

PREPOSITIONARY

CHARLES N. PRIEUR &
ELIZABETH CHAMPION SPEYER

The Writer's Guide to Prepositions[©]

*“The one and only
Prepositionary”*

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*“The one and only
Prepositionary”*

“Many times one preposition might seem logically just as right as another. And it is only that tyrannical, capricious, utterly incalculable thing, idiomatic usage, which has decreed that this preposition must be used in the case, and that in another..”

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH - “WORDS AND IDIOMS”

“Prepositions... cause more difficulty... than any other aspect of the English language.”

J.B. HEATON - “PREPOSITIONS AND ADVERBIAL PARTICLES”

“No parts of speech must be used more exactly than connectives (prepositions)..”

R. VOORHEES - “HANDBOOK OF PREPOSITIONS”

“The proper preposition is a matter of idiom; and idioms, if they do not come “naturally”, must either be learned or looked up.”

THEODORE M. BERNTEIN - “THE CAREFUL WRITER”

Note: We are indebted to all those we have quoted in our 'prepositionary'. We have attempted to return the favour by not only mentioning the authors of the quotations, but the sources as well; thus encouraging our readers to read, or refer to, their works.

PREFACE

DURING his long career in advertising, much of it as a writer, Charles Prieur often reached in vain for an 'instant help' reference work on the use of English prepositions -- one of the trickiest aspects of the language. He began collecting examples of right preposition use in the course of his reading. And, as the file expanded to vast proportions, he asked himself: "Why not a book?"

But the book kept being deferred, until a mutual friend introduced him to Elizabeth Speyer, whose career was education. In her work at the Centre for the Study and Teaching of Writing, at the Faculty of Education of McGill University, Elizabeth had found that preposition use baffled students, especially those new to the language. Preposition choice is capricious, related to meaning and nuance, and largely based on custom.

Together, Charles and Elizabeth decided to organize a guide to prepositions in a handy dictionary format, listing thousands of the most common words that present difficulty. The name "prepositionary" suggested itself.

Interspersed among the mundane examples in the Prepositionary are quotations from many sources: snippets of information, philosophy, and humour.

We are confident "*The Writer's Guide to Prepositions*" will prove both very helpful and very easy to use. It was designed to be so.

Abbreviations used for quick reference:

n = noun

a = adjective

v = verb

vv = versatile verb. In other words: the verb in question can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows. This is particularly true of any verb that suggests motion, such as walk, run, crawl, creep, inch, hide, etc.

A SPECIAL NOTE...

THE world's many languages are not the result of logical design. They evolved out of culture and tradition. Whenever linguists have tried to impose order on wayward usage, the vernacular has always won out in the end. Which perhaps explains the failure of Esperanto to take root. It was not born of the people. It has no music, no soul.

From approximately 50,000 words in the 16th century, English now greets the new millennium with an estimated 750,000 words. Although technology has prompted much of this increase, it is the readiness of the language to assimilate useful words from other cultures that has nourished its growth over the centuries.

The Writer's Guide to Prepositions will prove invaluable, if good speech and lucid writing matter to you. Our 'prepositionary' offers you more than 10,000 examples of the right preposition, for the exact meaning you want to convey.

The word preposition itself says that it pre-positions the thought or action that follows. For a good example of this, consider the phrase: gathering in the corn. If gathering means harvesting, then in is an adverb, not a preposition, because it adds to the verb. If, however, gathering means assembling, then in is a preposition, because it pre-positions where people are meeting, i.e. in the corn.

Prepositions are not to be trifled with. The collision of two 747s in 1997, killing 583 people, resulted from a misunderstanding over the preposition at. "At take-off" was understood by the air controller to mean that the plane was waiting at the take-off point; and not that it was actually taking off.

Using a wrong preposition will not often have such tragic consequences. But using the right preposition will always be a source of satisfaction, and speak well of one's writing competence.



ABATE

The cleaning women are **abating** the noise of their vacuum cleaners *by* plugging their ears with cotton batten.

We can **abate** the smoke nuisance *by* half.

His anger will **abate** *in* intensity when he learns of your cooperation.

Her pain was **abated** *by* a strong drug.

His voice suddenly **abated** *to* a whisper.

ABBREVIATE

She automatically **abbreviates** my written speeches *by* cutting out the first paragraph; almost always, for the better.

The exam was **abbreviated** by omitting an entire section.

She **abbreviated** his whole diatribe *to* one word: NO!

He was **abbreviating** the message *with* great skill.

ABHORRENCE

We share an **abhorrence** *of* sloppy writing.

ABHORRENT

This idea is **abhorrent** *to* reason.

ABIDANCE

Abidance *by* the regulations is obligatory.

ABIDE

She is **abiding** *by* (i.e. sticking to) our agreement.

He promised to **abide** *by* (i.e. adhere to) the rules of grammar.

Do you intend to **abide** (i.e. dwell) *in* this part of the country.

“**Abide** *with* (i.e. remain faithful to) **me!**” says the psalmist.

ABILITY

His **ability** *at* chess was exceptional.

His **ability** *with* darts was a byword in every pub in England.

ABOUND

“Colonialism . . . **abounded** *in* flags, exotic uniforms, splendid ceremonies, Durbars, sunset-guns, trade exhibitions . . . postage stamps and, above all, coloured maps.” (Paul Johnson, *A History of the Modern World*)

Rocks **abound** *under* the soil.

This lake **abounds** *with* fish.

I promise you: it is **abounding** *with* game of all sorts.

ABREAST

I like to keep **abreast** *of* the latest news.

ABSCOND

The boy **absconded** *from* the reformatory with the warden’s credit cards.

He will **abscond** *with* the funds; I guarantee it.

ABSENCE

The student’s **absence** *from* class resulted in a failing grade.

“The dolphin can report the **absence** *of* objects, as well as their presence.” (Louis Herman, *Omni* mag.)

“Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear — not **absence** *of* fear.” (Mark Twain)

ABSENT

“God is **absent** *from* the world, except in the existence in this world of those in whom His love is alive . . . Their compassion is the visible presence of God here below.” (Simone Weil, *Gateway to God*)

ABSENTEE

He was a conspicuous **absentee** *from* the morning drill.

ABSOLVE

She was **absolved** *from* her obligation.

The bishop **absolved** him *of* his sins. (rare)

ABSORB

Nutrient may be **absorbed** *by* plants *into* their system *through* their roots.

Plants **absorb** moisture *from* the air.

“When iron is **absorbed** *in* the small intestine, it is immediately joined to the protein transferrin, which shuttles it through the bloodstream, shielding tissues from its harmful effects.” (Terence Monmaney, Discover mag.)

She is **absorbing** all that information *in* small bites.

“Between 1867 and 1899, Canada **absorbed** 1.6 million immigrants *into* a population at Confederation of barely three million.” (Andrew Coyne, The Next City mag.)

ABSTAIN

True science teaches us to doubt and to **abstain** *from* ignorance.

ABSTINENCE

The negative side of virtue is **abstinence** *from* vice.

ABSTRACT (v)

To ascertain the truth, it was necessary to **abstract** (i.e. remove) a good deal *from* his account of the proceedings.

ABUT

The lane **abuts** *against* (i.e. runs alongside) the railroad.

The house **abuts** (i.e. fronts) *on* the street.

His property **abuts** (i.e. borders) *upon* mine.

ABUZZ

“The brain contains between 10 billion and 100 billion neurons, each forming bridges to so many others that the brain is **abuzz** *with* as many as 1 quadrillion

connections.” (Sharon Begley with John Carey and Ray Sawhill, Newsweek mag., Feb. 7, '83)

ACCEDE

“There are over 60 covenants on human rights . . . China has **acceded** *to* 17 and the United States *to* 15 of them.” (Qian Qichan, Time mag., Aug. 11, '97)

When the monarch died, his eldest son **acceded** *to* (i.e. inherited) the throne.

ACCEPT

Having been **accepted** *as* an accountant, he ‘moled’ his way into the secret organization.

His credentials have been **accepted** *by* the company.

“The computer can **accept** data only *in* a highly structured (digital) form.”

(British Medical Bulletin, Oxford English Dictionary)

I **accept** (i.e. agree) *to* do that, but on one condition.

“Legacies, or children of alumni, are three times more likely to be **accepted** (i.e. admitted) *to* Harvard than other high school graduates with the same (sometimes better) scores.” (Michael Lind, Harper's mag.)

ACCEPTANCE

“The assertion finds **acceptance** *in* every rank of society.” (M. Faraday, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The only real freedom is in order, in an **acceptance** *of* boundaries.” (Peter Ustinov)

ACCESS (N)

“Each animal was kept in a small room, with **access** *to* an outdoor exercise area.” (National Geographic)

ACCESS (v)

He **accessed** (i.e. made his way into) the house *by* (or *through*) a window.

I know she will **access** (i.e. enter) his apartment *with* the stolen key.

ACCESSIBLE

The fortress was **accessible** (i.e. approachable) *from* the seacoast only.

He was as **accessible** (i.e. available) *to* the humblest as he was *to* his peers.

ACCESSION (N)

The **accession** (i.e. addition) *of* 90 new students overcrowded the school.

The populace rejoiced at the prince's **accession to** (i.e. assumption of) the throne.

ACCESSION (V)

"This skull was the oldest of its type ever found (2.5 to 2.6 million years old). It was **accessioned** (i.e. recorded) *under* the number KNM-WT 17000 in the National Museums of Kenya." (Pat Shipman, Discovery)

ACCESSORY

A person who conceals a crime is an **accessory** *after* the fact.

A person who incites another to commit a felony is considered to be an **accessory** *before* the fact.

Though he escaped punishment, he was an **accessory to** the crime.

ACCIDENT

Her wealth was due to an **accident** (i.e. happenstance) *of* birth.

An **accident** (i.e. mishap) *to* the machinery halted production.

ACCLIMATIZE

She quickly became **acclimatized** *to* the new conditions.

He is **acclimatizing** himself *to* desert conditions.

ACCOMMODATE

They were **accommodated** (i.e. given lodging) *at* the newly-refurbished Ritz hotel.

His staff was usually **accommodated** (i.e. lodged) *in* motels.

We were forced to **accommodate** (i.e. adapt) ourselves *to* our circumstances.

She was always ready to **accommodate** (i.e. oblige) a friend *with* a loan.

ACCOMPANY

The child was **accompanied** (i.e. escorted) *by* her mother. She **accompanied** (i.e. went with) him *on* all his travels.

Let me **accompany** (i.e. escort) you *to* the door.

He **accompanied** (i.e. supplemented) his speech *with* gestures.

ACCOMPLICE

He was an **accomplice** (i.e. partner in crime) *in* the murder of the diplomat.

The police are searching for the two **accomplices** (i.e. associates in wrongdoing) *of* the thief.

ACCOMPLISH

She was **accomplished** (i.e. skilled) *in* all the social arts.

She **accomplished** (i.e. performed) the difficult task *with* speed and efficiency.

ACCORD (N)

They were all **in accord** *with* his decision.

ACCORD (V)

Wordsworth mentioned the glimpses of eternity **accorded** (i.e. granted) *to* saints.

The victim's account of the accident **accords** (i.e. agrees) *with* yours.

ACCORDING

"Corrosion costs America \$70 billion each year, **according to** the National Bureau of Standards." (The Economist, 1988)

ACCOUNT

He gave an accurate **account** *of* his adventures.

ACCOUNT

"The Columbia (river) and its tributaries **account for** (i.e. produce) one-third of all hydroelectric power generated in the United States."

(William Least Heat Moon, Blue Highways)

“The Higgs boson *accounts* (i.e. is responsible) *for* the origin of all mass in the universe.”

(Larry Gonick, *Discover* mag.)

The bank clerk had to *account to* (or *with*) his superiors every Tuesday.

ACCOUNTABLE

Man is *accountable for* his acts.

He likes to pretend that he is *accountable to* no one.

ACCRETE

“The poor live in . . . the makeshift, vertical barrio that has *accreted to* suspension cables of the bridge.”

(William Gibson)

ACCRETION

“They jettisoned . . . the embarrassing *accretions from* their past.” (Paul Johnson)

His book is an *accretion of* casual writings.

ACCRUE

Many advantages *accrue* (i.e. arise) *from* the freedom of the press.

All proceeds will *accrue* (i.e. accumulate and go) by natural advantage) *to* him.

ACCUMULATE

“In August 1986, bubbles of carbon dioxide *accumulating at* the bottom of (Lake Nyos in Cameroon) . . . burst to the surface; a blanket of dense carbon dioxide and water vapor spread over nearby villages, killing cattle and 1,700 people.” (*Discover* mag., Oct. 1988)

I’m *accumulating* stamps *for* my nephew *in* a large album.

Your discards are *accumulating into* quite a pile.

The maple leaves had *accumulated under* the porch.

ACCURATE

You must be *accurate in* your calculations.

“Today’s best atomic clocks are *accurate to* one part in 10 to the 14th power; but a super-cooled atomic clock should be 10,000 times more accurate.”

(*The Economist*)

ACCUSE

The foreman *accused* the worker *of* carelessness.

ACCUSTOM

You will simply have to *accustom* yourself *to* his habits.

“I’ve grown *accustomed to* her face.” (words of a song)

I’m slowly *accustoming* myself *to* this simpler way of life.

ACQUAINT

The couple became *acquainted through* mutual friends.

Please *acquaint* him *with* your plan.

ACQUAINTANCE

Clubs foster *acquaintance between* people with similar values.

She is anxious to make the *acquaintance of* any person who shares her interests.

ACQUIESCE

“You’re bound to *acquiesce in* his judgment, whatsoever may be your private opinion.”

(*Oxford English Dictionary*)

Note: The use of *to* and *with* is obsolete

(*Oxford English Dictionary*)

ACQUIRE

He will *acquire* it *by* hook or *by* crook.

They *acquired* most of their mercenaries *from* Germany.

“One year into the First World War, Britain had to *acquire* 32,000 pairs of German binoculars, *through* a Swiss intermediary.” (John Grigg, *The Spectator* reviewing *First World War* by Martin Gilbert)

ACQUIT

The defendant was *acquitted* by the jury.

The jury *acquitted* the man *of* the alleged crime.

By *acquitting* the executive *of* all blame, the tribunal dealt a serious blow to the company’s morale.

ACT (VV)

“A part of the brain called the hypothalamus acts as the body’s thermostat.” (Robert M. Sapolsky, Discover mag., 1990)

Why don’t you act for him?

You are acting in a manner that invites criticism.

“DNA is a long molecule that contains information on the way four different components are strung together like beads on a string. Thus, they act like letters in an alphabet. The sequence of those letters forms sentences called ‘genes.’” (David Suzuki, Montreal Gazette)

“Interlukin-1 acts on the body’s central thermostat, causing a fever, which may depress viral activity and enhance the immune response.” (Leon Jaroff, Time mag.)

Act towards him as you do towards his sister.

The gastric juice acts upon the food we swallow.

He always acted with decision.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

ACTIVE

Storefront lawyers are active in the cause of justice.

Drug dealers are very active on that street.

Mother Theresa is active with her sister nuns in obtaining relief for the poor.

One gland in particular becomes active under stress.

ACTUATE

She was actuated by compulsive curiosity.

He actuates the light with a snap of his finger.

The boy was actuating the car’s starter with a stolen key.

ADAMANT

“Yes, he was adamant on that.” (John Le Carré)

ADAPT

The gun was adapted for use in hand-to-hand fighting.

His invention was adapted from an idea conceived by his father.

“Natural selection cannot anticipate the future and can adapt organisms only to challenges of the moment.” (Stephen Jay Gould, Discover mag., Oct. ‘96)

A child adapts very quickly to his/her surroundings.

She was adapting unconsciously to his body language.

ADD

I will also add a ribbon for the effect.

“The burning of Earth’s rain forests . . . not only adds carbon dioxide to the atmosphere but also removes the trees that would have absorbed it. The result is an accumulation of heat-reflecting gases and an overall warming of the planet — the greenhouse effect.” (Jonathan Schell, Discover mag.)

When she added baby’s breath to the bouquet of roses, the effect was magic.

He was adding insult to injury by not acknowledging her presence.

That adds up to an insult, my friend.

ADDICT (V)

She was addicted to the music of Mozart.

What kind of monsters addict children to nicotine?

They were addicting underage girls to morphine.

ADDICTION

I shared his addiction to Sherlock Holmes mysteries.

ADDRESS (N)

She showed great address in dealing with her opponents.

He exhibited the address of an accomplished intriguer.

ADDRESS (V)

“Eric Gill solaced himself by instructing his apprentices to address him as ‘Master.’” (The Economist mag.)

The president addressed (i.e. spoke to) the people in a voice laden with sorrow.

She addressed (i.e. directed) her remarks to the legislature.

He was addressing her as Mrs. Ames long before she married him.

ADEPT

She is adept at getting out of trouble.

The parliamentarian was adept in the cut and thrust of debate.

ADEQUATE

His skills are barely **adequate** *for* the job.
He proved **adequate** *to* the situation.

ADHERE

Paint **adheres** best *to* a clean, dry surface.
Some of this food is **adhering** *to* the pan *like* glue.
“Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in **adhering to** their enemies, giving them aid and comfort.”
(Article 111, Section 3, Constitution of the United States)

ADHERENCE

His **adherence** *to* the cause proved to be his downfall.

ADHERENT

He is an **adherent** *of* the Conservative Party.
Adherents *to* Luther’s principles were called Protestants.

ADJACENT

The two men’s farms are **adjacent** *to* each other.

ADJUST

Just give me time and I’ll **adjust** *to* this new life.
She **adjusted** *to* theatrical life *like* a born trooper.
“Without gravity, the heart begins to relax, **adjusting to** its lower work load by slowing down and shrinking.”
(David Noland, Discover mag.)

ADMINISTER

She **administered** (i.e. dealt) a polite rebuff *to* the pushy salesman.
She **administers** (i.e. manages) our head office *with* a firm hand and an even temper.

ADMIRATION

“I take place to no man in my **admiration** *for* Dan Rather.” (James Brady, Advertising Age)
“The prince . . . is the **admiration** *of* the whole court.”
(The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

ADMIT

They have **admitted** (i.e. accepted) me *into* their ranks.
His problem did not **admit of** (i.e. permit) a solution.
When will they **admit** you *to* (i.e. allow you to take) the bar exams?
Confessing your crime to a priest is quite different from **admitting** it *to* the police.

ADOPT

The players **adopted** it *as* their mascot.
He **adopted** little Harry *with* trepidation.

ADORN

If you let him, he’ll **adorn** the statue of David *with* a fig leaf.
The emperor **adorned** his castle *with* the spoils of war.

ADRIFT

The boat was cut **adrift** *from* its moorings.
Our skiff is **adrift** *on* the lake.

ADVANCE (N)

“Every great **advance** *in* science has issued from a new audacity of imagination.”
(John Dewey, Forbes mag., 1970)
That’s certainly an **advance** *on* last year’s proposal.

ADVANCE (V)

He worked very hard to **advance** himself *in* his profession.
I regret to report they **advanced** *on* the city last night.
He kept **advancing** *on* her, and she kept backing away.
Our football **advanced** *to* the 30-yard line this time.
Let’s **advance** *toward* the town tonight.

ADVANTAGE

She has the **advantage** *of* Mrs. Jones, who is impoverished. (British)
I would take **advantage** *of* that situation, if I were you.
You have the **advantage** *over* me ; I don’t know you. (North American)
The **advantage** *to* him was plain.

ADVANTAGEOUS

It would be **advantageous** *for* them to buy time, but not for me.

That's certainly **advantageous** *to* us.

ADVERSE

Being **adverse** *to* a person or a thing reflects opposition.

ADVERT

Mac then **adverted** *to* last year's disaster.

I'm **adverting** *to* what you told me last night.

ADVERTISE

In the early 1930s . . . when Amtorg, the Soviet trading agency, **advertised** *for* 1000 skilled workers, more than 100,000 Americans applied.

She is now **advertising** her language school *on* Internet.

He took every opportunity to **advertise** her *in* Vogue magazine.

I would **advertise** this product *to* the 20-to-35 age group.

ADVICE

My **advice** *to* you is to avoid confrontation.

ADVISE

I will **advise** (i.e. inform) him *by* letter *of* the loss of the ship.

Our experts are here to **advise** (i.e. counsel) you *on* any computer problem.

ADVOCATE (N)

He was the principal **advocate** *for* the huge conglomerate.

The new political candidate is an **advocate** *of* electoral reform.

"We have an **advocate** *with* the Father." (1 John ii.1.)

ADVOCATE (V)

As a lawyer, he **advocates** *for* (i.e. defends) a number of blue chip firms.

The soap box orator was **advocating** (i.e. recommending) group action *to* his only listener.

AFFECT

The vibrations are **affecting** her *at* night, *after* she has gone to sleep.

He is **affected** *by* bad weather.

"Psychological conditions **affect** the welfare of people *through* the immune system." (Rita Levi-Montalcini)

Bach's music **affects** me *in* my innermost being.

AFFILIATE (N)

The department store is an **affiliate** *of* a nation-wide chain.

AFFILIATE (V)

The group decided to **affiliate** *with* the national association.

Note: *with* (American); *to* (British)

AFFINITY

There is a strong **affinity** *between* music and dancing.

"An **affinity** *for* is confined to scientific usage. One substance is said to have an **affinity** *for* another when it has a tendency to unite with it."

(Frederick T. Wood, *English Prepositional Idioms*, published by MACMILLAN)

"When Père Armand David, the great French explorer-priest, acquired the Western world's first great panda in 1869, he never doubted its evident **affinity** *with* bears."

(Stephen Jay Gould, *Discovery*) Note: Never *to*

AFFIX

So why don't you **affix** (i.e. attach) this *to* your will?

They're **affixing** this warning sign *to* every trailer in the country.

AFFLICT

FM stereo was the only high-fidelity audio medium **afflicted** *with* background noise.

Afflicting us *with* his presence, the politician proceeded to monopolize the conversation.

AFOUL

He was often **afoul** *of* the law.

AFRAID

He was **afraid of** his own shadow.

She was **afraid to** walk home in the dark.

AGE (N)

You can't get married in that country under the **age of** eighteen.

AGE (V)

I have the Christmas pudding **ageing in** wine.

That meat is **aged to** perfection.

AGGRIEVED

She was **aggrieved at** being overlooked for the part.

They were **aggrieved by** the attitude of their relatives.

AGHAST

They were **aghast at** his negligence in the matter.

AGITATE

She spent her life **agitating for** equality.

We will **agitate for** a new contract starting tomorrow.

AGOG

They were all **agog about** the latest gossip.

AGONIZE

They are **agonizing over** the scathing review.

She **agonized with** him *throughout* the dismal third act.

AGREE

They **agree about** that, but nothing else.

They **agreed among** themselves.

"The principles to be **agreed by** all."

(Bacon, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

He **agrees on** the course to be taken. We're sure she will **agree to** that.

"History," said Napoleon, "is a set of collectively **agreed upon** lies."

"An intellectual is not necessarily a man who is intelligent, but someone who **agrees with** other intellectuals." (Edward Teller, Discovery mag.)

"They **agree** (i.e. reconcile) their budgets **with** their accountants every six months." (The Economist)

Can you believe it? She's **agreeing with** everybody.

AGREEABLE

I am **agreeable to** your plan of action.

AGREEMENT

I am in full **agreement with** you.

AIM

"As late as 1931, the United States had a war plan **aimed at** the British Empire, 'Navy Basic Plan Red'."

(Paul Johnson: A History of the Modern World)

The girl **aimed for** the target but broke a window instead.

"The reason laser light works so well in everything from CD players to surgery is that it's 'coherent'— that is, ordinary separate photons of light merge to make one powerful light wave that can be **aimed with** terrific precision." (Discover mag., July 1998)

AKIN

The tribes are **akin in** their warlike nature.

Your words were **akin to** a slap in the face.

ALARM (V)

I am **alarmed at** the present state of affairs.

The parents were **alarmed by** the rise in crime in their neighbourhood.

The child was constantly **alarming us by** running a fever.

Do not **alarm me with** these possible disasters.

ALARM (N)

My **alarm at** the news that soldiers were approaching spread like wildfire.

ALERT (A)

The squirrel is very **alert in** its movements.

“Phagocytes (white blood cells) constantly scour the territories of our bodies *alert to* anything that seems out of place. What they find, they engulf and consume.” (Peter Jaret, National Geographic/Reader’s Digest)

ALERT (V)

I had to **alert** him *to* the danger.

ALIEN (A)

The segregation of the blacks in South Africa was **alien to** democratic principles.

ALIEN (N)

They claimed to have seen an **alien from** the planet Venus.

ALIENATE

She was **alienated from** her own society *by* its treatment of the unfortunate.

He **alienates** (i.e. turns off) everyone *by* talking down to them.

They’re **alienating** (i.e. disaffecting) the whole world *by* bullying that small nation.

“Enemy property was **alienated** (i.e. transferred) *during* the war.” (World Book Dictionary)

ALIGHT

He is **alighting** (i.e. getting off) *at* every bus stop along the way.

She **alighted from** (i.e. got out of) her car and ran into the house.

The robin **alights** (i.e. lands) *on* that mailbox every morning.

ALIGN

Germany was **aligned with** Japan in World War II.

I think Jordan is **aligning** herself *with* Iraq this time.

He would rather **align** himself *with* me than *against* me.

ALIKE

The specimens are **alike in** kind.

ALIVE

The painter was at the top of his form, **alive in** every fiber of his being.

The missionary’s religion was founded on the conviction that we should be **alive to** every noble impulse.

Her eyes were **alive with** hope.

ALLEGIANCE

The leaders depended upon the **allegiance of** the citizens *to* the legitimate government.

ALLIANCE

The United Nations was designed to eradicate the need for military **alliances between** and *among* nations.

The Indian chief made an **alliance with** the neighboring tribe *for* the defense of their respective lands.

ALLOCATE

They **allocated** their resources *to* new tasks.

Canada is **allocating** her extra wheat *to* North Korea.

ALLOT

The director was authorized to **allot** (i.e. allocate) extra funds *to* the company *for* the specific purpose of completing the railroad link.

“Ten years I will **allot** (i.e. apportion) *to* the attainment of knowledge.” (S. Johnson, O.E.D.)

A certain amount of food was **alloted** (i.e. allocated) *to* each platoon.

How much of that shipment are you **allotting** (i.e. allocating) *to* me?

ALLOW

Astronomers, in their calculations, must **allow** (i.e. make provisions) *for* the pull of gravity.

The researcher is willing to **allow of** (i.e. permit) other hypotheses.

He **allowed** (i.e. granted) 10% of his annual income *to* each of his wives.

ALLUDE

This passage in the Bible evidently **alludes to** the Jewish Passover.

ALLURE

Allured by hope of gain, the prospectors risked their lives on the mountain pass.

It was hoped that the promise of heaven would **allure** people *from* evil *to* good.

ALLY

The quarreling states at last decided to **ally against** their common enemy.

In his mind, this treaty was **allied to** territorial expansion. (Federico Garcia)

“Lorca understood that any artist who **allied** himself too closely *with* a political ideology died as an artist, became little more than a talented propagandist.”

(Neil Bissoondath, *Montreal Gazette*)

He is **allying** himself with anyone who buys him a drink. You **ally** yourself *to* things, but *with* people.

ALOOF

He stood **aloof from** the rest of his family. She used to be rather **aloof with** strangers.

ALTERING

“By 2040, the **altering of** genetic material *in* embryo could eliminate more than 3000 genetically-derived diseases.” (*Life* mag.)

ALTERNATE

He **alternated between** scolding and praising. Here, floods **alternate with** droughts.

ALTERNATIVE

We were given the **alternatives of** leaving town or being shot.

“The **alternative to** functioning mitochondria (such as those in the human cell) is called death.” (David Clayton, molecular biologist, *Discover* mag.)

AMALGAM

The plan was an **amalgam of** sound ideas and foolish notions.

AMALGAMATE

He **amalgamated** the gold and silver *into* an alloy.

They decided to **amalgamate with** the larger company.

She is **amalgamating** her plans *with* his.

AMASS

He **amassed** a large fortune *by* fair means and foul *for* the purpose of exerting political control.

AMATEUR

The boy was an **amateur** (i.e. not an expert) *at* chess.

He remained an **amateur among** professional athletes by never accepting a salary.

Although she has had every opportunity to study, she remains an **amateur** (i.e. a dilettante) *in* the arts.

He was an **amateur of** (i.e. had a fondness for) the more exotic sports.

AMAZE

He was **amazed** (i.e. surprised) *at* the crowd.

She was **amazed** (i.e. bewildered) *by* his magic skills.

The gymnast was constantly **amazing** us *with* his feats of contortion.

AMAZEMENT

I was filled with **amazement at** such reckless daring.

AMENABLE

The problem is not **amenable to** mathematical analysis.

AMOUNT (N)

What is the **amount of** her bill for groceries?

AMOUNT (V)

That **amounts to** very little in practical terms.

AMPLIFY

The professor was requested to **amplify** his lectures *by* illustrating them.

The lecturer **amplified** *on* so many themes, that the audience lost the gist of his presentation.

AMUSE

He was **amused** *at* the bird's efforts to escape
The children were highly **amused** *by* the clown's antics.
Amuse the baby *with* that rattle.

ANAGRAM

His pen name is an **anagram** *of* his real name.

ANALOGOUS

"Einstein's observations on the way in which, in certain circumstances, lengths appeared to contract and clocks to slow down, are **analogous** *to* the effects of perspective in painting."

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

ANALOGY

There's an **analogy** (i.e. equivalency) *between* the military careers of Hitler and Stalin.

"The child is the **analogy** (i.e. simile) *of* a people yet in childhood." (Lytton)

He explained an electrical current by drawing an **analogy** (i.e. comparison) *with* a flow of water through a pipe.

Some still bear a remote **analogy** *with* (resemblance to) their Mongolian ancestors.

ANALYSIS

They made an **analysis** *of* the situation before proceeding.

ANATHEMA

An unorthodox approach is **anathema** *to* many in the arts.

ANCHOR

After anchoring his boat *by* the buoy, he swam to shore.

I will **anchor** the barge *near* the boathouse.

The boat seemed to be **anchored** *to* its own shadow.

ANGER

Anger *at* the insult prompted his acid reply.

Anger *toward* the offender exaggerates the offense.

ANGLE (N)

"The navigator sites himself in global terms, even universal ones, measuring the **angles** *between* his ship and the equator, the sun, the stars and the hypothetical meridian which stretches north and south from Greenwich to the poles." (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

ANGLE (V)

"I was too busy trying to **angle** (i.e. direct) the bow of the boat *into* the next wave to be frightened."

(Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

"For some years now, the Soviet Union has been **angling** (i.e. trying slyly) *to* detach Japan from the western powers."

(London Times, World Book Dictionary)

"Whether **angling** (i.e. fishing) *for* big ones or going after bream in a lake, good fishing is only minutes away from most Southern cities."

(Time mag., Oxford English Dictionary)

ANGRY

I was not so much **angry** *with* her as *at* what she had done.

Note: It's **angry** *with* a person, but *at* a thing.

Get **angry** *about* the political corruption you observe.

ANIMADVERT

The critic was wont to **animadvert** *on* (or *upon*) untrained performers.

ANIMATE

His remark was **animated** (i.e. motivated) *by* malice.

The teacher **animated** (i.e. enlivened) the lesson *with* witty comments.

ANIMUS

His **animus** *against* the Church was obvious to everyone.

ANNEX

Britain **annexed** Labrador *to* Newfoundland on the flimsiest of pretexts.

ANNEXATION

Most were in favour of **annexation** *to* the larger neighbouring country.

ANNOUNCE

They are **announcing** it *in* the newspapers?

The butler was told to **announce** each guest *in* a loud voice.

I will **announce** it *on* (or *over*) the radio. (Note: but only *on* TV)

The birth of a grandchild was **announced** *to* the family *by* phone.

ANNOYED

She was extremely **annoyed** *about* the damage to her front door.

I was **annoyed** *at* him for arriving late.

They were **annoyed** *by* his persistent coughing.

He **annoys** her *in* church *by* praying aloud.

She was **annoying** him *with* her endless questions.

I was **annoyed** *with* him for bringing up the subject.

ANSWER

She had a different **answer** *for* everyone.

He refused to give a direct **answer** *to* my question.

ANSWER

I cannot **answer** (i.e. be responsible) *for* him.

“In every man’s heart, there is a secret nerve that answers (i.e. responds) *to* the vibrations of beauty.”
(Christopher Morley)

This man **answers** *to* (i.e. matches) your description.

You will have to **answer** *to me*, my boy (i.e. you are responsible to me).

She **answered** (i.e. replied to) my question *with* an insult.

ANSWERABLE

You are **answerable** *to* me *for* the safety of the ship’s crew.

ANTAGONISTIC

The nationalistic spirit was the main force **antagonistic** *to* (or *towards*) the ruler’s schemes.

ANTECEDENT

Contrary to the report, the tremors were **antecedent** *to* the quake.

ANTERIOR

They lived in ages **anterior** *to* the Flood.

ANTIDOTE

The public health authorities could find no **antidote** *against* the new mysterious malady.

Economic opportunity is a good **antidote** *for* social discontent.

Is there a universal **antidote** *to* snakebite?

ANTIPATHY

They shared an **antipathy** *to* the avant-garde novelist.

ANTITHESIS

Exploitation of one’s fellows is the very **antithesis** *of* Christianity.

ANTITHETICAL

The guild mentality of doctors is basically **antithetical** *to* their oath.

ANXIOUS

The mother was **anxious** *about* her child’s health.

She’s **anxious** *at* the delay involved in the processing of her passport.

The parents were **anxious** *for* the safety of their young in the sailboat.

APATHY

The students' **apathy** *toward* their studies was justified by the limitations of the school program.

APOLOGIZE

You should **apologize** *to* the guest *for* your oversight.

APOLOGY

I think you should make an **apology** *to* your mother.

APPAL

They were **appalled** *at* the idea of being bussed to school. I was **appalled** *by* the prevailing conditions in the mine.

APPARENT

Their guilt is **apparent** *in* their every gesture. His guilt was **apparent** *to* all.

APPEAL (N)

The householders who had lost everything in the flood made an **appeal** (i.e. a call) *for* assistance. The law provides for an **appeal** (i.e. a calling to account) *from* a lower to a higher court.

APPEAL (V)

"He (Gandhi) is a man of God. You (Winston Churchill) and I are mundane people. Gandhi **appealed** *to* religious motives. You never have. That is where you have failed." (General Smuts)
She **appealed** *to* him *with* all the wiles she could muster.

APPEAR

He hopes to **appear** *among* the first names listed as passing with honours. The general will **appear** *at* the front *with* all the insignia of his rank. You are summoned to **appear** *before* the court. The submarine **appeared** *below* the surface *near* the harbour. It would **appear** (i.e. seem) *from* the reports that there are no survivors.

"Within just a few millions years (of the Cambrian explosion), nearly every major kind of animal anatomy **appears** *in* the fossil record for the first time."

(Stephen Jay Gould, *Discover* mag., 1989)

"There are no street names (in Tokyo). All streets are anonymous: street names do not **appear** *on* any map." (Josh Freed, *Montreal Gazette*)

If you are patient, the sun will **appear** *through* the mist. The bacteria will **appear** *to* the eye *through* the microscope.

The geologist was certain that rich mineral deposits would **appear** *under* the next layer of rock.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

APPEND

The secret codicil was **appended** *to* the billionaire's will. Why don't you **append** that glossary *to* your Chronicles?

APPENDAGE

The tail is an **appendage** *of* the tadpole; it is gradually absorbed in the process of metamorphosis.

APPENDIX

The **appendix** (i.e. addition) *to* his book is detailed and helpful.

APPETITE

Emily Carr had an **appetite** *for* the beauty of the forests of British Columbia.

APPLICATION

All **applications** (i.e. requests) *for* tickets must be made *to* the Registry.

"The **application** (i.e. use) *of* what you know will enlarge your understanding."

(John Le Carré, *The little drummer girl*)

APPLY

The idea was a clever one, but it would have to be **applied** (i.e. put into practice) *by* experts.

Equipped with his engineering degree, the young man was ready to **apply** (i.e. bid) *for* a position.

Make sure you **apply** (i.e. direct) this cost *to* the right budget.

APPOINT

He was **appointed** *as* my assistant *by* the director.

She was **appointed** *to* the position of Chairperson.

APPOINTMENT

His **appointment** *as* coach is the talk of the town.

Their **appointment** *by* the mayor is questionable, to say the least.

Her **appointment** *to* the Bench is effective January 1st.

APPORTION

The father tried to **apportion** his property equally *among* his heirs.

King Solomon's suggestion that a child be **apportioned** *between* two claimants was a clever ruse to identify the real mother.

The relief worker was instructed to **apportion** an equal amount of food *to* each family.

APPOSE

He **opposed** a seal *to* the certificate.

APPOSITE

It is a perfect **opposite** *to* that simile.

APPOSITION

The experiment he used in the course of his lecture was **in apposition** *to* his theory.

APPRECIATION

His sincere **appreciation** *of* my efforts encouraged me.

APPRECIATIVE

She was very **appreciative** *of* my tacit support.

APPREHENSION

Her **apprehension** (i.e. misgivings) *about* her stage performance undermined the whole company's morale.

He has an **apprehension** (i.e. perception) *of* the problem.

The citizens were relieved to learn about the **apprehension** (i.e. arrest) *of* the thief.

APPREHENSIVE

I was **apprehensive** *about* (or *for*) the children travelling alone.

The refugees were **apprehensive** *of* the future.

APPRENTICE

I want to be **apprenticed** *to* a super mechanic.

I was **apprenticed** *to* the garage trade *with* a top mechanic.

APPRISE

Go ahead: **apprise** me *of* the details of this case.

APPROACH

The **approach** *of* dawn reminded us of our peril.

The **approach** *to* the castle was a steep cliff.

APPROBATION

When did you get their **approbation** *of* this deal?

APPROPRIATE

Simple, comfortable clothing is **appropriate** *for* school children.

"The air of mystery is **appropriate** *to* the popular mystique of the Rothschilds, but not *to* the history of a bank." (The Economist)

APPROPRIATE

They have **appropriated** the idea of monarchy *to* their own ends. (The Economist)

APPROVE

I do not **approve** *of* your conduct.

APPROXIMATE (A)

Ten minutes of stretching exercises is approximate to hours on the golf course. (Brit.)

APPROXIMATE (V)

His methods of government began to **approximate to** his predecessor's.

APPROXIMATION

Five hundred miles is an **approximation of** the distance between the two cities.

The prosecutor's indictment was a close **approximation to** the truth.

APROPOS

Apropos of nothing, she suddenly interrupted the proceedings.

APT

She is very **apt** (i.e. skilled) **at** darning socks.

"The time was **apt for** (i.e. appropriate to) reminiscence." (Evelyn Waugh)

He is **apt** (i.e. likely) **to** lose his temper.

ARCH

The darkening sky was **arched with** a shimmering rainbow.

ARGUE

In the Army, we were enjoined not to **argue about** religion or politics.

Instead of **arguing against** everything, why don't you argue **for** something for a change?

"To **argue that there is a guiding intelligence behind, above, or within the universe is not the same as arguing for a benign, personal Deity.**"

(Patrick Glynn, National Review mag.)

He spent his life in swivel chairs, **arguing with** dictating machines.

ARISE

"Cancer **arises from** a number of insults to the DNA (the master molecule of life). Viruses are one insult. They start the process rolling." (Claudia Wallis, Time)

"What fascinates me is this (re human embryo) . . . The egg gets fertilized. The cells start dividing. Some end up as fingernails. Some end up as the liver. And then consciousness **arises out of** it. *How?*"

(Dr.L.E.H.Trainor, professor emeritus, Univ. of Toronto)

Do you believe that trouble will **arise over** the final score?

ARM (V)

"A vaccine is a small dose of a natural (though dead or weakened) virus meant to stimulate the immune system to make antibodies, and thus to **arm** itself against later invasion by that virus."

(Cambridge University, Mass., The Economist)

He **armed** his men **for** an assault on the bridgehead.

"Trawler skippers, grand as kings, standing on bollards **armed with** whistles, raising a scratch crew for a voyage." (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

ARMOUR, ARMOR

It's the body's **armor against** infection.

ARRAIGN

The felon was **arraigned at** the bar **for** his crime.

The young man was **arraigned on** a charge of vandalism.

ARRANGE

The wine bottles were carefully **arranged around** a pyramid of crystal wine glasses.

"There is a universal tendency for things to be arranged (i.e. constructed) **in** the least intricate, most probable way. The characteristic of life is that it works against this tendency, creating complexity where there was none."

(James Lovelock, The Economist)

Please **arrange** (i.e. plan) **for** the wedding on the last Saturday of this month.

Type: 'a' stands for adjective; 'adv' for adverb; 'n' for noun; 'ppl.a.' for past participle adjective; 'v' for verb; and 'vv' for Versatile Verb.

ARREST (V)

The youths were **arrested** *by* the police *for* the crime of arson.

He was **arrested** *in* school.

You cannot **arrest** a citizen *on* suspicion of a crime *without* a warrant.

ARRIVE

The wedding party **arrived** *at* the church in good time.

Will they **arrive** *by* plane?

“Board a Boeing 747 in New York and there is roughly a 99.9999% chance that you will **arrive** safely *in* London.” (The Economist)

The fire brigade **arrived** *on* (or *upon*) the scene and soon took charge.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

ASCEND

The rocket **ascended** *beyond* our view.

“The scientific establishment reveals its basic bias when it says that man descended, instead of **ascended**, *from* the monkey.” (Charles N. Prieur)

“In 1930, in (French) Indo-China alone, there were nearly 700 summary executions. If Gandhi had tried his passive resistance there, Ho Chi Minh wrote, ‘he would long since have **ascended** *into* heaven’.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

The explorers will **ascend** the river *to* its source.

ASCENDANCY

She hated his **ascendancy** *over* her.

ASCRIBE

“Schizophrenics . . . have . . . an unfamiliar odor, recently **ascribed** *to* trans-3-methylhexanoic acid, in their sweat.”

(Lewis Thomas, The lives of a cell)

ASK

The travel agent **asked** *about* our itinerary.

“Hoover had **asked** Rudy Vallee in 1932 *for* an anti-Depression song; the wretched fellow produced ‘Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?’”

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

Napoleon always **asked** *of* his generals, “I know he’s good. But is he lucky?”

ASPERSION

I can do without your **aspersions** *on* my reputation.

ASPIRANT

There are numerous **aspirants** *for* the post of theatre director.

ASPIRE

He **aspires** *after* (i.e. covets) fame, not truth.

“If you **aspire** *to* (i.e. reach for) the highest place, it is no disgrace to stop at the second, or even the third, place.”

(Marcus Tullius Cicero)

ASSAULT (N)

“The **assault** *on* the truth by such propagandists as Goebbels can have tragic consequences. Words ought to be somewhat outrageous for they are, after all, assaults of thoughts on the unthinking.” (John Maynard Keynes)

ASSEMBLE

The hikers were instructed to **assemble** *at* a fork in the trail.

The teacher **assembled** all the children in the primary grades *for* a picnic.

“We haven’t yet learned how to stay human when **assembled** *in* masses.” (Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

“There is an inherent tendency of matter to **assemble** itself, in an orderly way, *into* more and more complex forms, as though the ‘desire’ to attain consciousness and personal relationship were built into the nature of matter itself.” (Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

The dancers have been requested to **assemble** *on* stage.

ASSENT

He nodded his **assent** *to* the task.

ASSENT

Would you please **assent** *to* our suggestions *with* a nod of your head?

ASSIDUOUS

I've always been **assiduous** *in* my duties.

ASSIGN

Why don't you **assign** that work *to* me?

ASSIMILATE

He was careful to **assimilate** his behaviour (i.e. conform) *to* that of his neighbours.

"I am foreign material, and cannot **assimilate** *with* (i.e. become incorporated into) the Church of England."
(J.H. Newman)

ASSIST

They **assisted** *as* spectators rather than *as* participants.

Cornelius Mussus **assisted** *at* the Council of Trent.

He wanted to **assist** me *in* my observations.

"Could you **assist** a poor man *with* a copper, Sir?"
(Oxford English Dictionary)

ASSOCIATE (N)

The chief engineer was an **associate** *of* the architect in the construction of the stadium.

ASSOCIATE (A)

"Many of the traits **associated** *with* Type-A behaviour, including fast-paced speech and eating, and a sense of urgency about time, do not seem to increase the risk of heart attack . . . Only hostility appears to be related to disease." (Redford Williams of Duke University)

Note: never associated *to*

ASSOCIATION

"Most of the **associations** *between* the living things we know about are essentially cooperative ones . . . It takes long intimacy, long and familiar interliving, before one kind of creature can cause illness in another."

(Lewis Thomas, The lives of a Cell)

A university should function as an **association** *of* scholars for the advancement of knowledge.

Close **association** *with* good literature develops both the mind and the spirit.

ASSUMPTION

"Atheism is abnormality. It is not merely the denial of a dogma. It is the reversal of a subconscious **assumption** *in* the soul; the sense that there is a meaning and a direction in the world it sees."

(G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man)

He dreamed of a sudden **assumption** (i.e. elevation) *into* the heady community of the elite.

The acting manager bustled about with an **assumption** (i.e. appropriation) *of* authority.

ASTERN

He maneuvered his sloop slightly **astern** *of* the leader's.

ASTONISH

They were **astonished** *at* his doing such a thing.

"The people were **astonished** *at* his doctrine."

(Bible: Matthew 7:28)

You will be **astonished** *by* the musical ability of this child prodigy.

The magician will **astonish** the audience *with* his tricks.

ASTONISHMENT

Imagine their **astonishment** *at* his sudden wealth and fame.

ASTOUND

Weren't you **astounded** *at* their giving up so quickly?

I was **astounded** *by* his skills as a magician.

"He liked to **astound** his readers *with* paradoxes, such as the fact that, when the largest human cell (the female ovum) and the smallest (the male spermatozoon) meet and fuse, the biological miracle of conception occurs."

(Mind Alive mag.)

ASTUTE

How very **astute** you are *at* leaving no trace of your passage.

Their were surprisingly *astute* *in* the way they solved that problem.

ATONE

“Nothing can *atone for* the insult of a gift, except the love of the person who gives it.” (Old Chinese proverb)

ATTACH

The notary instructed his clerk to *attach* (i.e. affix) the codicil *at* the top of the last page of the will.

A legal writ will *attach* him (i.e. make him liable) *for* the debt he owes.

No blame may *attach on* (or *upon*) (i.e. adhere to) her for the accident.

