion to something (noun form: <i>idolatry</i>)
Idyllic	charming in a rustic way; naturally peaceful
Imbroglia	difficult or embarrassing situation
Imminent	about to happen; impending
Immutable	not capable of change; permanent
Impartial	unbiased; neutral

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Impassive	revealing no emotion
Impecunious	lacking funds; without money
Impede	to hinder; to obstruct; to slow something down
Imperturbable	marked by extreme calm, impassivity, and steadiness
Impervious	not allowing anything to pass through; impenetrable
Impetuous	hastily or rashly energetic; impulsive and vehement
Implacable	not capable of being appeased or significantly changed
Implement	to carry out
Implicit	implied rather than expressly stated
Impromptu	without preparation; on the spur of the moment
Improvident	lacking prudent foresight; careless
Impudent	bold; impertinent
Impugn	to attack, especially to attack the truth or integrity of something
Impunity	immunity from punishment or penalty
Inadvertent	lax; careless; without intention
Incessant	unceasing; never-ending
Inchoate	in an initial stage; not fully formed; not organized or orderly
Incipient	beginning to come into being or to become apparent
Incisive	cutting right to the heart of the matter
Incoherent	jumbled; chaotic; impossible to understand
Incongruous	not harmonious; not consistent; not appropriate
Incursion	a hostile invasion
Indefatigable	not easily exhaustible; tireless, dogged
Indifferent	having no interest or concern; showing no bias or prejudice; neutral
Indignant	angry, especially as a result of something unjust or unworthy
Indolence	laziness
Indulgent	lenient; yielding to desire
Ineluctable	inescapable; unavoidable
Inept	clumsy; incompetent
Inert	unmoving; lethargic; sluggish; not reacting chemically
Inevitable	unavoidable; bound to happen

Infamous	shamefully wicked; having an extremely bad reputation; disgraceful
Infelicitous	unfortunate; inappropriate
Infer	to conclude; to deduce
Ingenuous	artless; frank and candid; ; naive; lacking in sophistication
Inherent	part of the essential nature of something; intrinsic
Inimical	damaging; harmful; injurious
Inimitable	one of a kind, peerless
Innate	existing since birth; inborn; inherent
Innocuous	harmless; causing no damage
Innovate	to be creative; to introduce something new
Innumerable	too many to number or count; many
Inspid	without taste or flavor; lacking in spirit; bland
Insolvent	unable to pay one's bills
Insouciant	unconcerned, carefree, heedless
Instigate	to provoke; to stir up
Intractable	not easily managed or directed; stubborn; obstinate
Intransigent	refusing to compromise; stubborn (noun form: <i>intransigence</i>)
Intrepid	steadfast and courageous
Inured	accustomed to accepting something undesirable
Invective	insulting or abusive speech
Inveigle	to obtain by deception or flattery
Inveterate	deep rooted, ingrained, habitual
Irascible	easily angered; prone to temperamental outbursts
Ironic	satiric; unexpected
Jejune	vapid, uninteresting, nugatory; childish, immature, puerile
Jeopardy	danger
Judicious	exercising sound judgment
Kinship	natural or family relationship
Laconic	using few words, often to the point of being rude; terse
Lament	to mourn
Languish	to become weak, listless, or depressed
Laud	to praise highly (adj. form: <i>laudatory</i>)
Laudable	worthy of praise