“Since it consists only of a relatively short strand of DNA protected by a shell of protein, a virus cannot eat or reproduce by itself. What it can do is *attach* itself *to* a host cell and inject its DNA inside.”

(David H. Freedman, *Discover* mag.)

ATTACHMENT

The *attachment* (i.e. affection) *between* David and Jonathan in the Old Testament became a model for devoted friendship.

The machine had *attachments for* special cleaning tasks. The *attachment* of a child *to* an animal (i.e. the bond between) can be profound.

ATTACK (N)

A night *attack by* long-range bombers destroyed the city. Most of the household members suffered from an *attack of* the flu.

“R.L. Stevenson’s *The Lantern-Bearers* is an *attack on* realism that’s unreal.”

(G.K. Chesterton, *Generally Speaking*)

ATTACK (V)

The intelligence agent informed us that the enemy planned to *attack with* tanks at dawn, *against* our weakest positions.

I will *attack* you *on* this bill, if you introduce it.

The cabinet member decided to *attack* the opposition *through* its waffling position on electoral reform.

ATTAIN

I couldn’t *attain to* those heights of achievement *in* several lifetimes.

ATTEMPT (N)

At least make an *attempt at* it.

It wasn’t the first time they made an *attempt on* her life.

ATTEND

It’s your turn to *attend to* (i.e. take care of) him.

ATTENDANT

Debilitating weakness is one of the symptoms *attendant to* this particular disease.

“Historically, for each 1 percent increase in joblessness in the U.S. economy, the direct result has been 38,886 deaths, 20,240 cardiovascular failures, 494 cases of death from cirrhosis of the liver *attendant to* alcoholism, 920 suicides, and 648 homicides.” (*Harvey Brenner*)

ATTENTIVE

They were singularly *attentive to* his appeals for reform.

ATTITUDE

The actress assumed an *attitude of* mock despair.

“We cannot escape the Calvinist *attitude to* money — that it is something to be accumulated . . . that it is naughty to spend it.” (Pierre Berton, *The Smug Minority*)

Her *attitude toward* the course of study changed as her knowledge increased.

ATTRIBUTE (N)

“But mercy is above this sceptred sway . . . It is an *attribute to* God himself.” (Shakespeare)

Kindness is an *attribute of* the humane person.

ATTRIBUTE (v)

“In his book, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, written 12 years after he published his more famous *On the Origin of Species*, Darwin attributed the origin of human races to our sexual preferences (the survival of the sexiest). Natural selection played no role, Darwin claimed.”
(Jared Diamond, Discover mag.)

ATTRIBUTION

“Christianity, one star commentator declared, quoting without attribution from Disraeli, “was completed Judaism or it was nothing.”
(John Le Carré, The little drummer girl)

ATTUNE

He was thoroughly attuned to their way of life.

AUDIENCE

Our senator has an audience of the president on Tuesday.
(formal)
I had an audience with the Spanish Minister. (Disraeli)

AVAIL

I suggest you avail yourself of this rare opportunity.

AVAILABLE

“Lenders . . . wish . . . to have their assets as available as they can.” (Rogers, Oxford Universal Dictionary)
That book is available at your corner store.
The documents will be available for your perusal this afternoon.
Here, hospital care is available only in emergencies to insured persons.

“Experts agree that not more than 20% of all positions available on the job market are advertised through newspapers, employment centres or placement agencies. This means that over 80% of vacant positions are not advertised.” (Pointe-Claire Job Search Centre, funded by Human Resources Development Canada)
“Mental health is directly proportionate to the number of perceived options available to any individual. One

who is mentally disturbed often lives in a world in which almost every door seems to be closed.”
(G. Leonard, Esquire mag., Dec. 1982)
This should be available to you within 5 days.

AVENGE

The father will avenge the murder of his son by bringing the criminal to justice.
Hitler’s victims seek to avenge themselves on (or upon) the Nazi perpetrators who have so far escaped punishment.

AVERSE

“The boy (Frederick William II) was of an easy-going and pleasure-loving disposition, averse from sustained effort of any kind.” (Encyclopedia Britannica)
“To be averse to something indicates opposition on the subject’s part.” (Michael Gartner: Advertising Age)
“Our advice is to use different from and averse to.” (Fowler, The King’s English)
Note: Oxford’s King’s English finds from uncomfortable; prefers to in all instances.

AVERT

She averted her eyes from the ghastly tableau.

AWAKE

The young campers awake at sunrise to the sound of the bugle.
He awoke from his stupor, but it was too late to catch the train.

AWAKEN

“Scientists are awakening to its (Antarctica’s) critical importance as the storehouse of 70 percent of the world’s fresh water supply and the source of much of its weather.”
(Lennard Bickel, Antarctica, at the other end of the world)

AWARE

“In man, evolution became aware of self.” (Julian Huxley)

**AWAY**

Stay **away** *from* the fire.

The author decided to **do away** *with* (i.e. delete) his last chapter altogether.

AWKWARD

He proved **awkward** *at* the task of organizing the computer program.

Although **awkward** *on* land, the vehicle was efficient in the water.

The child was **awkward** *in* her gestures.

B

BABBLE

“He **babbled**, for a long time, *about* the generosity and goodness of his brother.” (Charles Dickens)

“I bubble in the eddying bays, I **babble** *on* the pebbles.” (Tennyson, Brook)

“Griefs too sacred to be **babbled** *to* the world.” (D. Mitchell, Dream Life)

BACK

Make sure you **back** *against* the wall.

Our house **backed** *onto* a cliff.

Why don't you **back** the car *out of* the garage?

OK, now **back** all the way *to* the street.

On a hot day, she **backs** her car *under* those trees.

BAFFLE

I am **baffled** (i.e. puzzled) *by* his position in this dispute.

The vessel **baffled** (i.e. struggled) *with* a gale throughout her voyage.

We can **baffle** (i.e. confuse) the enemy *with* this ruse.

BAIT

The promise of riches was the **bait** *for* gold prospectors.

BALANCE (N)

“**Balance** *of* trade is . . . the estimation of the difference of value between the exports and imports of a country.” (Oxford Universal Dictionary)

Try to strike a happy **balance** *between* capitalism and freedom *in* your speech.

BALANCE (V)

I'm trying to **balance** (i.e. weigh) his arguments *against* yours.

Can you **balance** (i.e. steady) yourself *on* one foot?

The seal was **balancing** (i.e. steadying) the ball *on* its nose.

Make sure this set of figures **balances** *with* (i.e. equals) that one.

BALK

The horse **balked** *at* the jump, unseating its rider.

BAMBOOZLE

They were **bamboozled** *by* the con artist.

So the lawyer **bamboozled** him *into* accepting the politician's rather weak defence.

BAN (N)

Individuals have always had to live under the **ban** *of* a society that could not tolerate dissent.

The city council placed a **ban** *on* parking cars on the street overnight.

BAN (V)

“Following a Prussian decree of 1816 which **banned** (i.e. barred) Jews *from* the higher ranks of law and medicine, he (the father of Karl Marx) became a Protestant and . . . had his six children baptized.”

(Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

Good air and sunny skies are **banned** (i.e. interdicted) *to* them *for* life.

BANDY

The ball was **bandied** (i.e. tossed) *from* one player *to* another *with* lightning speed.

Are you ready to **bandy** (i.e. exchange) words *with* me?

BANISH

Romeo was **banished** *from* Verona.

I am **banishing** them *from* this country *for* life.

Napoleon was **banished** *to* Elba.

BAR

“At the Lateran Council in 1215, they (the Jews) were *barred from* owning land and all military and civil functions.”

(from *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1974)

They are *barring him from* the next jazz festival.

BARE (A)

He swept the driveway *bare of* leaves.

BARGAIN (V)

The woman *bargained* (i.e. haggled) almost an hour *with* the merchant *for* the antique vase she wanted.

He is *bargaining for* (i.e. expecting) good weather.

BARK

The huge dog *barked at* every passerby.

The sergeant *barked* his orders *to* the company.

He is *barking up* the wrong tree.

BARRIER

The Rocky Mountains were a *barrier between* Canada's coasts till the railway was built.

North America was a *barrier to* Europeans trying to reach Asia by sea.

BASE (N)

The financial experts outlined a sound *base* (i.e. program) *for* reform of the economy.

The climbers rested at the *base* (i.e. bottom) *of* the mountain.

BASE (V)

I am *basing* my conclusion *on* your behaviour up to now.

“Chinese medicine is *based on* the belief that a life force, or qi, flows through 14 channels in the body and can be stimulated by the insertion of needles (at the 360 acupuncture points).”

(George Howe Colt, *Life* mag.)

“Biologists don't know how patterns are created *on real* mollusks. But mathematical models *based on*

hypothetical interacting chemicals match them with uncanny accuracy.” (Carl Zimmer, *Discover* mag. 1992)

BASIS

“Isidore's Etymologies . . . became the *basis for* all teaching in the West for about 800 years.”

(Paul Johnson, *The History of Christianity*)

“It is necessary therefore to have a *basis for* our discussion (i.e. shared assumptions).”

(J. Bright, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

The prosecutor's accusations had no *basis* (i.e. foundation) *in* fact.

The *basis* (i.e. principal ingredient) *of* this cosmetic preparation is a vegetable oil.

BASK

She loved to *bask in* the sun.

BATHE

“From sunrise to sunset, Mars *bathes in* dazzling lasershine.” (National Geographic)

He bathed the seedling *with* a secret chemical.

BATTEN

“Melancholy sceptics with a taste for carrion, who *batten* (i.e. glut) *on* the hideous facts of history — persecutions, inquisitions.” (Emerson, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

BATTER

She was *battered by* her husband at least twice last year.

“The sample was *battered with* beams of charged atoms.” (*The Economist* mag.)

Sam wasn't beating my rugs, he was *battering* them *with* a baseball bat.

BATTLE (N)

“Lymphocytes, the small white blood cells that lead the body's *battle against* infection and cancer.”

(Rob Wechsler, *Discover* mag.)

The professors engaged in a *battle of* words over the precise meaning of a term.

“The revival has ignited a bitter lobbying battle *between* Big Steel and its customers.”

(Christine Gorman, Time mag.)

BATTLE (v)

“One should never put on one’s best trousers to go out to battle *for* freedom and truth.”

(Henrik Ibsen, An Enemy of the People)

The waves **battled** *with* the winds.

BEAM (v)

The madman wanted his manifesto **beamed** (i.e. broadcast) *around* the world.

Radio programs were **beamed** *at* (i.e. transmitted to) Eastern Europe *from* England.

His moon face **beamed** (i.e. smiled warmly) **down** *at* her from its great height.

“A compact disc (CD) stores music in digital form in some 15 billion microspic pits on its aluminum surface . . . a laser (then) scans the pits and **beams** (i.e. transmits) their information *to* a computer chip for conversion into sound.”

(Stephen Koepp, Time mag.)

BEAR (v)

Her song was **borne** (i.e. carried) *on* the wind.

Your complaint doesn’t **bear** *on* (i.e. has no relation to) the subject at all.

Our guns were brought to **bear** (i.e. bracketed) *upon* (or *on*) the enemy’s batteries.

“There is nothing in the world so much admired as a man who knows how to **bear** (i.e. suffer) unhappiness *with* courage.” (Seneca)

She **bore** (i.e. endured) her pain *with* great fortitude.

BEARING

How does that have a **bearing** *on* this case?

BEAT (v)

The rioters are **beating** (i.e. pounding) *against* their cell bars with their tin cups.

The ship **beat** (i.e. ploughed) *along* the rocky coast.

“His mission: to **beat** (i.e. best) the archetypal mind-polluters *at* their own game.” (James Geary, Time mag.)

“They shall **beat** (i.e. hammer) their swords *into* plowshares.” (Isaiah 2:4)

They **beat** (i.e. bared) a path *to* his door.

“And the winds blew, and **beat** *upon* that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.” (Matthew 7:25)

He had **beaten** (i.e. smashed) the poor animal *to* a pulp. The mother’s heart **beats** (i.e. pounds) *with* joy at the news of her son’s success.

He was **beaten** (i.e. struck) *with* sticks *till* he lay senseless.

BECKON

She **beckoned** *to* him imperiously *from* the dais.

He is **beckoning** me *with* his finger.

BECOME

Don’t you care what **becomes** *of* (i.e. happens to) the valuable library book.

It does not **become** (i.e. befit) us *to* neglect our civic duty by failing to vote.

BECOMING

Her period costume was very **becoming** (i.e. flattering) *to* the aging actress.

BEG

He **begged** (i.e. asked) *for* alms from the people leaving church.

The nuns went door to door, **begging** food *for* the poor.

Please don’t beat him; I **beg** *of* (i.e. beseech) you.

BEGIN

I will **begin** *after* breakfast.

The blood drops **began** *at* the door.

I must **begin** *by* doing something. Anything.

“Professional pianists and violinists . . . almost always **begin** to play *by* the age of seven or eight.”

(James Shreeve, Discover mag., Oct. ‘96)

He had **begun** *from* a point directly north of here.

The war **began** *on* (or *upon*) a soft, sunny morning.

“Civilizations decay quite leisurely. For 250 years after moral weakening *began in* Greece *with* the Sophists, Hellenic civilization continued to produce masterpieces of literature and art.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Story of Civilization)

“The (American Civil) war *began over* the expansion westward of slavery, not its elimination.”

(The Economist)

I’m *beginning to* lose patience with you.

Don’t *begin under* any circumstances.

“If you would change the face of the world, *begin with* the face in the mirror.” (Anon.)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

BEHALF

The lawyer spoke eloquently *on behalf of* his client.

BEHAVE

“Electrons had been thought to exist only as subatomic particles until . . . the quantum theory suggested that electrons could *behave as* both particles and waves.”

(Jamie Murphy, Time mag.)

They *behaved like* madmen.

They *behave ruthlessly toward* (or *to*) their tenants.

BEHAVIOUR

The comedian’s *behaviour before* an audience commanded attention.

Children should be taught what is acceptable *behaviour in* a church, theatre or concert hall, as well as *on* public vehicles and *on* the street.

The *behaviour of* some individuals *toward* the elderly is inconsiderate.

BELIEF

There were numerous varieties of Christianity which . . . centred on *belief in* the resurrection.”

(Paul Johnson, The History of Christianity)

Strangely, sickness onto death causes most people to betray their *belief in* God.

(Walt) Whitman wanted his poems to embody “an implicit *belief in* the the wisdom, health, mystery, beauty of every process, every concrete object, every human and other existence, not only consider’d from the point of view of all, but of each.”

(Christopher Patton quoting Whitman)

BELIEVE

“Economists are one of the last groups of professionals on earth who still *believe in* perpetual motion machines.” (Paul Erlich)

BELONG

“The tensions in a harp are so tremendous and unrelenting that it becomes unplayable after fifty years, and *belongs on* a dump or *in* a museum.”

(Kurt Vonnegut Jr., Jailbird)

Your mother’s portrait belongs *over* the fireplace.

Most fruit trees *belong to* the rose family, including peach, apricot, plum, cherry, apple and pear trees. And - yes - the strawberry, which is considered a tree because it has a wooden stem.

That gift *belongs under* the Christmas tree.

His book *belongs with* the classics.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

BELOVED

“It gave the rustic scenery the kind of self-contained serenity *beloved of* romantic painters of the nineteenth century.” (The Economist)

BENEFICIAL

Why are these tax breaks *beneficial to* everyone but me?

BENEFIT (N)

The actors staged a *benefit for* one of their fellow artists in distress.

You should give him the *benefit of* the doubt.

That is of very little *benefit to* me.

Note: “Benefits *of* the benefactor; benefits *to* the beneficiary” (Fowler, The King’s English)

BENEFIT (v)

That child is so ill, he's unlikely to **benefit** *by* any kind of holiday.

"Only a few privileged individuals out of the total number of people who have a given disease ever **benefit** *from* the results of sophisticated medical technology, and even fewer doctors develop the skill to use them."

(Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

BENT (N)

They all have a **bent** *for* (i.e. bias to) the obvious.

BEND (v)

They left the bar **bent** (i.e. intent) *on* mayhem.

BEQUEATH

"It is this idolatry of self which they (the Romans) have **bequeathed** *to* us in the form of patriotism."

(Simone Weil)

BEREAVE

She was **bereaved** *of* three generations of her family in the Holocaust.

He was soon **bereft** *of* all his worldly goods.

BESET

He was **beset** (i.e. attacked) *by* his neighbours as soon as he stepped out the door.

She was **beset** (i.e. harassed) *by* problems all her married life.

He then **besets** (i.e. studs) the ring *with* priceless gems.

They were caught **besetting** (i.e. studding) jewelry *with* fake gems.

BESOTTED

The next morning, **besotted** (i.e. stupefied) *with* drink, he took the ferry back to the mainland.

She was **besotted** (i.e. infatuated) *with* words.

BESTOW

He rashly **bestowed** the award *on* (or *upon*) his own brother.

BIG

There's nothing **big** (i.e. elevating) *about* bigotry. (Charles N. Prieur)

That's **big** (i.e. generous) *of* you.

She is **big** *with* child (i.e. pregnant)

BILK

The vagrant **bilked** him *of* all his savings

BIND

They **bound** (i.e. covered) the volumes *in* red leather.

"Opiate drugs like morphine and heroin can **bind** (i.e. adhere) *to* cells in the brain."

(Rob Wechsler, Discover mag.)

Make sure you **bind** (i.e. tie) their hands *with* those ropes.

BLAME (N)

She put the whole **blame** *on* me.

BLAME (v)

"Doppler radars will give pilots advance warning of wind shear conditions, which have been **blamed** *for* a number of plane crashes." (Gordon Graff)

He **blamed** the whole mess *on* his brother.

"I **blame** it *on* heredity."

(Evelyn Waugh, A little learning)

BLEND

The diplomat's manner was a skilled **blend** *of* tact and good humour.

BLEND

"The town and country met and **blended** (i.e. became one) *in* almost perfect harmony."

(M. Moorcock, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Like chameleons, squid have chromatophores — pigment cells in their skin — that allow them to change colour to *blend* (i.e. melt) *into* their surroundings.”

(Mark Kemp, *Discover* mag.)

“Her manner was smoothly *blended* (i.e. was a smooth mixture) *of* graciousness and condescension.”

(World Book Dictionary)

The four escapees *blended* (i.e. mingled closely) *with* the crowd.

“Pleasant Spring scents . . . to *blend* (i.e. mix in) *with* the robuster aroma of coffee and fried bacon.”

(P.G. Wodehouse, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

BLESS

They were *blessed* (i.e. prayed for) *by* the chaplain before going into battle.

She *blessed* (i.e. thanked) him *for* his kindness.

“The bellman’s drowsy charm to *bless* (i.e. protect) the doors *from* nightly harm.”

(Milton, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“The Word liveth . . . ; and the nations shall *bless* (i.e. sanctify) themselves *in* Him.”

(Jer. 4:2, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

I was *blessed* (i.e. endowed) *with* good health all my life.

We found him *blessing* (i.e. praying over) his congregation *with* all manner of wild incantations.

BLIND (A)

“Winston Churchill . . . though alert to danger in India . . . was always *blind to* perils further east.”

(Paul Johnson, *A History of the Modern World*)

BLIND (V)

“Clouds *blind* (i.e. hide) the stars *from* my view.”

(*Oxford English Dictionary*)

His prejudice *blinds* him (i.e. closes his eyes) *to* the facts of the case.

She was suddenly *blinded* (i.e. made sightless) *by* the sun.

“*Blind with* (i.e. blinkered by) science.”

(*Oxford English Dictionary*)

BLOCK (V)

The whole street was *blocked by* the fallen crane.

At rush hours, the main arteries are *blocked with* traffic.

They *blocked* the road *with* their trucks.

BLOT (N)

After a lifetime of public service, his financial misdemeanor was a tragic *blot on* his reputation.

BLOW (N)

“It was like a *blow to* the pit of my stomach.”

(Anthony Hyde)

BLOW (V)

The old man watched the dry autumn leaves *blow across* the road.

The factory whistle *blows at* 7 a.m.

The innkeeper used a small bellows to *blow* the embers *into* flame.

The wind *blew* all the leaves *into* my garden.

It is not good table manners to *blow on* your food.

The sudden gust of wind *blew* my newspaper *under* the porch.

The wind is *blowing through* the cracks in the house.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

BLUNDER

The horses had to *blunder* their way *alongside* the river.

The driver *blundered into* the wrong lane.

He *blundered upon* a scouting party and was taken prisoner.

BOARD (V)

I *boarded* (i.e. had my meals) *with* the sailors at the hostel.

He is *boarding* his windows *against* (i.e. shielding them from) the hurricane *with* barn siding.

BOAST (V)

He couldn’t help *boasting about* his deed.

To *boast of* a virtue is to hollow it with pride. (Anon.)

She **boasted** *to* him *about* her infidelities.

Note: Sometimes, 'boast' is a transitive verb and needs no preposition to *pre-position* the object. As in:

"Critic . . . A person who **boasts** himself hard to please, because nobody tries to please him."

(Ambrose Pierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*)

BOAT (V)

They **boated** *down* the river, singing at the top of their lungs.

"Leopoldine, daughter of Victor Hugo, drowned with her young husband, while **boating** *on* the Seine . . . His other daughter, Adèle, died mad."

(Charles McCarry, *National Geographic* mag.)

BOGGLE

The mind just **boggles** *at* this concept of the universe.

BOIL (V)

Water deprived of its air will not **boil** *at* 212 °F.

"Martyrs were stoned, or crucified, or burned in fire, or **boiled** *in* oil." (Tennyson, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

I want it **boiled down** *into* (i.e. reduced to) a sentence.

The mob surged and **boiled** (i.e. stormed) *through* every room of the palace.

The revolutionaries **boiled with** rage at the injustices inflicted upon the hapless serfs.

BOOK (V)

Shall I **book** (i.e. charge) it *to* you or *to* your father? (British)

BOOST (N)

We're relying on you to give a **boost** (i.e. encouragement) *to* your Alma Mater.

Inflation was increased by a **boost** (i.e. surge) *in* prices.

The child needed a **boost** (i.e. lift) *over* the fence.

BORDER (V)

"Goethe said that many of his best poems were written in a condition that **bordered** *on* (i.e. approximated) **somnambulism**." (Lyall Watson, *Supernature*)

The garden is **bordered** *with* (i.e. hedged by) evergreens.

BORN

"We are **born** *for* cooperation, as are the feet, the hands, the eyelids and the upper and lower jaws."

(Marcus Aurelius)

"Children **born** *in* Italy in 1348, the year of the Great Plague, grew no more than 24 teeth instead of the normal 32." (Elwin Newman, *Sunday Punch*)

They were **born** *into* wealth.

"We are **born** *of* love. It is the only principle of existence and its only end." (Benjamin Disraeli)

"It is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, it is in dying that we are **born** again *to* eternal life." (St. Francis of Assisi)

"A baby is **born** *with* prefabricated flexure lines on its hand; and what can be the survival value of these?" (Hugh Montefiore, *The Probability of God*)

BORROW

"The original idea of our civilization, the only one that we have not **borrowed** *from* the Greeks, is the idea of the spirituality of labour." (Simone Weil)

BOUNCE (V)

She **bounced** (i.e. sprang) *from* her chair *in* a fury.

The children **bounced** (i.e. bounded) *on* the trampoline with great glee, until one of them **bounced** (i.e. rebounded) *off* the edge and fell to the floor.

"One (guard) even **bounced** *upon* the (King's) bed and felt every inch for any threatening thing."

(George Garrett, *Death of the Fox*)

The ball **bounces** (i.e. bounds) *over* the wall occasionally.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

BOUND (V)

The property was **bounded** (i.e. hemmed in) *by* the river on one side and woods on the other.

They left at dawn, **bound** (i.e. headed) *for* they knew not what adventure.

The dancer **bounds** (i.e. leaps) *into* the air as if free of gravity.

The retriever loved to **bound** (i.e. leap) *through* the tall grass.

She was **bound** (i.e. compelled) *to* go for it.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

Note: If the 'bound' you're looking for is the past tense of the verb 'bind', see 'bind'.

BOUNDARY

"It also promises to resolve the **boundary** *between* people and animals." (Matt Cartmill, Discover mag., Nov. '98)

Ideas are the **boundaries** *of* thought.

BOW (V)

The wreath-layers **bowed** *to* the Unknown Soldier.

The old lady's back was **bowed** (i.e. arched) *by* age.

The boat's bridge is **bowed** (i.e. bent) *like* an arch.

The Japanese lawyer **bowed** us (i.e. escorted us with bows) *into* his office.

Disgusted with the partnership, they **bowed** (i.e. backed) *out of* the agreement.

The whole crowd suddenly **bowed** (i.e. inclined their heads in reverence) *as one to* their sovereign.

BRAND (V)

"The remnants were eventually **branded** *as* (i.e. accused of being) heretics."

(Paul Johnson, The History of Christianity)

The bulls were branded *with* hot irons.

BREACH (N)

"The breaking of that trust (in words) . . . is symptomatic of **breach** *of* trust *with* God." (The Economist)

BREAK (V)

"One of the extraordinary properties of holograms is their resistance to damage or loss of memory. A tiny fragment or chip **broken** anywhere *from* the plate essentially holds all the information of the whole plate." (Yatri, Unknown Man)

They **broke** (i.e. smashed their way) *into* the house while the owner was away on vacation.

The composer loved to listen to the sea **break** (i.e. crash) *on* the rocks.

"The classic example of entropy is a car rusting in a junkyard; entropy **breaks down** the orderly machinery *into* crumbling rust."

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

Without warning, King Charles the First **broke in** *upon* (or *on*) (i.e. interrupted unexpectedly) a sitting of the House of Commons, hoping to trap the leaders.

He decided to **break** *with* (i.e. sever himself from) the past and start afresh.

BREAKTHROUGH

"**Breakthroughs** *in* miniaturization could lead to robots the size of a flea." (Philip Elmer De Witt, Time mag.)

BREATHE

"In every single breath of yours there are no less than 2 billion atoms that were once **breathed** *by* this great man (Leonardo da Vinci)."

(Heinz Haber, The Walt Disney story of our friend the atom)

"66 species of dolphins, porpoises, and other toothed whales inhabit the earth's water . . . **breathing from** openings on the tops of their heads."

(Justine Kaplan, Omni mag.)

"Ideas are the mightiest influence on earth. One great thought **breathed into** a man may regenerate him."

(Channing)

"The air **breathes** *upon* us here most sweetly." (Shakespeare)

BRIBE (V)

She **bribed** her dog *with* scraps from the table.

BRIDLE (V)

The young wife **bridled** (i.e. expressed resentment) *at* every criticism against her husband.

BRIEF (V)

He found himself **briefed** *by* the whole assemblage.

I was **briefed** *on* the subject as soon as I stepped into the office.

BRIGHTEN

“Only a very tired seagull would have **brightened at** the sight of its dank greenstone cliffs.”

(Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*)

The new owners **brightened** the old house **with** fresh paint.

BRIM (v)

“Current cosmology is **brimming with** exotic theories.”
(*The Economist*)

BRING

The government intends to **bring** a court action *against* companies which pollute the environment.

“The family of a landless Indian peasant now spends about six hours a day merely finding the firewood it needs for cooking and heating. Another four to six hours are spent *bringing* water *from* a well.”

(Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*)

“The only absolute response to absolute power is the absolute love which our Lord **brought into** the world.”
(Malcolm Muggeridge)

The new lens **brought** the scene *into* sharp relief.

Why don't you **bring** him *through* the garden?

Speaking about the late master lyricist Alan J. Lerner, historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. said, “Few men in our melancholy age **brought** so much pleasure *to* so many people.” (*Time* mag.)

Bring it to me now!

“The average cost of developing a new drug and **bringing it to** market is \$350 million to \$500 million.”

(Gary Taubes, *Discover* mag., Feb. '99)

Why wait? **Bring it with** you this evening.

BRISTLE (v)

I **bristle at** the very thought of it.

“Transparent, *bristling with* weapons and possessing a Houdini-like ability to slip between other cells, the white cells are the body's chief fighters” (against disease).

(Dr. Paul Brand, & Philip Yancey, *In His Image*)

“He would **bristle** all the land *with* castles.”

(Lytton, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“All France **bristles with** indignation.”

(*World Book Dictionary*)

BROOD (v)

They **brooded on** the terror that would come with the night.

“Jackson Pollock (was) a genius whose spirit continues to **brood over** American culture.”

(Robert Hughes, *Time* mag.)

She **brooded upon** her child's deathly pallor.

BRUSH (v)

It is impolite to **brush against** someone on a bus, if this can be avoided.

He **brushed by** me as he left the house.

The little boy was told to cheer up and **brush** the tears *from* his eyes.

BUBBLE (v)

“Some of the earth's strangest creatures live around hydrothermal vents — hot springs that *bubble from* volcanic fissures in the ocean depths.”

(*Discover* mag., Oct. '96)

BUCKLE (v)

The mother **buckled** her child *into* the car seat.

BUILD

“Mitochondria, like chloroplasts, are *built according to* an elaborate blueprint.” (*Life Science Library*, *The Cell*)

“**Build** better schoolrooms *for* the boy than cells and gibbets for the man.” (Eliza Cook)

The robin had **built** its nest *in* the eavestrough.

“Nature has *built* its own carefully constructed electronic devices *into* all organisms.”

(*Life Science Library*, *The Cell*)

“Nanotechnologists . . . believe in a ‘bottom-up’ approach. Take atoms and molecules . . . and custom *build* them *into* larger objects — ultra-strong materials, designer foods, even tiny robots.” (Michael Krantz, *Time* mag.)

“Proteins are very large molecules *built of* simpler units called amino acids.” (*Mind Alive* mag.)

“Istanbul (known for 1600 years as Constantinople) is the only city in the world to be *built on* two continents.” (James Stewart-Gordon, *Reader’s Digest*)

It was the first bridge *built over* that river.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

BUILDUP (N)

“Glaucoma is the *buildup of* fluid in the eyeball, causing increased pressure and eventual damage to the optic nerve.” (Andrew Purvis, *Time* mag.)

BULK (V)

“The question of the Russian zone of occupation in Germany therefore did not *bulk in* our thoughts or *in* AngloAmerican discussions, nor was it raised by any of the leaders at Teheran.” (Winston Churchill about the Iron Curtain)

BURDEN (V)

“Let us not *burden* our remembrance *with* a heaviness that is gone.” (William Shakespeare)

BURN (VV)

She was *burned brown by* the sun.

“Thanks to electromagnetism, the sun does not *explode*, but *burns smoothly for* billions of years.” (Sheldon Lee Glashow, *Discover* mag., 1989)

“Many people didn’t even know of the atom’s existence — until that day in 1945 when a frightful flash *burned* the word “atom” *into* the mind of modern man.” (Heinz Haber, *The Walt Disney story of our friend the atom*)

Candles *burn in* every corner of the church.

Lightning struck the old farmhouse, and it *burned to* the ground.

The cigarette had *burnt through* the upholstery.

She *burned with* desire.

“Oh, oh, oh,” Falstaff cries as the supposedly merry wives of Windsor *burn him with* tapers.” (Otto Friedrick, *Time* mag.)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

BURST (V)

With the sudden heat, the apple trees *burst into* bloom.

“The Fourth of July fireworks *burst into* being a second ahead of their muffled bangs.” (John Updike)

He suddenly *burst* (i.e. charged) *through* the doorway.

“In August 1986, bubbles of carbon dioxide accumulating at the bottom of (Lake Nyos in Cameroon) . . . *burst to* the surface; a blanket of dense carbon dioxide and water vapor spread over nearby villages, killing cattle and 1,700 people.”

(*Discover* mag., Oct. 1988)

The pantry was *bursting* (i.e. overloaded) *with* every kind of baked delicacy.

BURY (VV)

She was *buried by* the same priest who had married her only a few weeks before.

They *buried* their beloved father *in* a small orchard within sight of the homestead.

They are *burying him under* the bridge, where he died.

BUSY

I never thought I would be this *busy in* my old age.

I’m sorry, but I’m too *busy to* attend the meeting tonight.

He was *busy with* another set of problems.

BUY (V)

She ran out to *buy* cigarettes *at* the corner store.

I *bought* a doll *for* Anita and a teddy bear for Sue.

They always *bought* their fish *from* the same passing peddler.

They only *buy* fruit *in* season.

Consumers are *buying* too much *on* credit.

It was possible in the 19th century for a soldier to *buy* himself *out of* the army.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

C

CALL (v)

I **called** (i.e. stopped for a short spell) *at* his shop *on* the way home.

Why don't you have her sister **call for** her (i.e. pick her up).

He **called for** (i.e. demanded) his morning cup of coffee.

"Americans must **call on** more brain space to learn a second language than they did to assimilate English."

(Sharon Begley with John Carey and Ray Sawhill, Newsweek mag., 1983)

I **called to** her as she crossed the square.

CALVE

In 1982, an enormous chunk of freshwater ice **calved from** an ice shelf on Ellesmere Island.

CAPABLE

"Only a virtuous people are **capable of** freedom." (Benjamin Franklin)

"Stem cells (are) **capable of** generating an endless supply of red cells, white cells and platelets."

(Peter Radetsky, Discover mag.)

"The new digital video disc (DVD) . . . is **capable of** storing 4.7 gigabytes of data per side — enough to show a full-length feature film with stereo sound and a cinema-quality picture." (The Economist mag, June 1, '96)

CAPACITATE

"Current research shows the human brain to be marvelously designed and **capacitated beyond** the wonders with which it was invested by innocent imagination." (Scientific American mag.)

"We are infinitely **capacitated for** the future."

(Dr. Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

CAPACITY

"The human liver has a great **capacity for** regeneration (i.e. ability to regenerate) . . . and can rebuild a large

portion of itself within a month."

(Harold M. Schneck Jr., New York Times)

The **capacity** (i.e. volume) *of* that reservoir is staggering.

CAPTURE (v)

"A newly discovered molecule is thought to be a component of interstellar dust. Its essence is better **captured by** R. Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome, the many-sided structure whose perfect symmetry ensures perfect stability." (Sarah Boxer, Discover mag.)

He **captures** the spawning salmon *with* a net.

CARE (v)

I just don't **care** (i.e. worry) *about* that.

It's incumbent on the healthy to **care for** (i.e. look after) the sick.

She doesn't **care for** (i.e. like) candies.

I think she is **caring for** his two children this afternoon.

CARELESS

He was **careless about** details.

"Yet a boy **careless** (i.e. having no care) *of* books." (Wordsworth, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

CARRY

"One hair-thin strand of (pure glass fiber) can **carry** (i.e. transport) *as many* telephone conversations *as* 625 copper wires and *with* greater clarity."

(Stephen Koepp, Reader's Digest)

"Because babies usually **carry** their mother's antibodies *for* the first year or so of their life, all of them — even the perfectly healthy ones — will test positive using antibody tests." (Yvonne Baskin, Discover mag. 1990)

"In four centuries, the European slave trade **carried over** ten million slaves *from* Africa, over sixty percent of them between 1721 and 1820."

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

“Mitochondrial DNA has a unique characteristic that makes it very useful for tracing lineages. It is *carried in* the egg, but not in the sperm, so it is passed on to children only from their mothers.”

(David Noonan, *Discover* mag., Oct. '90)

They carried the old man *in* a chair *into* the garden.

“An endless supply of oxygen, amino acids, nitrogen, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sugars, lipids, cholesterol, and hormones surge past our (100 trillion) cells, *carried on* blood cell rafts or suspended in the (blood) fluid. Each cell has special withdrawal privileges to gather the resources needed to fuel a tiny engine for its complex chemical reaction.”

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *In His Image*)

“Light is suited to *carrying* enormous numbers of precise digital signals *at* high speed *over* long distances.”

(Stephen Koeppe, *Reader's Digest*)

“Human red-blood cells are saucer-shaped and fairly flat, permitting the ready transfer of the oxygen and carbon dioxide they *carry throughout* the body.”

(The Cell, *life Science Library*)

“A complex protein, produced in a nasal gland, has been identified as the chemical messenger that *carries* aromas *to* the odor-sensing nerves in the nose.”

(AP Washington/Montreal Gazette)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

CASE (N)

It was a case *of* pure neglect.

“Paul, attempting to interpret Christ, did not even try to construct a case *for* the legitimate use of force.”

(Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*)

That's the whole case *in* question.

CAST (V)

They cast me *for* (i.e. chose me to play) the part.

“Horses cast (i.e. rejected) *from* the cavalry.”

(*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“A figure cast (i.e. formed) *in* soft wax.”

(Hogarth, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“To cast (i.e. thrown) *into* hell.”

(Jowett, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“The discovery in Antarctica of the fossil beak of a giant carnivorous “terror bird” . . . 10 to 12 feet tall and probably the most dangerous bird ever to have existed . . . is *casting* (i.e. shedding) new light *on* the role of that continent in the evolution and worldwide spread of species.” (Walter Sullivan, *New York Times*)

“Cast (i.e. throw) thy bread *upon* the waters.”

(Ecclesiastes, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

CATALYST

“In field after field — astronomy, quantum mechanics, nuclear physics, cosmology —(John) Wheeler's ideas have been the catalyst *for* breakthroughs.”

(John Boslough, *Reader's Digest*)

CATER

“He that . . . providently caters *for* the Sparrow.”

(A.Y.L.II, iii, 44, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“Most of the cells in the cortex (newest part of the brain) respond only to lines of a particular orientation, between them *catering for* orientations at all degrees from vertical to horizontal and back.”

(Hugh Monterfiore, *The Probabilities of God*)

More than 2000 galleries (in Japan in 1987) — 300 of them crowding Tokyo's exclusive Ginza — cater *to* collectors.

CAUSE (N)

His sudden appearance was a cause *for* deep concern.

“God is the supreme and universal Cause *of* all things.”(Edmund Berkeley, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

CAUSE (V)

“It takes long intimacy, long and familiar interliving, before one kind of creature can *cause* illness *in* another.”

(Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of a Cell*)

“Fever and other flu symptoms are *caused by* the body's efforts to rid itself of the (influenza virus) invader.”

(Robert M. Sapolsky, *Discover* mag., 1990)

“I will cause the sun *to* go down at noon.”

(Amos, *The Bible*)

CELEBRATE

“Until the first half of the 20th century, the conquest and colonization of a weaker nation was *celebrated as* a patriotic event. Today, even mild economic exploitations are loudly condemned across the world as imperialism.”

(F.M. Esfandiary, *Optimism One*)

They are **celebrating** their release *in* a bistro in Montmartre.

They **celebrated** their 40th wedding anniversary *on* Wednesday.

“Lord Manny Shinwell **celebrated** his 100th birthday *with* a good cigar and several flagons of whisky.”

(James Brady, *Advertising Age*)

CENSOR

All references to actual persons were **censored from** his script.

CENTRAL

That was **central to** his debate.

CENTER, CENTRE

“Supreme authority was at last **centred in** a single person.” (*Fowler’s Modern English Usage*)

The eyes usually **center on** a point about one-third down the page. That’s why they call that point the ‘optical center’.

Note: NEVER centre *about* or *around*

CERTAIN

Are you **certain about** that?

I am **certain of** only one thing at the moment.

CHALK (V)

She quickly **chalked** her name *on* the blackboard.

“This difference has been **chalked up to** a presumed involvement in language processing.”

(James Shreeve, *Discover* mag., Oct. ’96)

CHAMPIONSHIP

“The majority (of the council of regency) deeply resented his **championship** (i.e. advocacy) *of* the poor *against* greedy landlords and capitalists.”

(*Encyclopedia Britannica re the Earl of Somerset*)

They won the tennis **championship** (i.e. supremacy) *of* the world for the second year running.

CHANCE (N)

Her **chance of** succeeding was one in a million.

He had no **chance** (i.e. opportunity) *to* save himself.

CHANCE (V)

They **chanced** (i.e. happened) *on* (or *upon*) the fossil on the first day.

You never know; you might **chance on** the right number tomorrow.

CHANGE (N)

“A **change in** the weather is enough to renew the world and ourselves.” (Marcel Proust)

After a quick **change of** clothes, he returned to his office.

Each photo incorporates a small **change to** the original.

CHANGE (V)

“The basic idea is that synapses (in the brain) **change in** efficiency *according to* their frequency of use.”

(*The Economist* mag., June 13, ’87)

His smile **changed to** fury *at* the mention of that name.

“Irradiation **changes** the molecular composition of food *in* unpredictable ways . . . So does barbecuing.”

(Dennis Demlinger)

The situation **changed from** bad *to* worse.

Plants can do something no animal can do: **change** nonliving substance *into* living substance, i.e. inorganic *into* organic.

She **changed** her confession *under* duress.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

CHANNEL (v)

“The Protestant Ethic with its emphasis on thrift, unremitting toil, and the deferral of gratification . . . channeled enormous energies into the tasks of economic development.” (Alvin Toffler, The Third Wave)

Isn't it time you channelled your energy *into* something constructive?

CHARACTERISTIC (A)

“Nowhere more than here (at the front of the skull) has there been greater expansion of the brain matter during the transition from primate to man, and this accounts for the high forehead characteristic of homo sapiens.” (Hugh Montefiore, The Probability of God)

CHARACTERISTIC (N)

“Superstition is . . . not the characteristic of this age.” (Junius, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

CHARGE (N)

The charge (i.e. accusation) *against* them is vandalism.

That nurse is in charge of (i.e. responsible for) too many children!

Yes, there is a charge (i.e. price) *on* that item.

The judge's charge (i.e. instructions) *to* jury members was to be thorough in weighing the evidence.

The two were charged with (i.e. accused of) theft.

CHARGE (v)

Why don't you charge that *against* (i.e. deduct from) his salary?

I will only charge (i.e. invoice) you *for* the first two days.

The interest is charged (i.e. applied) only *on* the second part of the debt.

Should I charge (i.e. bill) that order *to* your room?

“A magnetron is a . . . vacuum tube in which a wire coated with excess electrons gets charged (i.e. loaded) with electricity . . . and generates electromagnetic waves.” (Mark Rowan, Discovery mag.)

They've been charged with the job (i.e. given the responsibility) of keeping the stadium clean.

I'm charged with (i.e. accused of) a crime I did not commit.

CHASTENED

“A nation with a low birth rate shall be periodically chastened by some more virile and fertile group.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

CHEAT (v)

“Cheat me *in* the price, but not *in* the goods.”

(Thomas Fuller)

“Cheating on a large scale is supposed to have something about it that's imperial and therefore impeccable.”

(G.K. Chesterton)

CHECK (v)

He checked (i.e. searched) his pockets *for* loose change.

Why don't you check on his whereabouts (i.e. find him).

You check on (or *upon*) (i.e. investigate) the man, while I check his bank account. (American)

Are you checking (i.e. keeping tabs) *on* me again?

CHEER (N)

Three cheers for the winner.

There was a wild round of cheers from the bleachers.

CHINK

“As the wind veered, it discovered chinks in the landscape.” (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

CHOCKABLOCK

“At the beginning of the 20th century, Vienna was chockablock with giants of the age: Freud and Wittgenstein, Mahler, Berg and Schoenberg, Klimt, Schiele, Kokoschka, Hoffman, Wagner, Loos — as well as the young Adolf Hitler.”

(Kurt Andersen, Time mag.)

CHOICE

You have a choice between squealing on him or going to prison.

I'll give you the choice of weapon.

CHOOSE

The writer **chooses** *according to* preferences learned from personal experience.

He **chose** *among* all the horses in that corral.

She is busy **choosing** *between* the three cookies on that tray.

“The average doctor (in 1990) has some 50,000 drugs to **choose from** when writing out a prescription. Bewildered by the choice, few doctors ever prescribe more than 100.” (Discover mag.)

CIRCULATE

“While T cells **circulate in** the blood, (our) body’s billions of macrophages (large scavenging white blood cells) tend to collect in organs and tissues such as the spleen, skin, and lining of the abdomen and lungs” (Jeff Miller, Discover mag.)

CITE

You could cite all those *as* precedents.

“Well over half our total (English) vocabulary is foreign: of the five English words **cited by** Tovarish Vasilyev *as* “torturers” of the Russian tongue, not one is ‘pure’ English.” “Boss” comes from Dutch, “plantation” from Latin, and “referee”, “office” and “service” from French.” (Robert Claiborne, Our Marvelous Native Tongue)

CLAIM (N)

I’m afraid she has a **claim on** (or *upon*) my time.

“No law has any **claim over** us unless our conscience approves it as right and just.” (Roman Catholic Church)

He will lay **claim to** your property tomorrow.

“A **claim to** kindness.”

(Johnson, Universal English Dictionary)

CLASH (N)

The **clash between** the two families goes back to the Reformation.

“The **clash of** arguments and jar of words.” (Cowper)

The **clash on** that issue was heard around the world.

CLASH (V)

The new phisophy **clashed against** rooted tradition.

That **clashes with** everything I’ve ever learned.

CLASSIFY

“All viruses are named and **classified according to** the diseases they cause, and what they affect.” (Mind Alive mag.)

All these are **classified as** sponges.

CLAW (V)

The only thing I could do was **claw at** his eyes.

They **clawed their way over** the dead bodies, *into* a grotto.

She **clawed through** the sand, looking for her contact lens.

I **clawed a path under** the debris *till* I found daylight.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

CLEAR (A)

“**Clear as** the sun.” (Song of Solomon, Old Testament)

Steer **clear of** (i.e. away from) that door!

That’s very **clear to** me!

CLEAR (V)

First, he **cleared a path around** the house.

The firemen **cleared their way into** the burning house.

Our job is to **clear that bridge of** the enemy.

“If your cholesterol-removal system is working well, it doesn’t matter if you eat cheeseburgers . . . because you’re going to be able to **clear the cholesterol out of** the cells.” (Larry Husten, Discover mag.)

They are **clearing their way through** the brush.

She **cleared the debris under** the porch, worried about what she might find.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

CLEAVE

“Today . . . the created world has lost its sacredness. Christians have abandoned it, not to paganism, but to physics, geology, biology, and chemistry. We . . . have **cleaved nature from** the supernatural.”

(Philip Yancey, Fearfully & Wonderfully Made)

“Gravitational tides can cleave a giant star *in* two.”
(David H. Freedman, Discover mag., Nov. '99)

CLEVER

He's clever *at* math and *with* words.
That's very clever *of* you.

CLIMB (V)

First, climb *by* him, then loosen that rope.
Young man, climb *down* that tree this minute.
He climbed *into* the foliage and waited patiently.
He is climbing *over* anyone who stands in his way.
Go ahead; climb *through* the window.
Life expectancy, just 20 years in Greek and Roman times, could climb *to* 90 by the year 2030 and 100 by the year 2050.

Climb *up* the trellis, boy.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

CLING

She is clinging to me *for* dear life.
“Adjectives — brilliant, egotistic, rude, unorthodox — *clung to* (Admiral Hyman G.) Rickover like barnacles to boats . . . (He) first grasped the potential of nuclear power at sea.” (Michael Duffy, Time mag.)

CLOAK (N)

The dealer's antique shop serves as a cloak *for* (i.e. conceals) his shady activities.
“Humility is made the cloak *of* pride.”
(Robert Southey, World Book Dictionary)

CLOAK (V)

The novelist liked to cloak (i.e. disguise) his plots *in* obscurities and ambiguities.
Evil purposes can be cloaked *under* fine speeches.
“To cloak her guile *with* sorrow.”
(Spenser, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

CLOG

Ischemia (heart attack) happens when coronary arteries, either *clogged with* fatty deposits or temporarily contracted by stress, are contracted even more by spasms or are blocked by a clot; depriving the heart muscle of blood and thus oxygen.

CLOISTER (V)

“By afternoon, Loch Linnhe was arched and cloistered *with* rainbows.” (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

CLOSE (A)

“Mercury, the planet *closest to* the sun, is also the densest in our solar system: between 60 and 70% iron.”
(Robert Kunzig, Discover mag.)

CLOSE (V)

“Flowers . . . expand at 6 or 7, and close *at* 2 in the afternoon.” (W. Withering, Oxford English Dictionary)
London's Globe theatre, where Shakespeare opened his plays, was reduced to ashes in 1613. Though soon after rebuilt, it was *closed by* Cromwell in 1644.

The door closed *on* my foot.

That car is closing *on* (i.e. overtaking) us.

Close the doors *to* all reporters.

They closed *with* (i.e. neared) the other ship, then boarded it.

CLOTHE

“A good intention *clothes* itself *with* power.” (Emerson)

CLUE

It was the only clue I had *to* his character.

CLUMSY

He is clumsy *at* his job *with* whatever tool they give him.
He is even clumsy *in* the way he walks.

CLUSTER

In another classroom, children cluster *around* a computer.

CLUTTER (v)

The yard was **cluttered** *with* the debris of many years.

CO-OPT

They **co-opted** me *to* (or *on to*) the special commando force.

COAT

“One-foot-square panels, **coated** *with* amorphous silicon, (are) the most widely used thin-film material for converting sunlight to electricity.”

(Tony Baer, Discovery mag.)

Now she wants to **coat** the whole thing *with* boat varnish.

COEVOLVE

“Each type of bacterium has **coevolved** *with* its mammalian host.” (Sarah Richardson, Discover mag.)

COEXIST

“Suppose that there is an infinite number of universes **coexisting** *with* this one.” (The Economist)

COEXTENSIVE

“The Church . . . was already **coextensive** *with* the empire.” (Paul Johnson)

COGNATE

He is **cognate** *with* the Royal family of England.

COGNIZANT

The police are **cognizant** *of* his every move.

COHERE

The new metal **coheres** *with* the wood underneath.

COINCIDE

“The birth of religion **coincides** *with* the appearance of humanity on the stage of history.” (Mind Alive mag.)

COLLABORATE

You **collaborate** *with* me and I’ll make you rich.

“Globally-linked computers . . . allow investigators to **collaborate** or kibitz *on* experiments while continents apart.” (Gary Stix, Scientific American mag., Dec.’94)

COLLABORATION

She counted on the **collaboration** *of* everyone present.

Your **collaboration** *with* her on that job made all the difference.

COLLAPSE (v)

Grievously wounded, the man **collapsed** *against* me.

She **collapsed** *in* a heap.

After too many drinks, the writer’s discourse **collapsed** *into* incoherence.

The arena’s roof **collapsed** *on* the players inside.

The whole contraption is sort of **collapsing** *onto* itself.

There was great merriment when the chair **collapsed** *under* him.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

COLLATE

Try to **collate** your facts *with* mine.

COLLECT

We should all **collect** (i.e. gather) *at* her home.

The women were **collecting** the fabric *for* a quilt.

Radar images of the earth, **collected** *from* orbit *by* . . . space shuttle, reveal our planet with startling clarity.

“Flower nectar is usually **collected** *within* one mile of the hive.” (Garner and Sue Wilson, Montreal Gazette)

COLLIDE

“In all materials, in solids as well as gases and liquids, the atoms are constantly in motion, vibrating and **colliding** *with* each other, creating thermal energy. The wilder the motion, the greater the heat.”

(William Booth, Washington Post)

The van **collided** *with* her car and she is badly hurt.

COLLISION

“The world before our time survived suffocating ice ages and cataclysmic *collisions with* meteors.”

(*The Gazette*, Montreal)

“The collision *of* harsh consonants.”

(Gray, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

COLOR, COLOUR (V)

The sea was colored red *by* the algae.

She then colours it *for* effect.

Colour it *with* any paints handy.

COMBINE (V)

“*Combining* antimatter *with* matter could be a way to lift future rockets into space.” (Tom Waters, *Discover* mag.)

COME

She came *across* his letter *by* accident.

He came *at* me before I had a chance to defend myself.

Don't let anything come *between* you two.

I will come *for* you tomorrow.

“Every atom of gold on earth *comes* ultimately *from* supernovas.” (*The Economist/Reader's Digest*)

“The oxygen people breathe originally *came from* (an) exploding star.” Claude Canizares, *Dallas Morning News*

Evil comes *from* enjoying what we ought to use and using what we ought to enjoy. (A great medieval philosopher)

“The common cold virus is troublesome, because it *comes in* at least 100 identifiable variations.”

(Leon Jaroff, *Time* mag.)

“99% of the creatures ever to have *come into* existence have vanished.” (Gregg Easterbrook, *Newsweek* mag.)

He came *to* grief before he was ten years old.

They came up *with* interpretations of their own.

COMFORTABLE

“It would be no sort of a life if we felt entirely *comfortable in* it.” (P.J. Kavanagh, *Finding Connections*)

Only one teacher in ten feels comfortable *with* that theory.

COMMAND (N)

They gave him command *of* (i.e. authority over) the regiment.

His command (i.e. mastery) *of* English was remarkable.

There were commands *to* stop at every junction.

COMMEND

I commend you *to* your principal *for* living up to your principles.

COMMENSURATE

He prayed for a punishment commensurate *with* the crime.

COMMENT (N)

I found his comments *about* me very hurtful.

If you have any comments *on* this subject, let's hear them now.

COMMENT (V)

She commented *on* everything I said.

COMMENTARY

The scribes filled whole libraries with their commentaries *on* the Holy Scriptures.

COMMISERATE

He refused to commiserate *with* her.

COMMISSION (N)

His commission (i.e. appointment) *as* first officer had just come through.

I should get a commission (i.e. pro rata remuneration) *for* that sale.

He had to answer for the commission *of* (i.e. committing) a crime ten years ago.

There was a 15% commission (i.e. payment to middleman) *on* every copy.

“I have a commission (i.e. I am mandated) *to* find you.” (J. Rathbone, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

COMMISSION (v)

He was **commissioned** *by* the art gallery *to* do a painting.

COMMIT

“Today (1986), all but seven of the world’s more than 170 nations are **committed to** a single written charter of rights. And every one of them owes something to the American model that turns 200 next year.”

(Richard Lacayo, Time mag.)

COMMON

“China’s plight was the result of the optimistic belief, **common to** intellectuals of the Left, that revolutions solve more problems than they raise.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

“All the psychological evidence seems to suggest that an infant is predisposed to learn certain things — the classic example being the ‘deep structure’ that seems to be **common to** all language. This obviously implies that the genes contain instructions for wiring up brains.”

(The Economist mag., June 13, ‘87)

COMMUNE

Aubrey needed to **commune** *with* his peers.

COMMUNICATE

“In telecommunications . . . we are moving toward the capability to **communicate** anything *to* anyone, anywhere, *by* any form — voice, data, text, or image — *at* the speed of light.”

(J. Naisbitt & P. Aburdene, Megatrends 2000)

She **communicated** *by* semaphore.

“I’m much more interested in **communicating** (information) *to* dolphins and learning how they **communicate** *with* one another.”

(Louis Herman, Omni mag.)

“His (Shakespeare’s) genius resides in his mysterious ability to **communicate with** times, spaces and cultures far removed from his own.” (Northrop Frye)

COMMUTE

He always liked to **commute** *by* train *to* his cottage up north.

Francois-Xavier Prieur’s death sentence for his leading part in Canada’s 1837 Rebellion was **commuted to** (i.e. exchanged for a lighter sentence) exile for life in Australia.

They **commuted** (i.e. made regular trips) *to* and *from* New York every working day of the year.

COMPANION

Sandra is the **companion of** my friend Terry.

“**Companions in sin.**”

(Quarles, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

You are more of a **companion to** me than my own son.

COMPANY

She was in the **company of** a man who gave me the shivers.

He came **in company with** three other horsemen.

COMPARE

“(Stradivarius) produced perhaps 1500 violins . . . He made a handful of great instruments, but there are an awful lot that sound feeble **compared to** modern ones.”

(Robert Teitelman quoting Norman Pickering, Forbes mag.)

“In England . . . property stands for more, **compared with** personal ability, than in any other (country).”

(Emerson, Oxford English Dictionary)

Note: Use *to* for illustration, *with* to examine qualities.

COMPARISON

There was no **comparison to** last year’s record rainfall.

She suffered **in comparison with** the rest of her class.

COMPASSION

He has absolutely no **compassion for** the unemployed.

She took **compassion on** me.

COMPATIBILITY

There is simply no **compatibility between** their points of view.

“The **compatibility of** such properties in one thing.”

(Barrow, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

Frankly, my **compatibility with** you is minimal.

COMPATIBLE

This is **compatible** *with* your views.

“It is essential that we continue to respect freedom of thought and expression in so far as this is **compatible** *with* the laws of the state and national unity.”

(General de Gaulle)

“Our location in the Universe is necessarily privileged to the extent of being **compatible** *with* our existence as observers.”

(Brandon Carter, cosmologist, National Review mag.)

COMPENDIUM

His book was a **compendium** *of* all the current gossip.

COMPENSATE

“The right brain tends to **compensate** *for* left-brain damage.” (Edwin M. Reingold, Time mag.)

COMPENSATION

“It is one of the most beautiful **compensations** *of* this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.” (Charles Waldo Emerson)

His aggressive behaviour was **compensation** *for* his feelings of insecurity.

COMPETE

To a man, they refused to **compete** *against* me.

They are **competing** *for* the Stanley Cup.

I don't intend to **compete** *in* any other race this year.

“Animals **compete** fiercely *with* men for their food in an overpopulated world, unless they are thistle eaters like donkeys and camels.”

(Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Needs)

COMPETENT

He is only **competent** *at* archery in sports.

She is very **competent** *in* her own field.

The student is **competent** enough *to* try her hand at it.

COMPETITION

“From **competition** *among* traders (comes) reduction of prices.” (Bentham, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

There's **competition** *for* land *in* every country.

“**Competition** *to* the Crown there is none, nor can be.” (Bacon, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“The Priesthood, which ever has been in some **competition** *with* Empire.”

(Bacon, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

COMPLACENT

She's so **complacent** *about* her state of health that she doesn't even bother to take her medicine.

COMPLAIN

Why don't you **complain** *about* me while you're at it?

She **complained** *of* the scurrilous review.

COMPLAINT

I have no **complaints** whatever *about* his conduct.

There has been many a **complaint** *against* him.

There were a lot of **complaints** *from* the east end of the city.

“**Complaints** *of* lower back pain alone costs U.S. industry \$4.6 billion in annual workers' compensation payments.”

(Institute of Industrial Engineers, Atlanta, 1988)

COMPLEMENT (N)

Justice is not always the **complement** (i.e. full amount) *of* the law.

The **complement** (i.e. full crew) *of* the ship was 118.

COMPLEMENTARY

That's **complementary** *to* the money I gave you last month.

COMPLETE (A)

The hat came **complete** *with* feathers.

COMPLETE (V)

Try to **complete** your book *for* me *by* the end of the month.
 “The Mausoleum, the huge, marble temple . . . completed *in* 350 B.C., in memory of King Mausoleus, “became one of the Seven Wonders of the World.”
 (Michael Gartner, Advertising Age)

COMPLIANCE

The stock exchange requires **compliance** *with* by-laws that are not always in the public interest.

COMPLIMENT (N)

Compliments *of* the season.
 A **compliment** *to* one person may be an insult to someone else.

COMPLIMENT (V)

They **complimented** him *for* doing such a great job.
 I **complimented** him *on* his appearance.

COMPLIMENTARY

That's **complimentary** *to* my last letter.

COMPLY

You must either **comply** *with* the rules of this school or get out.

“When my hand surrounds an object — a ripe tomato, a ski pole, a kitten, another hand — the fat and collagen redistribute themselves and assume a shape to comply *with* the shape of the object being grasped.”
 (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

COMPOSE

“An apple is **composed** (i.e. consists) *of* seeds, flesh, and skin.”
 (William Stunk Jr. and E.B.White, The Elements of Style)
 V.S. Naipaul is “one of the greatest living writers in the English language . . . His themes, his vision of human destiny in our time, are composed (i.e. written) *with* a perfection of language, a flawless structure, and above all a profound knowledge of the world.”
 (Elizabeth Hardwick)

COMPOST

“In human affairs as in nature, decay is compost *for* new growth.” (Barbara W. Tuchman, History as Mirror)
 A **compost** (i.e. combination) *of* leaves and grass.

COMPOUND (N)

It's a **compound** *of* many chemicals.

COMPOUND (V)

It's **compounded** *of* chalk and arsenic.
 I will try to **compound** salt *with* sugar.

COMPRESS (V)

“Diesels rely on heat generated by compressing air *in* their cylinders in order to ignite fuel.” (The Economist)
 I propose to **compress** air *to* the nth degree.

COMPRISED

That charge is **comprised** *in* the total.
 It is **comprised** *of* the bats, the ball and the net.

COMPROMISE

He will **compromise** *in* some things and not *in* others.
 I will **compromise** *with* you *on* any agreement but this one.

CONCEAL

He is **concealing** the kitten *behind* his back.
 In Shakespeare's play, As you Like It, Rosalind **conceals** her identity *by* dressing as a man.
 I will **conceal** the money *for* you *till* tomorrow noon, but no longer.
 I was told the loot is **concealed** somewhere *in* this house.
 She **concealed** the packets of heroin *on* her person.
 “Remember that what you are told is really threefold: shaped by the teller, reshaped by the listener, concealed *from* both by the dead man of the tale.”
 (V. Nabokov, The Real Life of Sebastian Knight)

CONCEIVE

“Only apes, it seems, alone among animals, can truly distinguish themselves from the world around them. But only the naked apes (man), apparently, can conceive of (i.e. grasp with the mind) not just ‘self’ but ‘others.’” (Karen Wright, Discover mag., Nov. ‘96)

CONCENTRATE

They are **concentrating** (i.e. bunching up) *at* every crossroads and *in* every public square.

“During the past five million years, evolution seems to have concentrated (i.e. focused) most of its energy *in* the process of human development.”

(Lyll Watson, Supernature)

“Venture capital tends to concentrate (i.e. come together) *near* the coasts. (In 1986) 44% of all such funds (U.S.) went to California.” (Therese Engstrom)

Forget the frills; **concentrate** (i.e. focus) *on* the essentials.

CONCENTRATION

Her **concentration** *on* the work at hand was almost manic.

CONCERNED

I am very **concerned** (i.e. worried) *about* her.

He is very **concerned** *for* (i.e. disturbed about) the way this is going.

“H.G. Wells is concerned (i.e. involved) *exclusively with* external activity . . . He doesn’t understand that interior recollection (is a) matchless force, even for natural human development.” (Teilhard de Chardin S.J.)

Whether he likes it or not, he is **concerned** (i.e. involved) *in* that very peculiar affair.

CONCLUDE

The politician’s harangue was **concluded** *by* a thump on the lectern.

It looks like the match will **conclude** *in* a tie.

“Both ceremonies **concluded** *with* the kiss of peace and High Mass.” (Paul Johnson)

CONCLUSION

It’s the obvious **conclusion** (i.e. inference) *from* everything said yesterday.

That’s the **conclusion** (i.e. deduction) *of* everyone there.

Write a **conclusion** (i.e. an end) *to* his unfinished story.

CONCUR

He **concurred** *in* the decision but not *with* the judge.

Note: To **concur** *in* an opinion or action, or *with* a person.

CONCURRENT

The cold spell was **concurrent** *with* the shortage of oil.

CONCURRENTLY

He visited us **concurrently** *with* the fall of the Berlin wall.

CONDEMN

He was **condemned** (i.e. censured) *by* his peers *for* breaking the curfew.

“**Condemned** (i.e. doomed) *in* business or *in* arts *to* drudge.” (Alexander Pope)

The spy was **condemned** (i.e. convicted) *of* treason and shot.

“Any of a thousand malfunctions in a space suit or the LM could condemn (i.e. doom) an astronaut *to* swift death.” (David R. Scott, National Geographic)

CONDENSE

The whole mess **condensed** *into* a revolting glob.

CONDESCEND

She **condescended** *to* enter my home.

CONDITION (N)

“Excessive forms of wealth and prolonged formal employment . . . destroy the social, cultural and environmental conditions *for* equal, productive freedom.” (Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

“The air I breathe is the **condition** *of* my life, not its cause.” (Coleridge, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

CONDITION (v)

Too many people are **conditioned to** failure and dependent on public handouts.

I **condition** my travelling *on* the weather.

CONDITIONAL

That's **conditional on** (or *upon*) how much you pay back.

CONDOLE

"They are comforted and **condoled** . . . *by* their fellow-citizens." (Addison, Oxford English Dictionary)

I **condoled** (i.e. sympathized) *with* her *till* she burst into laughter.

CONDUCTIVE

"A dull place, and very **conductive to** sleep."
(Oxford English Dictionary)

CONFER

"Islam **conferred on** (i.e. granted) women the right to education, to inherit and to divorce over 1000 years before the first European woman suffragette."

(Akbar S. Ahmed, The Economist)

He **confers** (i.e. consults) *with* her every morning.

CONFESS

Only 19 years later did he **confess** (i.e. admit your guilt) *to* the police.

I **confess** my sins (i.e. acknowledge my sins orally) *to* whatever priest happens to be in the confessional.

CONFIDE

"He who most **confides in** the instructor will learn the sacred lesson best." (Oxford English Dictionary)

"Men do not **confide** themselves *to* boys . . . but *to* their peers." (Oxford English Dictionary)

She is **confiding in** her best friend.

CONFIDENCE

I have **confidence in** them.

He enjoyed the **confidence of** the police in spite of his many clashes with them.

CONFIDENT

"I do not feel too **confident about** his chances of success."
(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

"**Confident in** the security of his position, he derided their threats and machinations."

(Ainsworth, Tower Hill, OED)

"Were death never sudden, they who are in health would be too **confident of** life." (Paley, Natural Theology, OED)

CONFINE (v)

He was **confined** (i.e. cooped up) *in* his home *for* most of two years.

The sheriff **confines** him *in* a cell every weekend.

"Enthusiasm for 'the spirit of the world' is **confined** (i.e. restricted) *to* the Anti-Christ."

(R.H. Benson, Lord of the World)

CONFIRM

"This suspicion is **confirmed by** the enquiry." (Arthur Koestler)

They were **confirmed** (i.e. firm) *in* their belief that the earth was flat.

"When Macbeth is **confirming** (i.e. strengthening) himself *in* the horrid purpose."

(Johnson, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

Re the chairmanship, please **confirm** (i.e. affirm) this position *to* your brother.

CONFLICT (N)

It was a **conflict of** interest pure and simple.

"The **conflicts of** the ice-masses in their rotation." (Kane)

CONFLICT (v)

He held grimly to his views although they **conflicted with** his experience.

CONFORM

"The true freeman is he who **conforms** himself *to* his reason." (Oxford English Dictionary)

His behaviour **conformed** *with* their expectations in every respect.”

CONFRONT

They were suddenly **confronted** *by* (i.e. faced with) a bunch of motorcyclists.

“The Romans were **confronted** *with* (i.e. challenged by) a stiffnecked, subordinate people (the Jews).” (Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*)

He met me at the door, **confronting** me *with* today’s news headline.

CONFUSE

The little animal froze, **confused** *by* the car’s headlights.

I’m afraid you’re **confusing** me *with* my twin brother.

Too many people **confuse** socialism *with* communism.

“The shift of linguistic usage, coupled (i.e. combined) with our own drive for self-regard, has meant that the concept (civilization) has become hopelessly **confused** *with* good table manners and polite conversation.”

(*The Times of London*, 1989)

CONFUSION

“Love is an ideal thing, marriage a real thing; a **confusion** *of* the real with the ideal never goes unpunished.” (Goethe)

“The **confusion** *of* tongues.”

(Bacon, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

CONFUTE

The speaker **confutes** (i.e. overwhelms) his opponents *by* facts and logic.

The lawyer’s defense was **confuted** (i.e. refuted) *by* the prosecution.

She was not an easy person to **confute** (i.e. confound) *in* an argument.

CONGENIAL

Hard work is simply not **congenial** *to* me.

CONGRATULATE

I **congratulate** you *on* (or *upon*) your remarkable success.

I should **congratulate** him *for* what? He has failed at everything.

CONJUNCTION

This situation must have originated in a strange **conjunction** *of* circumstances.

His great height, **in conjunction** *with* his unusual hairiness, often scared little children.

CONNECT

“Cancer cells require a generous supply of blood, to survive and grow. So they **connect to** nearby arteries and veins by encouraging angiogenesis, the proliferation of networks of tiny capillaries.” (*Time* mag.)

“The spinal cord is a cable-like bundle of nerves that connects the brain to the rest of the nervous system. It is **protected by** the bony spinal column, with 24 vertebrae stacked in a gentle S-curve between the skull and tailbone.” (Don Colburn, *Washington Post*)

The police are busy **connecting** him *to* last night’s robbery.

“Joan of Arc was not a victim of English nationalism: only eight of the 131 judges, assessors and other clergy **connected with** her trial, were Englishmen.”

(Paul Johnson, *The History of Christianity*)

CONNECTION

“At the meeting of the Society of Neurosurgeons in Phoenix, Ariz., researchers confirmed the theory that the brain stores memories by ‘hardwiring’ new **connections between** groups of brain cells.”

(Thomas Maugh, *Los Angeles Times*)

In connection with that matter, I’ll call on her while I’m in Chicago.

CONNIVE

Politicians have always **connived** (i.e. winked) *at* infractions while pretending to correct them.

CONSCIOUS

Do you think she is **conscious** *of* the pain?

CONSENSUS

He wanted the **consensus** *of* the whole group.

The **consensus** *of* opinion was that it was the driver's fault.

Last year, we had a lot of controversy. This time around, we have a **consensus** *on* this matter.

Note: "Though generally current, (consensus of opinion) is avoided by some writers as redundant on the grounds that consensus means 'general agreement of opinion'." (World Book Dictionary)

After much debate, a **consensus** *on* budget priorities was reached by the council.

CONSENT (N)

I need the **consent** *of* the people.

"The Age of Consent: the age fixed by law at which a person's **consent** *to* certain acts (e.g. marriage, sexual intercourse) is valid in law."

(Universal English Dictionary)

CONSENT (V)

He will **consent** *to* that, if you cooperate with him on this.

CONSEQUENCE

The terrible **consequences** *of* his actions to his family did not deter him for a second.

CONSEQUENT

All his other problems are **consequent** *on* (or *upon*) his illness.

CONSIDERATE

That's not very **considerate** *of* you.

She was always very **considerate** *to* (or *towards*) her relatives.

CONSIDERATION

He doesn't show an iota of **consideration** *for* other people.

CONSIGN

Consigning (i.e. entrusting) her children *to* the care of a housekeeper, the young mother pursued her operatic career. "Surgical trauma, the jarring aftermath of the surgeon's knife, may one day be **consigned** (i.e. relegated) *to* the annals of primitive medicine." (National Geographic)

CONSIST

"Our greatest glory **consists** (i.e. resides) *not in* never falling, but *in* rising every time we fall."

(Oliver Goldsmith)

"The true miracle of modern medicine is diabolical. It **consists in** (i.e. is based on) making not only individuals but whole populations survive on inhumanly low levels of personal health."

(Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

"The Bahamas **consist of** (is composed of) 29 islands, 661 cays (islets) and 2387 rocks."

(Encyclopedia Britannica)

"Fully 10 per cent of our dry body weight **consists of** (i.e. is made up of) bacteria."

(Stephen Jay Gould, The Spread of Excellence from Plato to Darwin)

"Appetites are to be indulged only so far as **consists** (i.e. is consistent) *with* some . . . approved end."

(G. Grote, Oxford English Dictionary)

CONSISTENT

It's **consistent** *with* everything he said before.

"Morals are the rules by which a society exhorts . . . its members and associations to behaviour **consistent with** its order, security and growth."

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

CONSONANT

It's **consonant with** his recent behaviour.

CONSPIRE

"The system as it stands **conspires against** the mothers among the poor: they are damned, if they stay, as parasites; they are damned, if they go to work, for neglecting their children."

(Pierre Berton, The Smug Minority)

“We all **conspired** not *to* tell him.”

(I. Murdock, Oxford English Dictionary)

“All things **conspired** *to* make her birthday a happy one.”

(World Book Dictionary)

“The private secretary, Joseph Tumulty, **conspired with** Woodrow Wilson (paralyzed by a third massive stroke) and his wife Edith *to* make her the president, which she remained for seventeen months.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

CONSTANCY

Constancy in love is a noble ideal.

“The secret of success is **constancy** *to* purpose.”

(Benjamin Disraeli)

CONSTANT (A)

He is **constant** (i.e. assiduous) *in* his devotion to his ailing wife.

I expect him to be **constant** (i.e. faithful) *to* his pledge.

CONSTITUENT

They have concocted primeval soups which yield **constituents** *of* living things.

CONSTRUCT (V)

The pyramids were **constructed** *by* slaves.

He **constructed** his home *from* things he salvaged here and there.

Come winter, a palace is **constructed** *of* blocks of ice.

CONSTRUE

Syntactically, the noun ‘aerodynamics’ is **construed** *as* a singular.

I **construed** *from* your remarks that you are not in favour of our plan.

CONSULT

He **consulted** *with* her *about* matters of law.

I will **consult** you *on* that matter next wednesday.

CONSULTATION

“She established later, in **consultation** *with* me, that Aubry had been speaking of macroeconomics.”

(Edwin Newman, Sunday Punch)

CONSUMPTION

There is an increase in the **consumption** *of* oil *for* home heating purposes *in* sub-zero weather.

We brought extra food for **consumption** *on* our journey.

“One convincing measure of a nation’s development is its **consumption** *of* electricity. China consumed only 423 kilowatt hours of power per head in 1986, which compared with 3,327 Kwh for each person in Hongkong and 6,810 Kwh for each West German.”

(The Economist)

CONTACT (N)

Each time the astronauts circled behind the moon, their **contact** *with* the earth was interrupted.

CONTAMINATE

Their water is **contaminated** *by* the neighbouring mine *with* all kinds of impurities.

The prison is **contaminating** the town’s river *with* its sewage.

CONTEMPORANEOUS

His life was **contemporaneous** *with* Van Gogh’s.

CONTEMPORARY (A)

All three were **contemporary** *with* Henry Ford.

CONTEMPORARY (N)

He was a **contemporary** *of* my father.

“Writers **contemporary** *with* the events they write of.”

(M. Pattison, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

CONTEMPT

What you’ve done today has only added to my **contempt** *for* you.

You are fined \$200 for **contempt** *of* court. (legal)

CONTEND

How can any form of democratic government **contend** (i.e. struggle) *against* the anarchy now reigning on the continent?

He will **contend** (i.e. strive) *for* fame *to* his dying breath.
 “. . . Carthage shall **contend** (i.e. contest) the world *with* Rome.” (Dryden)

CONTENDER

“German was a strong **contender** *for* the position of leading European language in the nineteenth century.” (The Economist mag.)

CONTENT (A)

We are **content** *to* be alive.
 All three are **content** *with* that arrangement.

CONTENT (V)

I **contented** myself *with* the dictionary.

CONTIGUOUS

Her property is **contiguous** *to* mine.
 Every farm is **contiguous** *with* every other.

CONTINGENT

That is **contingent** *on* (or *upon*) keeping your end of the bargain.

CONTINUE

This highway **continues** *for* miles.
 “The children must **continue** *in* school *till* the end of June.” (World Book Dictionary)
 If I were you, I would **continue** *on to* the next town.
 “Most people **continue** to be emotionally responsive to music *throughout* their lives.”
 (James Shreeve, Discover mag., Oct. '96)
 “Our friendship **continued** *to* his death.”
 (D. Carnegie, Oxford English Dictionary)
 He **continued** *with* his work, ignoring the interruptions.

CONTINUOUS

The canal is **continuous** *with* the right fork of the river.

CONTRACT (N)

Your action yesterday makes the **contract** *between* us null and void.
 My **contract** *with* you ends today.

CONTRACT (V)

“The alternative view is that a loan freely **contracted** (i.e. arranged) *between* consenting parties has the blessing of market forces.” (The Economist, May 28, '88)
 “He **contracted** (i.e. incurred) debts *by* buying things he could not afford.” (World Book Dictionary)
 “The baker **contracted** *for* (i.e. signed to purchase) a load of flour.” (World Book Dictionary)
 The whole thing **contracted** (i.e. shrank) *into* a ball.
 I **contracted** (i.e. made a contract) *with* him yesterday *to* re-roof our house.
 Note: Contract, as in contracting a disease, needs no preposition.

CONTRADICTORY

One statement is **contradictory** *of* another.
 (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

CONTRARY

“We hate Christianity and Christians. Even the best of them must be considered our worst enemies. They preach love of one's neighbour and mercy, which is **contrary** *to* our principles. What we want is hate . . . Only then will we conquer.”
 (Anatole Lunacharsky, Soviet Commissar of Education, Izvestia)

CONTRAST (N)

The **contrast** *between* the original and the fake is so striking, it's a wonder anyone was fooled.
 Her manner was mild and quiescent **in contrast** *to* her violent behaviour of recent days.
 The **contrast** *with* his earlier conduct was remarkable.

CONTRAST (V)

“Methodism’s concentration on welfare and reform . . . contrasted with the more rigid, sin-oriented theology of the Baptists and Presbyterians.”

(Peter C. Newman, The Distemper of our Times).

CONTRIBUTE

They all **contribute** their share *to* the church.

I’ve been **contributing** *to* that charity for years.

CONTRIBUTION

I saw him make a **contribution** *of* fifty dollars.

Please make your **contribution** *to* the charity of your choice.

“This technique, of soliciting many modest contributions to the store of human knowledge, has been the secret of Western science since the seventeenth century, for it achieves a corporate, collective power that is far greater than one individual can exert.”

(Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

CONTROL (N)

“Executives who speak most warmly about the stern rule of the market usually have excellent control over the income that they get themselves.”

(John K. Galbraith, Guide to Economics)

The **controls** *of* the speeding truck were beyond the young boy’s reach.

CONVENIENT

Stopping here on the way to work is not **convenient** (i.e. practical) *for* me.

His home is **convenient** (i.e. close) *to* the church.

(Oxford English Dictionary)

CONVERGE

“The sides of the ship **converged** *into* an angle.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“Footsteps were coming to the house, **converging** *on* it *from* different directions.”

(P. Pearce, Oxford English Dictionary)

The whole group suddenly **converged** *on* me.

“Every circumstance **converges** *to* the same effect on his mind.” (Hallam, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“The interest of all the students **converged** *upon* the celebration.” (World Book Dictionary)

CONVERSANT

“He is **conversant** *in* Sanskrit and *in* Syriac, and is deeply knowledgeable of Hindu tradition.”

(MacMillan Publishing edition of Don Bede)

She made sure all her pupils were **conversant** *with* world history.

CONVERSE (N)

The **converse** (i.e. the opposite) *of* heaven is hell.

CONVERSE (V)

I will **converse** (i.e. talk) *with* him on my return from Italy.

CONVERT (V)

“Every second, 4 million tons of (the sun’s) mass are converted into pure energy and poured into space.”

(Heinz Haber, The Walt Disney story of our friend the atom)

He’s spent most of his life trying to **convert** sunlight *to* electricity economically.

CONVERTIBLE

Is this bond **convertible** *to* cash?

CONVICT (V)

She has been **convicted** *of* manslaughter, not murder.

CONVINCE

“In the absence of any other proof, the thumb alone would convince me *of* God’s existence.” (Isaac Newton)

COOPERATE

I promise to **cooperate** *in* every way possible.

“Large scavenger cells known as macrophages cooperate with T cells to sound the alarm when a virus or

bacterium invades the body and threatens to cause disease.” (Robert M. Sapolsky, Discover mag., 1990)

COOPERATION

“I’m asking for the **cooperation** of everyone here. Silence (when the lawyer knows his client is lying) is participation; it is cooperation with evil.” (Ellis Rubin, lawyer, Time mag.)

COORDINATE

Is there any way you can **coordinate** your arrival *with* mine?

COPE

“In 1971 Britain’s department of trade and industry thought that coping with (corrosion) cost Britain about 3 1/2% of its national income.” (The Economist)

COPY (v)

The painter was asked to **copy** his motif *across* (or *on*) the entire wall.

“Barbed wire was copied from osage orange thorns. Eli Whitney’s cotton gin was copied from the Indian charka.” (The Economist, Feb. 16, ’91)

CORRELATE

“In 1801 Sir John Herschel discovered an 11-year sunspot cycle, which . . . correlates with the thickness of annual rings in trees, the level of Lake Victoria, the number of icebergs, the occurrence of drought and famine in India, and the great vintage years for Burgundy wines.” (Lyll Watson, Supernature)

CORRELATION

“Apart from predicting university results, school examination scores (have) no correlation with later success.” (Prof. Robert Sternberg, Yale U.)

CORRESPOND

“Locke and Newton had **corresponded** (i.e. exchanged opinions) *on* the prophecies of Daniel . . .” (Brewster, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

“The patterns and shapes of living things correspond to (i.e. match) some of the most abstract ideas in math.” (Carl Zimmer, Discover mag., 1992)

“We have too many high-sounding words, and too few actions that **correspond with** (i.e. live up to) them.” (Abigail Adams)

CORROSIVE

“The lesson of the 30 years since (the Hungarian Revolution) is that humanity in all its ordinariness and contrariness is more corrosive to the totalitarianism ideal than heroism.” (Charles Krauthammer, Time mag.)

COST (N)

The **cost** *in* lives of the two world wars in the 20th century is mind-boggling.

“Extremes of privilege are created at the cost of universal enslavement.” (Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

The **cost to** me is minimal.

COUCH

Unfortunately, the proof is **couched in** the language of Einstein’s general theory of relativity.

COUNT (v)

That **counts as** (i.e. amounts to) a point in this game.

How I wish I could **count** (i.e. rely) *on* you!

If a person started counting at the moment of birth, and continued till the age of 65, he or she would still not have counted to a billion.” (David Louis, Fascinating Facts)

COUPLE

“Kings are **coupled** (i.e. sexually related) *to* divinity, but not so much *in* wedlock as *by* rude rape.”

(George Garrett, Death of a Fox)

Her name has often been **coupled** (i.e. linked) *with* that of the verger.

“The shift of linguistic usage, **coupled** (i.e. combined) *with* our own drive for self-regard, has meant that the concept (civilization) has become hopelessly confused with good table manners and polite conversation.”

(The Times of London, 1989)

COURSE (v)

The stream once **coursed** (i.e. flowed) *around* our house, *by* that barn and *across* the fields.

“One-fourth of the blood from each heartbeat *courses* (i.e. flows) *down* the renal artery *to* the twin kidneys.” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *In His Image*)

Rivers and streams that *course* (i.e. flow) *through* forests of conifers are more vulnerable to acidity.

Coursed (i.e. ran) *like* a colt *across* its lawns.

“Blood, five litres or so in a typical adult, is the river of life, *coursing through* close to 100,000 km of blood vessels to deliver oxygen and nutrients to and haul waste products from every part of the body.”

(Roderick Jamer, *CARP NEWS*)

We know of two rivers that are still **coursing** *under* our city.

COURTEOUS

He was **courteous** *to* everyone but his wife.

COVER (v)

I asked my colleague to **cover** (i.e. substitute) *for* me, while I enjoyed a few hours away from the office.

He was **covered** *from* head *to* toe *with* mud.

“The implication of the Apollo findings was astonishing but unavoidable: the moon must once have been *covered with* an ocean of magma.” (Tom Waters, *Discover* mag.)

Alice is busy **covering** her baby brother *with* leaves.

“Beginning in 1885, the Czars commissioned Russian jeweler Carl Fabergé to create a series of egg-shaped treasures . . . no two alike . . . *covered with* jewels and gold . . . (He) produced between 54 and 57 of these Imperial eggs.”

(Gordon M. Henry, *Time* mag.)

CRAM

They were **crammed** *like* a swarm of bees.

“A room **crammed** *with* fine ladies.”

(Pepys, *The Oxford Universal Dictionary*)

She could **cram** all those chocolates *into* her mouth quite easily.

CRAVING (N)

I have an irresistible **craving** *for* chocolate.

CRAWL (VV)

They **crawled** *along* the ditch *to* the river.

I planned to **crawl** *around* the corner of the house, come darkness, and jump the guard.

Children love to **crawl** *into*, *under*, *over* and *through* things, anything, anywhere.

She **crawled** *for* miles, it seemed, before she found someone who would help her.

“Pus . . . is made of white blood cells that have *crawled through* the walls of your blood vessels to get at the site of infection.”

(Gary Taubes, “The Cold Warriors”, *Discover* mag., Feb. '99)

CRAZE (N)

There was a sudden **craze** *for* anything old-fashioned.

CRAZE (v)

“The surface of my coffee had **crazed** *into* a (i.e. formed a cracked) milky skin.” (Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*)

“.. **crazed** (i.e. driven insane) *with* care, or crossed in hopeless love.” (Thomas Gray, *World Book Dictionary*)

CREATE

“Proteins are *created from* amino-acid building blocks by the machinery of a living cell.”

(Philip Elmer-De Witt, *Time* mag.)

“Without exception, every time a Southern nation develops and becomes a producer, it buys more, it *creates more jobs in* the North than it eliminates.”

(Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, *The World Challenge*)

His aim: to **create** incredibly fine circuitry *on* electronic chips.

CREDIT (v)

The sum of \$100.00 has been **credited** (i.e. added) *to* your account.

“Thomas Lovejoy, a Washington biologist, is *credited with* (i.e. given the credit for) bringing the plunder of the

rain forests to the attention of the world.”
(Montreal Gazette)

CRITERION

That's a **crit**erion *of* his good intentions.

CRITICIZE, CRITICISE

It was **criticized** *as* too impractical.
She was **criticized** *for* her bad behaviour.

CROSS (A)

I'm very **cross** (i.e. somewhat angry) *with* you *about* that.

CROW (V)

You're always **crowing** (i.e. boasting) *about* things you never did.
She **crowed** (i.e. exulted) *over* my bad luck.

CRUCIAL (A)

“DNA (is) the blueprint for producing all the proteins and chemicals that carry out the innumerable functions **crucial for** life.” (Business Week mag.)
Crucial to Napoleon's grand design for Europe was the conquest of Russia.

CRUELTY

“**Cruelty to** animals is cruelty and a vile thing; but **cruelty to** a man is not cruelty, it is treason.” (G.K. Chesterton)

CRY (V)

I cry *for* you.
The baseball strike goes on, and fans are **crying into** their beer.
They're **crying over** spilt milk again.

CULL

He **culled** most of his wisdom *from* Mark Twain's books.

CULMINATE

“A series of stunning advances has **culminated in** microscopes able to distinguish individual atoms whose diameter is only about one angstrom — about four-billionths of an inch.” (Arthur Fisher, Discover mag.)

CURE (N)

“There is no **cure for** birth and death save to enjoy the interval.” (George Santayana)
The podiatrist had an excellent **cure for** sore feet.

D

DABBLE

Although talented, the artist merely **dabbled at** painting.
Dabbling in social work doesn't bring satisfaction.
 Why do you **dabble with** something that is none of your business?

DAMAGE (N)

The **damage by** the hurricane is hard to compute.
 The **damage** is just **from** years of neglect.
 The **damage in** the downtown is **beyond** repair.
 "China alone, by burning its dirty coal, and making polluting refrigerators, could torpedo everybody else's efforts to stop the build-up of atmospheric carbon and **damage to** the ozone layer." (The Economist)

DAMN

He was **damned by** the evidence.
 The critic **damned** the author's new book **with** faint praise.
 She was **damning** the politicians **without** knowing the facts.
 "The system as it stands conspires against the mothers among the poor: they are **damned**, if they stay, **as** parasites; they are **damned**, if they go to work, **for** neglecting their children."
 (Pierre Berton, The Smug Minority)

DAMPEN

His ardor was **dampened** (i.e. diminished) **by** her indifference.
 She was **dampening** (i.e. moistening) the leaves of the plant **with** a wet cloth.

DANCE (V)

She **dances**, as if weightless, **across** the stage.
 The children **danced around** the Christmas tree.

The boy sent a stone **dancing** (i.e. skipping) **over** the water.

The firelight was **dancing** (i.e. reflected) **on** the wood panelling.

The mother **danced** (i.e. bounced) her child up and down **on** her knee.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DANGER

"The average American household is in more **danger from** chemical germ-killers than **from** germs."
 (Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

There's always **danger in** taking your enemy too lightly.

The **danger of** an explosion dogged his steps.

The **danger to** me was palpable.

DANGEROUS

"Vance Packard believes . . . that the excessive concentration of wealth among a cadre of megamillionaires . . . is **dangerous to** the good health of capitalism."
 (John Elson, Time mag.)

DANGLE

The prospect of great wealth is **dangling** (i.e. hovering) **before** his eyes.

Expensive jewelry **dangled** (i.e. swung to and fro) **from** her ears.

DASH (V)

He **dashed** (i.e. ran quickly) **across** the road **into** the field.

The ship was **dashed on** (i.e. slammed against) the rocks.

They **dashed** (i.e. sprinted) *through* the picnic crowd, upsetting tables.

She **dashed** (i.e. darted) *under* the bridge, when it began raining in earnest.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DATE (V)

“Carved jade pieces *dating from* (i.e. having their origin in) China’s new stone age (3000 B.C.) . . . are so fine as to require the use of a magnifying glass to be seen properly.” (*The Economist* mag.)

“It was Dionysius who invented the method of *dating* (i.e. setting the date) we still use in the West, that is *from the birth of Christ*.” (Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*)

This fossil **dates back to** (i.e. originated in) the Pre-Cambrian period.

DAUB

It was the tribe’s custom to **daub** their bodies *with* blue paint.

Why don’t you **daub** the fresh paint on your door *with* a sponge?

DAWDLE

He liked to **dawdle along** the village street.

It’s time you stopped **dawdling over** your homework.

DAWN (V)

It was slowly **dawning on** me that their intentions were less than honourable.

It just **dawned on** (or *upon*) me that we never did visit Aunt Mary.

It suddenly **dawned over** the whole country that the dictator’s death meant freedom for all.

DAZZLE (V)

The heiress was **dazzled by** the size of her inheritance.

He **dazzled** the audience *with* his magic tricks.

She was **dazzling** him *with* her smile.

DEAF

When she was reading, she was **deaf in** both ears.

He stood there, **deaf to** the cries of his people.

DEAL (V)

He began to **deal** (i.e. portion out) the bread *among* the hungry crowd.

He began **dealing in** drugs from the age of 13.

She **dealt** (i.e. distributed) the cards *to* her sisters *with* a flourish.

I will **deal with** (i.e. turn my attention to) you later.

“The subatomic world has provided just the recipe to *deal with* mutually exclusive forces such as science and religion.” (K.C. Cole, *Los Angeles Times*)

DEATH

He was condemned to **death by** hanging.

“It is the virtual certainty of *death from* AIDS, once the syndrome has fully developed, that makes the disease so **frightening**.” (*Time* mag, 1985)

She was mourning the **death of** her beloved brother.

“Let me die the **death of** the righteous.” (Bible: Numbers 23:13)

Death on a beautiful day seems more terrible.

Death to you, man!

DEBAR

After 20 years as a lawyer, he was **debarred from practising**.

DEBATE (N)

“Most popular discussion of “debt” and the financial distress it can cause is at root a **debate between** two blind prejudices.” (*The Economist*)

A full **debate on** (or *upon*) the root cause of poverty would take months, if not years.

DEBATE (V)

They **debated** the subject *amongst* themselves till dawn.

Various theological constructs have been **debated for** centuries.

They debated long *on* what was to be done.
(Tolkien, Oxford English Dictionary)

DEBIT (v)

I will debit that *from* your account.
Should I debit this *to* your account or *to* your wife's?

DEBRIS

"It is part of the law of life that cells die. Indeed the *debris from* dead organisms forms the food for new forms of life." (Hugh Montefiore, The Probability of God)
The yard was cluttered with the *debris of* many years.

DECAMP

He decamped *from* town *in* a panic.
On an impulse, he decamped *to* Mexico.

DECIDE

I will decide *about* that tomorrow.
Why don't you decide *on* the 15th of every month?

DEDICATE

I gratefully dedicate this book *to* you.

DEDICATION

She is also remembered for her lifelong *dedication to* good works.

DEDUCE

Can I deduce *from* your statement that you have no intention of cooperating?

DEDUCT

I will deduct a day's pay *from* your wages.

DEEP

She sat deep *in* gloom.
"Holograms and light pipes could bring daylight *deep into* building interiors, reducing the need for artificial illumination." (Herb Brody)

DEEPEN

The mood in the room deepened *into* gloom.

DEFACE

The motto carved into the stone had been defaced *by* centuries of weathering.
The metro car was defaced *with* crude slogans and cartoons.

DEFECT (N)

There's a defect *in* the manufacture of that tool.

DEFECT (v)

He defected *from* his party *over* a misunderstanding.
They defected en masse *to* the opposition.

DEFECTION

Their defection *from* the liberal ranks *to* the opposition happened during the last session.

DEFENCE, DEFENSE

The only real defence *against* ignorance is education.

DEFEND

They defended the town jail *against* the mob.
I promise to defend you *from* his scurrilous attacks.

DEFER

"If the owner of a nose, that reports something smells awful, stays around for a few minutes anyway, the nose concludes that the smell isn't so bad after all. It shuts itself off, *deferring* (i.e. yielding) *to* superior wisdom." (Kurt Vonnegut Jr., Jailbird)
I will defer (i.e. delay) my decision *till* the court pronounces itself.