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Lax	careless; not diligent; relaxed
Lethargy	sluggishness; laziness; drowsiness; indifference
Levee	an embankment designed to prevent the flooding of a river
Levity	lightness; frivolity; unseriousness
Ligneous	woodlike
Litigate	to try in court; to engage in legal proceedings
Loquacious	extremely talkative (noun form: <i>loquacity</i>)
Lubricious	lewd, wanton, greasy, slippery
Lucid	clear; easily understood
Luminous	characterized by brightness and the emission of light
Magnanimity	the quality of being generously noble in mind and heart, esp. in forgiving (adj. form: <i>magnanimous</i>)
Malevolent	having or showing often vicious ill will, spite, or hatred (noun form: <i>malevolence</i>)
Malleable	capable of being shaped or formed; tractable; pliable
Mandatory	authoritatively ordered or commanded; necessary
Manifest	visible; evident
Marred	damaged; bruised
Martial	associated with war and the armed forces
Maverick	an independent individual who does not go along with a group or party; a nonconformist; a rebel
Meander	to wander slowly, like a winding river
Mellifluous	sweetly flowing
Mendacity	the condition of being untruthful; dishonesty (adj. form: <i>mendacious</i>)
Mendicant	a beggar, supplicant
Mercurial	characterized by rapid and unpredictable change in mood
Meretricious	cheap, gaudy, tawdry, flashy, showy; attracting by false show
Merger	a joining or marriage
Meticulous	characterized by extreme care and precision; attentive to detail
Minatory	menacing, threatening (reminds you of the Minotaur, a threatening creature indeed)
Misanthrope	one who hates all other humans (adj. form: <i>misanthropic</i>)
Mitigate	to make or become less severe or intense; to moderate

Mollify	to calm or soothe; to reduce in emotional intensity
Morose	sad; sullen; melancholy
Motility	spontaneous movement
Mundane	of the world; typical of or concerned with the ordinary
Munificent	very generous; lavish
Nadir	low point, perigee
Nascent	coming into being; in early developmental stages
Nebulous	vague; cloudy; lacking clearly defined form
Negligence	carelessness
Neologism	a new word, expression, or usage; the creation or use of new words or senses
Neophyte	a recent convert; a beginner; novice
Neutral	unbiased; not taking sides; objective
Nonplussed	baffled, bewildered, at a loss for what to do or think
Nostalgia	a sentimental longing for the past; homesickness
Novel	new; original
Noxious	harmful, injurious
Nullify	to make unimportant
Obdurate	unyielding; hardhearted; intractable; stubborn
Obfuscate	to deliberately obscure; to make confusing
Objective	without bias (as opposed to subjective)
Obscure	unclear; clouded; partially hidden; hard to understand
Obsequious	exhibiting a fawning attentiveness
Obstinate	stubborn; hard-headed; uncompromising
Obstreperous	noisily and stubbornly defiant, aggressively boisterous
Obtuse	lacking sharpness of intellect; not clear or precise in thought or expression
Obviate	to anticipate and make unnecessary
Occlude	to obstruct or block
Odious	evoking intense aversion or dislike
Onerous	troubling; burdensome
Opaque	impenetrable by light; not reflecting light
Opprobrium	disgrace; contempt; scorn
Orthodox	conventional; adhering to established principles or doctrines, especially in religion; by the book

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Oscillation	the act or state of swinging back and forth with a steady, uninterrupted rhythm (verb form: <i>oscillate</i>)
Ossify	to convert into bone; to become rigid
Ostentatious	characterized by or given to pretentious display; showy
Paeon	a song or hymn of praise and thanksgiving
Palliate	to hide the seriousness of something with excuses or apologies
Panegyric	lofty praise
Paradox	a true statement or phenomenon that nonetheless seems to contradict itself; an untrue statement or phenomenon that nonetheless seems logical
Parallel	a comparison made between two things
Parody	a humorous imitation intended for ridicule or comic effect, esp. in literature and art
Parsimony	stinginess
Partisan	one who supports a particular person, cause, or idea
Pathology	the science of diseases; any deviation from a healthy, normal condition
Paucity	scarcity
Pedagogue	a teacher
Pedagogy	the profession or principles of teaching, or instructing
Pedantic	overly concerned with the trivial details of learning or education; show-offish about one's knowledge
Pedestrian	common; ordinary; banal (secondary meaning)
Pellucid	transparent, easy to understand, limpid
Penchant	strong taste or liking
Penurious	penny-pinching; excessively thrifty; ungenerous
Penury	poverty; destitution
Perennial	recurrent through the year or many years; happening repeatedly
Perfidy	intentional breach of faith; treachery (adj. form: <i>perfidious</i>)
Perfunctory	cursory; done without care or interest
Peripheral	unimportant
Permeate	to spread or seep through; to penetrate
Pernicious	extremely harmful; potentially causing death
Peroration	the concluding part of a speech; flowery, rhetorical speech