DEFICIENCY

There was a deficiency *of* red corpuscles *in* his blood.
Her deficiency *in* serotonin made her unable to concentrate.

DEFICIENT

He is very **deficient** *in* common sense.

DEFINE

The outline of the bridge was starkly **defined** *against* the sunset.

“A despotism may almost be **defined** *as* a tired democracy.” (G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man)

DEFLECT

I will not let you **deflect** my attention *from* this task.

In Henry VIII’s time, they **deflected** the tennis ball *on to* a side-running roof.

He **deflected** the sunlight *with* a mirror.

DEFRAUD

“It is a psychological paradox that those who are most afraid to die are most afraid to live, and in seeking to cheat death, they **defraud** themselves *of* life.”

(Sydney J. Harris, North American Syndicate)

They are **defrauding** old people *of* their life savings.

DEGENERATE

“Gods! how the son **degenerates** *from* the sire.”

(Pope, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“As a man grows older, his behaviour tends to take exaggerated forms: fear becomes paranoia, single-mindedness **degenerates** *into* intolerance, willfulness sinks into obstinacy, and insecurity is more and more tied to the specter of mental and physical impotence and incompetence.”

(Lacey B. Smith, Henry VIII: The Mask of Royalty)

DELEGATE (V)

Can’t you **delegate** your authority *to* me for this special occasion?

DELETE

Start by **deleting** one word *from* this sentence.

DELIGHT (V)

“The Fifties (proved) an extraordinary decade. Never before had we **delighted** *in* such a rain of innovations . . . Television took root everywhere. The Polaroid camera, the aqualung, the transistor radio . . . came on the market. The hi-fi and stereo industry sprang up. Commercial jet travel became standard. Polio was conquered. . . etc., etc.” (Alvin Toffler, The Third Wave)

DELIVER

I will **deliver** the parcel *at* 6 p.m. sharp.

They always **deliver** the paper *before* breakfast.

She promised to **deliver** *on* her promise *by* noon.

“Capillaries, the tiniest of blood vessels, form terminal branches of the vast network that **delivers** blood-carrying oxygen and other nutrients *to* the body’s organs.” (Natalie Angier, Discover mag.)

DELVE

He never **delves** *beneath* the surface of events.

He’s **delving** *in* his personal affairs as we speak.

I will **delve** *into* the matter as soon as possible.

“Minerals, **delved** . . . *out of* the hearts of mountains.”

(N. Hawthorne, Oxford English Dictionary)

DEMAND (N)

I will not comply with your **demand** *for* money.

Sleep is a **demand** *of* nature.

You are making too many **demands** *on* me at this juncture.

DEMAND (V)

They are **demanding** (i.e. asking for) still more taxes *from* us all.

I realize that obedience is **demanded** (i.e. required) *of* me.

“What about you?” I **demanded** *of* the second. “I’m Lutheran”, he said. “That’s a Catholic without guilt.” (James Brady, Advertising Age mag.)

That work is too **demanding** *of* (i.e. too hard on) me, I’m afraid.

DEMONSTRATE

“The existence of both capabilities, vocal and motor mimicry, has yet to be *demonstrated in* other species besides humans and dolphins.”

(Louis Herman, Omni mag.)

They wanted to **demonstrate** good-will *to* the world.

He is **demonstrating** his skill *to* the world.

DEMUR

The head nurse **demurred** (i.e. balked) at working a double shift.

You should **demur** (i.e. object) *to* that request.

“King Edwine **demurred** (i.e. hesitated) *to* embrace Christianity.” (Fuller)

I am **demurring** (i.e. objecting) *to* this new government policy.

DENIAL

“Atheism is abnormality. It is not merely the *denial of* a dogma. It is the reversal of a subconscious assumption in the soul; the sense that there is a meaning and a direction in the world it sees.”

(G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man)

DENIGRATE

“Catastrophism, once *denigrated as* an antiquated argument of miracle-mongers, has become respectable again.” (Stephen J. Gould, Discover mag., 1989)

The defendant’s character was **denigrated by** the prosecuting attorney.

DENOUNCE

He was **denounced as** a collaborationist.

This is the second time she has been **denounced to** the police.

I am **denouncing** him *to* the authorities forthwith.

DENSE

The buttercups are **dense on** the lawn

The lawn was **dense with** dandelions.

DENUDE

The front yard was **denuded of** grass.

He’s **denuding** his front yard *of* all its trees.

DENY

I will **deny** help *to* those who refuse to work.

DEPEND

“I can think of no other instance in history where the future of the world *depended on* the courage of one man.” (Stalin speaking about Winston Churchill)

“Biologists divvy up all animals into 40 or so phyla, **depending on** the classification scheme.”

(Discover mag., April 1996)

“Every cell in our body *depends upon* water to function properly.” (Jane E. Brody, Family Circle mag.)

DEPENDENCE

“The absolute *dependence of* mass microprocessor technology *on* capitalist production and distribution methods could well be the first nail in the coffin of doctrinaire Marxist thinking.”

(Christopher Evans, The Micro Millennium)

“Living . . . in **dependence on** the will of God.”

(Jowett, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“To free the Crown from its **dependence upon** Parliament.” (Green, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

DEPOSIT (v)

His father **deposited** (i.e. entrusted for safekeeping) five hundred dollars *in* his son’s account.

“A new way to coat materials with thin layers of artificial diamonds . . . can *deposit* (i.e. precipitate) *up to* 20 microns per hour, which is 200,000 atomic layers, *on* (or *upon*) a 10-square-centimetre crosssection.”

(Carl Collins of UTD)

DEPRIVE

“Don’t **deprive** yourself *of* the joy of giving.”

(Father’s advice to Michael ‘Gloves’ Greenberg)

I’m afraid he’s **depriving** himself *of* a lot of pleasure.

DEPUTE

I will **depute** that task *to* the new boy.

DEPUTIZE

They will be **deputizing** (i.e. appointing) him *as* a special agent tomorrow.

He will **deputize** (i.e. act as a deputy) *for* the sheriff at this function.

DEPUTY

The lawyer will act as **deputy** *for* the absent delegate.

I am a **deputy** *of* the sheriff in this area.

She was a **deputy** *to* the district attorney.

DERIVATION

The word *butcher* is a **derivation** *from* the French word *boucher*.

DERIVE

“The term holistic . . . **derives** *from* the philosophy that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. In holistic medicine, a doctor . . . takes into account all aspects of a patient’s life — physical, emotional, and social — in diagnosis and treatment” (Rob Wechsler, *Discover* mag.)

Every human cell **derived** *from* a fertilized egg (in the process of procreation) will have the same DNA.

DEROGATE

Why do you want to **derogate** *from* his fame?

DEROGATORY

Your words have been very **derogatory** *of* my friend’s good name.

Her conduct was very **derogatory** *to* her husband’s reputation.

DESCEND

“Bacteria are the earliest visible link in the great chain of being. Everything now living is **descended** *from* them.” (*The Economist*)

“The scientific establishment reveals its basic bias when it says that man **descended**, instead of ascended, *from* the monkey.” (Charles N. Prieur)

The stairs **descended** *into* a sculpture garden.

“We are **descended** *of* ancient families.” (Steele)

Relatives should not **descend** *on* us without notice.

She was too snobbish to **descend** *to* paid employment.

DESCENDANT, DESCENDENT

“The British royal family are **descendants** *of* Queen Victoria.” (Family Word Finder, *Reader’s Digest*)

DESCENT

Some people take pride in tracing their **descent** *from* illustrious ancestors.

To be sent to a concentration camp was a **descent** *into* hell.

He watched the erratic **descent** *of* the plane.

The paratroppers made their **descent** *through* heavy clouds.

DESCRIBE

“He (Jean-Jacques Rousseau) **describes** himself *in* odious colours to give his unjust and cruel imputations the semblance of truth.” (Diderot)

Please **describe** yourself *to* me.

She is **describing** her attacker *to* the police right now.

DESCRIPTION

“The genes that parents pass on to their offspring are **descriptions**, *in* code, *of* proteins — one gene for each protein an animal needs.” (*The Economist* mag.)

I gave a **description** *of* her car to the police.

DESCRIPTIVE

That is very **descriptive** *of* the accident I witnessed.

DESERT (v)

He **deserted** *from* the army within a week of enlistment.

Iraki soldiers are **deserting** *to* Iran in droves.

DESERTION

His *desertion from* his post has haunted him all his life.

DESERVING

She was very *deserving of* that promotion.

DESIGN (V)

The lawyer's terms were clearly *designed* (i.e. intended) *as* subterfuge.

"We even have folds of skin here and there *designed* (i.e. purposed) *for* the controlled nurture of bacteria." (Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of Cells*)

He has been *designing* (i.e. working as a fashion designer) *for* Dior *in* Paris for the past five years.

"A liquid solar cell *designed* (i.e. devised) *in* Israel has a built-in storage electrode that delivers power when the sun disappears." (Dawn Stover, *Popular Science* mag.)

"Doctors (in U.S.) estimate that they now perform \$15 billion worth of medically unnecessary tests, procedures and paperwork, all *designed* (i.e. intended) *to* combat possible lawsuits." (Otto Friedrich, *Time* mag.)

DESIRABLE

"Mammy . . . laboured to inculcate in her the qualities that would make her . . . *desirable as* a wife." (M. Mitchell, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

"Some experienced clinicians believe that less than two dozen basic drugs are all that will ever be *desirable for* 99% of the total population."

(Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis*)

It's often *desirable to* do things slowly.

DESIRE (N)

He had outlived his *desire for* mere things.

DESIROUS

"Man is not only *desirous*, but ambitious too, *of* happiness." (*Oxford English Dictionary*)

DESIST

Please ask her to *desist from* further prosecution.

DESPAIR (N)

In her *despair over* failing the first exam, she dropped out of the entire program.

DESPAIR (V)

I *despair for* him in this venture.

She *despaired of* ever meeting him again.

DESPATCH, DISPATCH (V)

The ambassador was *despatched* (i.e. sent) *to* Paris.

He *despatched* (i.e. disposed of) his opponent *with* one powerful blow.

DESPATCH, DISPATCH (N)

The captain gave the order for the *despatch* of the launch.

His *despatch to* the boondocks was long overdue.

DESTINE

She was *destined for* better things.

They will *destine* the computer resources *to* their own programs.

DESTITUTE

He had left her *destitute of* any means of support.

DESTRUCTIVE

"The colonizing procedure involved human engineering, and was therefore *destructive of* the individualistic principle which lies at the heart of the Judaeo-Christian ethic."

(Paul Johnson, *A History of The Modern World*)

DETACH

"A lean and dingy man in a flapping overcoat *detached* himself *from* the crowd." (Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*)

DETECT

"The Eskimo has 100 words for snow — such are the subtleties he *detects in* its color and tone and depth and temperature." (Lance Morrow, *Time* mag.)

“Until arsenic became easy to *detect in* an autopsy, it was a fairly common means of offing one’s enemies.” (Discover mag.)

DETER

“Do not seek to deter me *from* my purpose.” (Johnson, Rasselas)

DETERMINANT

“The environment is the primary *determinant of* the state of general health of any population.” (Ivan Illich, Medical Nemesis)

DETERMINE

“For evil is determined (i.e. ordained) *against* our master.” (1 Samson, XXV, 17, The Bible)

“Experts can *determine* (i.e. figure out) a skeleton’s age *by* how hard or “ossified” the cartilage has become.” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

They are *determining* (i.e. deciding) *on* an itinerary.

I’m *determined* (i.e. resolved) *to* do it right.

“Accidental impulses *determine* (i.e. direct) us *to* different paths.” (S. Johnson)

He was *determined on* learning the truth.

DETRACT

The scar *detracted from* his handsome features.

DETRIMENT

He supported his workers throughout the Great Depression, to the *detriment of* his family fortune.

The ceaseless gossip proved a *detriment to* his peace of mind.

DETRIMENTAL

His past record is *detrimental to* the party’s future prospects.

DEVELOP

“Once (human brain) cells differentiate and *develop into* mature neurons, they stop growing.”

(Peter Radetsky, Discover mag., April ‘91)

They are both *developing into* beautiful women.

“The stem cell . . . can *develop into* any kind of blood cell, including red cells, white cells and platelets. Some experts believe it may be able to create whole organs.”

(Brad Evenson, National Post)

All plants will *develop under* the proper conditions.

DEVIATE

He deviated *from* his course of action, *to* indulge a sudden fancy.

DEVOID

My life is devoid *of* interest.

DEVOLVE

Stress *devolves on* (or *upon*) a culture when foreign elements encroach on its values and nature.

DEVOTE

“Huge companies *devote* great energies *to* buying and selling one another. The American genius for commerce has discovered a method for generating vast profits without the inconvenience of making anything of value.” (Paul Gray)

DEVOTEE

She was a devotee *of* the arts all her life.

DICHOTOMY

“The *dichotomy between* subject and object . . . has been the central characteristic of Western thought for the past four centuries.” (Rollo May, The Courage to Create)

The astrophysicist is constantly reminded of the *dichotomy in* the cosmos *of* the known and the unknown.

DICTATE (N)

Follow the dictates *of* your heart.

DICTATE (V)

Are you trying to **dictate** *to* me?

DIE (V)

They died *at* the hands of the mob.

He is **dying** slowly, horribly, *by* degrees.

“If the rich could hire other people to **die** *for* them, the poor would make a wonderful living.” (Jewish proverb)

“One in three of us will contract cancer; barring breakthroughs, one in five will **die** *from* this family of related diseases.” (William Boly, Hippocrates mag. 1989)

“More men drown in the Sahara than **die** *of* thirst, because of the flash floods from the mountains.” (Desmond Bagley, Flyaway)

“In the fantasy you **die** *in* your own home, of old age, and in character. In reality, in the hospital, death is rarely serene.” (Dr. Perri Klass, Discover mag.)

She died *with* rare composure.

DIFFER

“Men at most **differ** *as* heaven and earth, but women, worst and best, as heaven and hell.” (Tennyson)

“Man is not man in that he resembles (brutes), but in that he **differs** *from* them.” (Jowett, Plato)

“I **differed** (i.e. disagreed) *with* him in the conclusion he drew.” (Coleridge)

DIFFERENCE (N)

The chef and his employer were having a major **difference** *about* something.

There are certainly **differences** *among* human races.

“The **difference** *between* fiction and reality? Fiction has to make sense.” (Tom Clancy, via www.ESLCafé.com)

Startlingly, the genetic **difference** *between* humans and chimpanzees turned out to be less than one percent. (David Noonan, Discover mag., Oct. '90)

“The **difference** *in* molecular structure explains why one type of pure carbon (graphite) is a lubricant, and the other (industrial diamond) an abrasive.” (The Economist mag.)

“It is a mere **difference** *of* degree that separates any (surgical) operation from any torture.”

(G.K. Chesterton, Essays)

DIFFERENCE (V)

“Every individual has something that **differences** it *from* another.” (Locke, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

DIFFERENT

“This creature (man) was truly **different** *from* all other creatures; because he was a creator as well as a creature.” (G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man)

“Our advice is to write **different** *from*.” (Fowler, The King's English)

“How **different** things appear in Washington *than* in London.”

Note: As British author Bill Bryson points out in his acclaimed book ‘Mother Tongue’: “Far from being a regrettable Americanism, “**different** *than* has been common in England for centuries and used by such exalted writers as Defoe, Addison, Steele, Dickens, Coleridge and Thackeray.”

DIFFERENTIATE

It was impossible to **differentiate** *between* the twins.

“It **differentiated** Christianity decisively *from* Judaism.” (Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

This suite by J.S. Bach **differentiates** *into* many dance forms.

DIFFICULT

“Arithmetic is **difficult** *for* some pupils.” (World Book Dictionary)

The high cliffs made the castle **difficult** *of* access.

“One of the most **difficult** *of* our poets.” (H.T. Buckle, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The chemical bonds between the molecules of liquids continuously shift position, and are therefore **difficult** *to* examine . . . A molecule changes partners ten billion to a hundred billion times a second.”

(W. Drost-Hansen and J. Lin Singleton, The Sciences mag.)

The director was very **difficult** *with* actors and film crew alike.

DIFFICULTY

We had to acknowledge the **difficulty** *of* achieving the goal.

I found great **difficulty** *in* even launching the plan.

DIFFIDENT

He was **diffident** *of* even opening the door.

DIFFUSE

“In the forests of the River Amazon, as on the crest of the High Andes, I realized how, from pole to pole, as though animated by a single breath, one life alone is **diffused** *among* stones, plants, animals, and in the swelling breath of man.” (Alexander Van Humbolt)

The sunlight was **diffused** *by* the smog.

The toxic gas was **diffusing** *into* the atmosphere.

DIG (VV)

“Clumps of fleshy-leaved Alpine Penny-Cress can reveal where to **dig** *for* lead and zinc.” (The Economist)

They started **digging** *for* gold *under* the first outcropping.

Many gardeners like to **dig** *in* the earth.

The cat’s claws **dug** *into* my flesh.

I **dug** *through* the rubbish with my bare hands.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DILATE

It was time to **dilate** (i.e. enlarge) *on* (or *upon*) the objection they faced.

DILIGENCE

Your **diligence** *in* caring for your old mother is very commendable.

DILIGENT

You are very **diligent** *in* your work until 3 p.m., then you become negligent. Why?

DILUTE

He **diluted** the rare wine *with* water, to everyone’s consternation.

DIN

I intend to **din** that truth *in* your ears *till* (or *until*) I die.

DINE

I **dined** *on* sausages and sauerkraut *with* my friend Albert every Tuesday for nearly ten years, and always *at* the same restaurant.

Can you believe it? He **dined** *off* that pig *for* weeks after it had saved his life.

DIP (N)

He liked to take a quick **dip** (i.e. swim) *in* the lake.

A brief **dip** (i.e. cursory glance) *into* this novel will capture your interest.

DIPLOMA

I earned a **diploma** *in* marketing after my discharge from the army.

DIRECT (V)

“Pregnant women report that, while in the water with dolphins, they feel blasts of energy **directed** (i.e. aimed) *at* their wombs.” (Justine Kaplan, *Omni* mag.)

Why not **direct** your efforts *into* this channel?

Please **direct** (i.e. address) your questions *to* the Speaker.

“It is a great mistake to suppose that love unites and unifies men. Love **diversifies** them, because love is **directed** (i.e. tends) *towards* individuality. The thing that really unites men and makes them like to each other is hatred.” (G.K. Chesterton)

He is **directing** (i.e. leading) his orchestra *with* great sensitivity this evening.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DISABLE

The fireman was **disabled** (i.e. crippled) *by* a falling chimney.

That crash into the boards **disabled** him *from* (i.e. rendered him incapable of) ever playing again.

“Papists, by the Act of Settlement, are **disabled** (i.e. legally unable) *to* inherit the Crown.”
(Luttrell, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

DISABUSE

That one remark **disabused** him *of* all his theatrical ambitions.

DISADVANTAGEOUS

It would prove **disadvantageous** *for* me to join a secret society.

This is obviously **disadvantageous** *to* me, as you intended it to be.

DISAGREE

They **disagree** *on* many things, but not *about* their love for each other.

Sorry, but I **disagree** *with* you *on* every point.

DISAGREEMENT

There's **disagreement** *on* that subject and *about* everything else.

My **disagreement** *with* you is profound.

DISAPPEAR

“Particles of anti-matter . . . have one spectacular property: If they ever touch their ordinary twins (particles with a positive charge), both **disappear** *in* a blast of energy.” (Tom Waters, Discover mag.)

Any reference to the evidence had **disappeared** *from* the files.

The great ship **disappeared** *into* the fog.

“In the 4th century A.D., the busy Roman port town of Kourion, on the southern coast of Cyprus, **disappeared** *under* the ground, buried by a massive earthquake.” (Jamie James, Discovery mag.)

DISAPPOINTED

After years of devoted study, the pianist was **disappointed** (i.e. cheated) *of* international success.

I couldn't be more **disappointed** *in* you.

They were **disappointed** *with* my plan.

DISAPPROVE

“Sir William Osler . . . **disapproved** *of* people who spoke of the agony of death, maintaining that there was no such thing.” (Dr. Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

DISARM

First, let me **disarm** you *of* that knife.

DISASSOCIATE

“Paul was anxious to **disassociate** Christ's teaching *from* Judaism.” (Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

DISBELIEF

I learned my **disbelief** *in* UFOs from my father.

His **disbelief** *of* her testimony demoralized her.

“Our belief or **disbelief** *of* a thing does not alter the nature of the thing.” (J. Tillotson, Oxford Universal Dictionary)

DISBELIEVE

He plainly **disbelieved** *in* ghosts.

DISCARD (V)

The teacher **discarded** all the compact disks *from* my locker.

DISCHARGE (V)

I was **discharged** *from* the Navy the same day.

DISCONNECT

Would you **disconnect** that extension *from* the wall plug now?

DISCOURAGE

She was **discouraged** *by* a host of happenings to her.

“Science has traditionally been presented in schools as a stereotypically male realm that girls are subtly **discouraged** *from* entering.” (Judith Stone, Discover mag.)

You're **discouraging** him *from* ever trying again.

DISCOVER

“A brain chemical (dynorphin), 200 times more powerful than morphine and 50 times more powerful than any previously known substance of its kind, has been *discovered by* scientists at Stanford University and the California Institute of Technology in the U.S.” (Medical News, England/Reader’s Digest)

“All five of the chemical bases for a human gene have been *discovered in* a meteorite.”

(Cyril Pannamperuma, University of Maryland)

I’m *discovering in* her a real talent for portraiture.

DISCOVERY

“Love is but the *discovery of* ourselves *in* others, and the delight in the recognition.” (Alexander Smith)

DISCREDIT

I have to say it: you’re a *discredit to* this family.

DISCREDITABLE

She thinks it was *discreditable of* you to attend that show. That was very *discreditable in* a person of your age.

DISCREPANCY

They found a serious *discrepancy between* what he collected and what he turned over to us.

DISCRIMINATE

“If tomorrow morning everyone woke up looking exactly alike, in features, complexion and stature, by tomorrow afternoon we would begin *discriminating* (i.e. acting with prejudice) *against* someone *on* the basis of posture, gesture and odor.” (Sydney Harris, syndicated columnist)

Man’s eyes can *discriminate* (i.e. distinguish) *among* almost 8 million gradations of colour.

King Lear was wrong to *discriminate* (i.e. play favourites) *between* his daughters.

“Studying literature helps a person to *discriminate* (i.e. distinguish) good books *from* poor ones.”

(World Book Dictionary)

It is unjust to *discriminate* (i.e. be partial) *in* a matter of civil rights.

DISCRIMINATION

There’s a lot of *discrimination against* Indian merchants here.

Discrimination is rampant *amongst* that crowd.

Discrimination between the major parties is the law of this land.

DISDAIN (N)

They evinced a *disdain for* everything foreign.

DISDAINFUL

She was *disdainful of* me from the time I set foot in her house.

DISEMBARRASS

The politician made strenuous efforts to *disembarrass* (i.e. detach) himself *from* any association with the opposition party.

Why don’t you *disembarrass* (i.e. relieve) him *of* his parcels.

DISENCHANTMENT

“Most men live in a state of confusion and *disenchantment with* their Creator, if they believe in him at all.” (The Economist)

DISENGAGE

She *disengages from* one cult only to join another.

DISFAVOUR, DISFAVOR

The teenager was *in disfavour with* her whole family.

DISFIGURE

They *disfigured* the front of the building *by* crashing a tank into it.

He is *disfiguring* the famous statue *with* a hammer.

DISFIGUREMENT

The *disfigurement of* that church dates back to Cromwell’s Roundheads.

The new building is a **disfigurement** *to* the whole neighbourhood.

DISGRACE

You have been a **disgrace** *to* your country all your adult life.

DISGRACEFUL

Don't you find it **disgraceful** *for* a policeman to behave in that manner?

That remark is **disgraceful** *of* you.

His drunken countenance proved **disgraceful** *to* all members of his union.

DISGUISE

"We are continually faced by great opportunities brilliantly **disguised** *as* insoluble problems."

(The Gazette, Montreal)

The sergeant's animosity was **disguised** *by* an appearance of geniality.

The spy was **disguised** *in* a military uniform.

I am **disguising** the wall safe *with* panelling.

DISGUST (N)

My **disgust** at the vandalism prompted me to leave the team.

Her **disgust** *for* him knew no bounds.

His **disgust** *with* the results of the fund-raising was obvious to all.

DISGUST (V)

I am **disgusted** *at* (or *with*) your behaviour.

Even the mother was **disgusted** *by* the boy's manners.

How come you're not **disgusted** *with* Tom, too?

DISILLUSION

Do not **disillusion** her *of* her high ideals.

DISILLUSIONMENT

There was general **disillusionment** *at* the rampant vandalism.

Your **disillusionment** *over* this event reveals a lack of faith on your part.

His **disillusionment** *with* his protégé was the talk of the company.

DISINCLINE

Your attitude **disinclined** me *from* trying to make friends with you.

You will have to **disincline** him *from* climbing that wall.

I have been **disinclined** *to* do that from the start.

DISJOIN

That locker has been **disjoined** *from* the others *with* a crowbar.

DISLODGE

He was trying to **dislodge** the squirrel *from* its nest, but in vain.

DISLOYAL

Why are you so **disloyal** *to* your country?

DISMISS

This doesn't mean it should be **dismissed** *as* uncreative.

My child was **dismissed** *by* the school principal this morning.

I will **dismiss** him *from* this school right now.

DISPARITY

The **disparity** *between* the two of them was obvious.

The **disparity** *in* their wages was tantamount to injustice.

DISPENSE

I will be pleased to **dispense** *with* your services.

"Dispensed *from* all necessity of providing for himself."
(S. Johnson, World Book Dictionary)

DISPERSE

The North American Indian was **dispersed** *from* his ancestral lands.

The races of mankind have been **dispersing** *into* all parts of the globe since recorded history.

The general **dispersed** his army *over* the countryside.

They soon **dispersed** *throughout* the country.

DISPLEASE

I am **displeased** *at* your display of anger.

You greatly **displease** me *by* your actions.

She was very **displeased** *by* the whole business.

He was **displeasing** her simply *by* being there.

Such conduct is most **displeasing** *to* me.

I can't remember when I was so **displeased** *with* someone.

DISPLEASING

You are very **displeasing** *to* me.

DISPOSE

"It is estimated that by 1992, Americans will be spending \$90 billion **disposing** (i.e. ridding themselves) *of*, and treating, the nearly 600 million tons of waste they generate annually." (Susan Chollar, Discover mag.)

I eat an apple to **dispose** (i.e. incline) myself *to* sleep.

DISPOSSESS

Either you vote with us, or I'll see to it that you are **dispossessed** *of* everything you own.

DISPROPORTION

The **disproportion** *between* these two grants is embarrassing.

"Let there be no great **disproportion** *in* age."

(Fuller, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

DISPROPORTIONATE

Don't you think that the interest is **disproportionate** *to* the amount I borrowed from you?

DISPUTE (N)

"Their **dispute** *about* (or *over* or *concerning*) the inheritance went on for years."

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

DISPUTE (V)

"Simon felt a momentary terror, lest he should have to **dispute** (i.e. fight) *for* his life *with* the youth."

(Scott, F.M. Perth)

"No one will **dispute** *to* (i.e. refuse) Johnson the title of an admirer of Shakespeare."

(J.S. Mill, English Oxford Dictionary)

DISQUALIFICATION

His **disqualification** was *for* drug-taking.

Her **disqualification** *from* the exam *by* her teacher was totally justified.

DISQUALIFY

Do that once more, and I will **disqualify** you *from* the Olympic Games.

She was **disqualified** *from* racing *for* a previous infraction.

They are **disqualifying** players *for* trivialities.

DISQUISITION

The members of the House of Commons found the Minister's **disquisition** *on* the new bill enlightening.

DISREGARD (N)

"It isn't necessary to be a bastard to be a genius, but a **disregard** *for* others does seem necessary."

(Howard Gardner, Harvard U.)

DISRESPECT (N)

"I like the disrespect which survives the pomp of Washington . . . I mean the older, deeper **disrespect** *for* circumstance in general, which used to be, for half the world, the very meaning of this republic."

(Jan Morris, Destinies)

DISSATISFY

He was **dissatisfied** *with* their latest recommendation.

DISSEMINATE

The mass of the Fulani population . . . is **disseminated** (i.e. distributed) *among* diverse black populations in Africa.

He managed to **disseminate** (i.e. spread) pleas for pardon *from* his cell *to* all the important media.

“Missionaries **disseminate** (i.e. spread) Christian beliefs all *over* the world.” (World Book Dictionary)

DISSENT (v)

“The Dissenters were so called because they **dissented** *from* the doctrines of the Church of England.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

DISSERTATION

Her **dissertation** *on* public hygiene was a great success.

DISSIMILAR

This is **dissimilar** *to* what you showed me yesterday.

DISSIMILARITY

The **dissimilarity** *between* those two siblings is striking.

Their **dissimilarity** *of* taste was a source of conflict.

The **dissimilarities** *of* counterfeit bills *to* real moneybills are obvious.

DISSIPATE

“Others (legends) are quite different from it and more difficult to **dissipate** *into* daylight.” (G.K. Chesterton)

Factories have been **dissipating** noxious gases *into* the countryside for generations.

DISSOCIATE

I must **dissociate** myself *from* you, given your stand.

DISSOLVE

“Onions contain a volatile compound called propanethial S-oxide. When released by the peeling and slicing of an onion, the chemical **dissolves** *in* the small quantities of water in the eyes, producing sulfuric acid, an irritant that causes tears.”

(Jack Denton Scott, Reader's Digest)

She quickly **dissolved** *into* tears.

DISSUADE

I don't see much chance of **dissuading** her *from* leaving home.

He **dissuaded** her *from* going to Mass within a month.

DISTANCE (v)

What else can she do? She has to **distance** herself *from* you.

DISTANT

That town is so **distant** *from* here that we have to start at dawn.

DISTASTE

His **distaste** *for* any and all work was proverbial.

DISTASTEFUL

This new law should be **distasteful** *to* you, too.

DISTINCT

His manner is **distinct** *from* everyone else's.

DISTINCTION

“For us convinced physicists the **distinction** *between* past, present, and future is an illusion, although a persistent one.” (Tony Rothman, Discover mag.)

She ruled her little fiefdom without **distinction** *of* persons.

DISTINCTIVE

His costume is **distinctive** *of* that particular tribe.

DISTINGUISH

These phagocytes go back in evolution a very long time. And they can **distinguish** (i.e. tell the difference) *between* self and nonself. (Discover mag.)

The building was **distinguished** (i.e. made notable) *by* an exceptionally large dome.

“In . . . images produced by . . . brain scans, false memories can be clearly **distinguished** (i.e. discerned) *from* those that are true.” (Leon Jaroff, Time mag.)

“Given the Scots’ major contributions to British culture in medicine, technology, science and government, it’s hard to believe that they could not have *distinguished* (i.e. made a name for) themselves equally *in* letters had they cared to.”

(Robert Claiborne, *Our Marvelous Native Tongue*)

“Things are commonly *distinguished* (i.e. divided) *into* animal, vegetable and mineral.” (*World Book Dictionary*)

“He had distinguished himself (i.e. served outstandingly) *on* every frontier of the empire.”

(Gibson, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

DISTINGUISHABLE

His house is barely *distinguishable from* all the other row houses.

DISTRACT

It will be easy to *distract* the enemy *by* pretending to retreat.

I’m afraid you’re *distracting* him *from* his task.

DISTRACTION

She was bothered by all the *distractions from* the street.

“In the *distraction of* this madding fever.” (Shakespeare)

DISTRIBUTE

She *distributed* the flowers *about* (or *around*) the room.

The nuns *distribute* the food *among* (or *to*) the poor.

We do not *distribute* our magazine *in* Canada.

“When elephants encounter the skeleton of an elephant out in the open, they methodically take up each of the bones and *distribute* them, in a ponderous ceremony, *over* neighbouring acres.”

(Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of a Cell*)

DISTURBING

“The idea that order can arise spontaneously is *disturbing to* scientists conditioned by the second law of thermodynamics.” (*The Economist*)

DIVE (N)

“Speaking with passion, but without the facts, is like making a beautiful *dive into* an empty swimming pool.” (Leroy Ramsay)

DIVE (VV)

You can *dive into* a lake, *off* a cliff, *over* a fence, *under* the table, *through* a hedge, it’s up to you.

DIVERGE

Your ambitions *diverge from* mine.

Our opinions are *diverging on* this subject

DIVERT

She *diverted* (i.e. distracted) me *from* my course of action *by* crossing her eyes.

They *diverted* (i.e. deflected) the noxious creek *into* the canal thereby compounding the pollution problem.

He *diverts* (i.e. entertains) small children *with* his magic hand tricks.

DIVEST

I *divest* myself *of* all the perks of office.

DIVIDE (V)

A civil war in a country may be compared to a house *divided against* itself.

“By the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, Britain and France agreed to strip Turkey of its Arab provinces and *divide* them *between* themselves.”

(Paul Johnson, *A History of the Modern World*)

OK, now *divide* that sum *by* three.

“This 1,500-mile-wide sphere, made not of rock but of solid iron, is *divided from* the rest of the planet by the outer core — a moat of churning liquid iron, 1,300 miles thick.” (Tim Appenzeller, *Discover* mag.)

“(Our) auditory system is responsive from 20 to approximately 10,000 hertz — vibrations per second. That range is *divided into* about 25 frequency bands, each a third of an octave wide.” (*Discover* mag.)

DIVISIBLE

“A prime (number) is a number *divisible* only *by* 1 and itself” i.e. 1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, etc.

(I. Peterson, Science News)

DIVISION

“The degrading *division of* labour *into* intellectual and manual labour.” (Karl Marx)

DIVORCE (N)

Modern man is raised on an almost complete *divorce between* the arts and sciences.

The new law enabled her to obtain a *divorce from* her abusive husband.

In this country there is a *divorce* (i.e. separation) *of* government and religion.

DIVORCE (V)

I'm *divorcing* myself completely *from* this debate.

DIVVY UP

(Slang. Short for divide up)

“Biologists *divvy up* all animals *into* 40 or so phyla, depending on the classification scheme.”

(Discover mag., March 1996)

DO (VV)

You've *done* very well *by* (i.e. been good to) me.

“When Stalin said that he did not know what France had *done for* civilization, Winston (Churchill) felt bewildered. In his eyes, France is civilization.”

(Lord Moran, Churchill's physician)

“That which the fool *does in* the beginning, the wise man *does in* the end.” (Richard Trench, Forbes mag.)

Why don't you *do* something *to* correct this deplorable situation?

What are you *doing with* your sister's watch?

The reeves of Scotland (tax collectors) sometimes *did away with* (i.e. killed) a taxpayer, presumably one in default; hence the word 'bereaved'.

Addendum: The verb “do” is especially flexible and takes many colloquial forms. Viz. He was hard done by (i.e.

badly treated) . . . Could you *do with* (i.e. use) a couple of plums? . . . He was *done in* (i.e. exhausted) *by* his exertions. Etc.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DOCUMENT (V)

The archeologist hopes to *document* religious customs *from* pre-history.

“Referential reporting has been *documented in* dolphins, apes and man.” (Justine Kaplan, Omni mag.)

DOMINATE

The farm house was *dominated* (i.e. towered over) *by* an enormous tree.

She never stopped trying to *dominate over* (i.e. control) me. (Note: Better used in this sense without a preposition.)

DOMINEER

He considered *domineering over* people the best perk of his presidency.

It was in her nature to *domineer over* others.

He *domineered over* me *with* sadistic delight.

DONATE

That sculpture was *donated by* the Optimists Club.

The children are *donating* their lunch money *to* the old people's home.

I'll be glad to *donate* my spare time *to* this wonderful cause.

DORMANT

“The challenge is to figure out how to reawaken this genetic potential (of growing new nerve cells in the brain) that may be lying *dormant within* (or *in*) ourselves.” (Geoffrey Montgomery, Discover mag.)

DOSE (V)

I *dose* my dog *with* cod liver oil. He loves it.

NOTE

“Still in her 30s, she (Margaret Atwood) was hailed as the ‘queen bee’ of Canadian letters, and was doted upon (or on) by a host of academic drones.”

(Richard Marin, Montreal Gazette)

DOUBLE (V)

The car **doubled** (i.e. also served) *as* a delivery van.

The consequences of our mistake were **doubled** (i.e. multiplied by two) *by* the delay that followed.

The joggers **doubled on** their tracks (i.e. returned the same way).

The page was **doubled over** (i.e. folded) *at* the most important paragraph.

The athlete’s legs were **doubled** (i.e. collapsed) *under* him.

She **doubled up** (i.e. bent over) *with* pain.

DOUBT (N)

I admit it; I have **doubts about** (or *of*) every claim made.

The scientists still had **doubts on** the subject.

DOUBTFUL

She was extremely **doubtful of** (or *about*) my excuse for being late.

DOUSE

The boys are **dousing** their hot faces *in* the cool stream.

“In Seveso, Italy, where an entire population was doused with dioxin (the most toxic substance ever made by man) in 1976, no birth defects, reproductive failures, or other long-term health effects have yet appeared.”

(William Tucker, National Review mag., 1986)

DRAG (V)

What did you **drag in** this time?

He **dragged** the body *into* the brush.

Let’s **drag** this carpet *through* the doorway and *onto* the driveway.

The dog **dragged** the doll *under* the porch.

They **dragged** the deer’s carcass *up* the path *to* their car.

DRAIN

First, **drain** the oil *from* your tank.

Your constant bickering **drains me of** energy.

DRAPE

A large shawl was **draped around** her shoulders.

The thick fog **draped** itself *over* the city.

They are **draping** the stage *with* red velvet.

DRAW (V)

“There is life on earth — one life, which embraces every animal and plant on the planet . . . A rose is a rose, but it is also a robin and a rabbit. We are all one flesh, drawn from the same crucible.” (Lyall Watson, Supernature)

Unwillingly, they were **drawn into** a quarrel.

“Music as we know it today is a cultural creation that **draws on** many neural systems.”

(James Shreeve, Discover mag., Oct. ‘96)

The boy was preparing to **draw** a sling-shot *out of* his pocket.

The actor **drew** his cloak *over* his face.

DREAM (V)

I **dreamt about** (also *of*) you last night.

You’re **dreaming in** colour.

“The canary has powers we can only dream of: its brain can grow new nerve cells.”

(Geoffrey Monthomery, Discover mag.)

Dream with me a little.

DRENCH

The violets were **drenched by** the rain.

The entire landscape was **drenched in** golden light.

I woke up **drenched with** perspiration.

DRESS (V)

I will **dress** (i.e. clothe myself) *in* black *for* the occasion.

The antique four-poster bed was **dressed** (i.e. adorned) *with* white silk.

DRIFT (VV)

The overturned canoe *drifted down* the river, *under* the bridge, *around* the island and *into* the lake.

“Squids’ huge eyes glow spookily as they *drift through* the ocean’s darkness.” (Mark Kemp, *Discover* mag.)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DRILL (V)

The students had been well **drilled** (i.e. instructed) *in* grammar.

“Petroleum companies can (now) travel farther out to sea for their oil. But, when they *drill* (i.e. bore) *in* deeper water, they take more chances with our very fragile ocean environment.” (Phil Scott, *Omni* mag., May ‘91)

He **drilled** (i.e. rammed) the concept *into* their minds.

DRINK (V)

Sheep will not *drink from* running water.

He **drank** himself *into* a stupor.

That little lady is **drinking** him *under* the table (i.e. is remaining sober longer).

Drink to me only *with* thine eyes.

They **drink to** (i.e. salute) every member of the Royal Family.

He **drinks till** (or *until*) he’s fall-down drunk.

DRIVE (VV)

I think I will **drive** (i.e. motor) *along* the waterfront.

They **drove** (i.e. forced) him *from* the hall.

You cannot **drive into** (i.e. enter) the parking lot without paying first.

“Their ships were **driven on** (i.e. propelled onto the shore.” (The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

They simply **drove** (i.e. rolled the wheels) *over* him.

After enthroning King Charles at Reims, Joan of Arc proceeded to **drive** (i.e.) the English *out of* (i.e. oust the English from) France.

She **drove** me *out of* my mind (i.e. made me crazy).

“All front-ranked physicists these days are studying theology. It seems that the unashamed individuality

inside the atom . . . the splendid balance of it all, and the H-bomb power . . . that makes everything hang together — it seems that these visions are *driving* (i.e. forcing) the laboratory men *to* their knees.” (Wm. F. Rickenbacker)

“It’s much more dangerous to *drive to* the beach than to venture into the water once you get there.”

(Michael D. Lemonick, writing about sharks in *Time* mag.)

“A straw can be *driven* (i.e. thrust) *through* a fencepost by a tornado.” (*The Economist* mag.)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DROP (VV)

“Under parts of the north China Plain, around Beijing and Tienjin, the water table is *dropping by* one to two metres a year.” (*The Economist*)

“(Elephants) can easily lift a 2-ton rhino with their trunk and slam it to the ground . . . and they can *drop* their body temperature 16 degrees just *by* flapping their ears.” (Hammond Innes, *The Big Footprint*)

The balloonist **dropped from** the sky.

The exhausted actor **dropped into** his chair.

“We are in a world with 50,000 nuclear warheads — each one, on average, some 30 times the destructive power of that *dropped on* Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” (Robert AcNamara, *Christian Science Monitor*)

The parachutists **dropped over** New York’s Central Park.

“As long as we rule India, we are the greatest power in the world. If we lose it, we shall *drop straight away to* a third-rate power.” (Lord Curzon, 1917)

The smaller berries **dropped through** the sieve.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DROWN

“500,000 Northern fur seals are *drowned each year by* lost plastic fishing nets.” (Cathy Spencer, *Omni* mag.)

“He went on to guess that, when the history of the Third Reich was written, it would be said that it *drowned in* a sea of alcohol.”

(J.K. Galbraith, *Albert Speer*)

DRUDGE (v)

He has been **drudging** *at* this job since the theatre opened.

She had **drudged** *for* her snobbish husband since they married.

They **drudge** day and night *for* a pittance.

DRY

Our wet clothes will **dry** *in* the sun.

The tomato **dried** *to* a crisp.

It should **dry** *over* the next 24 hours.

DUBIOUS

You should be **dubious** *of* (or *about*) any suggestion he makes.

DUCK

He **ducked** (i.e. dove) *behind* the wall.

The fugitive **ducked** (i.e. plunged) *into* the nearest cellar.

She tried to **duck** *out of* (i.e. avoid) taking the course.

They **ducked** (i.e. hid) *under* the bridge.

DUE (A)

“If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not **due** *to* the thing itself, but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.” (Marcus Aurelius)

DUMP (VV)

They **dumped** the earth *along* the side of my driveway.

“With all the pollution man **dumps** *in* the ocean, the populations of whales may well continue to decline. Why add outright slaughter to their demise?”

(Dr. Paul Spong, Greenpeace bulletin)

Because nobody was looking, they **dumped** the chemicals *into* the lake.

Laughing, he **dumped** the leaves *over* me.

He was **dumping** the body *under* the bridge, when caught by the police.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

DUTY

A barge did **duty** *for* (i.e. served as) a dock for years.

It's the **duty** (i.e. obligation) *of* all citizens *to* vote.

Many believe it is their **duty** *to* the future of humanity to raise a family.

DWELL

They **dwell** (i.e. live) *by* the bend in the river.

She **dwelled** (i.e. resided) *at* that address almost a decade.

He **dwelled** (i.e. lived) *in* that house virtually all his life.

We **dwelled** (i.e. lived) *near* each other most of our lives.

Do not **dwell** *on* (or *upon*) (i.e. linger over) your faults, but seek to correct them.

She is **dwelling** (i.e. living) *with* two old ladies in the next town.

“There is no witness so terrible — no accuser so powerful as conscience which **dwells** *within* us.” (Sophocles)

DWINDLE

“The planet's natural resources will **dwindle** *into* oblivion.” (James Geary, *Time* mag.)

She watched helplessly as her family fortune **dwindled** *to* nothing.

E

EAGER

I am **eager** *for* a fight.

She was **eager** *to* get going.

EAR

She had an **ear** *for* foreign accents.

“Mother . . . kept an alert **ear** *on* the way we talk, correcting our grammar.” (C. Chaplin)

I put my **ear** *to* the wall and heard footsteps.

EASY

That’s **easy** *for* you to say.

“Electronically-boosted Mozart isn’t any **easier** *on* the ears than rock (music).”

(Univ. of California, [Berkeley Wellness Letter](#))

It’s **easy** *to* say, but hard to do.

EAVESDROP

She was **eavesdropping** *at* the bedroom door.

He sidled up to the hedge to **eavesdrop** *on* the party next door.

ECHO (V)

The scream **echoed** *down* the hall.

I heard my name **echo** *from* the barn down the hill.

Christmas carols **echoed** *through* the village streets.

“The old house **echoed** *to* the children’s laughter.”

(Frederick T. Wood, [English Prepositional Idioms](#))

The hills echoed **with** shouts.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

ECONOMIZE

She **economizes** *by* making her own clothes.

They **economized** *on* nails with sad results.

The parents are **economizing** *for* the sake of their childrn.

EDGE (V)

He **edged** (i.e. moved cautiously) *around* the corner.

They tried to **edge** *from* sight, but to no avail.

She **edged** *into* the room.

They slowly **edged** *out of* the madding crowd.

He was **edging** his way *through* the piled furniture.

She **edge** (i.e. trimmed) the dress *with* lace.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

EDUCATE

He simply was not **educated** (i.e. trained) *for* the job he had to do.

Advertising **educates** women *in* (i.e. informs women about) the possibilities of life.

Her ears were **educated** *to* (i.e. familiar with) Eastern music.

The art school is **educating** its students *to* the glories of Impressionism.

EFFACE

It is as if they had been **effaced** *from* the surface of the earth.

He was made to **efface** the shocking word *from* the blackboard.

EFFECT (N)

This new law **takes effect** *from* the 20th of the month

His **effect** *on* the crowd was instantaneous.

“Speeches which will have an **effect** *upon* the courts.”
(Jowett, [Universal Oxford Dictionary](#))

EFFECTIVE

“Immune cells (in the aged) . . . may not be as **effective** *against* armies of invading organisms.”
(Katherine Johnston, Good Times mag.)

Some artillery pieces are **effective** (i.e. deadly) *within* a 30-mile radius.

EGRESS

The **egress** *from* this place is to the right of that shed.

EJECT

They **ejected** him *from* the stage the minute he opened his mouth.

I will **eject** you *from* this classroom and this school, if you do that again.

ELBOW

They **elbowed** their way *down* the stairs.

Go ahead; **elbow** him *out of* the way.

She **elbowed** her way *through* the throng.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

ELECT

He was **elected** three times *to* Parliament *as* a Conservative.

She was **elected** *by* acclamation.

They were **elected** *in* a rather dubious manner.

Electing him *to* the presidency is a serious mistake.

ELEGANT

You look **elegant** *in* your new uniform.

ELEGY

His **elegy** *on* death frightened me to death.

Thomas Gray wrote a famous **elegy** *on* rustic life inspired by gravestones in a church yard.

ELEVATE

“He could **elevate** my simple art . . . *into* a prodigy.”
(Conan Doyle, Oxford English Dictionary)

They were **elevated** *to* the cardinalate last year.

ELICIT

Elicit all the information you can *from* him.

ELIGIBLE

To be **eligible** *for* this job, you must meet two conditions.

He is **eligible** *to* compete in this race.

ELIMINATE

First, **eliminate** all the duplications *from* that script.

ELOPE

She decided to **elope** *with* Bill.

I am **eloping** *with* Cathy tomorrow morning.

EMANATE

“Changes in the cocktail of gases **emanating** *from* a volcano may signal an imminent eruption.”

(Tobias Fischer, Discover mag., Oct. ‘96)

Those rumours always **emanate** *from* the servants’ quarters.

EMANCIPATE

He was one of the first **emancipated** *from* slavery.

“We saw it in the ‘60s in the hippie movement, when tens of thousands of young people quite purposely **emancipated** themselves *from* ordinary rules.”

(Tom Wolfe, Time mag.)

EMBARGO

There’s been an **embargo** *on* (or *upon*) alcohol for almost five years.

EMBARK

He will **embark** *at* Tunis *for* the Azores *on* a rather rickety sloop.

I expect to **embark** *on* my new mission *by* Christmas.

EMBARRASS

She was **embarrassed** *at* the fuss they made of her.

Her young relative is sure to **embarrass** his hostess *by* criticizing something.

This case will not be **embarrassed** (i.e. complicated) *by* that decision.

“We may be **embarrassed** (i.e. disconcerted) *in* feeling or *in* action.”

(The Reader’s Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

I am **embarrassed** (i.e. encumbered) *with* debts.

EMBARRASSING

Your stand in this matter is very **embarrassing** *to* me.

EMBARRASSMENT

There is an **embarrassment** *of* bad literature.

“The verse . . . became a perennial **embarrassment** *to* their elders.” (Bill Bryson, “Mother Tongue”)

EMBED

He found the car **embedded** *in* mud.

The French always **embedded** their customs and language *in* their colonies, *through* marriage or dalliance.

“You and the world are **embedded** *within* each other.” (Gerald Edelman, New York Times mag.)

EMBELLISH

How about **embellishing** your front door *with* this charming wreath?

He **embellished** his story *with* fantasy.

EMBODY

I promise to **embody** your suggestion *in* my next report.

EMBOSS

He had his name **embossed** *in* red *on* the jacket of his book.

I will **emboss** it *with* my family crest.

EMBROIL

Every time he goes there, he gets **embroiled** *in* an argument with his sister.

EMERGE

“Male red-sided garter snakes in Manitoba, Canada, wait in groups of thousands for females to **emerge**, one at a time, *from* hibernation.” (Billy Allstetter, Discover mag.)

The lunar module **emerged** *from* darkness *into* light.

“The photons in conventional lasers are emitted in all directions; only a few — focused by mirrors — **emerge** *in* a useful beam.” (Discover mag.)

EMIGRATE

He **emigrated** *from* Canada *to* England right after the war.

EMISSION

“Formaldehyde **emissions** *from* plywood and particleboard are one of the primary causes of indoor air pollution today.” (Cathy Spencer, Omni mag.)

Computer terminals, particularly older ones, emit EMFs (ElectroMagnetic Fields) from all sides. So you may be exposed not only to **emissions** *from* your own terminal, but also *from* co-workers’ monitors around you.

EMIT

Black smoke **emitted** *from* the building *into* the air.

“All objects with a temperature above absolute zero emit some radiation. Objects hotter than 1000o C (1800o F) **emit** radiation *in* the visible wavelength — light.”

(Air & Space Museum, Washington)

EMMESH

They were **emmeshed** *in* a web of intrigue.

EMPATHIZE

No one can **empathize** *with* her plight.

EMPATHY

“My rereading of (Dr.) Spock’s advice confirms for me his great love and understanding of children and his real **empathy** towards parents’ frailties.”

(Eve McBride, The Gazette, Montreal)

The gentle doctor was known for his remarkable **empathy** *with* his patients.

EMPHASIS

His **emphasis** *on* (or *upon*) economics won the election.

“The **emphasis** *in* Axworthy’s paper is *on* the need for individual responsibility — something very close to a user-fee democracy.”

(Peter C. Newman, Macleans, Oct. 17, ‘94)

EMPLOY (V)

“I believe that water will one day be **employed** *as* a fuel; that hydrogen and oxygen, which constitute it, used singly or together, will furnish an inexhaustible source of heat and light.” (Jules Verne in 1874)

I’ve been **employed** *by* the state since 1957.

They were only **employed** *for* the summer.

They **employ** students *for* the day *at* the minimum wage.

She was **employed** *in* (i.e. busy) painting the fence.

“We find him **employing** his considerable energies *on* such matters as horse-breeding.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

I was **employed** *to* do a job; please let me do it.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

EMPLOYMENT

My **employment** *by* the state has come to an abrupt end.

The professor desired **employment** *in* his special field.

Employment *of* women and visible minorities is only beginning.

Employment *on* the docks was dangerous and difficult.

EMPTY

The Dutch **empty** the canals of Amsterdam *into* the sea every single day.

“The seas began to **empty** *of* other craft.”

(Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

ENACT

“We live in an age in which it is no longer possible to be funny . . . There is nothing you can imagine . . . that will not promptly be **enacted** *before* your very eyes.”

(Malcolm Muggeridge)

“The scene **enacted** *in* the great awe-stricken house.”

(Henry James, Oxford English Dictionary)

ENAMORED, ENAMOURD

“We . . . are a dull people **enamoured** *of* childish games.”

(Irving Layton)

ENCAPSULATE

“Nearly two-thirds of the human body, by volume, consists of water — about ten gallons of it, **encapsulated** *in* trillions of cells.”

(Walter Drost-Hansen and J. Lin Singleton, The Sciences mag.)

ENCASE

“In 1904, Eugène Freyssinet, devised prestressed concrete, in which steel wires are stretched before being **encased** *in* concrete.”

(Reader’s Digest Library of Modern Knowledge)

I’m thinking of **encasing** this crest *in* lucite.

ENCHANT

“I was **enchanted** *by* the river and its activities.”

(R. Church, Oxford English Dictionary)

He **enchants** her *with* tales of distant lands.

They were **enchanted** *with* their new home.

ENCHANTMENT

The **enchantment** of the good fairy enabled Cinderella to go to the ball.

My **enchantment** *with* her lasted all my married life.

ENCLAVE

“For sixteen centuries the Jewish **enclaves** *in* Christendom maintained their continuity and internal peace by a strict and detailed moral code, almost without help from the state and its laws.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

ENCLOSE

The small park was **enclosed** *by* shrubbery.

His fear of all outsiders prompted him to **enclose** (i.e. fence in) his whole property *with* an 8-foot-high brick wall.

She **enclosed** (i.e. included) a note *with* her remittance.

ENCODE

“Mitochondrial DNA **encodes** *for* only 13 of the proteins needed to carry out its vital energy-producing functions . . . The nucleus is responsible for the remaining 50 or so proteins needed for cellular respiration.”

(Edwin Kiester Jr., Discover mag.)

“Although 99.9% of the genetic information **encoded** *in* a person’s cells is not unique, one thousandth of it is.”

(The Economist)

“A fiber-optic transmitter **encodes** information (computer data, human voices, text or pictures) *into* modulated light waves.” (Herb Brody)

“Proteins are made according to instructions **encoded** *in* DNA, *through* the intermediary messenger RNA.”

(Judith Stone, Discover mag., 1988)

ENCOUNTER (N)

Our chance **encounter** *with* the neighbour started the whole chain of events.

ENCOURAGE

Instead of **encouraging** him *in* his evil ways, you should **encourage** him instead *to* mend those ways.

ENCROACH

Foreign elements **encroach** *on* (or *upon*) its values.

ENCROACHMENT

They resist **encroachment** *from* anyone outside their families.

They cannot stand **encroachment** *on* (or *on*) their preserves.

ENCUMBER

She came in **encumbered** *with* Christmas gifts.

ENCUMBRANCE

I’ve been an **encumbrance** *to* my family since I was born.

END (V)

He **ended** his career *as* a bishop in York.

“Khalkhali . . . was Ayatollah Khomeini’s hanging judge. It was Khalkhali who had conducted many of those swift Islamic trials that had **ended** *in* executions.”

(V.S. Naipaul, Among the believers)

Only St. Matthew’s Gospel does not **end** *with* the word: Amen.

“For Hegel, history “**ended** *with* Napoleon’s triumph over the Prussian forces . . . in 1806” (John Elson, Time mag.)

ENDEAR

My mother’s sheer good humour **endeared** her *to* everyone.

Even her son’s lisp was **endearing** *to* her.

ENDOW

“They were enormously **endowed** *in* (i.e. enriched with) land.” (Paul Johnson)

“The Japanese invented paper folding (origami) more than a thousand years ago and **endowed** (i.e. invested) it *with* aesthetic principles at the heart of their culture.”

(Peter Engel, Discover mag.)

ENEMY

I am an **enemy** *of* anyone who is not a friend of hers.

This is a poor time to be an **enemy** *to* change.

ENGAGE

He was **engaged** (i.e. hired) *as* a guide. I **engaged** (i.e. employed) him *for* the day.

“Green plants **engage in** photosynthesis: they take carbon dioxide from the air and convert it into organic carbon, the stuff of which we are all built.”

(Anne Fausto-Sterling, Discover mag., April '93)

She was **engaged** (i.e. betrothed) *to* two men at the time.

Note: The adjective ‘engaging’ needs no preposition.

ENGAGEMENT

“We daily expect to hear of an **engagement** (i.e. battle) *between* the Swedish and Danish Fleets.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

Her **engagement** (i.e. betrothal) *to* the famous conductor was the talk of the musicians in his orchestra.

ENGRAVE

My intentions are not **engraved in** stone.

I shall have that **engraved on** my tombstone.

He is **engraving** his name *on* the boulder in his backyard.

ENGROSS

The story-teller was able to **engross** his listeners *for* hours. She found him **engrossed in** a book about entropy.

ENJOIN

The teacher **enjoined** good conduct *on* the students.

She **enjoined upon** me not to whisper a word of it.

The court **enjoined** her *to* keep the peace.

ENLARGE

You **enlarge on** (or *upon*) everything I say.

ENLIST

I **enlisted in** the army as soon as I turned 18 years of age.

ENMITY

She soon earned the **enmity of** everyone there.

His **enmity towards** her was palpable.

ENOUGH

I have had **enough of** your cheek for a lifetime.

He had **enough money to** retire in comfort.

ENQUIRE

He **enquired** (i.e. tried to find out) *about* my whereabouts.

Was she **enquiring** (i.e. asking) *after* my health?

She is **enquiring** (i.e. looking) *for* Mr. Elms.

They were **enquiring into** (i.e. investigating) my personal business.

“If you **enquire of** the . . . bellman *about* Hemmingway . . .”

(James Brady, Advertising Age mag.)

ENRICH

“Owen has . . . **enriched** science *with* contributions of his own.” (R.W. Emerson, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The hilt and scabbard were gold **enriched with** diamonds.” (Swift)

ENROL

“They were **enrolled amongst** those who had given their lives for their fellow men.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

Why don't you **enrol him in** the third grade and see how he fares?

ENSHROUD

She was **enshrouded in** a very large shawl.

ENSLAVED

He was **enslaved by** his hatred.

“The brain-washed mind is utterly **enslaved through** terror and manipulation.” (Charles Krauthammer, Time mag.)

“The shattered society leaves atomized individuals **enslaved to** the all-powerful state.”

(Charles Krauthammer, Time mag.)

ENSUE

The trouble that **ensued** *from* his return home chased him off again.

ENSURE

Why shouldn't she **ensure** a good income *for* herself?
He was **ensured** *of* a good pension after only ten years of service.

ENTAIL

A lot of hardship is **entailed** *in* that job *on* (or *upon*) anyone who does it.

ENTANGLE

"The villain tried to **entangle** the hero *in* an evil scheme."
(World Book Dictionary)

She got thoroughly **entangled** *in* her web of lies.
My arm became **entangled** *with* the telephone wire.

ENTER

He **entered** *into* (i.e. joined) the debate almost against his will.

"Cohabitation . . . increases the odds of divorce. Women who have lived with a man out of wedlock are 80% more likely to eventually divorce or separate than are women who have never **entered** *into* a live-in relationship . . . Men who have lived in common-law unions are 150% more likely." (Elena Cherney, National Post — from a study published in the Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology)

If you don't **enter** your name *on* (i.e. add your name to) that list today, you're out of luck.

He **entered** *upon* (i.e. started in on) the task with gusto.
Those purchases were **entered** (i.e. charged) *to* your name.

ENTHRALL

"A man should not . . . **enthrall** (i.e. enslave) his credit and honour *to* harlots."
(T. Newton, Oxford English Dictionary)

Not everyone is **enthralled** (i.e. enchanted) *with* the decline of ideology.

ENTHRONE

"The Bishop of Norwich . . . was **enthroned** *as* Primate."
(Universal Oxford English Dictionary)

After **enthroning** King Charles *at* Reims, Joan of Arc proceeded to drive the English out of France.

"There pride, **enthroned** *in* misty errors, dwells."
(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

ENTHUSE

"They were very **enthused** *by* the idea." (Tam Deachman)

ENTHUSIASM

Your **enthusiasm** *about* sports is rather tepid.

"No one I had met so far showed a fraction of Mr. Lwanson's **enthusiasm** *for* my journey."
(Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

ENTHUSIASTIC

I'm not very **enthusiastic** *about* the conditions here.

"Some of those who came to Paris are less than **enthusiastic** *for* the venture." (The Economist)

ENTITLE

You're **entitled** *to* three passes.

This **entitles** you *to* a season ticket.

ENTRANCE

Entrance *to* the tunnel is barred to vehicles.

The **entrance** *of* the building is blocked with debris.

ENTREAT

She went to the local jail to **entreat** (i.e. plead) *for* her brother.

They are **entreating** (i.e. begging) you *to* help them now.

ENTRUST

"Like all Communist regimes, Hungary has a Secretariat for Religious Affairs, which is **entrusted** *with* the surveillance and ultimately the liquidation of churches and religious beliefs." (Time mag., 1989)

I would like to **entrust** this key *to* you.

ENTRY

The **entry** *of* (i.e. opening into) the cave was tangled with vines.

I will have to cancel my **entry** (i.e. application) *for* that test.

His **entry** (i.e. name and address) *in* the book was highlighted.

Someone had crossed out my **entry** (i.e. name) *on* the list.

Entry *to* the tunnel was barred.

ENVELOPE

First, I **envelope** him *in* a blanket, then I carry him to the car.

Enveloped *in* flames, he jumped out of the window.

ENVIOUS

She was **envious** *of* her friend's success throughout their school years.

ENVISAGE

"The kind of personal dictatorship (Karl Marx) **envisaged** *for* himself . . . was actually carried into effect, with incalculable consequences for mankind, by his three most important followers: Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung." (Paul Johnson, Intellectual)

ENVY

"I **envied** him . . . *for* walking with you."

(Middleton, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

She was **envied** *on account of* her wealth.

EPILOGUE

That's the **epilogue** *to* one of Chaucer's tales.

EQUAL

They are **equal** (i.e. on a par) *in* size but not *in* skill.

Are you **equal** (i.e. up) *to* the job?

The child's height is just **equal** (i.e. even) *with* the edge of the table.

EQUATE

I will **equate** your salary *to* the effort you put in your job.

"A devotion to Humanity . . . is too easily **equated** *with* devotion to a Cause; and Causes, as we know, are notoriously bloodthirsty."

(James Baldwin, Everybody's Protest Novel)

EQUATION

".. Hoover's effortless **equation** *of* the gospel-singing civil rights marches *with* the godless communists."

(The Economist)

EQUIP

He **equipped** his barn *as* a shelter *for* itinerants.

While his nation sinks into poverty, he is **equipping** his army *with* high-tech weapons of all kinds.

EQUIPMENT

"The ancestors of bees . . . had the **equipment** *for* perceiving flower color 400 million years before the first flower bloomed."

(Kathleen Spiessbach, Discover mag., Sept. '96)

EQUIVALENT (A)

"Absolute zero **equivalent** *to* -460oF or -273oC, represents a total absence of heat; it is the coldest temperature conceivable." (Michael D. Lemonick, Time mag.)

"3 billion pairs of chemical bases that make up the spiraling DNA strands inside the nucleus of our cells . . . spell out a fantastically long message — **equivalent** *in* length *to* 13 sets of the Encyclopaedia Britannica — programming the birth, development, growth, and death of a human being."

(Jerold M. Lowenstein, Discover mag., 1992)

"The use of the microchip technologies in large businesses alone produces an output **equivalent** *to* three trillion clerical workers each day! Clearly, there would be no business as we know it today, without the mighty microprocessor chip."

(Walter Perry, Microchips Now, 1984)

EQUIVALENT (N)

"An optical disc 4.7 in. in diameter can store the **equivalent** *of* 250,000 pages of typewritten information." (Stephen Koepp, Reader's Digest)

ERADICATE

I want to **eradicate** *from* my mind all traces of my years with her.

ERASE

Don't dwell on that; **erase** it *from* your memory.

ERR

She **erred** *in* her decision to leave home.
Banks seem to always **err** *on* the right side: their side.

ESCAPE (N)

"Comedy is an **escape**, not *from* truth but *from* despair; a narrow escape into faith." (Christopher Fry)
An **escape** *of* methane gas caused the explosion.

ESCAPE (VV)

"The best way to **escape** *from* a problem is to solve it."
(Brendan Francis)
The frightened deer **escaped** *into* the park.
I **escaped** *through* the window.
They **escaped** *with* only seconds to spare.
Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

ESCORT

I will send someone to **escort** him *to* jail.

ESSENTIAL (A)

"Soybean meal is about 50 percent protein (3 times more than meat) and contains all the amino acids **essential** *to* human nutrition."
(Jack Denton Scott, The Reader's Digest)
Sunshine is **essential** *to* my well-being.

ESTABLISH

Massive speculation is **establishing** his position *in* the city.
"Richelieu **established** the first professional police **under** Louis XIV." (Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

ESTEEM (N)

Your **esteem** *for* him is unfounded.

ESTRANGE

I have been **estranged** *from* my family for years.
He soon became **estranged** *from* his wife.

EULOGY

To speak or write a **eulogy** *about* (someone).
(The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)
He pronounced a **eulogy** *upon* his best friend.
(The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

EUPHEMISM

That's a **euphemism** *for* a very vulgar word.

EVEN

I expect to get **even** *with* (i.e. take revenge on) him soon.
Thee window-washers are now **even** (i.e. on a level) *with* the third floor of that building.

EVICT

She was **evicted** *from* her apartment last October.
I am **evicting** them *from* that location tomorrow morning.

EVIDENCE

"It provides further **evidence** *for* the proposition that most of Britain's best political scientists . . . are, for some reason, journalists." (Anthony King, The Economist)
There's **evidence** *of* bigotry *in* his every statement.
You'll find **evidence** *under* every tree.

EVIDENT

"It was **evident** *from* his manner that I had offended him."
(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)
"You don't have to go to a factory to see why (Japan) has achieved such great industrial success. The reasons are **evident** *in* the thoroughness, efficiency, and resourcefulness that pervade Japanese society." (Herb Brody)
It was **evident** *to* her that her mother had left in a hurry.

EVOKE

“He **evokes** the small societies of town or village *with* an acid incisiveness.” (Colin Thubron, The Times)

EVOLVE

“The solid-state integrated circuits and chips that **evolved** *from* the transistor are the essential ingredients of today’s electronic products.” (Jamie Murphy, Time mag.)

“They must . . . have **evolved** late *into* sea-creatures.” (L. MacNeice, Oxford English Dictionary)

The sculptor’s technique **evolved** *into* a recognizable style.

“About 535 million years ago . . . in a relative flash called the Cambrian explosion, almost all the basic body plans of animals living today seem to **evolve out** *of* nowhere.” (Karen Wright, Discover mag., March ‘97)

EXAMINE

I was **examined** *on* the subject *by* the teacher *in* my native tongue.

She **examined** him *from* head *to* toe.

He **examined** me *with* total dispassion, as if I were a bug.

EXAMPLE

The **example** *of* Mother Theresa is a rebuke to those who are indifferent to the needy.

You should be an **example** *to* your little brother.

EXASPERATION

My **exasperation** *with* him knew no bounds.

EXCEL

He **excelled** as a basketball player in high school.

You will **excel** *at* that game, I promise.

She **excels** *in* just about every subject.

EXCEPT

“English is a remarkable language. It is . . . the native tongue of some 300,000,000 people — the largest speech community in the world **except for** Mandarin Chinese.”

(Robert Claiborne, Our marvelous native tongue)

EXCEPT

You’re **excepted** *from* this class session.

I **except** you *from* this chore.

EXCERPT (N)

This is an **excerpt** *from* his latest book.

EXCHANGE (V)

“By the end of this year, 98 percent of the atoms in your body will have been **exchanged for** new ones.” (Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

How about **exchanging** seats *with* me?

EXCISE (V)

OK, I’ll **excise** that chapter *from* my manuscript.

EXCISION

He made an **excision** *from* the roster.

EXCLUDE

As a child, I was always **excluded** *from* adult conversations.

I intend to **exclude** you *from* the next meeting.

EXCLUSION

My **exclusion** *from* the school was the last straw.

Their **exclusion** *of* non-whites was a scandal.

EXCLUSIVE

The price is one hundred dollars, **exclusive** *of* taxes.

“On grounds . . . not **exclusive** *of* each other.”

(Burke, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

It was agreed that the journalist’s weekly column would be **exclusive** *to* the Times.

EXCUSE (N)

What’s your **excuse** *for* being late?

EXCUSE (v)

Excuse me *to* your sister for being late.
I want to be excused *from* that task.

EXECUTE

“The third incarnation of London’s Globe theatre, in Tokyo, is executed (i.e. realized) *in* grey and dominated by the stage.” (The Economist)

“Execute a warrant, a writ, a sentence *on* (or *upon*) a person.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

He was executed (i.e. put to death) *with* dispatch.

EXEMPT

The benefits were exempted *from* the man’s income tax.
He was exempted *from* active service *for* reasons of health.

EXEMPTION

I resented my exemption *from* the proceedings.

EXERCISE (v)

He exercised total control *over* her.

“The only purpose for which power can be rightly *exercised over* any member of a civilized community, *against* his will, is to prevent harm to others . . . Over himself, over his own mind and body, the individual is sovereign.” (John Stuart Mill, On Liberty)

That power should be exercised *under* the King’s authority.

EXERT

“Apple trees . . . exerted themselves (i.e. thrust themselves out) *in* air.” (Dryden, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

They exerted (i.e. applied) tremendous pressure *on* him.

EXHALE

“With every breath, you inhale hundreds of millions of atoms of air *exhaled* yesterday *by* someone in China.” (Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

EXHIBIT

He exhibited his carvings *at* the museum.
They exhibited the Holy Shroud *to* the congregation.

EXHORT

“Morals are the rules by which a society *exhorts* . . . its members and associations *to* behaviour consistent with its order, security and growth.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

EXILE (N)

My long exile *from* the world of music was about to end.

EXILE (v)

“You are fitted for society and it is shameful you should be exiled *from* it.” (Jane Austen, Oxford English Dictionary)

He found himself exiled *to* a very inhospitable island.

EXIST

“The Seven Wonders of the ancient world — the pyramids at Giza, the hanging gardens of Babylon, the statue of Zeus at Olympia, the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, the Mausoleum at Helicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes and the Pharos at Alexandria — probably *existed* together *for* little more than 30 years and only the pyramids survive.”

(Lufthansa advertisement, The European magazine)

“The quantum field *exists in, around, and through* you.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

“Cheese does not *exist in* China.”

(Paul Theroux, Sailing through China)

I exist *on* a stipend from my father, and also *by* guile and cunning.

EXPAND

The sweat stains expanded (i.e. spread) *across* the back of his shirt.

“Flowers . . . expand (i.e. open up) *at* 6 or 7, and close at 2 in the afternoon.”

(W. Withering, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Our country expanded (i.e. enlarged) *by* adding new territory.” (World Book Dictionary)

“The mind, once expanded (i.e. stretched) to the dimensions of larger ideas, never returns to its original size.” (Oliver Wendell Holmes)

“The single organism (man) can expand (i.e. grow) into dimensions of worlds and times without moving a physical limb; it can take eternity into itself even as it gaspingly dies.” (Ernest Becker, The Denial of Death)

“My heart expanded (i.e. swelled) with joy at the thought.” (J. Dickey, Oxford English Dictionary)

A child’s self-confidence expands (i.e. increases) with praise.

EXPECT

“A nation expects support from its allies.”

(World Book Dictionary)

“What others are expecting of us, that is what God expects.” (Bernanos)

“The decline of vigour in old age is largely the result of people expecting to decline.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

EXPEL

He was expelled from every school he ever attended.

EXPEND

I expended all my strength on that project.

EXPENDITURE

The expenditure of our tax money on that monument is a scandal.

EXPERIENCE

His experience of life in a commune was very sobering.

I have little experience in management.

EXPERIMENT

“Several new studies have suggested that most, perhaps even all, of Ediacaran creatures are not related to modern forms. They may even represent an entirely separate experiment in multicellular life.”

(Stephen Jay Gould, Discover mag., 1989)

Don’t let that surgeon experiment on you.

He experimented with three kinds of fuel.

EXPERT

I am an expert at retrieving golf balls.

“A Militia . . . expert in war.”

(Petty, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

“Nothing can happen so fast that there is not a microinstant of realization . . . Ten trillion cells exchanging coded information every instant. The brain has time to release the news of its own dissolution, time to factor a few questions about why, what, who . . . and what is happening to me . . . We’re each expert in our own death.” (John D. MacDonald, Cinnamon Skin)

We [www.goodenglish.com] are experts on prepositions.

I am an expert with a bow and arrow.

EXPLAIN

Now explain your conduct to me.

EXPLODE

“You should see the bag (deep-fishing net) surface with a big load of cod. It explodes from the water when the fish blow their pokes. Their air sacs burst like balloons — and all at once.”

(William Least Heat Moon, Blue Highways)

“Booklets may be broken down or exploded into separate sheets.” (David Potter, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Every year shallow pools in northern California explode with plants and creatures found nowhere else in the world.” (Glen Martin, Discover mag.)

EXPLOITED

“Arsenic is actually being exploited in energy generation.” (Dianne Ahmann, Discover mag.)

EXPORT

Heroin is exported from Iran to many countries around the world.

“Ireland began exporting scholars to the continent (as well as to Britain) at a very early stage.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

EXPOSE

His paintings are **exposed** *in* every second-rate art gallery in America.

“We live in a world that **exposes** us *to* danger at every moment from conception onward.”

(Jared Diamond, *Discover* mag.)

Computer terminals, especially older models, emit EMFs (Electro Magnetic Fields) in all directions. You’re **exposed to** emissions from your own terminal AND from co-workers’ monitors near you.

“Almost everybody who was a 10-17-week foetus when **exposed to** Hiroshima’s radiation was mentally retarded.”
(*The Economist* mag., June 13, ‘87)

EXPOSTULATE

He would **expostulate** *about* anything and everything.

Ask him to **expostulate** *on* the massacre of whales.

I could **expostulate** *with* my teacher till I was blue in the face, but it was useless.

EXPOSURE

The **exposure** *of* the real thief cleared the suspect.

His **exposure** *to* that bitter, cold weather proved his undoing.

EXPOUND

Russia’s leader **expounded** *to* attentive ears his latest ideas on East-West arms control.

EXPULSION

His **expulsion** *from* school scarred him for life.

EXPURGATE

I want you to **expurgate** your book *of* all slang.

EXTEND (VV)

“Twelve is the age during which the range of sympathy suddenly **extends** far *beyond* those nearest to us.”

(Karl Stern, *The Pillar of Fire*)

“The Kuiper belt is thought to **extend** *from* just beyond the orbit of Neptune *to* a few hundred times Earth’s

distance from the sun. It contains hundreds of millions of comets.” (Sam Flamsteed, *Discover* mag.)

The corner of my house **extended** *into* the town square.

His personal influence **extended** *over* the whole realm.

Their liberalism did not **extend** *to* civil rights for others.

EXTENT

Thank goodness they never learned the **extent** *of* his duplicity.

EXTERNAL

That’s **external** *to* the problem we are facing.

EXTINCT

“Sea otters were slaughtered by the hundreds of thousands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by American and Russian fur traders; by 1910 they were nearly **extinct** *over* their entire range, *from* California *to* Alaska.” (Glen Martin, *Discover* mag. 1990)

EXTIRPATION

He was busy with his **extirpation** *of* dissidents.

EXTORT

He extorted money *from* a dozen widows.

EXTRA

That, my friend, is **extra** *to* your wages.

EXTRACT (N)

Do you like this **extract** *of* mint?

EXTRACT (V)

DNA can be **extracted** *from* bloodstains that are years old.

EXTRANEOUS

I believe that material is **extraneous** *to* the matter at hand.

EXTRAVAGANT

You are very **extravagant in** your ways.
Why shouldn't I be **extravagant of** my leisure time?
I wish you were not so **extravagant with** my allowance.

EXTRICATE

I wish I could **extricate myself from** this mess.

EXTRINSIC

"Merits **extrinsic to** his character as a gentleman."
(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

EXTRUDE

A filthy handkerchief **extruded from** his pocket.

EXUDE

Moisture **exuded from** the walls.

EXULT

She **exulted at** his good luck.
They **exulted over** his embarrassment.

EYE (N)

He had a keen **eye for** beauty.
In the **eye of** the law, you're guilty.
Keep an **eye on** my purse, please.
To see **eye to** eye.
"With an **eye to** (i.e. looking out for) one's own interests."
(Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

EYE (V)

He **eyes** them carefully **from** the upper balcony.
She **eyed** the other woman's state of undress **with** disgust.

F

FACE (V)

After hours on the trail, the campers were **faced** (i.e. confronted) *by* a formidable wall of rock.

Their house **faced** (i.e. fronted) *on* (or *onto*) the river.

Every home in the village **faces to** the south.

They all turned, **facing** (i.e. fronting) *toward* the setting sun.

You'll have to **face up to** (i.e. deal with) it sooner or later.

The whole upper floor was **faced** (i.e. covered) *with* stucco.

She was **faced** (i.e. confronted) *with* the end of all her dreams.

FACILITY

Facilities (i.e. equipment, supplies, etc.) *for* health care and education seldom equal the need.

He had a **facility** (i.e. aptitude) *for* the quick rejoinder.

She had a **facility** (i.e. suppleness) *of* movement that was quite extraordinary.

FACT

The pertinent **facts** *about* the case were mailed to all concerned.

The **fact of** the matter is that you lied.

FACTOR (N)

“In 1848, (gynecologist I. Samuelweis) reduced mortality from puerperal fever by a **factor of** 15 . . .”

(Ivan Illich, Medical Nemesis)

FACTOR (V)

“As old bone is renewed, Blast (cells) **factor into** their design necessary adjustments for stress.” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

The engineers had **factored in** all the water stresses that affect a bridge.

FAIL

You have **failed in** your duty *as* an officer.

“For once the charm of hot food . . . **failed to** cheer me.” (L. Van Der Post, Oxford English Dictionary)

FAIR (A)

“All's **fair in** love and war.” (Francis Edward Smedley)

That's very **fair of** you.

You're not being **fair to** me.

Be **fair with** me and I'll be **fair with** you.

FAITH

“There has never been another town . . . quite like El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles (Los Angeles' full name), where the lost American **faith in** machines and materialism built its own astonishing monument.” (Jan Morris, Destinies)

They did not pass on the **faith of** their ancestors.

FAITHFUL

They've been **faithful in** some things, but not *in* others.

I've been **faithful to** her all my married life.

FALL (V)

I **fell for** (i.e. lost my heart to) her the first time I saw her.

I have **fallen for** (i.e. fallen in love with) a rascal.

The child **fell** (i.e. tumbled) *from* the second-storey balcony.

“To **fall in** love is awfully simple, but to **fall out of** love is simply awful.” (Bess Myerson)

“Barred from most professions and deprived of the right to own or rent land, they (the Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe) **fell into** (i.e. had to opt for) a fatally unstable position as overseers and rent collectors to the feudal nobility.” (John Hersey, Esquire)

“Until a freak storm in 1971, not a single drop of rain had *fallen on* Chile’s Atacama desert in 400 years.” (Omni mag., April ‘92)

She *fell over* herself (i.e. was very eager) to spread the news.

It *fell to* me (i.e. was my lot) to give her the bad news.

“When an assassin struck down Czar Alexander II, frustrations from all quarters *fell heavily upon* (i.e. was directed at) the Jews.” (John Hersey, *Esquire* mag.)

“When the state considers that taste and style *fall within* its jurisdiction, and links culture to the preservation of national values, it does not create, it embalms.”

(Sanche de Gramont)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

FALSE

She was *false* both *of* heart and mind.

How can someone be *false in* word and true in deed?

You’ve been *false to* your word from the very start.

FALTER

She *faltered at* the sudden interruption.

The debate *falters for* a moment.

He *faltered in* intent *during* his eulogy.

FAMED

He was *famed for* his great strength.

“His deeds were *famed in* song and story.”

(The Reader’s Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

FAMILIAR

His face is *familiar* (i.e. known) *to* me. Why can’t I think of his name?

You are being far too *familiar* (i.e. intimate) *with* me.

FAMILIARITY

Your *familiarity* (i.e. being known) *to* me is disquieting.

I don’t like such *familiarity* (i.e. intimacy) *with* the guests.

“Familiarity *with* danger makes a brave man braver, but less daring.” (Melville)

FAMOUS

“California’s Silicon Valley (is) *famous for* . . . the densest concentration of high-technology companies in the world.” (*Discovery* mag.)

“They (elephants) are *famous for* their fondness for liquor and are great guzzlers.”

(Mahendra Pande, Indian forest official, *Time* mag.)

FANCY (N)

His *fancy for* chocolate has taken a toll on his waistline.

I rue the day he took a *fancy to* my car

FANTASIZE

She could *fantasize about* anything and everything.

FAR

I don’t like to go too *far from* home.

This is *far from* what you promised me.

How *far* is it *to* your house?

FARM (V)

They have been *farming in* this area longer than I can remember.

The peasants had to *farm with* primitive implements.

FASCINATE

She was *fascinated* (i.e. captivated) *by* his accent

I am *fascinated with* (i.e. captivated by) his laptop computer.

FASTEN

She *fastened* (i.e. seized) *on* the fact that we were distant cousins.

He *fastened upon* me as I came aboard, and never let go.

“Twenty years ago (1960s) American doctors began using staples to *fasten* grafts *to* burned skin (etc.) . . . Now two surgeons (are) using glue.” (*Discover* mag.)

FATAL

“Belief in celibacy necessarily proves *fatal to* a heretical movement.” (Paul Johnson, *The History of Christianity*)

FATHER

“(Jean-Jacques Rousseau) is the *father of* the cold bath, systematic exercise, sport as character forming, the weekend cottage ..” (Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

You have been a *father to* me since the death of my own father.

FAVOUR, FAVOR (V)

“A suitcase . . . of a type *favoured* (i.e. preferred) *by* such unpersons as guestworkers and Turks.”

(John Le Carré, The Little Drummer Girl)

How about *favoursing* (i.e. blessing) me *with* your smile?

FAVOUR, FAVOR (N)

“It is folly in one nation to look for disinterested *favours from* another.” (George Washington)

The student enjoys great *favor in* his teacher’s eyes.

The courtier stood high in the *favours of* the king.

The strikers were out of *favours with* their employers.

FAVOURABLE, FAVORABLE

This heavy rain is not *favorable* (i.e. appropriate) *for* a troop movement.

That verdict was not *favoursable to* me (i.e. in my *favours*).

FAWN

He *fawned on* (or *upon*) the judge throughout the court session.

FEARFUL

I am *fearful of* the outcome.

She was *fearful for* the child in that crowd.

FEAST (V)

My cat spends the summer *feasting on* birds.

FEED (V)

They *fed* the incriminating papers *into* a shredder.

I *fed on* carrots and fed the leftovers *to* my hamster.

“China is *feeding* one-fifth of the world’s population *with* produce grown on only 7% of the planet’s arable land.” (Michael S. Serrill, Time mag., Nov. 7, ‘94)

FEEL (V)

“Every cell in your body is totally aware of how you think and *feel about* yourself.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

She *felt* (i.e. groped) *for* her keys in the dark.

I *feel for* (i.e. commiserate with) you in that dank cell of a room.

It *feels like* (i.e. promises to be) a storm coming on.

FEND

It was *fend for* yourself or die of starvation.

FIDELITY

His *fidelity to* her was legendary.

FIGHT (N)

“Life’s *fight against* probability goes on at many levels.” (The Economist)

It boiled down to a *fight for* my life.

“There is *fight in* the old dog yet.”

(World Book Dictionary)

The rich man’s heirs were locked in a *fight over* his estate.

The soldiers were ready for a *fight to* the bitter end.

FIGHT (V)

“It is often easier to *fight for* a principle than to live up to it.” (Adlai Stevenson)

180,000 African Americans *fought in* the (American) Civil War.

Soldiers in “that terrible exercise called war, *fight over* land that doesn’t care and *for* ideas soon forgotten.”

(Gregory Jaynes, Life mag.)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

FIGURE (v)

He wanted to design a computer that would **figure out** (i.e. deduce) *for* itself what some of the rules of composition are.

“The conspiratorial strain, like the violent strain, has **figured** largely *in* the American past.”

(Jan Morris, Destinies)

FILL (v)

Fill the pool *up to* this mark.

The scribes **filled** whole libraries *with* their commentaries on the scriptures.

FILTER (v)

The oil **filtered** *through* the floor *into* the basement.

FINANCE

“He **financed** himself *through* college.”

(World Book Dictionary)

Can you **finance** that purchase *with* the help of a bank loan?

All those initiatives should be **financed** *by* business.

“In Britain, the creation in 1948 of a national health service (was) **financed** *from* taxation.” (The Economist)

FIND

The jury decided to **find** *for* (i.e. express a decision in favour of) the accused, *against* the prosecution.

I’m **finding** (i.e. discovering) everything but drugs *in* this man’s pockets.

FINE (N)

He imposed a **fine** *of* fifty dollars *on* every person there.

FINE (v)

Are you going to **fine** me *for* walking across my own lawn?

FIRE (v)

Damn if he didn’t **fire** *at* me!

He **fired** *at* the intruder *with* an old army rifle.

We were ordered to **fire** tear gas *into* the crowd.

They must have **fired** from *that* hedge.

“The neuron is the brain’s relay station. When it receives an electrical signal, it **fires** neurotransmitters *to* receptors on the next neuron, triggering another electrical impulse that carries on the message.” (Sharon Begley with John Carey and Ray Sawhill, Newsweek mag., Feb. 7, ‘83)

FIRM

I was **firm** (i.e. stubborn) *in* my resolve to pursue the matter.

Make sure that machine is **firm** (i.e. solid) *on* its foundation.

He was very **firm** *of* purpose (i.e. determined).

I shall have to be **firm** (i.e. forceful) *with* you.

FIT (A)

I am not **fit** (i.e. qualified) *for* that job.

She is not **fit** *to* live (i.e. worthy of living) in our home.

FIT (v)

“You are **fitted** (i.e. possess the proper qualifications) *for* society and it is shameful you should be exiled from it.” (Jane Austen, Oxford English Dictionary)

Can you **fit** (i.e. measure) me *for* a new overcoat?

“The DNA is so narrow and compacted that all the genes in all my body cells would **fit** *into* an ice cube; yet if the DNA were unwound and joined together end to end, the strand could stretch from the earth to the sun and back more than four hundred times.” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

“The invaders (bacteria, protozoa, fungi and viruses) are too tiny to see. Indeed some are so small that more than 200 million would **fit** (i.e. find room) *on* the period at the end of this sentence.”

(Peter Jaret, National Geographic/Reader’s Digest)

Why not **fit** the hose bracket (i.e. affix) *to* the side of the house?

“Why do you laugh? It **fits** not *with* (i.e. is not suitable to) this hour.” (Shakespeare, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

I should **fit** (i.e. furnish) that room *with* cupboards.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

FITNESS

His *fitness for* this job is in question.

FITTING

It is not *fitting for* him to enter the church.

FIX (v)

“Atoms are considerably more dependable (as timekeepers), because the frequencies at which they can emit and absorb electromagnetic energy are *fixed by* the laws of quantum mechanics.”

(Gary Taubes, *Discover* mag.)

“Nothing *fixes a thing so intensely in* the memory as the wish to forget it.” (Montaigne)

“Broken genes cause a variety of illnesses. Genetic surgeons can now go into a cell and *fix those genes with an unlikely scalpel: a virus.*”

(Geoffrey Montgomery, *Discover* mag.)

Note: Can also be followed by *on, near, over, to, under*, etc., according to what follows. For example: The wasp nest was *fixed to* the wood, *in* the corner, *under* the porch, *near* the entrance.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), it can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

FIXED

“He remained *fixed in* his integrity.” (Hilaire Belloc)

FLATTER

“*Flatter my sorrows with* report of it.”

(Shakespeare, Richard III, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

Do not *flatter me with* vapid compliments.

“More people are *flattered into* virtue than bullied out of vice.” (Robert Smith Surtees)

FLAVOUR, FLAVOR (v)

I like to *flavour* my milk *with* a little chocolate.

FLEECE (v)

He *fleeced* his mother *of* everything she owned.

FLIRT (v)

He *flirted* outrageously *with* me.

FLOAT (v)

“Mitochondria are long, skinny bundles of enzymes that *float around* your cells, turning chemicals into energy.”

(Paul Hoffman, *Discover* mag.)

“Were it not for tiny plants *floating in* the sea, we would be smothered by a thick cloud of carbon dioxide.”

(Robert Kunzig, *Discover* mag.)

Kozo Ishizaki, a Japanese inventor, has “made tiny, perfect spheres of polyethylene simply by heating a rough chunk of polyethylene as it *floats in* compressed argon.” (*Discover* mag., 1992)

They swam in the Dead Sea, *floating like* corks.

“The treasures of Africa were *floated on* rafts *to* the mouth of the Euphrates.”

(Gibbon, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

FLOOD (v)

The fields were *flooded with* icy water *by* the spring melt-off.

FLOURISH (v)

“The Netherlands, after all, has *flourished* more than 12 feet *below* sea level for hundreds of years.”

(Philip Elmer-Dewitt, *The Economist*)

“.. Protective bacteria have long been known to *flourish in the colon.*” (Sarah Richardson, *Discover* mag.)

“They can *flourish on* many different foods.”

(*The Economist*)

FLOW (v)

“Praise God, *from* whom all blessings *flow.*”

(Bishop T. Ken, *Doxology*)

“When developing intuition, the goal is to create ways to allow information to *flow from* the super conscious to the conscious.” (Bill Cautz, *Omni* mag., April ‘92)

“In the universes of both Newton and Einstein, time *flows* backward *into* the past as readily as it does forward *into* the future.” (Rob Wechsler, *Discover* mag.)

The stream is in flood and *flowing over* the dam.

The river *flows* all the way *to* the sea.

FLY (v)

“5000 million birds *fly across* the Mediterranean in the Fall, from Europe to Africa.” (Richard Attenborough)

She *flew* (i.e. sprang) *at* my face, fingers curled like claws.

“Research & Development has begun on hypersonic craft that would take off from a runway and *fly into* orbit.” (Leon Jaroff, *Time* mag.)

First, he *flew over* the bridge, then circled back to bomb it.

He *flew* his plane *under* the bridge, and was promptly cashiered.

“Old age is like a plane *flying through* a storm. Once you’re aboard, there is nothing you can do.” (Anon.)

FOAM (v)

“Ross Clark *foams with* rage *at* the absurdities of the British quarantine system.” (*The Spectator*, Aug.20, ‘94)

FOB (v)

I *fobbed off* (i.e. sold) a worthless watch *on* the poor unsuspecting fool.

He *fobbed her off* (i.e. got rid of her) *with* a rather vague promise.

FOCUS (N)

He adjusted the *focus of* the lens for a clearer image.

FOCUS (v)

“The photons in conventional lasers are emitted in all directions; only a few — *focused by* mirrors — emerge in a useful beam.” (*Discover* mag.)

“The Berkeley team . . . *focused* its efforts *on* (or *upon*) the bacterium *Pseudomonas syringae* which lives on the leaves of many plants and actually promotes the formation of frost.” (Leon Jaroff, *Time* mag.)

Why don’t you *focus* your attention *on* your homework instead of *on* the TV?

FOIST

The forged confession was *foisted at* him for his signature.

They *foisted* a self-serving clause *into* the document.

“It was the South’s attempt to *foist* the slave system *on* (or *upon*) the free territories that led to the Civil War.” (Alfred Kazin)

FOLLOW

It *follows from* your behaviour tonight that you can’t be trusted.

Almost a decade of prosperity *followed on* that discovery.

FONDNESS

She developed an overweening *fondness for* chocolate.

FOOL (v)

“You and I . . . go *fooling* about (i.e. wasting time) *with* him, and get rusticated.” (Thomas Hughes)

“Strontium-90, a product of nuclear reactors, *fools*’ (i.e. tricks) the body *into* thinking it is calcium; and concentrates in bone, where it can cause leukemia.” (Paraphrasing Patrick Moore, PhD.)

FORBID

I *forbid* you *to* go out tonight.

You are *forbidden to* go into his house.

FORCE (v)

I was *forced against* the wall by the crowd.

“The U.S. is a consumption-oriented society that systematically rewards borrowers and penalizes savers. Until recently, banks were *forced by* law to pay artificially low interest rates . . . and even this return was taxed 50%. (And) the government paid up to 50% of the cost of a loan. Is it surprising that so many Americans borrowed more than they saved?” (Robert Haavind)

They were *forcing* him *down* the shaft.

The whole mob was *forced into* the tunnel.

That was **forced** *on* me.

He was **forced** *to* make restitution.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

FOREIGN

“A purpose **foreign** *from* his pursuits helps.”
(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

Such behaviour is **foreign** *to* me.