Perspicacious	acutely perceptive; having keen discernment (noun form: <i>perspicacity</i>)
Peruse	to examine with great care (noun form: <i>perusal</i>)
Pervade	to spread throughout (adj. form: <i>pervasive</i>)
Pervasive	having the tendency to permeate or spread throughout
Petulant	rude; cranky; ill tempered
Philanthropy	love of mankind; donating to charity
Phlegmatic	calm; sluggish; unemotional
Pine	to yearn intensely; to languish; to lose vigor
Pious	extremely (and sometimes falsely) reverent or devout; showing strong religious devotion (noun form: <i>piety</i>)
Piquant	pungent
Pirate	to illegally use or reproduce
Pith	the essential or central part
Pithy	precise and brief
Pivotal	crucial
Placate	to appease; to pacify; to calm by making concessions
Placid	pleasantly calm; peaceful
Plangent	pounding, thundering, resounding
Platitude	a superficial remark, esp. one offered as meaningful
Plethora	an overabundance; a surplus
Plumb	to measure the depth of something
Plummet	to plunge or drop straight down
Polemic	a powerful argument made in refutation of something
Polemical	controversial; argumentative
Pragmatic	practical; down-to-earth; based on experience rather than theory
Prattle	to babble meaninglessly; to talk in an empty and idle manner
Precipitate	acting with excessive haste or impulse; to cause to happen abruptly
Precipitate	to cause or happen before anticipated or required
Preclude	to prevent; to make impossible; to shut out
Precursor	one that precedes and indicates or announces another
Predecessor	someone or something that came before another
Predilection	a disposition in favor of something; preference

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Preen	to dress up; to primp; to groom oneself with elaborate care
Prescience	foreknowledge of events; knowing of events prior to their occurring (adj. form: <i>prescient</i>)
Presumptuous	overstepping due bounds (as of propriety or courtesy); taking liberties
Pretentious	pompous; self-important
Prevaricate	to deliberately avoid the truth; to mislead
Pristine	pure; uncorrupted; unspoiled; clean
Probity	adherence to highest principles; complete and confirmed integrity; uprightness
Problematic	doubtful or questionable
Proclivity	a natural predisposition or inclination
Prodigal	recklessly wasteful; extravagant; profuse; lavish
Prodigious	abundant in size, force, or extent; extraordinary
Prodigy	an extremely talented child; an extraordinary accomplishment or occurrence
Profligate	excessively wasteful; recklessly extravagant (noun form: <i>profligacy</i>)
Profound	deep; insightful (the opposite of superficial)
Profuse	given or coming forth abundantly; flowing; extravagant
Proliferate	to grow or increase swiftly and abundantly
Prolific	producing large volumes or amounts; productive
Prolix	long-winded, verbose; <i>proximity</i> means verbosity
Propensity	a natural inclination or tendency; penchant
Propinquity	nearness
Propitiate	to appease; to conciliate; <i>propitious</i> means auspicious, favorable
Propriety	properness; good manners
Prosaic	dull; lacking in spirit or imagination
Proselytize	to convert someone from one religion or doctrine to another; to recruit converts to a religion or doctrine
Provincial	limited in outlook to one's own small corner of the world; narrow
Provocative	exciting; attracting attention
Prudent	careful; having foresight
Puerile	childish, immature, jejune, nugatory
Puissance	power, strength; <i>puissant</i> means powerful, strong