FOREST (v)

The small cove was **forested** *with* masts and derricks.

FORGETFUL

He's often **forgetful** *of* good manners.

FORM (v)

“In 1979, (Thomas) Gold published the first of a series of papers contending that on Earth, as on other planets, most hydrocarbons (including oil) were **formed** *from* nonbiological sources.”

(David Osborne, National Geographic mag.)

“A ridge of rocky peaks, **forming** *into* two ridges about its centre.” (L. Stephen, Oxford English Dictionary)

FORMULA

“He drew up the standard **formulae** *for* papal correspondence.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

It was a **formula** *for* disaster.

FORTIFY

They **fortified** the coast *against* an invasion.

FORTUNATE

They were very **fortunate** *in* their choice of friends.

They've been very **fortunate** *with* their inheritances.

FORTUNATELY

“**Fortunately** *for* human health: both X-rays and gamma rays are filtered out by the earth's atmosphere.”
(The Economist)

FORUM

“A quarterly **forum** *for* viewpoints on the current state of the English language.” (Word Watching, Elan Bulletin)

FOSSICK (v)

He **fossicked** (i.e. searched) *for* gold in abandoned mines.
She **fossicked** (i.e. rummaged) *about* (or *around*) the room *for* the lost bracelet.

FOSSIL

They are exhibiting **fossils** *from* the Burgess Shale of Canada, the most famous of all Cambrian fossil sites.

It is the **fossil** *of* a plant long extinct.

In her views and values, her aunt was a **fossil** *of* a bygone age, an anachronism.

FOSTER (v)

That whole political mess was **fostered** *by* the mayor's intractable attitude.

The painter tried to **foster** creativity *in* his disciples.

FOUND

Note: If the 'found' you have highlighted is the present tense of the verb 'to found', then the following prepositions apply:

“That you will undertake the instruction of the young clerk . . . with the end in view of **founding** him (i.e. giving him basic training) *in* . . . Penmanship.”

(H.Allen, Oxford English Dictionary)

“He **founded** his claim *on* facts.”

(World Book Dictionary)

“Our traditional psychology has been **founded** *upon* this dichotomy, ‘the cancer of all psychology and psychiatry up to now.’” (Rollo May, The Courage to Create)

“The conspiratorial strain, like the violent strain, has figured largely in the American past, not least because it

has so often been *founded upon* hard fact.”

(Jan Morris, *Destinies*)

Note — If the ‘found’ you have highlighted is the past tense of the verb ‘to find’, then the following prepositions apply.

The jury **found for** (i.e. expressed a decision in favour of) the accused, *against* the prosecution.

I’ve **found** (i.e. discovered) everything but drugs *in* this man’s pockets.

“At least 55 different amino acids have been *found* (i.e. discovered) *in* meteorites. Only 20 of those are used by living organisms on Earth to build proteins.”

(Tom Waters, *Discover* mag.)

If drugs are **found** (i.e. discovered) *on* a person there, he or she is immediately shot.

He plans to **found** (i.e. establish) his Church *on* a godless philosophy.

FRAUGHT

“Of all the problems faced by Jews since their earliest days in America, the endless struggle over identity seems most *fraught with* anguish.”

(Hirsch Goldberg, *The Jewish Connection*)

FREE (A)

All I want is to keep my mother **free from** pain.

“Honey is one of the few foods *free of* bacteria, because it absorbs the moisture essential to their life.”

(Fred McGuinness, *Reader’s Digest*)

“Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left *free to* combat it.” (Thomas Jefferson)

She’s very **free** (i.e. carefree) *with* my money.

FREE (V)

“When the states of Europe *freed* themselves *from* papal overlordship and protection, each state encouraged nationalism as a supplement to its army and navy.”

(Fred McGuinness, *The Reader’s Digest*)

“The astronauts in outer space, *freed from* gravity, lost up to 20 percent of their calcium.”

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*)

FREEDOM

“I know but one freedom and that is the *freedom of* the mind.” (Antoine de Saint-Exupery)

“The State’s . . . civic creed left ample **freedom for** the psyche **within** the empire.” (Paul Johnson)

“Complete *freedom from* stress is death.”

(Dr. Hans Selye)

FREEHOLD

“No generation has a *freehold on* this earth. All we have is a life tenancy with a full repairing lease.”

(Margaret Thatcher, *The Economist*)

FREIGHT (V)

“The Holocaust and Auschwitz are so *freighted with* significance that we must let this story tell itself.”

(Willem Dafoe, actor)

FRET

“A scant 20,000 years ago, the rivers and lakes we now *fret about* preserving did not exist.”

(Gregg Easterbrook, *Newsweek* mag.)

The ship was **fretting at** her chains.

Her mind was **fretted** (i.e. vexed) *by* the problems of her irresponsible family.

“This majestical roof, **fretted** (i.e. adorned) *with* golden fire.” (Shakespeare)

FRICTION

She loved to cause **friction between** her friends.

There’s a lot of **friction in** this family.

FRIEND

He’s a **friend of** Mrs. Baker.

She was a **friend to** the downtrodden.

I wish I could be **friends with** my ex-wife.

FRIENDLY

That article is very **friendly to** our cause.

He’s been **friendly with** James since school days.

FROWN (N)

He came in with a **frown** *on* his face.

FROWN (V)

“He was still **frowning** *at* the engine noise.”

(Paul Th  roux)

I thought you liked me. Why are you **frowning** *upon* me?

FRUITFUL

His missionary work was always **fruitful** *of* good results.

FULL

She brought a paper bag **full** *of* apples.

The bucket of wild strawberries was **full** *to* the brim.

The basket was so **full** *with* apples, it was spilling over.

FUMBLE

He **fumbles** *at* any manual task.

She is **fumbling** *for* the earrings *in* her purse.

They **fumbled** *with* their citizenship documents.

FUNCTION (N)

The **functions** *of* the brain are impaired by alcohol.

FUNCTION (V)

“These three systems (the immune system, the nervous system and the endocrine system) are now known by physiologists to **function** *as* the master controls of the body.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

“Most (of our) critical organs can **function** well *at* 30 percent of peak capacity.”

They may have **functioned** *like* kelp.

A robot can **function** (i.e. perform) *like* a human in certain prescribed ways.

FUNDAMENTAL

This procedure is **fundamental** *to* the whole process.

FURIOUS

I’m **furious** *at* that, of course, but I’m more **furious** *with* you.

He’s **furious** *about* everything this morning.

FURNISH

The whole lobby was **furnished** (i.e. embellished) *in* art deco fashion.

I promise to **furnish** (i.e. give) the proof *to* you first thing tomorrow morning.

“The Catholic Church has long **furnished** (i.e. provided) mankind *with* its brightest dreams.”

(Winston Churchill)

FUSE (V)

“The unborn baby has 350 bones which will gradually **fuse** together *into* the 206 carried by most adult humans.”

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

FUSS (V)

You are **fussing** *about* silly details again.

She always **fusses** *over* me.

**GAIN** (N)

It's a net **gain** *for* democracy.

She had to admit a **gain** *of* four pounds in one week.

GAIN (V)

He **gains** weight *by* eating too much.

"Too many parents have forgotten that freedom **gains** meaning *from* restraint." (Roger Rosenblatt, Time mag.)

"Politics is the only profession in which mediocrities can **gain** the world's attention *through* slander." (Gore Vidal)

GAMBLE (V)

She **gambles** (i.e. invests) *in* stocks and bonds *for* a living.

They prefer to **gamble** (i.e. bet) *on* greyhounds.

I'm **gambling** (i.e. relying) *on* his going to the tavern this evening.

He likes to **gamble** *with* other people's money.

GAME (A)

Are you **game** (i.e. eager) *for* a few sets of tennis?

GAP

"A persistent **gap** *between* interest rates and income growth . . . serves warning of insolvency."

(The Economist)

"The path led me . . . through a **gap** *in* a high elder hedge."

(J.T. Story, Oxford English Dictionary)

"One of those narrow rocky **gaps** . . . *over* the line of ranges." (R. Boldrewood, Oxford English Dictionary)

GASP (V)

They **gasp**ed in amazement *at* his antics

He was **gasping** *for* breath.

GATHER

The children **gathered** *around* the maypole.

The Hindu worshippers are **gathering** *by* the Ganges.

The crowd **gathered** *in* a clearing *on* the mountaintop.

"Herrerasaurus, the most ancient dinosaur discovered to date, flourished 230 million years ago . . . when most of the earth's landmasses were **gathered** *into* a single supercontinent, now called Pangea." (Time mag.)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

GAZE (V)

She just sat there and **gazed** *at* the moon.

She was **gazing** *into* the mirror, delighted with her new hat.

"You may not, cannot, appropriate beauty. It is the wealth of the eye, and a cat may **gaze** *upon* a king." (Theodore Parker)

They spend their last days **gazing** *through* the windows.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

GENERATE

"Antibodies are **generated** *by* the immune system in response to an antigen (a foreign cell or chemical)". (Ricki Lewis)

"Some 76% of Britain's electricity is **generated** *from* coal." (The Economist, 1988)

"An adult bird can **generate** *up to* 20,000 new neurons in a single day." (Geoffrey Montgomery, Discover mag.)

GENEROSITY

He's shown great **generosity** *of* spirit.

GENEROUS

He's **generous** *in* his relations with people.
 That's very **generous** *of* you.
 Why are you always so **generous** *to* me?
 You're so **generous** *with* my money.

GENIUS

He had a **genius** *for* finding oil.

GENUFLECTION

"The public sacrifices were simply a routine **genueflection** *to* government." (Paul Johnson)

GET

I'm trying to **get** *at* (i.e. reach) that big apple up there.
 First, let me try to **get** *by* (i.e. past) you.
Get *in* the house or **get** *out of* my yard.
 "Clichés" he said, "are the best way to **get** simple ideas *into* the heads of idiots." (Len Deighton, Berlin Game)
 He **got** *round* (i.e. circumvented) that problem first.
 I'll **get** *through* (i.e. complete) this work by evening.
 We're finally **getting** *to* the bottom of (i.e. finding out about) this thing.
 You're **getting** *under* his skin (i.e. really bothering him).
 "In the U.S.A., we **get** *on* or *off* a train; in Great Britain, we **get** *in* or *out of* a train."
 (Logan Pearsall Smith, Words and Idioms)
 Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

GIBE (V)

He is always **gibing** *at* me.

GIFT (N)

I have a **gift** *for* you *from* your sister.
 The magi made a **gift** *of* myrrh and incense.
 "The weakest among us has a gift however seemingly trivial, which is peculiar to him and which worthily used will be a **gift** also *to* his race." (Ruskin)

GIFT (V)

"You can . . . be **gifted** (i.e. given) *up to* 90,000 pounds before you become liable to tax."
 (Daily Telegraph, Oxford English Dictionary)
 He is **gifted** (i.e. endowed) *with* great skills.

GIVE

What I would **give** *for* a glass of beer right now!
 He **gave** *in* (i.e. surrendered) *to* her wiles reluctantly.
 "Nietzsche worshipped the warrior. He said that the only role for man was fighting, and the only role for women, **giving** birth *to* warriors." (Len Deighton, Winter)
Give *with* grace or not at all.

GLAD

They were all **glad** *for* me.
 I'm **glad** *of* this chance to help you.
 We'll be **glad** *to* do it.

GLIMMER (V)

"The idea of ever recovering happiness never **glimmered** *in* her mind for a moment."
 (George Eliot, Oxford English Dictionary)
 "The light of a lamp **glimmered** *through* the cracks."
 (W. Cather, Oxford English Dictionary)
 "Chartres is famed for . . . windows deemed incomparable by many experts, **glimmering** *with* blues so deep that they were once said to consist of sapphires."
 (Marcy Heidish, GEO mag./Reader's Digest)

GLOAT

"Never did miser **gloat** *on* his money *with* more delight."
 (W. Irving)
 The warrior **gloated** *over* his fallen foe.
 He **gloated** *upon* my discomfiture *with* malevolent pleasure.

GLORY (v)

He **gloried** (i.e. took pride) *in* the chaos he had created.

GLUE (v)

“CAMs (cell-adhesion molecules) are the proteins that **glue** individual cells *to* one another to make tissues.”
(New York Times mag.)

GO

That **goes** *against* the grain.

He **went** *at* (i.e. attacked) the task with a vengeance.

Why don't you **go** (i.e. travel) *by* bus.

If you **go** *by* (i.e. bank on) appearances, you'll be in for a shock.

Go *for* it (i.e. pursue it with vigor), my boy.

They've **gone** *in for* (i.e. favour) silks and satins.

“Do not **go** gentle *into* that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” (Dylan Thomas)

“Hydrogen has a lower energy content than gasoline: in fact, a car can **go** (i.e. travel) some 3,000 times farther *on* a gallon of gasoline than it can *on* a gallon of hydrogen.”
(Sam Flamsteed, Discover mag.)

Just **go** *to* the next street and turn left.

I think I'll **go** *out for* a drink.

“Most of the vast bulk of War and Peace **went through** (i.e. was subjected to) at least seven drafts.”
(Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

“Something is very wrong about a free enterprise system in which we bail out a huge corporation with enormous sums of government money, but a poor fisherman often cannot **go to** the bank and get \$500 to repair his boat.”
(Walter J. Hickel, U.S. Interior Secretary)

“Wherever a thought goes, a chemical **goes with** it.”
(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

Yellow **goes** (i.e. harmonizes) *with* many colours.

I **went** (i. e. lived) *without* food for five days

GOOD

Let me do it; I'm **good** (i.e. skilled) *at* that.

This must be **good** (i.e. useful) *for* something.

That's very **good** (i.e. kind) *of* you.

That ticket is **good** (i.e. valid) *in* all respects and *under* all conditions.

You are being very **good** (i.e. helpful) *to* me.

He's **good** (i.e. skilled) *with* tools.

GOOD-NATURED

“The world is **good-natured** *to* the people who are good-natured.” (William Makepeace Thackeray)

GORGE (v)

“To . . . **gorge upon** the Church.”

(Milton, Oxford Universal Dictionary)

She **gorged** herself *with* chocolate-coated cherries.

“During excessive laughter, the head and face become **gorged** (i.e. suffused) *with* blood.”

(Darwin, Oxford Universal Dictionary)

GOSSIP (v)

She loved to **gossip** *with* her friends *about* other friends.

GRAB (v)

The passing bicyclist **grabbed** *at* her purse.

He was **grabbing** *for* the brass ring.

She **grabbed** me *with* all her strength.

GRADUATE (v)

“To say ‘I graduated college, rather than I **graduated from** college, is to be a language slob.’”

(William Safire, On Language)

GRAFT (v)

“**Graft** a damson *on* a plum tree; **graft** a plum tree *with* a damson.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

GRANT (v)

He **granted** his money *to* a foundation.

GRAPPLE

“Generations of emperors **grappled** *with* the problem of the Christian deity.” (Paul Johnson)

GRASP (N)

The lecturer had a firm **grasp** *of* his subject.

GRASP (V)

The baby **grasped** *at* everything within reach.

The poet **grasped** the crag *with* tired hands.

GRATE

His voice **grated** *on* my ears.

GRATEFUL

I'm **grateful** *to* you *for* all your trouble.

GRATITUDE

I was pleased to show my **gratitude** *to* him *for* all his kindnesses.

GREAT

“Mr Harrison is **great** *on* (i.e. very fond of) D.H. Lawrence.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

GREET

The guests were **greeted** *at* the door *by* a butler.

The young girl **greeted** her father *with* a sunny smile.

GRIEF (N)

My **grief** *at* the loss of my business almost ruined my life.

GRIEVE (V)

I **grieve** *at* your loss.

They were **grieving** *for* all their lost relatives.

He **grieved** *over* (or *about*) his life all his life.

GRIND (V)

He's been **grinding** *at* (i.e. sweating over) math all year with little success.

“It takes some 140,000 insects, **ground** *into* a fine powder, to produce one kilogram of cochineal, a natural, intense, scarlet food dye.”

(Noel Vietmeyer, International Wildlife/Reader's Digest)

GROW

“Character **grows** *from* circumstance acting on that which is within.” (Hilaire Belloc, Cromwell)

“Most of the world's top-quality vanilla, from the vanilla orchid, is **grown** *in* Madagascar . . . Cheap artificial vanilla contains only 1 of more than 150 components of natural vanilla.” (J. Naisbitt & P. Aburdene, Megatrends 2000)

“The true miracle (is), as always, the union of egg and sperm and the emergence of a cell that can **grow** *into* a human brain.” (Dr. Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

“70% of the world's commercial crop of mustard (the world's most popular condiment) is **grown** *on* about 170,000 hectares in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta (Canada).”

(W. Collins, Harrowsmith mag./Reader's Digest)

“I had **grown** (i.e. learned) *to* love the place.”

(A. Greene, Oxford English Dictionary)

“His red-gold pair of horizontal moustaches had **grown** (i.e. increased) *to* really noble proportions.”

(J. Conrad, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The garden could be begun . . . and **grow** (i.e. increase) *with* the membership of the community.”

(I. Murdock, Oxford English Dictionary)

“**Sugar-canes** **grow** *without* planting.”

(F. Brooke, Oxford English Dictionary)

GROWTH

Unemployment can stunt the **growth** *of* a nation.

GUARANTEE (v)

The British Empire did not **guarantee** free trade *to* the colonies. (Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

GUARD (v)

You will have to **guard** *against* over-exertion.

GUARDING

“**Guarding** realms and kings *from* shame.” (Tennyson)

GUESS (v)

I’ll **guess** *at* it, but I won’t bet on it.

GUIDE (v)

I promised to **guide** the children *around* the museum.

“She dropped her things and, **guided** *by* George’s voice, found the bedroom.”

(R.H. Mottram, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Good advice **guided** him *in* the choice of a career.”

(Oxford English Dictionary)

He took her by the elbow and **guided** her *into* the room.

“He took her arm to **guide** her *through* the Saturday evening crowds.” (N. Shute, Oxford English Dictionary)

I will **guide** you *to* the pass, then you’re on your own.

GUILTY

Was this woman **guilty** *of* cruelty?

H

HAGGLE

If you **haggle** *with* me *about* the price, I'll take the painting off the market.

They **haggle** *over* every item in their booth.

HAIL (v)

"Still in her 30s, she (Margaret Atwood) was **hailed** (i.e. acclaimed) *as* the 'queen bee' of Canadian letters, and was doted upon by a host of academic drones."

(Richard Marin, Montreal Gazette)

I **hail** (i.e. come) *from* the Buda side of Budapest.

It suddenly **hailed** (i.e. rained ice pellets) *on* our picnic.

HALLOW

"A place **hallowed** (i.e. consecrated) *by* memories." (World Book Dictionary)

Cap-de-la-Madeleine in Quebec is **hallowed** (i.e. made holy) *to* millions *by* the miracle of the "Bridge of Ice".

HAMMER (v)

The lawyers **hammered** *at* him till he pleaded guilty.

First, they **hammer** the spikes *into* the ground.

The boxer was **hammering** him *on* the head *with* his huge fists.

HAND (v)

"He **handed** (i.e. helped) her *into* the carriage."

(A. Trollope, Oxford English Dictionary)

You have to **hand** it *to* him (i.e. give him credit), he is clever.

Hand that ball *to* your brother, now!

HANDLE (v)

"To deliver a perfect picture, a color-video signal requires about 90 million bits per sec. Optical fibers can

handle that *with* several hundred million bits of capacity to spare" (Stephen Koepp, Time mag.)

Handle it *with* care.

HANDY

Some men are **handy** *about* the house.

The whole village of Saint-Jean-Port-Joli in Quebec seems to be **handy** *at* woodcarving.

This tool will be **handy** *for* repairing the fence.

She's surprisingly **handy** *with* a hockey stick.

HANG

You should not **hang** *about* (or *around*) that place.

You should **hang** it *from* that hook.

They **hanged** (i.e. lynched) the poor slave *from* a nearby tree.

"Even land viruses **hang out in** (i.e. live in) the sea, patiently waiting in limbo for a shot at their targets." (David H. Freedman, Discover mag.)

She **hung** (i.e. draped) her clothes *on* the branches of a tree.

The children **hung onto** (i.e. focused totally on) the storyteller's every word.

They **hung** the painting *over* the fireplace.

"The Trinity Episcopal Cathedral (in Miami) . . . the hall of which is **hung** (i.e. adorned) *with* the massed tartans of the Scottish clans." (Jan Morris, Journeys)

"Sometimes (in Houston) you can taste the old spite and coarseness of the South. Macho rednecks ride ostentatiously around with guns **hanging in** their pickup cabs." (Jan Morris, Journeys)

They found him **hanging from** a tree limb.

He was found **hanging on to** the chimney of his flooded home.

I found my towel **hanging over** the fence.

The boy found his jacket **hanging under** the bridge.

HANKER

Even from his prison cell, he **hankered** *after* power.

“Hanker *for* a glimpse of home.”

(Fowler, Modern English Usage)

HAPPEN

“Worse than the clear-cutting of the Earth’s forests . . . bottom trawling (of the ocean floor) **happens** *around* the world . . . there are nearly 89,000 trawlers (in operation in 1998) . . . Researchers said 5.9 million square miles of ocean floor are scraped each year, about twice the area of the contiguous United States.”

(Seth Borenstein, Knight Ridder Newspapers)

“I believe Bergson once said towards the end of his life that everything good that **happened** *in* the world since Christ has happened through Him.”

(Karl Stern, The Pillar of Fire)

I **happened** (i.e. came by chance) *on* (or *upon*) the accident at a turn in the trail.

Aldous Huxley said: “Experience is not what **happens** *to* you; it is what you do with what **happens** *to* you.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

HARD

You will find him **hard** *at* (i.e. concentrated on) his task.

The old dear is very **hard** *of* hearing (i.e. deaf).

Walking on cobblestones is **hard** (i.e. punishing) *on* one’s feet.

He’s very **hard up** *for* (i.e. short of) photos of that period.

HARD-WIRE

“Some defenses (against infectious diseases) are **hard-wired** *into* our genes.” (Jared Diamond, Discover mag.)

It’s **hard-wired** *into* us all.

“We are all born with the same fundamental grammar **hard-wired** *into* our brains, and we are preprogrammed to pick up the additional rules of the local language, just as baby ducks are **hard-wired** *to* follow the first big animal they see when they hatch.”

(N. Chomsky, as reported by Matt Cartmill, Discover mag.)

HARMFUL

“The ambition, greed, tyranny . . . negligence and brutal insensitivity (of fathers) are a hundred times more **harmful** *to* children than the unthinking tenderness of mothers.” (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Emile)

HARNESS

“Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall **harness** *for* God the energies of love; and then, for the second time in the history of the world, man will discover fire.”

(Pierre Teilhard de Chardin)

Modern totalitarianism is **harnessed** *to* high technology and mechanized power.

HARP

Don’t harp *on* (or *upon*) the subject; drop it.

Why do you keep **harping** *on* (or *upon*) that subject?

He had **harped** *on* the subject till I wanted to hit him.

HARVEST (v)

“With just one application of 16 percent methanol, Nonomura **harvested** an additional 12 tons of watermelons *from* two and a half acres.”

(Discover mag., April ’93)

HATEFUL

“Smoking: A custom loathsome to the eye, **hateful** *to* the nose, harmful to the brain and dangerous to the lungs,” wrote James I, King of England, in 1604. “Too few listened to the “wisest fool in Christendom” then or since.” (The Economist)

HAUL (v)

“Blood, five litres or so in a typical adult, is the river of life, coursing through close to 100,000 km of blood vessels to deliver oxygen and nutrients to and **haul** waste products *from* every part of the body.”

(Roderick Jamer, CARP NEWS)

Most of the wheat is **hailed** *by* freight train *to* the coast.

HEAD (v)

She will **head down** the aisle sooner or later.

“In the middle of West Berlin there is no darkness, at the edges no light. They were **heading for** the light.”

(John Le Carré, The little drummer girl)

She **headed in** the wrong direction.

Our plane is **heading right into** storm clouds.

The ship finally **headed out to** sea.

Finally, they **headed toward** me.

HEAL

She was **healed of** her disease by chemotherapy.

HEAR

“In a sense, we doctors are like employees at the complaint desk of a large department store. We tend to get a biased view of the quality of the product (the human body) when we **hear about** its aches and pains all day.” (Dr. Paul Brand, Fearfully & Wonderfully Made)

We have not **heard from** him since last Tuesday.

“12% of all adults living in New York City (late in 1965) never **heard of** the 1964-65 New York World’s Fair.” (Charles F. Adams, Common Sense in Advertising)

HEARKEN

“She **hearkens** (i.e. listens) **for** his hounds and **for** his horn.” (Shakespeare)

Harken (i.e. pay heed) **to** (or **unto**) my words, pilgrim.

HEART

The women had no **heart for** fox hunting.

It was a strange feeling to hold the **heart of** a man in my hands.

The two chatted **heart to heart** till darkness invaded the room.

HEAVE

The ships **hove into** view (i.e. appeared) with the dawn.

“In the end, (Sao Paulo) will have no choice but to **heave** (i.e. raise) that other Brazil **up to** their level.”

(The Economist)

HEEDFUL

She was **heedful of** my warning and lived to tell her tale.

HEEDLESS

They drove **heedless of** all the stop signs.

HEIR

He was the only legitimate **heir of** the baronet.

I was the sole **heir to** my family’s fortune.

HELL-BENT

The cowboy was **hell-bent for** the rodeo prize.

“Few tasks are more daunting than standing in the path of a charging theoretical physicist who is **hell-bent on getting funding** for the next particle accelerator.” (Eugene Linden, Time mag.)

HELP (N)

There’s just no **help for** it.

She got through the day with the **help of** a couple of aspirins.

You’ve been a great **help to** him.

HELP (v)

Two volunteers **helped** him **down** the stairs.

She **helped** him **in** the most difficult period of his life.

A neighbour **helped** him **into** his wheelchair.

“He did not **help** himself **to** any food.”

(Scott, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

Would you **help** her **over** that fence.

Just **help** him **through** the worst part of the swamp.

Please **help** him **with** that heavy lawnmower.

Exercise **helps with** circulation.(modern)

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

HERALD (v)

(Eric) “Gill’s strong uncomplicated lines and wide-eyed primitive heads seemed to have been **heralded in** the

works of Gauguin and Cézanne.”

(Fiona MacCarthy, Eric Gill)

HIDE

The three-year-old liked to **hide** *behind* the cupboard.

“The great secret, known to internists and learned early in marriage by (their) wives, but still *hidden from* the general public, is that most things get better by themselves . . . (usually) by morning.”

(Dr. Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

Hide your purse *from* view at the first opportunity.

The plane climbed till it was **hidden** *in* the clouds.

He **hid** *under* the bed.

HINDER

They were **hindered** *from* doing a good job in every way possible.

The foreman seemed to take pleasure in **hindering** me *in* my work.

HINDRANCE

He has been a **hindrance** *to* his party from the start.

HINGE

“Creative invention almost always *hinges on* creative observation.” (Robert Friedel, Discover mag., Oct. ‘96)

The debate in court **hinged** *upon* the fact that he was seen in the neighbourhood that night.

HINT

He **hinted** *at* violence *with* a smile on his face.

I am reluctant to **hint** *to* the mother that her child has misbehaved.

HITCH

Hitch your wagon *to* a star. (Emerson)

HITCHED

“The famous naturalist John Muir declared, ‘Whenever we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it *hitched to* everything else in the universe.’”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

HITCHHIKE

If you think you can **hitchhike** (i.e. build) *on* (or *onto*) this idea, you’re welcome to try.

I proposed to fly to Vancouver, then **hitchhiked** (i.e. thumbed a ride) *from* Vancouver *to* Alaska.

HOICK

“(It) transformed the French theater, **hoicking** it *out of* the noble stasis of Corneille and Racine.”

(Time mag., April 27, ‘98)

HOISTED

“With a little brown backpack **hoisted** *on* his shoulders, Paul Theroux was on his travels.”

(Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

“To have the engineer **hoist** *with* his own petard.” (Shakespeare)

HOLD

They’re **holding** him *for* ransom.

Just **hold** *on to* me till I get you to shore.

Well, they **held** me *to* my word, so I had to do it.

I don’t **hold** (i.e. agree) *with* your insane plan.

HOLLOW

They found the tree stump **hollowed** *by* rot and ants.

“A Grotto **hollowed** *in* the Rock.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

I **hollowed** the log *with* an axe.

HOME

Millions of birds **home** *in on* their small island every spring.

HOME

I took her to a **home** *for* the aged.

“A mere 33 of 30,000 known oil fields hold half the world’s known reserves. The Middle East is *home to* 25 of these giant fields, and *to* 60% of known oil reserves.”

(David Osborne, National Geographic mag.)

HONEST

“Being entirely **honest** *with* oneself is good exercise.”
(Sigmund Freud)

HONOUR, HONOR (V)

He was **honored** *by* his peers.

She was **honored** *in* absentia.

“Students liked to **honour** him (Ibsen) *with* torchlight processions.” (Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

HONOUR, HONOR (N)

It’s an **honour** *for* him just to be here.

We should do something in **honor** *of* that deed.

That’s a big **honour** *to* me.

HOOK (V)

His golf ball **hooked** (i.e. curved) *to* the right and *into* the woods.

Why don’t we **hook** (i.e. attach) your car *onto* my trailer till we find a garage?

HOP (V)

The kangaroo **hopped** *over* the fence.

The wallaby **hopped** *across* the lawn, *around* that tree, *over* the hedge, and *through* the park.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

HOPE (V)

They **hoped** *against* hope *for* a reprieve.

He **hoped** *for* rain, but refused to pray for it.

HOPE (N)

There’s **hope** *for* me yet.

You haven’t a **hope** *in* hell *of* making that jump.

HOPEFUL

I am not very **hopeful** *about* the outcome; are you?

How **hopeful** are you *of* a victory today?

HORRIFY

She was **horrified** *at* his intention.

I was **horrified** *by* his tale of woe.

HORROR

I’ve had a **horror** *of* dentists since I was a child.

The **horrors** *of* hell.

HOSPITALIZE

“In 1985 . . . thirty-five thousand (Americans) were **hospitalized** *with* salmonellosis, which killed more than 1,000 people and left 120,000 others with chronic crippling diseases like arthritis.”

(Penny Ward Moser, Discover mag.)

HOSTILE

Why are you so **hostile** *to* me?

HOSTILITY

Her **hostility** *to* me was obvious to everyone in the room.

HOUSE (V)

We were **housed** *in* a trailer truck for the better part of a year.

HUNGER (V)

She **hungered** *after* sainthood.

He **hungered** *for* love all his young life.

HUNGRY

“People are **hungry** *for* marvels, and the world is full of them. People don’t see them even though they are right under their noses.”

(Robertson Davies, What’s Bred in the Bone)

HUNT (V)

They **hunt** *by* night.

“Some (seals) routinely forgo breathing for as long as 20 minutes, while **plunging** thousands of feet below the ocean’s surface to **hunt** *for* fish and squid.” (Discover mag.)

He **hunted** *in* the reserve till he was shot to death himself.

They **hunted** in vain *through* the night.
Why shouldn't he **hunt** *with* binoculars only?

HURL

“Franz Liszt’s ambition: to *hurl* my lance as far as possible *into* the boundless realm of the future.”
(Christopher Porterfield, Smithsonian)

HURRY (v)

They were **hurrying** *across* the bridge, as if afraid it would collapse.

He **hurried** *to* the station *for* the afternoon train.

I want you to **hurry** *into* the room and begin dusting everything in sight.

HURT (v)

“I have never been **hurt** *by* anything I didn't say.”
(Calvin Coolidge)

I

IDEA

Have you any **idea** *of* the damage you've just caused?

IDEAL (A)

This place is **ideal** *for* a picnic.

IDEAL (N)

He couldn't live up to her **ideal** *of* justice.

IDENTICAL

"Brain waves of hypnotized persons . . . are **identical with** the waking state." (Lyll Watson, Lifetide)

Note: Never *to*.

IDENTIFY

"A complex protein, produced in a nasal gland, has been **identified as** the chemical messenger that carries aromas to the odor-sensing nerves in the nose."

(AP Washington/Montreal Gazette)

I just **identified** (i.e. put the finger on) the criminal *for* the police.

"Biometric security systems . . . **identify** a person *by* his or her voice, fingerprint, hand geometry, or retinal pattern." (Sam Diamond)

"Seventy percent of the 3,000 plants **identified to date by** the National Cancer Institute (U.S.) *as* offering potential cures for cancer are indigenous to tropical rain forests." (Omn mag., May '91)

"To Hitler, the nuclear field was **identified with** Einstein and Jewish physics." (The Economist mag.)

IDEOLOGY

"Growth for the sake of growth is the **ideology of** the cancer cell."

(Edward Abbey, The Nine Nations of North America)

IGNORANCE

His **ignorance of** their customs got him into deep trouble.

IGNORANT

They are **ignorant of** the most basic hygiene.

ILL

The news is that things are going desperately **ill** (i.e. badly) *for* him.

She became **ill** (i.e. sick) *with* fever.

IMBED

"Beams of reinforced concrete, *in* which iron (and later steel) rods or mesh were **imbedded** to provide strength, were introduced by the French engineers Joseph Monier and François Hennebique."

(Reader's Digest Library of Modern Knowledge)

I found my favorite shovel **imbedded in** the manure pile.

IMBUE

"Marshall Lyautey, the great French Governor-General of Morocco, described (French) colons as 'every bit as bad as the Boches, **imbued with** the same belief in inferior races whose destiny is to be exploited.'"

(Paul Johnson, A history of the Modern World)

He has **imbued** all his children *with* a strong desire to help.

IMITATION

He was famous for his **imitation of** Winston Churchill.

IMMERSE

She was totally **immersed in** her book.

IMMIGRATE

They're **immigrating** *into* Canada in search of a better life.
 "The expense of **immigrating** (i.e. bringing in) coolie labour *from* the East Indies." (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

IMMUNE

I'm now **immune** *against* malaria.
 "The monarchy cannot be **immune** *from* the extraordinary change in British Society." (The Economist mag.)
 "In addition to offering much greater transmission capacity than metal cable, fiber optics are **immune** *to* electrical noise, such as the switching on of a large electric motor." (Robert Haavind)

IMMUNITY

He paid the witch doctor a princely sum for **immunity** *against* all tropical diseases.
 "He was drunk . . . with the drunkard's sublime **immunity** *to* the hazards of the world." (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

IMMUNIZE

The mercenaries were **immunized** *against* every known tropical disease.

IMMURE

She virtually **immured** herself *in* (or *within*) that one room for almost 40 years.

IMPACT (N)

"The emergence of Einstein as a world figure . . . is a striking illustration of the dual **impact** *of* great scientific innovators *on* mankind. They change our perception of the physical world and increase our mastery of it. But they also change our ideas."
 (Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)
 His **impact** *upon* (or *on*) me is immeasurable.

IMPAIRMENT

"New studies have uncovered evidence of serious physical and intellectual **impairment** *in* children with only small amounts of lead in their blood."
 (Michael Weisskopf, Discover mag.)

The terrible noise caused a permanent **impairment** (i.e. deterioration) *of* her hearing.

IMPART

He was able to **impart** both life and interest *to* botany.

IMPATIENCE

Her **impatience** *at* delays grew day by day.
 My **impatience** *for* her to come home grew by the minute.
 His **impatience** *of* continuous correction finally grew explosive.
 The judge's **impatience** *with* law clerks was famous.

IMPATIENT

You're far too **impatient** *about* her idiosyncrasies.
 They were **impatient** *at* being held up so long.
 He stood hatless in the rain, **impatient** *for* news of her condition.
 Her children were **impatient** *of* her constant corrections.
 She was so **impatient** *with* my child that I scolded her about it.

IMPEACH

They were **impeached** *of* misdemeanor. (British)
 He was finally **impeached** *with* tax evasion.
 They intend to **impeach** him *with* treason.

IMPENETRABLE

The new plastic proved **impenetrable** *by* X-rays.
 The car's windows were **impenetrable** *to* passersby.

IMPERVIOUS

He proved **impervious** *to* my broadest hints.

IMPINGE

The rock **impinged** *against* the wire fence where it had fallen.

“The scientific genius *impinges on* humanity, for good or ill, far more than any statesman or warlord.”

(Paul Johnson, The History of the Modern World)

You’re *impinging upon* my concentration.

IMPLANT (v)

“The sense of the beautiful which God has *implanted in* the human soul.” (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

IMPLANTATION

“The notions of political and economic freedom both spring from the workings of the Christian conscience as a historical force; and it is thus no accident that all the *implantations of* freedom *throughout* the world have ultimately a Christian origin”.

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

IMPLICATE

There’s no question she was *implicated in* that scam.

IMPLICATION

“That the human brain functions by selection without a prewritten program has ‘the deepest *implications for* individuality, and *for* why we object to the idea of people as machines.” (Gerald Edelman, New York Times mag.)

The shadow cabinet’s *implication in* the affair was obvious.

The story suggested the *implication of* many people.

IMPLICIT

The man is *implicit in* the child.

(The Reader’s Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

IMPLY

What are you trying to *imply by* that remark?

So let’s figure out what’s *implied in* that statement.

IMPORT (v)

Everything seems to be *imported from* China these days.

They’re actually *importing* coal *into* Newcastle.

IMPORTANT

“In right-handed people, the left half of the brain is far more *important to* language use than the right half.”

(Geoffrey Montgomery, Discover mag.)

IMPOSE

“In 1916 (John Maynard Keynes) argued that the 1871 indemnity Germany had *imposed on* France had damaged both countries and was largely responsible for the great economic recession of the 1870s.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

I don’t want to *impose upon* you.

IMPOVERISH

Emigration is *impoverishing* our country *of* artists.

IMPREGNATE

“Lasers, made of glass *impregnated with* neodymium ions, are the most powerful source of near-infrared light.” (High Technology mag.)

IMPRESS

It was obvious; they were most *impressed by* (i.e. filled with admiration for) him.

The blast was *impressed* (i.e. indented) *into* the concrete wall.

The young men were *impressed into* (i.e. forced to serve in) the Navy.

If you don’t *impress it on* (or *upon*) (i.e. convince) her now, you never will.

I was *impressed with* (i.e. struck by) her performance.

IMPROVE

“There’s no point in speaking, unless you can *improve on* silence.” (Edward Muskie quoting a Maine saying)

I simply cannot *improve upon* that.

IMPROVEMENT

“The only real revolution is in the enlightenment of the mind and the *improvement of* character, the only real emancipation is individual, and the only real revolutionists are philosophers and saints.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

The food was a great **improvement** *on* our regular kind of fare.

IMPUTE

They **impute** a nobility of intent *to* me that I didn't deserve.

INACCESSIBLE

The cave was **inaccessible** *to* mere mortals.

INADEQUATE

While this salary is clearly **inadequate** *for* me in this job, it's not **inadequate** *to* my simple needs.

INCAPABLE

"Even the most brilliant scientists in the best equipped laboratories are still **incapable** *of* copying even the simplest cells."

(Dr. Boris P. Dotsenko, Scientists Who Believe)

INCENSE (V)

"Each land shall be full of you and each sea; and every one shall be **incensed** *at* your customs."

(Apocryphal prophecies about Jews)

U.S. president Woodrow Wilson "was, in particular, **incensed** *by* the torpedoing of the Irish civilian ferry Leinster, with the loss of 450 lives . . . on 12 October (1918), more than a week after the Germans had approached him for an armistice."

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

She was **incensed** *with* him; even he could tell.

INCENTIVE

There is simply no **incentive** *for* us to save.

What is the **incentive** *to* hard work?

INCIDENTAL

He enjoyed all the perks **incidental** *to* being a sports star.

Our participation in this political movement is **incidental** *upon* its goals.

INCLINATION

There's a strong **inclination** (i.e. penchant) *among* them *for* the religious life.

INCLINE (V)

Look. I could swear that house **inclines** *to* the right.

I'm afraid they strongly **incline** *towards* neo-Facism.

INCLUDE

"If freedom has no restraints and embraces everything, then it risks becoming tyranny, since logically it must **include** tyranny *among* the things it embraces."

(Roger Rosenblatt, Time mag.)

Is that tax **included** *in* the price?

How about **including** a dollar *with* every promotion.

INCLUSION

"American, British and French conservatives who talk about the great postwar success of Germany never mention the **inclusion** *of* union representatives *on* the boards of directors as a reason."

(John K. Galbraith, Guide to Economics)

INCLUSIVE

The price is **inclusive** *of* all taxes.

INCOMPATIBILITY

There is deep **incompatibility** *between* our daughters.

INCOMPATIBLE

That's **incompatible** *with* my express desire.

INCOMPETENT (A)

He's **incompetent** *as* a doctor, let alone a surgeon.

He has proved **incompetent** *in* everything he has ever tried.

INCONGRUOUS

Your casual dress is **incongruous** *to* the occasion.

(Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

The general's plan was **incongruous** *with* reason.

INCONSIDERATE

That is most **inconsiderate** *of* you.

INCONSISTENT

“One of the most fundamental principles of physics — the conservation of energy — is ***inconsistent with*** an expanding universe.” (Tim Folger, Discover mag.)

INCONVENIENT

Your office hours are too **inconvenient** *for* me most of the week.

If that date is **inconvenient** *to* you, try coming Saturday.

INCORPORATE

Why don't you **incorporate** (i.e. integrate) that item *into* your manuscript?

“Grace can no more **incorporate** (i.e. mix) *with* sin, than oil *with* water.” (Flavel)

INCREASE (N)

“The Richter scale is the most common measure of the magnitude or strength of earthquakes . . . Each whole-number increase represents a tenfold rise in the size of earthquake waves and a thirty-one fold ***increase in*** the energy released.” (Shannon Browlees, Discover mag.)

That was an **increase** *of* at least thirty pounds.

The new figures showed a marked **increase** *over* last year's.

INCREASE (V)

“Quantum physics teaches us that energy, in its transformation, does not ***increase in*** a continuum but by ‘jumps’.” (Karl Stern, The Pillar of Fire)

That mountain is **increasing** *in size by* the hour.

You can **increase** the strength of steel *by* pounding on it.

INCREDULOUS

People nowadays are **incredulous** *about* fairies and witches. (World Book Dictionary)

I was **incredulous** *of* your story from the very start.

INCULCATE

“That commandment which Christ did so often try to **inculcate** *unto* Peter.”

(Hooker, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“Mammy . . . laboured to **inculcate** *in* her the qualities that would make her . . . desirable as a wife.”

(M. Mitchell, Oxford English Dictionary)

Why do you try to **inculcate** your beliefs *on* (or *upon*) me?

INCUMBENT

All the duties **incumbent** *on* him left no time for personal pursuits.

INDEBTED

I will always be **indebted** *to* you *for* saving my life.

INDEBTEDNESS

My **indebtedness** *to* him is boundless.

INDEFATIGABLE

She is **indefatigable** *in* her quest for stardom.

INDEMNIFY

I want to be **indemnified** *against* even the slightest possibility of loss.

She expects you to **indemnify** her *for* her lost ring.

INDEPENDENT

“Dr. Wilder Penfield concluded, after studying thousands of patients, that the mind is totally ***independent of*** the brain”

(Bookjacket comment: The Mystery of the Mind by Dr. Penfield)

INDICATIVE

Isn't his suicide plainly **indicative** *of* his guilt?

INDICT

“They **indicted** our friends *as* rioters.”

(Ellwood, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

He was **indicted** *of* a criminal act twenty years ago.

INDIFFERENCE

They have shown complete **indifference** *to* the laws of the land.

INDIFFERENT

“He is (or appears to be) **indifferent** *to* the content of the policies he is pursuing.”

(Anthony King, The Economist mag.)

INDIGENOUS

The kangaroo is **indigenous** *to* Australia.

“Seventy percent of the 3,000 plants identified to date by the National Cancer Institute (U.S.) as offering potential cures for cancer are **indigenous** *to* tropical rain forests.” (Omni mag., May ‘91)

INDIGNANT

Frankly, I’m **indignant** *about* many things.

He was rightly **indignant** *at* his mistreatment because of his race.

I am **indignant** *with* you *for* behaving so uncivilly.

INDISPENSABLE

Your being here is **indispensable** *for* the success of our festival.

“A fixed creed is absolutely **indispensable** *to* freedom.”

(G.K. Chesterton, Essays)

INDISPOSE

“The long habit of living **indisposes** us *to* dying.”
(Thomas Browne)

INDISTINGUISHABLE

“Its purpose and style were **indistinguishable** *from* those of the State.” (Paul Johnson)

INDIVISIBLE

“Man seems **indivisible** *from* mankind. In the natural wild, a solitary primate is invariably a dead primate.”

(Yatri, Unknown Man)

INDOCTRINATE

They were **indoctrinated** *with* the thought that they were inferior.

INDUCT

I was **inducted** *into* the army two days after my eighteenth birthday.

INDUCTION

My **induction** *into* the navy proved a disaster.

INDULGE

“The more you **indulge** *in* anything, good or bad, but especially bad — in drugs, casual sex, violence, idiot music, stupidity, driving too fast, bad manners, rage — the more you lose. The more you abstain, the more you gain.” (Lance Morrow, Time mag.)

The operatic diva was **indulged** *with* special privileges *by* the director.

INDULGENT

They were the most **indulgent** (i.e. lenient) *of* landlords.

“The feeble old, **indulgent** (i.e. self-indulgent) *of* their ease.” (Dryden)

INELIGIBLE

I’m sorry, but you are **ineligible** *for* that award.

INFATUATED

He is plainly **infatuated** *with* her.

INFER

What can you possibly **infer** *from* my last remark?

INFERENCE

The natural **inference** *from* this would be: avoid its use.

INFERIOR

That performance is clearly **inferior** *to* your previous one.

INFEST

My whole backyard is **infested** *with* ants.

INFILTRATE

“Education **infiltrates** *from* the upper and governing classes *to* the lower.” (The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

“Carbonized remains (are) often **infiltrated** *with* mineral matter.” (Huxley)

INFIRM (A)

The poor man is **infirm** *of* mind, body and spirit.

INFIRMITY

His **infirmity** *of* purpose is legendary.

INFLICT

“She (the Titanic) was invulnerable if as many as four of her watertight compartments were flooded. But the 300-ft. gash **inflicted** *by* an iceberg inundated five compartments.” (Otto Friedrich, Time mag.)

I intend to **inflict** pain *on* (or *upon*) anyone who insults my wife.

INFLUENCE (N)

“The brain has a civilizing **influence** *on* primitive parts.” (Sir Charles Sherrington)

“Our particular reader is most usually a wife and mother — the central radiating **influence** *over* an American family.” (Good Housekeeping mag.)

“Have you any **influence** *with* any of the electors?” (Oxford English Dictionary)

INFLUENCE (V)

“All of us possess creative talent. The difference is only in degree, and that degree is largely **influenced** *by* effort.” (Alex Osborne, Your Creative Power)

INFORM

I will **inform** her *of* that fact tomorrow morning.

INFUSE

“The power to create and the power to love, that’s what sex is about, not orgasms. It is about creating a life which God will **infuse** *into* an infinite soul.”

(Dr. Gordon McCoy, surgeon)

“At his peak, Horowitz had it all flawless technique, physical power, unearthly control, heightened and amplified by a daredevil recklessness that **infused** every performance *with* an exhilarating, unabashed theatricality.” (Michael Walsh, Time mag.)

INGRATITUDE

Her **ingratitude** *for* all their help is a bad omen.

His **ingratitude** *to* his parents is hard to understand.

INHERENT

“**Inherent** *in* the Darwinian theory of selection, in (H.B.) Barlow’s opinion, is the idea that the better adapted types in a species multiply more successfully.”

(David Hellerstein, N.Y. Times mag.)

INHERIT

“Regions of DNA . . . are as distinctive as individual fingerprints. People **inherit** their DNA pattern *from* their parents, so the (so-called) fingerprints can settle paternity cases with virtual certainty.”

(Dr. Alec Jeffreys, New Scientist mag.)

INHIBITION

“He (Henrik Ibsen) had deep **inhibitions** *about* sex.”

(Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

INIMICAL

She was very **inimical** *to* my ideas from the start.

I feel very **inimical** *toward* you today.

INITIATE

He wanted to be **initiated** *into* a secret society. Any secret society.

INJECT

Injecting a foreign protein *into* a person or animal usually triggers a strong immune response.

He was **injected** *with* a lethal dose of the chemical.

INKLING

“Crucial though the blood-brain barrier may be, doctors long had no *inkling of its existence*.”

(Natalie Angier, Discover mag.)

INNOCENT

“To confess a folly freely is the next thing to being *innocent of it*.” (Publius Syrus)

INOCULATE

“In 1796, Edward Jenner proved people *inoculated with* cowpox-infected material would fail to develop smallpox even when directly exposed to it.” (Man Alive mag.)

INQUEST

There should be an **inquest** *into* the circumstances of that death. (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

An **inquest** *on* the victim is planned for next week.

INQUIRE

He **inquired** (i.e. tried) to find out) *about* my whereabouts.

Did she **inquire** (i.e. ask) *after* my health.

She is **inquiring** (i.e. looking) *for* Mr. Parsons.

They were **inquiring** *into* (i.e. investigating) my personal business.

INQUIRY

An **inquiry** *into* her death is set for next Monday.

INQUISITION

I don't like this **inquisition** *into* my business.

INQUISITIVE

She is so **inquisitive** *about* my business.

INROAD

She planned to make a considerable **inroad** *into* his privacy.

You are making a lot of **inroads** *on* (or *upon*) my time these days.

INSCRIBE

My father's words are **inscribed** *in* (i.e. engraved on) my memory.

“Francesca . . . **inscribed** (i.e. wrote) the figure 4 *on* the margin of her theatre programme.”

(Saki, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Archeologists have discovered a 2,000-year-old clay wine jug *inscribed* (i.e. engraved) *with* the name of King Herod.” (Associated Press, The Gazette, Montreal, July 9, '96)

“A super-powerful scanning transmission electron microscope . . . can punch a trillion tiny holes in a pinhead, or *inscribe* it *with* (i.e. engrave on it) the entire contents of the Encyclopedia Britannica's 29 volumes.”

(Arthur Fisher, Discover mag.)

INSCRUTABLE

“The ways of Providence are **inscrutable** *to* man!”

INSENSIBLE

He is totally **insensible** *to* their toadying.

“**Insensible** *to*, but **unconscious of**; **indifferent** *to*, but **oblivious of**.” (Fowler, The King's English)

INSENSITIVE

He is **insensitive** *to* her needs.

INSEPARABLE

“In man, the whole biological evolution is *inseparable from* cultural evolution.” (Yatri, Unknown Man)

INSERT (v)

The caretaker tried to **insert** the key *in* the rusty lock.

“Take the *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT) toxin, the gene for which has been *inserted into* a number of plants to make them unattractive to scavenging caterpillars.”

(The Economist)

INSIGHT

“We have an **insight** *into* the Church’s view of secular sanctity.” (Paul Johnson)

INSINUATE

“When it infects a cell, the AIDS virus needs to **insinuate** (i.e. insert) a copy of its own genes *into* the genes of its host.” (The Economist mag.)

INSIST

“If mankind **insists on** antagonizing it, the planet Earth will be the most dangerous and determined opponent ever to face the human race.”
(Robert Musel, Montreal Star newspaper)

INSPECT

I inspected the whole house *for* ants.

INSPIRATION

“This is the first time I’ve heard of anybody getting **inspiration from** an office building.” (Edwin Newman)
“The names of (Eric Gill’s) 13 children were intended to serve as an **inspiration to** their lives.”
(Fiona MacCarthy, Eric Gill)

INSPIRE

“I was **inspired by** a mighty faith in the marvellousness of everything.”
(Charles Dickens, Memories of His Childhood)
They **inspire** hope *in* me.
I was **inspired with** hope.

INSTALL (VV)

I had a new phone **installed in** my office last week.

INSTILL

“Unless parents **instill** a love of learning *in* their kids, the best schools in the world will only be playing catch-up from the first day of class.”
(Anthony W. Hanson, Time mag.)
We tried our best to **instill** ambition *into* our children, but with little success.

INSTINCT (A)

The whole affair was **instinct** (i.e. filled) *with* promise.

INSTINCT (N)

“The French **instinct** has been more *for* conquest and exploration than *for* settlement.”
(Sanche de Gramont, The French)
“The true **instinct of** genius.”
(Hamerton, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

INSTRUCT

I was **instructed in** all the varieties of self-defence.

INSTRUCTION

“All the psychological evidence seems to suggest that an infant is predisposed to learn certain things — the classic example being the ‘deep structure’ that seems to be common to all languages. This obviously implies that the genes contain **instructions for** wiring up brains.”
(The Economist mag., June 13, ‘87)
Instructions for assembling the table are included.

INSUFFICIENT

Her plans were **insufficient for** the occasion.

INSULATE

He **insulates** himself *from* distractions *with* loud music.
“So many members of his class (the oligarchy) are safely **insulated from** the effects of racial preference by the largest affirmative-action program in the United States: legacy preference.” (Michael Lind, Harper’s mag.)
Politicians become **insulated from** reality.
The attic was **insulated with** fiberglass batting.

INTEGRATE

“Gaia . . . **integrates** living things and inanimate forces *into* a unified system, allowing both science and religion to look at life as something more than a mere accident.”
(Eugene Linden, Time mag.)
“It was Benny (Goodman) who broke the color line in music by **integrating** his band *with* the likes of Lionel

Hampton and Teddy Wilson. ‘I’m selling music, not prejudice,’ he said.” (Michael Walsh, Time mag.)

INTENT (A)

She was **intent** *on* (or *upon*) carrying out her threat.

INTENTION

The **intention** *of* the government is to eliminate our enormous public debt in the next five years.

It’s my **intention** *to* hire you at the first opportunity.

INTERACT

“Recent research suggests that at least 6,000 fungal species can **interact** *with* more than 300,000 types of higher plants.” (The Economist, Jan. 4, ’92)

INTERACTION

“There’s a need for **interaction** *between* the two parties.

Quantum mechanics (is) the science that describes the **interactions** *of* subatomic particles.”

(Tony Rothman, Discover mag.)

“Like everything else in the body, the immune system must reach a balance, and that balance must be maintained by **interaction** *with* the brain.”

(H. Besedovski, quoted by Rob Wechsler, Discover mag.)

INTERCEDE

I want you to **intercede** *for* me *with* my father.

INTERCHANGE

Gifts were **interchanged** *between* the two teams.

“Those insects that **interchange** *from* worms *to* flies.”

(Bacon, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

INTEREST (N)

“To appreciate nonsense requires a serious **interest** *in* life.” (Gelett Burgess)

INTEREST (V)

Why don’t you try to **interest** him *in* portrait painting?

I **interested** her *in* art at the museum last summer.

INTERESTED

“Albert Einstein once remarked that there were more clergymen than fellow-physicists **interested** *in* his theory of relativity.” (K.C. Cole, Los Angeles Times)

People are far more **interested** *in* people than *in* things.

INTERFERE

“Lead de-activates vitamin D and **interferes** *with* the body’s use of calcium.” (The Economist mag.)

Please don’t **interfere** *in* my business.

INTERMARRY

They **intermarried** *with* the people on the next island.

INTERMEDIATE

He built his shopping mall at a point exactly **intermediate** *between* the two highways.

INTERMIX

We **intermixed** the blue tiles *with* the white ones.

INTERPOLATE

He **interpolated** the quote *in* his speech.

INTERPOSE

He **interposed** (i.e. placed) the maple leaves *between* the pages of his book.

“I shall not **interpose** (i.e. interfere) *in* their quarrel.” (Addison)

INTERRUPTION

“Dr. Vreeland and myself witnessed repeated **interruptions** *of* their continuity.” (Kane, Oxford English Dictionary)

INTERSPERSE

He **interspersed** jokes *in* his talk.

Why don’t you **intersperse** your talk *with* some risqué stories?

INTERVENE

“Only three generations (of Kings of France) *intervened* (i.e. elapsed) *between* “L’État c’est moi” and “Après le déluge”.” (Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

The police *intervened* (i.e. interfered) *in* the riot with tear gas.

INTERVIEW (N)

“The *interview* of Satan *with* the Lord (appears) in the first and second chapters of Job.” (B. Taylor, Faust)

INTIMATE (A)

I was never *intimate with* her.

INTIMATE (V)

She *intimated to* me that her marriage was not a bed of roses.

INTRIGUE (V)

They were *intrigued* (i.e. fascinated) *by* her lies.
She *intrigued* (i.e. plotted) *with* my competitor.

INTRODUCE

“The Julian calendar was *introduced* (i.e. brought into use) *in* the year 44 B.C.” (Lockyer)

“I realized that human beings were *introduced into* the universe for an important reason. They’re like bees who go out and get honey without realizing they’re performing cross-pollination.”

(Buckminster Fuller, on his 86th birthday)

“I was whirled around the hall and *introduced* (i.e. presented) *to* everybody.” (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

INTRODUCTION

“The *introduction of* realism *into* literature in the eighteenth century by Richardson, Fielding and Smollett was like the *introduction of* electricity *into* engineering.” (Tom Wolfe)

INTRUDE

She didn’t *intrude into* the party; I invited her.

“It was almost as if he had *intruded upon* his own thoughts.” (John Le Carré, The Night Manager)

INUNDATES

She *inundated me with* facts.

INURE

They shall be *inured by* force, if need be.

We shall try to *inure* them *to* sin *for* the salvation of their soul.

The have-nots who are *inured to* misery.

“Only older North American drivers, with the long distances they habitually travel on good roads with competent machines, have become *inured to* the automobile as toy and as manhood metaphor.” (Trevanian, Shibumi)

INVEIGH

He *inveighed against* my every plan.

INVEIGLE

She *inveigled me into* stealing her brother’s watch.

He *inveigled* the poor girl *into* his home.

INVENT

“Anti-matter was *invented by* Paul Dirac in 1930.” (The Economist, Jan. 4, ‘92)

INVENTIVE

“He was miraculously *inventive with* sea and shore descriptions.” (Rachel Billington, Financial Times)

INVEST

“In 1960, Theodore M. Maiman *invested* (i.e. introduced) the glare of a flash lamp *in* a rod of synthetic ruby; from that first laser on earth he extorted a burst of crimson light so brilliant it outshone the sun.”

(Allen A. Boraiko, Lasers)

“*Invest in* inflation. It’s the only thing going up.” (Will Rogers)

It wasn't much of a job, but it *invested* (i.e. endowed) him *with* a little authority.

He was *invested with* (i.e. awarded) the Order of Canada.

INVESTIGATION

There was simply no time for an *investigation of* the whole matter.

An *investigation* was ordered *into* the whole sordid affair.

INVESTMENT

"Amount of direct (Canadian) *investment in* the United States: \$43.3 billion. Of direct American *investment in* Canada: \$75.2 billion." (Macleans's mag., 1989)

It's well worth the *investment of* my time.

INVISIBLE

The house was *invisible from* the road.

It was *invisible to* the naked eye.

INVITATION

Somebody once said that mistakes are simply *invitations to* try again.

INVOLVE

"Genetic diseases are *involved in* most human deaths. We are all of us time bombs, differing from one another only in the triggering agent, the length of the fuse, and the inevitability of the explosion."

(Jared Diamond, Discover mag.)

"If the basic chemicals *involved in* the photosynthesis process are mixed in a library solution, nothing much happens." (Life Science Library, The Cell)

He was thoroughly *involved with* the triggering mechanism, and forgot his fear.

INVOLVEMENT

Wider government *involvement in* health care came only in the 1960s.

INVULNERABLE

Her life was such that she was *invulnerable to* gossip.

IRRELEVANT

That is *irrelevant to* the subject at hand.

IRRESPECTIVE

He went for a walk, *irrespective of* her helpless condition.

ISOLATE

The country was *isolated by* towering mountains.

"Peter Oeltgen . . . believes he has *isolated* a molecule *from* the blood of hibernating mammals that is responsible for the dramatic seasonal slowing of their metabolic processes."

(Andrew C. Revkin, Discover mag.)

ISSUE (N)

Please don't make an *issue of* it.

She took *issue with* the first words out of his mouth.

ISSUE (V)

"Every great advance in science has *issued* (i.e. originated) *from* a new audacity of imagination."

(John Dewey)

J

JAM (v)

They **jammed** (i.e. squeezed) the truck *against* the great doors. The place was **jammed** (i.e. crammed) *to* the doors with revelers.

“The ship, stuck fast . . . **jammed** (i.e. wedged) *in between* the two rocks.”

(DeFoe, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

A child is reputed to have **jammed** his finger *into* (i.e. blocked) the hole in the dike.

Hats are **jammed** tightly *on* (i.e. squeezed onto) the head. (The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

JAUNT (n)

He went for a **jaunt** *through* the park *in* his neighbourhood.

JEALOUS

“He was “**jealous** *for* the good name of the family.” (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

I’ve always been **jealous** *of* their prerogatives.

JEER (v)

They spent most of lunch hour **jeering** *at* her. He **jeers** *at* the crowd at every town meeting.

JEST (v)

Please **jest** *about* anything but that.

“Verily I do not **jest** *with* you.” (Shakespeare)

JOIN (v)

“DNA, the basic material of genes, consists of two strands of nucleic acids, sense and antisense, **joined** *in* the familiar double helix.”

(Geoffrey Montgomery, Discover mag.)

Why don’t you use a gate to **join** the garage *onto* the house? “Civilization . . . has to do not with things but with the invisible ties that **join** one thing *to* another.”

(Antoine de Sainte-Exupery, Wartime Writings)

They **joined** *with* the crowd at the first opportunity.

JOKE (v)

I wouldn’t **joke** *about* that if I were you.

You are **joking** *with* me.

JOURNEY (v)

I **journeyed** *across* the Sahara *in* my sturdy Jeep.

They **journeyed** *in* London till they ran out of money.

He **journeyed** *through* life as if on a perpetual holiday.

JUDGE (v)

Do you feel competent to **judge** *between* our two submissions?

“Since the self **judges** itself *by* its own standards, it finds itself good.” (Reinhold Neibuhr)

“From its form and colour, he could . . . **judge** *of* its condition.” (Tyndall, Oxford English Dictionary)

JUDGMENT

In the **judgment** *of* his neighbours he was guilty of theft.

That lightning strike on his barn was considered a **judgment** *on* him.

JUGGLE

He **juggled** (i.e. maneuvered) *for* a place in the cabinet.

He’s been **juggling** (i.e. playing around) *with* the statistics ever since he took over as mayor.

JUMP

You can believe I **jumped** *at* the chance (i.e. seized the opportunity).

'Leapfrog' technologies will enable business to **jump** *beyond* (i.e. leap ahead of) the current state of the art.

"What if their new genes somehow **jumped** *into* other living things?" (The Economist)

"And the cow **jumped** *over* the moon."

He taught his cat to **jump** *through* a hoop.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

JUNIOR

"His **junior** she *by* 30 years." (Byron)

I was **junior** *to* him when we fought in Sicily.

JUSTIFY

"The narratives of antiquity are **justified** *by* the experience of modern times."

(Gibbon, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

Are we **justified** *in* resorting to violence?

Don't try to **justify** yourself *to* me!

K

KEEN

She was never **keen** (i.e. enthusiastic) *about* fox hunts.
 They were **keen** (i.e. eager) *for* the morning's first news.
 "He is very **keen** (i.e. sharp) *of* hearing."
 (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)
 "I wasn't particularly **keen on** (i.e. interested in) children
 — and I'm still not." (Princess Anne, American Press)
 You don't seem very **keen to** try on your new clothes?

KEEP (V)

"The relationship between all the living and non-living parts of the Earth organism are a complex of self-stabilizing systems with the inbuilt goal of *keeping* (i.e. maintaining) planetary conditions *at* an optimum *for* the maintenance of life." (Robert Muse)

There's an enormous backup system working to *keep* a mitochondrial defect *from* harming the individual. (W. Davis Parker, pediatric neurologist, Discover mag.)

"A man should **keep** his friendship *in* constant repair." (Samuel Johnston)

Keep your bananas *in* the refrigerator; they won't ripen so fast.

We expect you to **keep on with** (i.e. persist in) the good work.

Keep to the subject, please!

I don't think you can **keep up with** me (i.e. match my speed).

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

KEY (N)

"Love, the **key of** hearts, will open the closest coffers." (Fuller, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

"Poetry is the **key to** the hieroglyphics of nature." (Hare, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

KEY (V)

Why don't you **key** (i.e. focus) *onto* that target?

KIBITZ

Never **kibitz** (i.e. give unasked advice) *from* a standing position, because that confuses the players.

"Globally-linked computers . . . allow investigators to collaborate or *kibitz on* (i.e. trade information about) experiments while continents apart."

(Gary Stix, Scientific American mag., Dec. '94)

KILL (V)

Some men **kill** just *for* the thrill of it.

"A computer model suggests that the AIDS virus *kills* us *with* sheer diversity, throwing more virals strains at our immune system than it can handle."

(Rachel Nowak, Discover mag., 1992)

"Peptide antibiotics are rapid response troops, *killing* bacteria *within* minutes of encounter. They line every body surface — eyes, skin, lungs, tongue, intestinal tract." (Josie Glausiusz, Discover mag., Nov. '98)

"We **kill** more Americans *with* our mines than we do anyone else." (Gen. Alfred Gray, Time mag., Aug. 11, '97)

KIN

She was **kin to** the Prince of Wales.

KIND

That was very **kind of** you.

You are being very **kind to** me.

KNACK

He has the **knack of** painting what is popular.

"Chomski compares a child's inherent *knack for* language learning to puberty: a distinct, genetically programmed phase of life." (David Berreby, Discover mag., April 1992)

There's a **knack** *in* using the old-fashioned fountain pen.

KNOW

I've only **known** *about* that since breakfast.

"TIME's first overseas editions, produced for U.S. forces during World War II, were **known as** pony editions." (Time mag.)

"The man of destiny **knows** it *before* anyone else." (Gen. Charles De Gaulle)

"We **know from** physics that the earth rises infinitesimally to meet my step, as any two bodies attract each other." (Rollo May, *The Courage to Create*)

I **know of** him, but we've never met.

"Coal tar is one of the most potent cancer-causing substances **known to** man." (Joel Gareau, *The Nine Nations of North America*)

"The brain has a unique defense system **known as** the blood-brain barrier that shuts out most chemicals and toxins floating in the blood." (Natalie Angier, *Discover* mag.)

"Large scavenger cells **known as** macrophages cooperate with T cells to sound the alarm when a virus or

bacterium invades the body and threatens to cause disease." (Robert M. Sapolsky, *Discover* mag., 1990)

"Our present computers are less complex than the brain of an earthworm, a species not **known for** its intellectual powers."

(Stephen Hawking, world-famous scientist, *London Daily Telegraph*, Jan., 2000)

"The Orchidaceae (orchids) constitute the largest, most advanced flower family **known to** science. Experts estimate there are 25,000 species."

(Ogden Tanner, *Smithsonian* mag./*Reader's Digest*)

KNOWLEDGEABLE

"He is conversant in Sanskrit and in Syriac, and is deeply **knowledgeable of** Hindu tradition."

(from MacMillan Publishing's edition of *Don Bede*)

KOWTOW

You are always **kowtowing to** him. It's disgusting.

L

LACK (N)

Your **lack of** patience is going to wreck our plans.

LACK (V)

Now I'm rich, I do not **lack for** friends.

He is certainly **lacking** (i.e. deficient) *in* taste.

LADEN

The truck was **laden** (i.e. loaded) *with* fruit from his orchard.

"The camels were **laden with** bundles of silk and rice."
(Tennyson, World Book Dictionary)

LAMENT (N)

"This is a layman's **lament about** linguistic anarchy."
(Bob Blackburn, Words fail us: Good English and other lost causes)

Her life was a long **lament for** her lost child.

LAMENT (V)

She was **lamenting** (i.e. uttering cries) *for* her whole family at the camp's gate.

They **lamented over** (i.e. mourned) their lost ones.

LAND (V)

She **landed at** Montreal two months before I did.

The plane is **landing in** a field of turnips.

I saw the car **land on** its side, then burst into flames.

When he dies, I'm going to be **landed with** (i.e. inherit) this wreck of a house.

LANGUISH

She **languished** (i.e. pined) *for* home.

"The flowers **languished** (i.e. wilted) *from* lack of water."
(World Book Dictionary)

"To **languish** (i.e. suffer) *in* poverty."

(Carlyle, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

"During the 22 years his captive (poet Armando Valladares) **languished in** hell, Castro became a Soviet stooge and a violator of even the most basic human decencies." (Andrew Hurley, Against All Hope)

"He did not live, but **languished** (i.e. continued in a state of feebleness) *through* life."

(Mrs. Jameson, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The new colony **languishes under** conditions of extreme poverty.

LAPSE (N)

He never forgave her **lapse from** grace.

She suffered a **lapse of** memory.

For him, it was an extraordinary **lapse in** judgment.

Their **lapse into** a drunken stupor gave me the chance to flee.

LAPSE (V)

He **lapsed from** his public school accent *into* his native Cockney.

LASH (V)

"A strong sea wind **lashed at** (i.e. whipped) his city suit."

(J. Le Carré, Oxford English Dictionary)

"In his latest article, he **lashes out at** (i.e. rebukes) modern historians." (World Book Dictionary)

Marc Anthony **lashed** (i.e. incited) the mob *into* a fury.

I will **lash** (i.e. fasten) the broken mast *to* the deck.

I caught him **lashing** (i.e. whipping) his dog *with* a strand of heavy wire.

"The youthful charioteers . . . stoop to the reins, and **lash** (i.e. whip) *with* all their force."

(John Dryden, World Book Dictionary)

LAST (v)

“The most turbulent period of solar activity since records began is about to start and *last for* around four years.” (The Economist, Jan. ‘89)

He is sure he won't last *till* the year 2000.

“The rat-skin grafts lasted *until* the mice died a natural death at the ripe old mouse age of a year and a half.” (Mark Caldwell, Discover mag., April ‘92)

LATCH (v)

“It was discovered that neurotransmitters, chemicals released by nerves, could *latch onto* (i.e. adhere to) immune cells and alter their ability to multiply and kill invaders.” (Rob Wechsler, Discover mag.)

LATENT

The whole situation was *latent with* disaster.

LAUGH (v)

We laughed *about* his escapade all night.

“No one should ever *laugh at* (i.e. scorn) the Jews . . . When a man starts trying to define a Jew, he defines humanity.” (Gabriel Fielding, Eight Days)

“Earth laughs *in* flowers.” (Ralph E. Emerson)

We laughed *to* scorn (i.e. ridiculed) his plea of innocence.

LAUNCH (v)

The writer's latest novel is to be *launched by* his publisher (i.e. introduced for sale to the public) next week.

“An angry person *launches* threats *against* enemies.” (World Book Dictionary)

“We *launched* (i.e. set sail) *for* the main coast of Africa.” (Daniel DeFoe, World Book Dictionary)

“A new ship is *launched* (i.e. put to sea) *from* the supports on which it was built.” (World Book Dictionary)

“The largest muscle in the human body is the uterine muscle that *launches* (i.e. thrusts) a baby *into* the world.” (Mind Alive mag.)

It was time to *launch* (i.e. start) him *on* his career.

The missiles were *launched* (i.e. fired) *toward* the city.

“He was going to put up the money to *launch* (i.e. start) Sally *upon* a stage career.”

(C. Isherwood, Oxford English Dictionary)

LAVISH (A)

They were too *lavish* (i.e. extravagant) *in* their habits.

He was much too *lavish* (i.e. wasteful) *with* his inheritance.

LAVISH (v)

She *lavished* all her love *on* a childhood doll.

LAX

I was *lax in* morals, training and behaviour; at least I was consistent.

LAXITY

My *laxity in* training proved my undoing.

His *laxity of* purpose was legendary.

LAY

Note — When ‘lay’ means ‘place’ or ‘set’ or ‘depend on’ or ‘settle’ or ‘attack’ or ‘be in the field of’, the following prepositions apply:

I know he will *lay* (i.e. place) a charge *against* me.

“A human brain's architecture is *laid between* the eighth and fifteenth week of pregnancy.” (Discover mag.)

The children were asked to *lay* (i.e. set) the table *for* supper.

“They had *laid* (i.e. placed) their fallen comrades *in* a mound. (Tolkien, Oxford Universal Dictionary)

He *laid into* (i.e. attacked) me *with* a vengeance.

I *laid* (i.e. placed) the newspaper *on* the counter.

His future *lies with* (i.e. is in the field of) words.

“See how I *lay* (i.e. settle) the dust *with* my tears.” (Shakespeare)

Note — When ‘lay’ is the past tense of ‘to lie’ and means ‘recline’ or ‘spread out’ or ‘be located’ or ‘not be picked up’, the following prepositions apply:

A small village *lay* (i.e. was situated) *at* the head of the lake.

What a future *lay* (i.e. was spread out) *before* him!

The boy *lay* asleep (i.e. was asleep) *in* his teak bunk.

And there they lay *in* rows, both the wounded and the dead.

LEAD (v)

I was led *down* the street, then *across* a field *to* a tall stand of trees.

“The Gruccis of southern Italy began working with fireworks in the nineteenth century; now the close-knit clan is *leading* the industry *into* the twenty-first.”

(Alex Kozlov, *Discover* mag., 1990)

“The path led me . . . *through* a gap in a high elder hedge.”
(J.T. Story, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“There is only one way which leads upward, the one which, through greater organization, *leads to* greater synthesis and unity. (So) down with the pure individualists, the egoists, who expect to grow by excluding or diminishing their brothers, individually, nationally or racially.” (Teillard de Chardin)

Greed is *leading* us all *to* destruction.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

LEAGUE

First, there was the League *of* Nations; now we have the United Nations.

He was accused of being *in league with* the devil.

LEAK (v)

“An alarming communiqué to the effect that the French had *leaked* (i.e. informed someone surreptitiously) *about* the project.”

(*Herald*, Melbourne, Aus., *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“Without a protective barrier of skin, burn patients can *leak* gallons of fluid *from* their raw flesh each day.”
(Elisabeth Rosenthal, *Discover* mag., Sept. '90)

Heavy rains flooded the yard and water was now *leaking into* our basement.

Water from the plant *leaked on* (or *onto*) the table.

The oil had *leaked out of* the rusted can.

“Electrons have an annoying habit of *leaking through* insulating barriers if the barriers are only a few atoms thin.” (*The Economist*, Feb. 16, '91)

“The natural resources of our country are *leaking away through* misuse.” (*World Book Dictionary*)

The scandal was *leaked* (i.e. sneaked) *to* the local papers.

LEAN (v)

She *leaned across* my lap to pick up the book.

“Lean (i.e. prop) the ladder *against* the wall until I am ready for it.” (*World Book Dictionary*)

The child had developed the habit of *leaning on* (or *upon*) (i.e. depending on) his older brother for advice.

“Trainees . . . often *lean* too heavily (i.e. depend too much) *upon* the advice or comments of a supervisor.”

(*Oxford English Dictionary*)

Many *leaned out of* the window to watch the parade.

He *leant* (i.e. bent) *over* the ship's rail and stared at the water.

The foundation was sinking and the building *leaned to* the right.

The broken pole was *leaning* dangerously *towards* the house.

LEAP (v)

He *leapt across* the creek.

Ten thousand swords will be *leaping from* their scabbards.

She wanted her horse to *leap over* the fence, but it balked.

He *leaped through* the window and cut himself badly.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

LEARN

“The more we already know about some area of knowledge . . . the easier it is for us to *learn* even more *about* it.” (Ian M.L. Hunter, *Mind Alive* mag.)

“We *learn by* trial and error. Why do we always say that? Why not trial and rightness, or trial and triumph? The old phrase puts it that way because that is, in real life, the way it is done.”

(Lewis Thomas, *The Medusa and the Snail*)

“The press has *learned from* experience that there are two kinds of expensive libel suits: the ones it loses and the ones it wins.” (Richard Lacayo, *Time* mag.)

“Listen to a man of experience: Thou wilt *learn* more *in* the woods than *in* books.” (St. Bernard)

She wants to *learn* to sew.

He was very *learned* *in* matters military.

LEASE (v)

“We have *leased* (i.e. rented) an apartment *for* one year.” (World Book Dictionary)

The farm was *leased* *from* (i.e. rented to them by) the owner.

I want to *lease* (i.e. rent) the house *to* my brother.

“Our landlord was . . . planning to *lease out* (i.e. rent out) our apartment *to* the two families.”

(A. Miller, Oxford English Dictionary)

LEAVE (v)

They are *leaving* (i.e. departing) *at* dawn.

She *left* two cats *in* the house (i.e. did not take them out).

Leave (i.e. place) those files *on* my desk.

Why don't you *leave* that book *with* (i.e. entrust it to) me?

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

LECTURE (v)

They are being *lectured* (i.e. reprimanded) *by* the teacher.

He *lectured* (i.e. spoke) *from* the podium.

“She is *lecturing* (i.e. giving a course) *in* Chemistry.” (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

He *lectured* (i.e. gave a discourse) *on* a subject that was of no interest to me.

The world-famous author was asked to *lecture* (i.e. give a talk) *to* the students.

LEGISLATE

The new government *legislated* *on* everything: economics, family relationships, even sex.

LEISURE

I used to play billiards, but I don't have the *leisure* *for* it now.

He enjoys enough *leisure* *to* go fishing once a week.

LEND

Would you *lend* me your canoe *for* the afternoon?

He *lent* his power saw *to* Harry last year.

LENGTHEN

“The awkward pause *lengthened* *between* them.”

(Dennis Potter, Oxford English Dictionary)

“A blue-whale calf *lengthens* *by* five centimetres a day and gains an average of three kilograms an hour.”

(Noel Vietmeyer, Reader's Digest)

“A garrulous chairman *lengthened out* a . . . meeting *into* nearly three hours.” (J. Wain, Oxford English Dictionary)

The rope was *lengthened* *to* its fullest extent.

LENIENT

She was *lenient* *in* all her caricatures of the president.

The judge was *lenient* *to* me because it was my first offense.

LESSON

A new *lesson* *in* diagnosis was impressed on the surgical staff.

There's a *lesson* *in* that *for* you.

LETTER

“*Letter* your answers *from* A *through* H.”

(World Book Dictionary)

The graffiti were *lettered* *in* red.

“He drove an old blue chevy truck with his name and phone number *lettered* *on* the door.”

(J. Gardner, Oxford English Dictionary)

LEVEL (A)

Brick it up *level* *with* the rest of the wall.

LEVEL (V)

Level the wet concrete (i.e. make it even) *with* your trowel.

Now *level* *with* me (i.e. tell me the truth).

LEVY (N)

There was even a *levy on* drinking from the creek.

LIABILITY

“(American companies’) collective *liability for* health care for retired workers could exceed \$200 billion.”

(The Economist, 1992)

“*Liability* (i.e. being subject) *to* error.”

(Froude, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

LIABLE

I am *liable* (i.e. responsible) *for* any accident on my property.

They are *liable* (i.e. open) *to* lung infection in this hovel.

LIBEL (V)

“Publish a *libel on* (or *upon*) him.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

LIBERAL

He’s very *liberal* (i.e. broad-minded) *in* his philosophy.

She’s very *liberal* (i.e. open-handed) *with* her inheritance.

LIBERATE

I want you to *liberate* him *from* those chains right now.

He was one of the relatively few *liberated from* Dachau.

LIBERTY

“*Liberty of* thought means *liberty to* communicate one’s thought.” (Salvador de Madariaga)

LICENCE, LICENSE

“Others would confine the *license* (i.e. liberty) *of* disobedience to unjust laws.”

(Mills, Universal English Dictionary)

Why don’t you try and get a *licence to* that patent?

Monopolies are *licences to* print money (i.e. open sesames to wealth).

LIE

Note: When lie (or lies, lied, lying) means ‘to tell an untruth’, the prepositions are:

You *lie* (i.e. tell an untruth) *at* every opportunity *about* your past.

Lying about his past, he ingratiated himself with his new friends.

“He . . . indited a proud and lofty letter . . . declaring that whoever charged him with the plot *lied in* his heart.”

(Washington Irving, World Book Dictionary)

“It seems so terrible to *lie to* him . . . *about* things which just aren’t true.” (I. Murdock, Oxford English Dictionary)

Note: When lie (or lies or lying or lain) means lay (or lays or or laid or laying or laid) the prepositions are:

“The necessity to produce life *lies* (i.e. is) *at* the centre of the universe’s whole machinery and design.”

(John Wheeler quoted by John Boslough, Reader’s Digest)

This library book has *lain* there (i.e. not been picked up) *for* a week.

“In Emeishan, the holiest of China’s five holy mountains, (pilgrims) are ambushed by the half-tame monkeys that *lie in* wait (i.e. crouch in ambush) along the ascent, demanding food. (The Economist)

“In the liquid-crystal display of a laptop computer . . . glass sheets constrain the fluid’s long molecules so that they *lie in* fixed directions.”

(Madhusree Mukerjee, Scientific American mag.)

“All the main holy sites for Jews *lie within* the post-1967 municipal borders of Jerusalem.”

(Martin Gilbert, The New Republic mag.)

LIFE (N)

The so-called nine *lives of* a cat.

There’s nothing like *life in* the country.

Yes, there is still some *life* (i.e. power) *in* that battery.

He spent his *life under* cover.

Life with you is certainly exciting.

“Read no history, only biography, for that is *life without* fiction.” (Benjamin Disraeli)

LIFT (V)

“It is only once in a generation that a people can be *lifted above* material things.” (Woodrow Wilson)

He is **lifting** the pup gently *over* the fence.

“(Elephants) can easily **lift** a 2-ton rhino *with* their trunk and slam it to the ground . . . and they can drop their body temperature 16 degrees just by **flapping** their ears.” (Hammond Innes, The Big Footprint)

LIGHT (V)

“The scene was **lit** *by* oil lamps.”

(I. Murdoch, Oxford English Dictionary)

She **lighted** (i.e. descended) *from* her horse.

“Luck had **lighted** *on* our shoulders (i.e. favoured us).”

(P. Scott, Oxford English Dictionary)

His eye **lighted** *upon* (i.e. spotted) a coin in the road.

“Edison’s plan to **light** (i.e. illuminate) a city *with* electricity was called ‘impossible’ by a panel of top British scientists.” (Rev. Webb Garrison)

LIKEN

“Members of the Pulitzer board **likened** (August Wilson, who was awarded a second Pulitzer Prize) *to* the playwright generally regarded as America’s greatest: Eugene O’Neil.” (Time mag.)

“I **likened** him often . . . *to* sheet-lightning.”

(Carlyle, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

LIMIT (N)

“Dark Age scholars believed that God had imposed **limits** *on* what knowledge man might acquire in this world without sin.” (Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

“There’s a **limit** *to* our energy, but none to our desires.”

(The Golden Lotus)

LIMIT (V)

His powers are **limited** *by* the new by-law.

I was **limited** *to* two slices of bread and one cup of foul coffee.

Limited *for* funds, she borrowed a lot from friends.

Of course he was the last to admit he was **limited** *in* talent.

LIMITATION

“(Liberty) has never come from the government. The history of liberty is the history of the **limitation** *of*

governmental power, not the increase of it.”

(Woodrow Wilson, U.S. President)

LINE (N)

Well, I have to admit that report is **in line** *with* what he said yesterday.

The target was outside my **line** *of* sight.

Face it, you’re **out of line** *with* family tradition.

LINE (V)

The writing pad is **lined** (i.e. has lines traced) *in* blue.

The guests were **lining up** (i.e. queuing) *for* the buffet.

The coffin was **lined** (i.e. faced inside) *with* white satin.

LINGER

“Honfleur, that lovely port which **lingers like** a dream of the 16th century at the mouth of the River Seine.”

(Charles McCarry, National Geographic mag.)

They **lingered** *over* their meal well *into* the night.

LINK (N)

“I believe I’ve found the missing **link** *between* animal and civilized man. It is us.” (Konrad Lorenz)

“It is a mistake to look too far ahead. Only one **link** *in* the chain of destiny can be handled at a time.”

(Sir Winston Churchill)

“We can speak of man’s natural rights only if we recognize the truth of man’s divine origin and his **link** *with* the eternal.” (Philip Murray, pres. of the C.I.O.)

LINK (VV)

Link it *onto* the neighbour’s fence.

She was **linked** *to* the crime *by* a fingerprint.

“By comparing the genes of modern people, one research team has **linked** everybody *to* a fully human common ancestor — a woman who lived in Africa 100,000-300,000 years ago.” (The Economist)

They were **linked** *through* a long-dead, distant cousin.

“The industries of the future will have no national boundaries. They will exist wherever human brains **link** *up with* computer terminals.”

(J.-J. Servan-Schreiber, The World Challenge)

We **linked up** *with* their group in Madrid.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

LIST (v)

His name was **listed** *among* the fallen.

“A dictionary **lists** words *in* alphabetical order.”
(World Book Dictionary)

“I tried to **list** the quotations *on* an interminable amount of stock.” (Scott Fitzgerald, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Sauntering about with the baby on her hip, **listing** (i.e. learning) *to* one side.”

(J.C. Oates, Oxford English Dictionary)

The doctor is **listed** *under* “Physicians” *in* the directory.

“The deck **listed** (i.e. tilted) *with* the weight of passengers.” (A. Schlee, Oxford English Dictionary)

LISTEN

I want you to **listen** *for* the doorbell.

“If your wife is short, bend down and **listen** *to* her.”
(The Talmud)

LITTER (v)

The child’s clothes were **littered** (i.e. strewn) *about* his room.

“He **littered** (i.e. scattered) the Sunday paper all *over* the floor.” (World Book Dictionary)

“Do not **litter** (i.e. mess up) your room *with* books and papers.”

“Even small (American) hospitals are **littered** (i.e. replete) *with* sparkling new scanners and lithotripters.”

(The Economist)

LIVE (v)

“Some of the earth’s strangest creatures **live** *around* hydrothermal vents — hot springs that bubble from volcanic fissures in the ocean depths.”

(Discover mag., Oct. ‘96)

“Young women **living** *at* close quarters in dormitories tended to undergo spontaneous synchronization of their menstrual cycles.” (Lewis Thomas, The Lives of Cells)

“I am **living** so far *beyond* my income that we may almost be said to be living apart.” (Saki, a.k.a. H.H. Munro)

“Borya mirabilis is a rare Australian plant that can **live** for years *with* no water.”

(The Economist/Reader’s Digest)

“I’d like to **live** *like* a poor man — only *with* lots of money.” (Pablo Picasso)

They **lived** *in* the jungle for almost four years.

“We all **live** *on* islands and language is what helps us to build bridges.” (Northrop Frye)

“Wherever you **live** *on* the earth there is a region nearby where diamonds abound — but it is out of sight 100 miles underground.”

(Robert M. Hazen, The New Alchemists: Breaking Through The Barriers Of High Pressure)

“I live by **living** *with* them.”

(Florida Scott-Maxwell, The Measure of My Days)

You have never **lived** *within* your means.

I simply could not **live** *without* you.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

LOAD (v)

“The chauffeur **loads** the suitcases *into* the car.”

(A Brooker, Oxford English Dictionary)

The secretary was inclined to **load** her tasks *on* others.

“Paving asphalt is only 5 percent asphalt; the remainder is a combination of sand and rock **loaded** *with* microorganisms.” (Omni mag., May ‘91)

Do not **load** (i.e. burden) your mind *with* worries.

LOAN (n)

I made him a **loan** *of* my best carving knife.

LOAN (v)

Would you believe I **loaned** \$10 *to* a complete stranger? (U.S.)

LOATHSOME

“Smoking: A custom **loathsome** *to* the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain and dangerous to the lungs,” wrote James I, king of England, in 1604. “Too few

listened to the “wisest fool in Christendom” then or since.” (The Economist)

LOCALIZE, LOCALISE

“Simply by *localizing* your awareness *on* a source of pain, you can cause healing to begin, for the body naturally sends healing energy wherever attention is drawn.” (Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

LOCATE

The gunboats yesterday . . . *located* the enemy’s position *at* Kerreri. (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“The Green Tree Frog is a ventiloquist. It throws its voice so predators can never *locate* it *by* its croaking.” (W. Allen, Saturday Review of the Society/Reader’s Digest)

I plan to *locate* my business *in* a large mall.

“Flies have 1500 taste buds — all *located on* their feet.” (Omn mag., April ‘92)

We finally *located* him *under* a bridge.

LOCK (V)

He always *locks* his house *against* unexpected visitors.

“To feel in tune with that Supreme Power, (God) makes you feel content because you realize that you have something that is so big it isn’t *locked in* your body. It doesn’t matter that you’re lonely or bald or fat.” (Kent Lane)

LODGE (V)

I have been *lodging* (i.e. residing) *at* that address almost a year.

The ball finally *lodged* (i.e. got stuck) *in* a crevice in the old wall.

“The hunter *lodged* (i.e. placed) a bullet *in* the lion’s heart.” (World Book Dictionary)

Come darkness, he *lodges* (i.e. takes shelter) *on* the sidewalk *under* some cardboard. His private papers are *lodged with* (i.e. entrusted to) his lawyer.

“We *lodged* a complaint *with* (i.e. complained to) the police.”

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

LOG (V)

It’s time to *log on to* your computer.

Log into POP serve.

LOGGERHEADS

They were at *loggerheads with* each other most of their married life.

LONG (A)

He’s quite *long in* the tooth (i.e. old).

They’re both *long in* the arm like apes.

LONG (V)

I have *longed* (i.e. yearned) *for* her all summer.

“Millions of people who *long for* immortality don’t know what to do with themselves on a rainy afternoon.” (Susan Ertz, The Gazette, Montreal)

She *longs* (i.e. wishes earnestly) *to* return to the old country.

LOOK (V)

“We are all in the gutter, but some of us are *looking* (i.e. gazing) *at* the stars.” (Oscar Wilde)

“It has been said that Whitman created the nation America sees when it *looks at* itself.” (Christopher Patton about Walt Whitman)

“If you *look for* (i.e. seek) a pleasure nerve in the human body, you will come away disappointed; there is none.” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

“The brain is a master of the tiniest details. In rats it even devotes a special cluster of neurons to *look out for* a single whisker.” (Newsweek mag., Feb. 7, 1983)

The mother *looked into* (i.e. searched) her purse for a dollar.

“Three feet long and trailing fernlike leaves, this tropical algal plant (Caulerpa) *looks like* (i.e. resembles) an ordinary clump of seaweed, but is actually a single gigantic cell.” (W. P. Jacobs, Scientific American mag.)

We *looked* (i.e. glanced) *over* the fence.

One must *look* (i.e. see) *through* the facade *to* those inner qualities that make us all human.

She *looked* (i.e. peered) *under* the table in search of the ring.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

LOOSE

The dogs were *loosed among* us *in* the living room.

LOSE

“Where is the wisdom we have *lost in* knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have *lost in* data?” (T.S. Elliot)

“Southern Louisiana (U.S.A.) is *losing* land *to* the Gulf of Mexico at the alarming rate of one acre every 16 minutes.” (Philip Elmer-Dewitt, *The Economist*)

“The astronauts in outer space, freed from gravity, *lost up to* 20 percent of their calcium.” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*)

I am *lost without* you.

LOVE (N)

They seem to have no *love for* each other.

His *love for* his children exceeds his *love of* money.

“Marina’s interest in gypsies was part of her *love of* everything exotic.” (*Oxford English Dictionary*)

LOVE (V)

“No one *loves* his country *for* its size or eminence, but because it is his own.” (Seneca)

I love you *in spite of* your poor prospects.

He loves her *to* distraction.

LOWER (V)

“Two ounces a day of oatmeal or oat bran can *lower* blood cholesterol *by* almost five percent in a matter of weeks.” (Tufts University Diet & Nutrition Letter)

I can *lower* my voice *to* basso profundo.

LOYAL

I can’t complain; he has been very *loyal to* me.

LUCKY

I am very *lucky at* poker.

It’s *lucky for* me that he did not see me go in the house.

He’s very *lucky in* most of his dealings.

They are very *lucky with* their investments.

(Frederick T. Wood, *English Prepositional Idioms*)

LURCH (VV)

The teenager *lurched against* me, but did not apologize.

He is *lurching up* the street *towards* the pub.

LURE (V)

“Bees are *lured* (i.e. attracted) *by* the scent of flowers.” (*World Book Dictionary*)

She refused to be *lured* (i.e. tempted) *away from* her studies.

“The flashlight fish . . . *lures* (i.e. decoys) luminescent bacteria *into* chambers inside its body, and then uses the cultures to light its way through the dark ocean.”

(Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Discover* mag., April ‘91)

“It was a mistake to be drawn or *lured out of* his taciturnity.” (S. Bellow, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

LURK (VV)

Strange shadows *lurked beyond* the garden, *behind* the poplars, and *near* the edge of the lake.

Danger *lurked in* the shadows.

“Fifty thousand invaders (bacteria) may *lurk on* the rim of a drinking glass, and a billion can be found in a half-teaspoon of saliva.” (Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*)

“Scorpions *lurk under* loose stones.”