Pundit	a learned person; an expert in a particular field
Pungent	characterized by a strong, sharp smell or taste
Pusillanimous	cowardly, craven
Putrefy	to rot; to decay and give off a foul odor (adj. form: <i>putrid</i>)
Quaff	to drink deeply
Qualify	to modify or restrict
Qualms	misgivings; reservations; causes for hesitancy
Queries	questions; inquiries; doubts in the mind; reservations
Querulous	prone to complaining or grumbling; peevish
Quiescence	stillness; motionlessness; quality of being at rest (adj. form: <i>quiescent</i>)
Quixotic	foolishly impractical; marked by lofty romantic ideals
Quotidian	occurring or recurring daily; commonplace
Rampart	a fortification; a bulwark or defense
Rancorous	characterized by bitter, long-lasting resentment (noun form: <i>rancor</i>)
Rarefy	to make or become thin, less dense; to refine
Recalcitrant	obstinately defiant of authority; difficult to manage
Recant	to retract, esp. a previously held belief
Reciprocal	mutual; shared; interchangeable
Recondite	hidden; concealed; difficult to understand; obscure; over one's head
Redoubtable	awe-inspiring; worthy of honor
Redundant	repetitive; unnecessary; excessively wordy
Refulgent	radiant; shiny; brilliant
Refute	to disprove; to successfully argue against
Rejuvenate	to make young and strong again
Relegate	to forcibly assign, esp. to a lower place or position; to banish; to send away
Relevant	important; pertinent
Remonstrate	to protest, to object
Remorse	sadness; regret
Renaissance/renascence	a rebirth or revival
Renege	to fail to honor a commitment; to go back on a promise
Reprehensible	worthy of blame or censure
Repress	to hold down

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Reproach	to scold
Reprobate	a wicked, sinful, depraved person
Repudiate	to refuse to have anything to do with; to disown; to reject; to deny
Repugnant	distasteful or offensive
Rescind	to invalidate; to repeal; to retract
Resignation	reluctant acceptance of a bad situation (secondary meaning)
Resolute	determined; firm; unwavering
Respite	a rest; a period of relief
Reticent	quiet; reserved; reluctant to express thoughts and feelings
Retract	to take back; to withdraw; to pull back
Revere	to worship; to honor (think of a reverend)
Reverent	marked by, feeling, or expressing a feeling of profound awe and respect (noun form: <i>reverence</i>)
Rhetoric	the art or study of effective use of language for communication and persuasion
Ribald	vulgar or indecent speech or language, as in a ribald joke
Rigorous	strict; harsh; severe
Rivet	to fix one's attention on
Saccharine	sweet; excessively or disgustingly sweet
Sagacious	wise; possessing wisdom derived from experience or learning
Sage	wise; possessing wisdom derived from experience or learning; a wise person
Salacious	lustful, lascivious, bawdy
Salubrious	promoting health or well-being
Salutary	remedial, wholesome, causing improvement
Sanction	authoritative permission or approval; a penalty intended to enforce compliance; to give permission or authority to
Sanguine	cheerful, confident, optimistic
Satire	a literary work that ridicules or criticizes a human vice through humor or derision (adj. form: <i>satirical</i>)
Satiric	using sarcasm or irony
Saturnine	a sluggish, gloomy temperament
Savor	to linger on the taste or smell of something

Scanty	inadequate; minimal
Scrupulous	strict; careful; hesitant for ethical reasons
Scrutinize	to examine closely
Sedulous	diligent; persistent; hard-working
Sententious	aphoristic or moralistic; epigrammatic; tending to moralize excessively
Servile	submissive and subservient; like a servant
Shard	a piece of broken pottery or glass
Sinuous	having many curves
Skeptical	doubting (opposite of gullible)
Slander	to defame; to speak maliciously of someone
Solemn	serious; grave
Solicit	to ask for; to seek
Solicitous	concerned and attentive; eager
Solvent	able to meet financial obligations; able to dissolve another substance
Soporific	causing drowsiness; tending to induce sleep
Sordid	characterized by filth, grime, or squalor; foul
Sparse	thin; not dense; arranged at widely spaced intervals
Specious	seeming true, but actually being fallacious; misleadingly attractive; plausible but false
Spendthrift	one who spends money wastefully
Sporadic	occurring only occasionally, or in scattered instances
Spurious	doubtful; lacking authenticity or validity; false; counterfeit
Squalid	sordid; wretched and dirty as from neglect (noun form: <i>squalor</i>)
Squander	to waste by spending or using irresponsibly
Stagnation	motionlessness; inactivity
Stanza	a section of a poem; verse
Static	not moving, active, or in motion; at rest (not radio fuzz)
Stentorian	extremely loud and powerful
Sterile	unimaginative; unfruitful; infertile
Stoic	indifferent to or unaffected by pleasure or pain; steadfast (noun form: <i>stoicism</i>)
Stringent	strict; restrictive
Stupefy	to stun, baffle, or amaze

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Stygian	gloomy, dark
Stymie	to block; to thwart
Subjugate	to subdue and dominate; to enslave
Subpoena	a court order requiring appearance and/or testimony
Substantive	having substance; real; essential; solid; substantial
Subtle	not obvious; elusive; difficult to discern; crafty
Succinct	brief; concise
Sullen	gloomy or dismal
Supercilious	haughty; patronizing
Superficial	on the surface only; shallow; not thorough
Superfluous	exceeding what is sufficient or necessary
Supplant	to take the place of; to supersede
Surfeit	an overabundant supply; excess; to feed or supply to excess
Surreptitious	sneaky; secret
Sycophant	one who sucks up to others
Synthesis	the combination of parts to make a whole (verb form: <i>synthesize</i>)
Tacit	implied; not explicitly stated
Taciturn	untalkative by nature
Tangible	touchable; palpable
Taut	tightly drawn, as a rope; emotionally tense
Tedious	boring
Temerity	boldness; recklessness; audacity
Temperament	one's disposition or character
Temperate	moderate; restrained
Tenacious	tough; hard to defeat
Tenacity	the quality of adherence or persistence to something valued; persistent determination (adj. form: <i>tenacious</i>)
Tendentious	biased; showing marked tendencies
Tentative	experimental; temporary; uncertain
Tenuous	having little substance or strength; flimsy; weak
Terse	brief and concise in wording
Timbre	the quality of a sound independent of pitch and loudness
Timorous	timid, fearful, diffident
Tirade	a long and extremely critical speech; a harsh denunciation

Torpid	lethargic; sluggish; dormant (noun form: <i>torpor</i>)
Torpor	sluggishness; inactivity; apathy
Torque	a force that causes rotation
Tortuous	winding, twisting; excessively complicated
Tout	to publicly praise or promote
Tractable	easily managed or controlled; obedient
Transient	fleeting; passing quickly; brief
Transitory	not staying for a long time; temporary
Trenchant	sharply perceptive; keen; penetrating
Trepidation	fear; apprehension; nervous trembling
Truculent	fierce and cruel; eager to fight
Turpitude	shameful wickedness or depravity
Tyro	novice, greenhorn, rank amateur
Ubiquitous	existing everywhere at the same time; constantly encountered; widespread
Unfeigned	genuine; not false or hypocritical
Uniform	consistent; unchanging; the same for everyone
Unprecedented	happening for the first time; novel; never seen before
Untenable	indefensible; not viable; uninhabitable
Untoward	unfavorable or unfortunate; improper
Urbane	sophisticated; refined; elegant (noun form: <i>urbanity</i>)
Vacillate	to waver indecisively between one course of action or opinion and another
Vacuous	lacking ideas or intelligence
Variiegated	multicolored; characterized by a variety of patches of different color
Vehement	urgent; passionate
Venerate	to revere, to treat as something holy; especially because of great age
Veracity	truthfulness, honesty
Verbose	wordy; overly talkative
Vex	to annoy; to pester; to confuse
Vexation	annoyance; irritation (noun form: <i>vex</i>)
Vigilant	alertly watchful (noun form: <i>vigilance</i>)
Vilify	to defame; to characterize harshly
Vindicate	to clear from all blame or suspicion
Virtuoso	masterful musician; a masterful practitioner in some other field

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Virulent	extremely harmful or poisonous; bitterly hostile or antagonistic
Viscous	thick; sticky (noun form: <i>viscosity</i>)
Visionary	a dreamer; someone with impractical goals or ideas about the future
Vitiate	to corrupt, to debase, to spoil, to make ineffective
Vituperate	to use harsh condemnatory language; to abuse or censure severely or abusively; to berate
Volatile	readily changing to a vapor; changeable; fickle; highly unstable; explosive (noun form: <i>volatility</i>)
Volition	will; conscious choice
Voluble	fluent, verbal, having easy use of spoken language
Voluminous	very large; spacious (this word has nothing to do with sound)
Voluntary	willing; unforced
Voracious	having an insatiable appetite for an activity or pursuit; ravenous
Waver	to move to and fro; to sway; to be unsettled in opinion
Welter	a confused mass; a commotion or turmoil
Willful	deliberate; obstinate; insistent on having one's way
Zealous	fervent; ardent; impassioned, devoted to a cause (a <i>zealot</i> is a zealous person)

Not as Easy as it Sounds

The following list contains some of those simple-sounding words with less common secondary meanings

Alloy	to commingle; to debase by mixing with something inferior; <i>unalloyed</i> means pure
Appropriate	to take for one's own use; to confiscate
Arrest, arresting	to suspend; to engage; holding one's attention: as in arrested adolescence, an arresting portrait
August	majestic, venerable
Bent	leaning, inclination, proclivity, tendency
Broach	to bring up; to announce; to begin to talk about
Brook	to tolerate; to endure; to countenance
Cardinal	major, as in cardinal sin

Chauvinist	a blindly devoted patriot
Color	to change as if by dyeing, i.e., to distort, gloss, or affect (usually the first)
Consequential	pompous, self-important (primary definitions are: logically following; important)
Damp	to diminish the intensity or check the vibration of a sound
Die	a tool used for shaping, as in a tool-and-die shop
Essay	to test or try; to attempt; to experiment
Exact	to demand; to call for; to require; to take
Fell	to cause to fall by striking
Fell	inhumanly cruel
Flag	to sag or droop; to become spiritless; to decline
Flip	sarcastic, impertinent, as in flippant: a flip remark
Ford	to wade across the shallow part of a river or stream
Grouse	to complain or grumble
Guy	a rope, cord, or cable attached to something as a brace or guide; to steady or reinforce using a guy: Think <i>guide</i> .
Intimate	to imply, suggest, or insinuate
List	to tilt or lean to one side
Lumber	to move heavily and clumsily
Meet	fitting, proper
Milk	to exploit; to squeeze every last ounce of
Mince	to pronounce or speak affectedly; to euphemize to speak too carefully. Also, to take tiny steps; to tiptoe
Nice	exacting, fastidious, extremely precise
Obtain	to be established, accepted, or customary
Occult	hidden, concealed, beyond comprehension
Pedestrian	commonplace, trite, unremarkable, quotidian
Pied	multicolored, usually in blotches
Pine	to lose vigor (as through grief); to yearn
Plastic	moldable, pliable, not rigid
Pluck	courage, spunk, fortitude
Prize	to pry, to press or force with a lever; something taken by force, spoils
Rail	to complain about bitterly
Rent	torn (past tense of <i>rend</i>); an opening or tear caused by such

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

Quail	to lose courage; to turn frightened
Qualify	to limit
Sap	to enervate or weaken the vitality of
Sap	a fool or nitwit
Scurvy	contemptible, despicable
Singular	exceptional, unusual, odd
Stand	a group of trees
Steep	to saturate or completely soak, as in to let a tea bag steep
Strut	the supporting structural cross-part of a wing
Table	to remove (as a parliamentary motion) from consideration
Tender	to proffer or offer
Waffle	to equivocate; to change one's position
Wag	wit, joker

WORD PLAY

You can usually get around not knowing a word or two by using the techniques we teach you, but it's always going to be helpful to know the sorts of tricks these people are up to with words. Much of what looks like vocabulary is actually a game of some kind. With this in mind, we've prepared the following lists of prefixes, suffixes, roots and other word-related factoids. Study them as often as you can, and you'll be in a far more comfortable position on test day.

Roots and Suffixes

You probably remember being told by one teacher or another that the best way to learn vocabulary was to study Latin, or, barring that, to learn important roots and suffixes. Your teacher was right, and since you probably don't have the time right now to learn Latin, the best move you can make is to commit the following roots, suffixes, and prefixes to memory.

a- or an-: Without, such as amoral or anaerobic.

ab-: Away or off, as in abnormal or abstain.

acro-: Top or most, as in acrobat or acropolis.

ad-: Motion or direction towards, as in addition or adverse.

agro-: Field, as in agriculture.

ambi-: Both, as in ambidextrous or ambiguous.

amphi-: On both sides, as in amphibian or amphitheater.

ante-: Before or preceding, such as antecedent.

anti-: Against, such as antipathy (hatred).

apo-: Removal, departure, ending, as in apocalypse.

arch-: Chief, most, or beginning, as in archbishop or archangel.

auto-: Self, or by or of oneself, as in autobiography or autonomy.

bene-: Good, as in benevolent.

bio-: Life, as in biology.

caco-: Bad, as in cacophonous.

calli-: Beautiful, as in calligraphy (beautiful handwriting) or calisthenics (exercises combining beauty and strength).

cardio-: Heart, as in cardiology (the study of the heart).

carn-: Flesh, as in carnal or carnivorous.

contra-: Against, as in contradict or contrary.

credo-: Believe, as in incredible or credulous.

dict-: To say or speak, as in dictation or Dictaphone.

dis-: Negative, as in disappear or distress.

dono-: Give, as in donate or donor

Some *ante* words:
anterior, antecedent,
antebellum,
antediluvian

Some *apo* words:
apology, apostle,
apocalypse, apogee,
apocryphal,
apotheosis, apostasy,
apoplexy

Some *carn* words:
carnivorous, carnival,
carnal, carnage, rein-
carnation, incarnation

VOCABULARY & VERBAL ABILITY

e- or ex-: Out, as in external or exoskeleton (like a lobster).

fides-: Faith or loyalty, as in Fido (you know, the loyal dog, man's best friend) or fidelity.

garriso-: Talk or chatter, as in garrulous.

gyn-: Woman, as in misogyny or gynecology.

hetero-: Mixed, as in heterogeneous or heterosexual.

homo-: The same, as in homogeneous or homosexual.

im-: Against or not, as in impossible or impotent.

magnus-: Large or big, as in magnificent or magnanimous.

mal-: Bad or harmful, as in malignant or malicious.

manus-: Hand or by hand, as in manipulate or manufacture.

ob-: By way of, as in observe.

omni-: All, as in omniscient or omnipotent.

phone-: Sound, as in phonetics or telephone.

potens-: Power, as in potency.

pre-: Before, as in prehistoric or preface.

proto-: Earliest, as in prototype, or protozoa.

sciens-: Knowledge, as in prescient or science.

ubiqui-: All, as in ubiquitous.

val-: Farewell, as in the valedictory address (farewell address).

verbus-: Having to do with words, as in verbalize or verbose.

volo-: Want or desire, as in volunteer or volition.

voro-: Eating, as in devour or omnivorous.

Some words from
magnus: magnify,
magnitude, major,
maximum, majestic,
magnanimous, magnate,
maxim, magniloquent