(A. Sillitoe, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

LUST (N)

The painter, Van Gogh, had a *lust for* life.

The *lusts of* the flesh.

LUST (V)

He *lusted after* fame all his life.

They *lusted for* the old man’s money to no avail.

M

MAD

I am **mad** *about* (i.e. infatuated with) you.

She is **mad** *at* you. (American)

We were **mad** (i.e. avid) *for* a night on the town.

She is **mad** *on* (i.e. wildly enthusiastic about) sports of all kinds. (Brit.)

I'm **mad** (i.e. frantic) *with* pain.

I am still **mad** (i.e. angry) *with* you for causing it. (Brit.)

MAINTAIN

He **maintained** himself *in* (i.e. kept himself supplied with) cigarettes by running errands.

She **maintains** herself (i.e. keeps herself going) *on* less than twenty dollars a week.

Maintaining (i.e. sticking to) his policies *with* intransigence, the mayor refused to resign.

MAKE (v)

He elected to **make** *for* (i.e. try to reach) the shore and drowned.

"If you wish to **make** an apple pie truly *from* scratch, you must first invent the universe." (Carl Sagan)

"Cloning a bit of DNA once took weeks of meticulous toil. Now almost anyone can **make** billions of copies of it *in* hours." (Yvone Baskin, *Discover* mag., 1990)

What do you **make** (i.e. think) *of* that?

"Blood is 83 percent water; muscles 75 percent; bone 22 percent. In fact, 55 to 65 percent of a woman's body and 65 to 75 percent of a man's body is **made** . . . *of* water." (*Reader's Digest*)

"In the 1950s, he (Sir Fred Hoyle) helped to show that we are **made**, literally, *of* stardust."

(John Horgan, *Scientific American* mag.)

They **made off** (i.e. ran off) *with* all her money.

"There is a ritual moment when the (sea) voyager **makes friends** *with* a gannet, or a pigeon, or a pilot fish, or a dolphin." (Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*)

He **made** a marvelous meal *with* all the leftovers in his fridge.

MANAGE

Did you **manage** *about* (i.e. solve the problem of) the cat, or are you giving up on the weekend?

However are you **managing** *for* funds? (i.e. where are you finding the money?)

You will have to **manage** (i.e. make do) *on* that amount.

Are you **managing** (i.e. able) *to* save any money?

We can **manage** it (i.e. succeed) *with* that ladder.

MANEUVER, MANOEUVER, MANOEUVRE

"The howitzen (a bird) has claws on its wings for about a month as a baby. These help it **maneuver** *around* the branchy nest." (Anon.)

MANIA

He has a **mania** *for* limericks.

The tulip **mania** *in* Holland. (*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

The **mania** *of* land speculation. (*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

MANIFEST (A)

"The hundreds of thousands of lakes **manifest** *in* the summer of the far north (of North America) are the result of only four inches of moisture a year — less than that in the Sahara."

(Joël Gareau, *The Nine Nations of North America*)

"Calisto there stood **manifest** *of* shame."

(Dryden, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

MARCH (vv)

They **marched** *against* their city of birth.

They gathered around him and **marched** him *from* the hall.

We will **march** *through* the fields, *along* the base of the hill *to* the clearing, then *on* (i.e. invade) the town.

“If all the Chinese in the world were to **march** four abreast *past* a given point, they would never finish passing, though they marched forever and ever.” (William Allen, Saturday Review of the Society/Reader’s Digest)

They **marched** *to* the beat of a hundred drums.

MARK (V)

His speech was **marked** (i.e. characterized) *by* disagreement with his opponent’s position.

“Antibodies are proteins which recognize undesirable substances invading our bloodstream, bind to them, and **mark** (i.e. designate) them *for* destruction.” (Shawna Vogel, Discover mag)

The threatening logo was **marked** *in* blood on the wall.

That’s not the way it was **marked** *on* the map.

“If we are **marked** *to* die ...” (Shakespeare)

Mark your ballot *with* an X.

MARKET (N)

“I think there is a world **market** *for* about five computers.” (Thomas J. Watson Jr. (subsequently chairman of IBM, 1943)

The **market** *in* drugs is booming and cannot be controlled.

MAROON (V)

They were **marooned** *in* the border village for almost three months.

He was **marooned** *on* an island longer than he liked to remember.

MARRIAGE

Her **marriage** *to* a king was her crowning achievement.

His **marriage** *with* her lasted much longer than expected.

MARRY

Marrying *into* wealth can bring problems as well as benefits.

She was **married** *to* that cad over 15 years.

MARTYR (N)

She was a **martyr** *for* love.

He was a **martyr** *to* the cause.

MARVEL (V)

“She **marvelled** *at* the self-regarding irrelevance of the ruling English mind.” (Le Carré, The little drummer girl)

MASK

“These few principles are **masked** . . . *by* the world’s bewildering array of 6,000 languages, each with its own history and culture.”

(David Berreby, Discover mag., April 1992)

She was already **masked** *for* the evening’s costume party.

“Her depression set in . . . **masked** *from* friends and acquaintances, but painfully communicated to Shelley.”

(R. Christiansen, O.E.D.)

MASTER (N)

“The brain is a **master** *of* the tiniest details. In rats it even devotes a special cluster of neurons to look out for a single whisker.” (Newsweek mag., Feb. 7, 1983)

MASTERY

Mastery *of* any subject demands dedication.

His **mastery** *over* her was the talk of the town.

MATCH (V)

Why don’t you **match** Harry *against* their defenceman?

“The amount of energy contained in visible light is perfectly **matched** *to* the energy needed to carry out most chemical reactions.” (Lyll Watson, Supernature)

“Biologists don’t know how patterns are created on real mollusks. But mathematical models based on hypothetical interacting chemicals **match** them *with* uncanny accuracy.”

(Carl Zimmer, Discover mag., 1992)

MATE (V)

Many animal species **mate** *for* life.

“People tend to **mate** *with* individuals who resemble themselves in every conceivable way.”

(Jared Diamond, Discover mag.)

MATERIAL (A)

It is just not **material** (i.e. relevant) *to* the situation.

MATERIALIZER, MATERIALISE

“We expect it (an underground city) to **materialize** *in* the early part of the next century.” (Time mag.)

According to legend, Merlin **materialized** *into* a raven.

A huge cat seemed to **materialize** *under* the tree.

Suddenly, a large balloon **materialized** *over* the crowd.

MATTER (V)

Save her; it doesn't **matter** (i.e. forget) *about* me.

The broken crockery doesn't **matter** *to* me (i.e. I don't care).

It **mattered** not a bit (i.e. was of no concern) *to* me what she thought.

MEAN (N)

This is his only **means** *of* making a living.

MEASURE (N)

“In the 12th century, the word ‘faethm’ meant the ‘embracing arms’. If a man straightened those embracing arms out, they would stretch about 6 feet. Thus did the word ‘fathom’ come to mean a **measure** *of* about 6 feet.” (Michael Gartner: Advertising Age)

“The Richter scale is the most common **measure** *of* the magnitude or strength of earthquakes . . . Each whole-number increase represents a tenfold rise in the size of earthquake waves and a thirty-one fold increase in the energy released.” (Shannon Browlees, Discover mag.)

MEASURE (V)

“A human scream . . . **measures** *about* 3000 hertz.” (vibrations per second) (Discover mag.)

“About 0.1 percent of all material which has ever fallen on earth is organic. By comparison, if we **measure** the total weight of all organic matter on earth *against* the mass of the planet itself, only 0.0000001 percent is of living origin. This means that meteors are coming from somewhere that is a million times more organic than earth itself.” (Lyll Watson, Lifetide)

“Even today, distances from Paris to the borders of France are **measured** *from* the Notre Dame parvis (church square).” (Sanche de Gramont, The French)

“The frequencies of electromagnetic waves are **measured** *in* hertz (Hz) . . . One hertz means one wave each second.” (The Economist mag.)

How could I ever **measure up** *to* your standards?

MEDDLE

I won't let you **meddle** *in* my affairs.

Don't **meddle** *with* me.

You are **meddling** *with* my mind.

MEDIATE

I refuse to **mediate** *between* those two.

Should you have **mediated** *in* that quarrel?

MEDITATE

I will **meditate** *on* that.

MEDIUM

Let's settle for the **medium** *between* what they wanted last week and what they want now.

Send it through the **medium** *of* e-mail.

MEET (V)

“When someone says I'll **meet** you *between* 3 and 4 p.m., it means our relationship is finished.”

(V.S. Naipaul, Time mag., July 10, '89)

We are **meeting** *for* lunch next Wednesday.

“Only in Judaeo-Christianity do Time and Eternity **meet** *in* History.” (Karl Stern, The Pillar of Fire)

I met (i.e. talked) *with* him just before he entered the church.

MEMBER

I was a **member** *of* the Board for ten years.

MEMORIAL

“The pyre (of 2400 tusks) was a **memorial** *to* the hundreds of thousands of elephants slaughtered in

Africa by poachers (from 1979 to 1989).”
(Time mag., July 31, ‘89)

MEMORY

She’s lost all **memory** *of* that day.
I wish I had a better **memory** *for* faces.

MENACE (N)

The **menace** *in* his eyes was almost tangible.
He’s a **menace** *to* himself.
That child is a **menace** *with* a fork.

MENACE (V)

He **menaced** her *with* dire consequences.
“The solitary dissentient was **menacing** *to* leave the meeting-house.” (J. Martine, Oxford English Dictionary)

MENTION (V)

That accident was **mentioned** *by* the police.
He was twice **mentioned** *in* dispatches.
“The Virgin (Mary) is . . . **mentioned** 34 times *in* the Koran.” (Robert Sullivan, Life mag., Dec. ‘96)
“In the Old Testament, Jerusalem is **mentioned** *on* 656 occasions.” (Martin Gilbert, The New Republic mag., as abridged by the Reader’s Digest, Sept. ‘95)
Did you **mention** me *to* her last night?

MERCIFUL

Be **merciful** *in* your treatment of the aged.
You should be **merciful** *to* your enemy.

MERCY

When he landed, he found himself at the **mercy** *of* the villagers.
To have **mercy** *on* (or *upon*) me.

MERGE (V)

After dark, all the trees **merge** (i.e. combine) *into* one giant mass.
When we travelled at top speed, one house seemed to **merge** (i.e. become one) *with* the next.

He is **merging** (i.e. uniting) his business *with* Terry’s next month.

MESH (V)

“The rules of quantum mechanics do not **mesh** well *with* (i.e. seem to contradict) the laws of Newton and Einstein.” (Eugene Linden, Time mag.)
If you watch closely, you’ll see the small gear **meshing** (i.e. engaging) *with* the larger one.

MESSENGER

“Messengers *of* war.” (Shakespeare)
“The mind stands above the content of consciousness at any moment. It is an independent entity. The mind directs, and the brain executes. The brain is **messenger** *to* consciousness.”
(Dr. W. Penfield, The Mystery of the Mind)

METABOLIZE

“By the time you reach 70, your cells will look unique, mirroring the unique experiences you processed and **metabolized** *into* your tissues and organs.”
(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

METHOD

There is **method** *in* his madness.
The **method** *of* doing that can be quickly learned.

MIDWAY

The town is **midway** *between* Montreal and Boston.

MILESTONE

It proved an important **milestone** *in* medical history.

MILITATE

That **militates** *against* (i.e. contradicts) everything I have ever learned.

MILK (N)

“Alcohol is **milk** *for* the elderly.” (Sir William Osler, MD)
There is **milk** *in* a coconut.

“Milk *of* human kindness.” (Shakespeare)

MINDFUL

Be **mindful** *of* their customs.

MINGLE

“It was a reminder of the Arab glory of a thousand years before, when the Arab faith *mingled with* Persia, India and the remnant of the classical world it had overrun, and Muslim civilization was the central civilization of the West.” (V.S. Naipaul, Among the believers)

At last, she is **mingling** *with* the rest of her classmates.

MINISTER (v)

He **ministered** *to* his flock.

MISTAKE (v)

He was **mistaken** *about* her height.

Don't **mistake** her *for* a person of weak will.

She **mistook** me *for* someone else.

In his disguise, he was **mistaken** *for* a vagrant.

I was **mistaken** *in* my hope that she cared.

MISTRUSTFUL

I am **mistrustful** *of* everything she does.

MITIGATION

He gave the preacher a fortune **in mitigation** *of* his past sins.

MIX (v)

He disappeared by **mixing** *in* the crowd.

“The great (Antoine) Lavoisier . . . was arrested, during the French Revolution, on the trumped-up charge that he had *mixed* water *into* the tobacco of the soldiers . . . (and) sentenced to die on the guillotine.”

(Heinz Haber, A Disney story of our friend the atom)

A spritzer effectively **mixes** water *with* wine.

MOAN (v)

She was always **moaning** *about* her aches and pains.

He **moaned** *with* pain.

MODEL (v)

“Robots might be better off *modelled on* insects rather than *on* people.” (The Economist)

The poor girl is trying to **model** herself *on* some actress or other.

MOIST

The grass was still **moist** *from* last evening's rain.

Her little handkerchief was **moist** *with* tears.

MOMENT

Take a **moment** *for* reflection.

There was a **moment** *of* sheer wonder, then joy set in.

MONITOR (v)

The general was able to **monitor** troop movements *from* an observation tower.

“How far do pandas roam? We need to **monitor** them *with* radio-equipped collars.”

(George B. Schaller, National Geographic)

MONOPOLY

“Neither side has a **monopoly** *of* right . . . or wrong.” (Freeman)

MOOD

“(The French) are not in a *mood for* trivia these days. If, individually, they are as pesky, as charming, as irreverent, as bloody-minded, as profoundly conservative as ever, corporately they have become forceful and rather flashy.” (Jan Morris, Journeys)

The **mood** *of* the country is pessimistic.

MOORING

Science helped to cut us adrift from our traditional **moorings** *in* our faith and morals.

MORAL

There is a **moral** *in* that story; can you find it?

The **moral** *of* the story is: ‘beware!’

‘If there's a **moral** *to* your story, it escapes me.

MORTALITY

Mortality *from* AIDS is still not much reduced.

MORTGAGE (N)

I just increased the mortgage *on* my house.

MORTGAGE (V)

I am mortgaged *up to* my ears.

My car is mortgaged *with* the bank.

MOTIVE

“It must be a sociological fact that prejudice is a more common *motive for* emigration than poverty.”

(Paul Theroux, The Great Railway Bazaar)

MOUNT (V)

“The AIDS virus is unique in that it can *mount* a speedy and lethal attack *on* helper T cells, which cripples the immune system before it can counterattack.”

(Leon Jaroff, Time mag.)

MOURN

How can I mourn his loss yet not *mourn for* him.

She never stopped *mourning over* her bad luck.

MOVE (V)

“When you’re reading, your eyes do not *move* continually *across* the page. They *move from* one clump of words *to* another, *in* a series of jumps.” (Anon.)

No material object can *move at* the speed of light (i.e. reach that limit). (Hans Christian Von Baeyer, Discover mag.)

“Two thousand times smaller than the atom itself, the electron can, under the impulse of a weak current, *move in* the circuits of calculators in a to-and-fro movement to simulate 0 and 1. This permitted the birth of ‘electronics’.”

(J.-J. Servan-Schreiber, The World Challenge)

“Laser communications . . . are *moving into* space . . . Future satellites will exchange information by transmitting modulated laser beams across thousands of miles of empty space.” (Jonathan B. Tucker)

“In telecommunications we are *moving to* a single worldwide information network . . . We are *moving toward*

the capability to communicate anything to anyone, anywhere, by any form — voice, data, text, or image — at the speed of light.”

(J.Naisbitt & P. Aburdene, Megatrends 2000)

“Laser beams *move through* empty air without dispersing, and they can pass close to and even through one another without interference.” (Alex Kozlov, Discover mag.)

MOVEMENT

There is some *movement in* that direction.

I note some *movement to* the left.

“Our entire earthly existence is but a transitional stage in the *movement toward* something higher.”

(Alexander Solzhenitsyn, National Review mag.)

MULTIPLE

One hundred is a *multiple of* ten.

MULTIPLY

OK, multiply two *by* two.

“Everyone knows our brain can’t grow new nerve cells. So why are human neurons happily *multiplying in* a plastic lab dish at Johns Hopkins?”

(Peter Radetsky, Discover mag., April ‘91)

MURMUR (V)

He neither *murmured about* the pain nor *about* the cost.

The gossip-mongers *murmured against* him at every opportunity.

She *murmurs at* having to go to school or church.

MUSE (V)

I can’t help but *muse on* (or *upon*) her visit this evening.

She is always *musings over* the bad things in her life.

MYSTIFY

“Mrs Margaret Thatcher is *mystified by* Scotland.”

(The Economist mag.)

N

NAG (V)

He's been **nagging** *at* me to complete the assignment.

NAIL (N)

"The absolute dependence of mass microprocessor technology on capitalist production and distribution methods could well be the first ***nail in*** the coffin of doctrinaire Marxist thinking."

(Christopher Evans, The Micro Millennium)

NAIL (V)

They **nailed** Him *on* the cross.

He always **nails** his colours *to* the mast (i.e. becomes unyielding).

They **nailed** me *down* (i.e. held me) *to* my promise.

NAME (V)

"Hood is the most notable American mountain ***named after*** an enemy leader (Admiral Samuel Hood), **second in command of the British fleet during the Revolutionary War.**"

(W. Least Heat Moon, Blue Highways)

Her parents will **name** her *for* her grandmother (i.e. give her her grandmother's name); you can bet on it. (American)

The town was **named** *in* honour of its founder.

He was **named** (i.e. appointed) *to* the Senate.

NATIVE (A)

He is **native** *to* the jungles of Borneo.

NATIVE (N)

They are **natives** *of* Ireland.

NATURAL

It is **natural** *for* people *to* want a modicum of security.

Fighting seems to be **natural** *to* men.

It is **natural** for a girl *to* play with dolls at that age.

NATURE

"It is in the ***nature of*** German syntax that you have to compose the sentence in your mind before you start to say it." (Len Deighton, Berlin Game)

NEAR

"English is the ***nearest*** thing *to* (a world language) that has ever existed."

(Robert Claiborne, Our marvelous native tongue)

NECESSARY

Patience is **necessary** *for* all nurses.

Discretionary income is **necessary** *to* the good life.

NECESSITY

I resent the **necessity** *of* these half-measures.

There never was any **necessity** *for* his declaration of bankruptcy.

As you get older, there's a **necessity** *to* water your wine.

NEED (N)

"Men — and possibly chimpanzees and dolphins — have acquired a ***need for*** things that satisfy none of the normal, natural hungers. We have developed a taste for the mysterious." (Lyll Watson, Supernature)

I have no **need** *of* your bitching.

NEGLECT (N)

My **neglect** *of* my children haunts my old age.

NEGLECTFUL

I have been very **neglectful** *of* my wife lately.

NEGLIGENCE

The boy scouts were made to smart for their **negligence** *in* losing their equipment.

Her **negligence** *of* her wards was the talk of the town.

NEGLIGENT

He had long been **negligent** *of* his business.

She was lovable, but **negligent** *in* her duties.

NEGOTIATE

“The car **negotiated** (i.e. managed) the sharp curve *by* slowing down.” (World Book Dictionary)

He always **negotiates** (i.e. bargains) *in* good faith.

I have been **negotiating** (i.e. doing business) *with* him *on* the same contract for some forty years.

NEGOTIATION

My **negotiations** *with* him *on* the right of way are almost complete.

NEIGHBOUR, NEIGHBOR

I’ve always been a good **neighbour** *to* them; but I can’t say that of a **neighbour** *of* mine.

“Which now of these three . . . was **neighbour** *unto* him that fell among the thieves?” (Bible: Luke 10, 36)

NERVE

I don’t have the **nerve** *for* that anymore.

The **nerve** *of* that man!

Do you think you have the **nerve** *to* do it?

NERVOUS

She has always been very **nervous** *about* flying.

He is very **nervous** *around* strangers. (American)

He is very **nervous** *of* strangers. (British)

He was too **nervous** *to* pull the plug.

NEW

That face is **new** *to* me.

NEWS

What’s your **news** *about* your coming trip?

I have not had any **news** *of* him since he left for Chicago in 1988.

Well, that’s **news** *to* me.

NIGGARDLY

He is **niggardly** *of* his praise.

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

He is very **niggardly** *with* the wine when he’s entertaining, but not when he’s helping himself to yours.

NIMBLE

Chess made him very **nimble** *of* mind.

She is very **nimble** *on* her feet; she must be a dancer.

Look how **nimble** he is *with* his hands.

NOMINATE

He is **nominating** her *as* his successor.

Why don’t you **nominate** him *for* the position?

She was **nominated** *to* the Cabinet last fall.

NOTABLE

He is **notable** *as* the first man to reach the top of Everest.

She is **notable** *for* her opposition to the mayor last year.

NOTE (N)

Please make a **note** *of* that.

My **notes** *on* the professor’s lectures were much in demand by other students.

NOTION

I don’t have the faintest **notion** *about* that.

They had no **notion** *of* impending doom.

NUMB (A)

My whole leg was **numb** *to* the touch.

She came in **numb** *with* cold.

NURSE (v)

“He **nursed** (i.e. coddled) his sore arm *by* using it very little.” (World Book Dictionary)

“The fierce savage **nursed** (i.e. nurtured) *in* hate.”
(Shelley, Oxford English Dictionary)

It is destructive to **nurse** (i.e. foster) a hatred *in* one’s heart.

“Kindness was employed to **nurse** (i.e. encourage) them *into* mischief.” (Oxford English Dictionary)

“Mrs. Bolton had once **nursed** (i.e. tended) him *through* scarlet fever.”

(D.H. Lawrence, Oxford English Dictionary)

(Captain Michael Hatcher’s) “**divers *nursed*** (i.e. gentled) 23,000 pieces of late Ming and Transitional Period Chinese porcelain *to* the surface . . . They came from a Chinese junk wrecked in the 1640s.”

(John Dyson, Reader’s Digest)

He is **nursing** (i.e. pampering) that poor child back *to* health.

She **nurses** (i.e. ministers to) all her patients *with* tender, loving care.

NUTS (A)

They’re **nuts** (i.e. mad) *about* football. (American)

He is **nuts** (i.e. skilful) *at* cricket. (British)

NUZZLE (v)

The dog **nuzzled** gently *against* my leg, then ran off.

The cat **nuzzles up to** me, curls up in my lap, and goes to sleep.



OBEDIENT

Should we be blindly **obedient** *to* the dictates of the law?

OBJECT (V)

I **object** *to* that on principle.

He **objects** *to* my presence.

OBLIGATED

She said she was **obligated** *to* me *for* a favour I had long since forgotten.

OBLIGE

I am **obliged** *to* you (i.e. I am in your debt).

I am **obliged** (i.e. forced) *to* retire now.

I felt **obliged** (i.e. compelled) *to* do something.

Could you **oblige** me (i.e. make me your debtor) *with* a cigarette?

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

OBLITERATE

We will all be **obliterated** *from* the face of the earth, if we do not abandon nuclear weapons.

A heavy fog is **obliterating** the whole crowd *from* my view.

OBLIVIOUS

They sat there vacant-eyed, **oblivious** *of* their surroundings.

OBNOXIOUS

You're being **obnoxious** *to* me again.

OBSCURE (A)

That passage of the Bible is **obscure** *to* me.

OBSCURE (V)

Suddenly, a passing car **obscures** him *from* sight.

OBSERVABLE

“Chronic lead insult (poisoning) now affects all mankind. Biological disfunctions, especially **observable** *in* the most advanced populations, must be considered among the causes of wars and revolutions.”

(Saul Bellow, The Dean's December)

OBSERVE

“The cells **observed** (i.e. studied) *in* laboratory culture . . . stop dividing.”

He **observed** (i.e. commented) *on* her lecture.

OBSESSED

Americans are **obsessed** *about* their health.

I was **obsessed** *by* her beauty.

He was **obsessed** *with* the thought of death.

OBTRUDE

“Subordinate officials who . . . **obtruded** (i.e. thrust) themselves *into* matters beyond their office.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

He **obtrudes** (i.e. forces) his advice *on* (or *upon*) everyone.

OBVIOUS

That has to be **obvious** *to* anyone with half a mind.

OCCASION

Every funeral was an **occasion** *for* a family get-together.

OCCUPY

She **occupied** herself *by* knitting me a sweater.

“If we discovered that we had only five minutes left to say all we wanted to say, every telephone booth would be

occupied by people calling other people to stammer that they loved them.” (Christopher Morley)

I will occupy my time *with* a few visits to the neighbours.

OCCUR

“It was found that 91 percent of serious complications during pregnancy *occurred* (i.e. happened) *among* those (women) who said that they led stressful lives and had little social support.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*)

“There are 92 chemical elements that *occur* (i.e. can be found) *in* nature, but the same small selection of 16 form the basis of all living matter.”

(Lyll Watson, *Supernature*)

Did it ever *occur to* you (i.e. cross your mind) that you might be bigoted?

ODDS

The *odds against* (i.e. probability of) winning the major prize in a lotto are mind-boggling.

We are all *at odds* (i.e. in conflict) *with* each other.

ODIOUS

Even her scent had become *odious to* him.

OFFEND

“In 1848, I. Semmelweis, the first gynecologist to use antiseptic procedures, reduced mortality from puerperal fever by a factor of 15, and was . . . ostracized by his colleagues, who were *offended at* (i.e. angered by) the idea that physicians could be carriers of death.”

(Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis*)

I was *offended* (i.e. annoyed) *by* everything about him.

“Perhaps he was *offended with* me.”

(John Gielgud speaking of Orson Wells)

OFFER (N)

I made an *offer of* a box of Cuban cigars *to* every politician in the room.

OFFER (V)

They refused the freedom *offered to* them.

Why do you refuse it? Is it because I am the one *offering* it *to* you?

OLD

You're much too *old for* that kind of conduct.

He is *old in* appearance *for* his age.

OMEN

He thought it was a clear *omen of* good fortune.

That should be an *omen to* him not to proceed.

OMINOUS

Their death is *ominous for* him.

That's *ominous of* disaster.

OMISSION

That's another *omission from* your guest list.

“To supply the *omission in* the preceding narrative.”

(Paley, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

The *omission of* his name on the scholarship list was rectified by the dean.

OMIT

You *omitted* my name *from* your column again. Why?

OOZE (VV)

“Macrophages are . . . amoeba-like, and they *ooze around* the site of an infection, rebuilding damaged tissues and devouring bacteria, viruses, etc.”

(Rob Wechsler, *Discover* mag.)

The muddy waters are *oozing out of* the riverbank, *into* the basement and *over* the carpet.

The oil spill is *oozing down* the channel and *under* the bridge.

OPEN (A)

I am *open for* business tomorrow.

She was *open to* my suggestions *till* he came into the picture.

OPEN (v)

The company **opened** its books *for* scrutiny.

They are **opening** (i.e. starting to) fire *on* the attacking enemy.

Her window **opens** *on to* (i.e. overlooks) the river.

“Talking about heart disease, there is something very fitting in the fact that the less you **open** your heart *to* others, the more your heart suffers.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

They **opened** (i.e. began) the ceremony *with* a trumpet blast.

OPERATE

“Militate means . . . ‘to **operate** *against* or *for*, usually against.” (Howard Richler, “Speaking of language” in The Gazette, Montreal)

“After 1792, the French dropped out, and the British took up the slack, making 1798 a record year, with 160 British slaving ships **operating**, mostly *from* Liverpool.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

“At least 12 different transport systems are now known to **operate** *in* the brain capillaries, each one custom-tailored to accept a particular water-soluble molecule.”

(Natalie Angier, Discover mag.)

She will be **operated** *on* *for* a tumour on the brain tomorrow.

“Society **operates** *on* the theory that specialization is the key to success, not realizing that specialization precludes comprehensive thinking.”

(Buckminster Fuller, Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth)

They are **operating** *under* a mistaken set of rules.

OPINION

What is your **opinion** *about* this?

They have a very poor **opinion** *of* you.

She would volunteer an **opinion** *on* any subject whatsoever.

OPPONENT

I am an **opponent** *of* all dictatorships.

OPPOSE

I will **oppose** (i.e. set) good judgment *against* his irrational ideas.

She was **opposed** *by* the town gentry.

He was **opposed** *to* (i.e. against) every initiative.

I am **opposed** *to* (i.e. against) every form of elitism.

She **opposes** (i.e. counters) malice *with* love.

OPPOSITION

The **opposition** *of* my own family is hard to bear.

His **opposition** *to* reform was legendary.

OPPRESSED

She was **oppressed** *by* the early darkness of the winter afternoon.

Oppressed *with* feelings of guilt, he took his own life.

OPT

“Shakespeare was a likable man, quite well educated for his time: he worked hard from his late ‘20s to mid-‘40s, after which he **opted** *for* (i.e. decided on) early retirement and went home to Stratford.”

(Northrop Frye, Northrop Frye on Shakespeare)

Let’s make him **opt** (i.e. choose) *for* one of two alternatives.

“Even those colonies which choose to stay within the French community . . . will have the chance to change their minds later and **opt** *for* independence.”

(Observer, World Book Dictionary)

OPTION

My only **option** is *between* giving in to your whims or leaving you.

She has the **option** *of* retiring or continuing for another year.

Do you want first **option** *on* that job?

ORDER (v)

What will you **order** (i.e. ask for) *for* lunch? An egg sandwich again?

The first ghetto was Campo del Ghetto Nuove in Italy. Ghetto means foundry in Italian. In 16th-century Venice, Jews were **ordered** (i.e. directed) *to* live in an area around a foundry.

“He was **ordered** by his doctor *to* (i.e. the doctor prescribed) a warmer climate.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

ORGANIZATION

“Design means the *organization of* all elements *into* a unified whole . . . to gain dramatic power and aesthetic pleasure through the sense of sight.”

(Ralph M. Pearson, Design mag.)

ORGANIZE, ORGANISE

“A formidable conspiracy was **organized** *against* him.”

(W.S. Churchill, Oxford English Dictionary)

“I had **organized** *among* the railroad men a club of a hundred.” (A. Carnegie, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Innovative companies might build morale and a sense of belonging by asking groups of workers to *organize* themselves *into* mini-companies or cooperatives, and contracting directly with these groups to get specific jobs done.” (Alvin Toffler, The Third Wave)

“We spent the rest of the day **organizing** a car *to* take us to Mexico City.” (G. Durrell, Oxford English Dictionary)

ORIGINATE

“Most of our best ideas are *originated by* amateurs.”

(Stuart Chase)

More than 80,000 products *originate* (i.e. derive) *from* oil.

“Every major flu epidemic known has *originated in* South China.” (John Langone, Discover mag., Dec. ‘90)

All our immune cells *originate in* our bone marrow.

Gun powder *originated with* the Chinese.

OSTRACIZE, OSTRACISE

“In 1848, I. Semmelweis, the first gynecologist to use antiseptic procedures, reduced mortality from puerperal fever by a factor of 15, and was . . . *ostracized by* his colleagues, who were offended at the idea that physicians could be carriers of death.”

(Ivan Illich, Medical Nemesis)

He was *ostracised from* society because of his wild lifestyle, so he joined the Foreign Legion.

My government will **ostracize** you *from* this state, and *from* this country if possible.

OUST

She was **ousted** *from* the class on the first day.

The children are **ousting** the teacher *from* their classroom.

OUTFIT (V)

I want you to **outfit** him *for* a week in the bush.

We were **outfitted** *from* head *to* foot *by* the army.

“Your immune cells and endocrine glands are *outfitted with* the same receptors for brain signals as your (brain) neurons are; therefore, they are like an extended brain.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

OUTLINE (N)

He left a rough **outline** (i.e. silhouette) *of* his body in the sand.

“Two playscripts and an **outline for** (i.e. a quick summary of) a short play.”

(Plays International, Oxford English Dictionary)

OUTLINE (V)

How about **outlining** your plans *for* me?

The rationale of the company’s policy was clearly **outlined to** employees.

OUTLOOK

Exactly a year ago, the **outlook for** the world economy was alarming. (The Economist)

OUTSTANDING

She is **outstanding for** her flower arrangements.

He is **outstanding in** the field of mathematics.

OVERCOME

Overcome *by* the enemy, he simply gave up.

She was **overcome with** joy.

OVERSEER

“Overseer *of* the poor.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“Barred from most professions and deprived of the right to own or rent land, they (the Jews) in Russia and Eastern Europe) fell into a fatally unstable position as overseers and rent collectors to the post-feudal nobility.” (John Hersey, Esquire mag.)

OVERTURE

My **overture** (i.e. act) *of* friendship *to* him was summarily dismissed.

He wrote the **overture** (i.e. instrumental prelude) *to* his opera in one afternoon.

OVERTURN

The man's cart was **overturned** *by* a passing truck.

“In 1830, 4,150 stagecoaches overturned in France, causing more than a thousand deaths.”

(Ivan Illich, Toward a history of needs)

This vehicle might **overturn** *on* a rough country road.

OWE

I still **owe** you *for* those theatre tickets.

How much is still **owed** *on* that house?

“We owe the revival of the atomic theory to a man who . . . was more a philosopher than a scientist: Pierre Gassendi, of France.” (Heinz Haber, The Walt Disney story of our friend the atom)

OWN (v)

This house is **owned** (i.e. possessed) *by* a couple of spinsters.

“He **owns** (i.e. admits) *to* disliking the doctor.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

You should **own up** *to* (i.e. admit) your mistakes.

P

PACK (V)

We hurried to **pack** *for* our trip.

Pack (i.e. store) your clothes *in* this trunk.

She certainly **packs** (i.e. crams) a lot of living *into* her life.

“The heavy trucks **packed** (i.e. hard-layered) the snow *on* the highway.” (World Book Dictionary)

“Put three grains of sand inside a vast cathedral, and the cathedral will be more closely **packed with** sand than space is with stars.” (Sir James Jeans)

PACT

“South Africa has recently concluded a trade **pact with** Japan and declared, business being business, that all Japanese are white.” (Studs Terkel, Talking to Myself)

PAIR

“A new age in the treatment of diseases may be upon us . . . Artificial strings of nucleic acids can **pair with** RNA, or wind around the double helix of DNA, and in effect silence the genes responsible for many illnesses.”

(J. S. Cohen and M. E. Hogan, Scientific American)

“It is further alleged that one Conservative . . . saw fit to **pair with** two Labour members.”

(New Statesman, Oxford English Dictionary)

PALL (V)

Even semi-classical music has begun to **pall** *on* me.

PANDER

“These abbreviators harm both knowledge and love . . . **pandering to** impatience, the mother of stupidity.”

(Leonardo da Vinci)

PANEGYRIC

His **panegyric** *on* his company president was too saccharine for my taste.

PANT

He **pants** *for* a drink of gin and lime like a dog *for* water.

I’m so worried: he is **panting from** just going up the two steps to the kitchen.

PAR

His new TV show is not **on a par with** his last hit series.

PARACHUTE (V)

“Governor (of Alaska) Cooper called out the Air National Guard to **parachute** supplies *into* remote villages.”

(Time mag.)

She **parachuted over** (or *beyond*) the landing zone and splashed into the lake.

PARALLEL (N)

He drew **parallels** *between* the two happenings.

Parallels with the 1930s came readily to mind.

(The Economist)

PARAMOUNT

“Their first duty . . . is **paramount to** all subsequent engagements.” (Oxford Universal Dictionary)

To him, Mozart is **paramount over** all other composers.

PARANOID

The politician was **paranoid about** any dissent in the party’s ranks.

PARCHED

I came back from our drive **parched with** thirst.

PARDON

I ask your **pardon** *for* that rude remark.

PARITY

She insists on **parity of** respect.

In English education it was not until recently that modern languages enjoyed **parity of** esteem *with* the classics. (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

PARK (V)

Tell them to **park** their trailer trucks *alongside* the church.

He **parked** his car *by* the house.

I am **parking** my truck *in* his backyard.

Tell her to **park** her limo *next to* mine.

She **parked** her Corvette *under* the tree.

PARODY

It was a devastating **parody of** my favorite poem.

PART (N)

She wanted to **take part in** every activity.

I was given the **part of** Hamlet in our school play.

PART (V)

I always hate to **part from** (i.e. leave) my ailing wife.

How much cash are you **parting with** (i.e. relinquishing)?

PARTAKE

“Bred in a luxurious court, without **partaking in** its effeminacy.” (Goldsmith, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

In spite of his physical handicap, he was able to **partake** (i.e. participate) *in* the Games.

He generally **partakes of** (i.e. eats) his snack by the pool.

PARTIAL

She’s very **partial to** the downtrodden.

PARTICIPANT

“This time the furor is over the revelation that MI5, Britain’s domestic counterintelligence service, has for decades been a secret **participant in** decisions to hire, fire and promote BBC employees.” (Time mag.)

PARTICIPATE

This is the last time I will **participate in** these games.

Although language was a barrier, our foreign visitors were able to **participate in** the festivities *with* us.

PARTICULAR

He is very **particular about** the way he looks.

She is **particular in** all things.

“Never suffer this fellow to be **particular with** you again.”

(Fielding, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

PARTNER (N)

We’ve been **partners in** this business since 1949.

PARTY (N)

I refuse to be a **party to** your connivances.

PASS (V)

“Stones such as chrysoptase, jasper and serpentine are **passed off as** jade, but only two minerals correctly bear the label: jadeite and nephrite.”

(Timothy Green, Smithsonian/Reader’s Digest)

“Many modern critics have **passed** (i.e. moved) *from* the proposition that a masterpiece may be unpopular *to* the proposition that unless it is unpopular it cannot be a masterpiece.” (G.K. Chesterton)

I used to **pass myself for** (i.e. pretend to be) an engineer.

“The banalities of a great man **pass for** (i.e. are accepted as) wit.” (Alexander Chase, The Gazette, Montreal)

“Very little is required. You will easily **pass** (i.e. go unnoticed) *in* a crowd.”

(C.M. Young, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Both men **passed** (i.e. slipped) *into* perfect unconsciousness.”

(D.H. Lawrence, Oxford English Dictionary)

The judge will **pass** (i.e. pronounce sentence) *on* (or *upon*) that matter tomorrow.

“How can a wing ever be constructed if evolution must **pass through** a long series of intermediary stages — for 5 percent of a wing confers no benefit whatsoever in flight.” (Stephen Jay Gould, Discover mag., Oct. ’96)

“..Trillions of them (neutrinos) **pass through** every human being on Earth every second (fortunately

without doing any damage).”

(Michael D. Lemonick, Time mag. June 15, '98)

(Mitochondrial DNA) “ is passed (i.e. transferred) to a child by the mother’s egg only, and not by the father’s sperm.” (Edwin Kiester Jr., Discover mag.)

She passed the exam (i.e. successfully met the test) with distinction.

“The spontaneous generation of life on the earth . . . would have been as likely as the assemblage of a 747 aircraft by a tornado passing (i.e. flying) through a junkyard.” (Sir Fred Hoyle, Scientific American mag.)

“Establishing title (to real estate) is very important in Quaker thinking. A Friend always tries to pass (i.e. bequeath) to his heirs more land than he began with.” (William Least Heat Moon, Blue Highways)

They’re passing under the bridge right now.

She passed the exams (i.e. graduated) with distinction.

PASSION

“If the anti-Dreyfus agitators and clerics represented France at its worst, the Dreyfusards, most of them Christian, demonstrated the nation’s passion for justice and equality.” (Jean-Denis Bredin, The Affair)

“Ambition is so powerful a passion in the human breast, that however high we reach we are never satisfied.” (Niccolo Machiavelli)

PATIENCE

He has the patience of a saint.

She doesn’t have the patience to take care of old people.

PATIENT (A)

Be patient with me.

PAUSE (V)

He paused at the public fountain, then continued on his way.

She is just pausing for breath.

“A Russian drill has paused for the winter 250 metres above what is now called Lake Vostock — 200 kilometres long, 125 metres deep on average and comparable in size to Lake Ontario . . . (The lake) is 4 kilometres under the Antarctic icecap.” (Tim Radford, The Guardian, London)

They paused under the bridge to wait out the shower.

“Other offenders we will pause upon.” (Shakespeare)

PAW (V)

Stop your dog from pawing at me like that.

PAY (V)

Are you paying in cash or by cheque?

You will pay (i.e. make retribution) for that, I promise you.

Why don’t you pay that money directly into my account?

He will make you pay through the nose (i.e. excessively).

“Hypocrisy is the tribute vice pays to virtue.”

(Chris Humphrey)

(Oliver Wendell) “Holmes used to say that the only debt he paid with pleasure was his taxes, for with them he bought civilization.” (The Economist mag.)

PAYMENT

This is in payment for all you have done for us.

I want your payment in cash.

They made all their payments to the local registrar.

PECK (V)

“Why do chicks peck at the one place in an egg where there is an air space?”

(Hugh Montefiori, The Probability of God)

PECULIAR

I find something peculiar (i.e. strange) about her.

“He is very peculiar in his behaviour.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

“The weakest among us has a gift however seemingly trivial, which is peculiar to him and which worthily used will be a gift also to his race.” (Ruskin)

PEER (V)

“The amoeba has one cell. Inside my human eye, peering at it, are 107,000,000 cells. Seven million are cones which . . . give me the full band of color awareness . . . The other hundred million are rods, backup cells for use in low light.” (Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

“Leaning into the shaft, **peering down** *into* the darkness.”

(P. Dickinson, Oxford English Dictionary)

The sun was **peering from** behind a cloud.

The old woman **peered from** the window.

The ship’s captain **peered into** the night.

“Already streaks of blue **peer through** our clouds.”

(Carlyle, Oxford English Dictionary)

PENALTY

There’s a **penalty for** strewing garbage.

PENCHANT

He has a **penchant for** trouble.

PENETRATE

The drizzle is **penetrating** right *through* my clothes.

Finally, the drill **penetrated to** the durum mater, and brain matter welled up.

PERCOLATE

“The worship of Isis had **percolated** (i.e. seeped) . . . *into* the Greek Peninsula.”

(Gladstone, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The rain had **percolated** (i.e. trickled) *through* the ceiling.

PERFECT (A)

That actress is **perfect for** the part.

Her drawings are **perfect in** every detail.

PERFECT (V)

He wants to **perfect** himself *in* the martial arts.

“**Perfecting** herself *in* French, which she already knows very well.” (H. James, Oxford English Dictionary)

PERIL

“At the **peril of** his life.” (Paley)

She is a **peril to** me.

PERMISSION

Have you **permission from** your mother to go on this excursion?

“Do as thou find’st **permission from** above.”

(Milton, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“The article is published by **permission of** the Director of the Physics and Engineering Laboratory.”

(Physics Bulletin, Oxford English Dictionary)

(Actor and director Sam) “Wanamaker .. was given **permission to** construct an \$18 million replica of the playhouse where King Lear and Macbeth were probably first performed, a stone’s throw from its original site along the south bank of the Thames River.”

(J.D. Reed, Time mag.)

PERMIT (V)

That passage in the Bible **permits of** (i.e. allows) no other interpretation.

You are not **permitted** (i.e. allowed) *to* smoke in here.

PERPETRATE

“Outrageous violence **perpetrated by** human beings *on* human beings.” (R.D. Laing, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The violin is the most astounding acoustical phenomenon ever **perpetrated** . . . *on* the human nervous system.” (Carleen Maley Hutchins, Discover mag.)

“The most horrific excesses have been **perpetrated with** sincere moral conviction.”

(B. Magee, Oxford English Dictionary) (Note: not *from*)

PERSEVERE

She is **persevering in** her fruitless efforts to change him.

If you **persevere with** me, you will be amply rewarded.

PERSIST

“Why do scientists **persist in** saying that we descend from the apes, instead of ascend?” (Charles Prieur)

PERSUADE

She is **persuaded of** the rightness of his cause.

“Monasticism proved highly effective in **persuading** . . . emergent western societies *to* devote a dramatic part of their wealth and skills to cultural purposes.”

(Paul Johnson, The History of Christianity)

“One of the best ways to **persuade** others is *with* your ears — by listening to them.” (Dean Rusk)

PERTAIN

“Twenty-seven different government agencies (in U.S.) monitor some 5,600 federal regulations that *pertain to* the manufacture of steel alone.” (Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*)

PERTINENT

Make sure it's *pertinent to* your basic argument.

PERTURBED

She is very *perturbed at* (or *about*) the turn of events.
I am very *perturbed by* the report I've received.

PESSIMISTIC

They are very *pessimistic about* the future.

PESTER

She always *pesters me about* the clothes I wear.
His son and heir continually *pestered him for* money.
Stop *pestering me to* do this; it's plain wrong.
The Customer Service Office is *pestered with* complaints.

PHONE (V)

Please *phone me at* six o'clock sharp.
She *phones me at* the house after supper.
I ran to the drugstore and *phoned for* a taxi.
My daughter is *phoning from* her friend's home.

PIERCE

“His only son . . . was *pierced through* the heart *by* a javelin.” (Gibbon, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

PILE

He *piled one brick onto* another without mortar.
They knocked me down, then *piled on* (or *onto*) me.
His desk was *piled high with* books.

PINCH

She was *pinched* (i.e. squeezed) *for* money to buy clothes.
He *pinches* (i.e. saves) *on* everything but his cigars.
They came in, their faces *pinched with* cold.

PINE (V)

He *pined for* her the rest of his life.

PIONEER (N)

He was a *pioneer of* the minimalist school.

PIPE (VV)

“It is about one-fourth as expensive to *pipe* hydrogen *across* long distances as it is to transmit electricity the same distance.” (Joan Ogden, physicist, *Discover* mag.)
They are *pipng* the natural gas *to* all the major cities in the country.

PIT (V)

I would *pit* my dog *against* yours any day.
The argument that *pits* him *against* most scientists concerns evolution.

PITY (N)

“The practical weakness of the vast mass of modern *pity for* the poor and the oppressed is precisely that it is merely *pity*; *pity* is pitiful, but not respectful.” (G.K. Chesterton)
Please have *pity on* me.

PLACE (VV)

I will *place* it *at* your feet.
“Treat your friends as you do your pictures, and *place* them *in* their best light.” (Jennie Jerome Churchill)
“For reasons that are still a puzzle, the (Statue of Liberty's) head was not *placed* directly *on* the pylon's central axis, nor was (its) arm properly positioned. As a result, the head and arm are about two feet to the right of where they should be.” (Anon.)

He carefully *placed* the Bible *on* the table.

“The body's 5 million sweat glands are packed so tight that a green pea *placed on* the skin's surface would cover more than 100.” (Eric Adler, *Kansas City Star*)

She is *placing* the flower bush right *under* my window.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

PLAN (N)

“The crisis of modern society is precisely that the youth no longer feel heroic in the *plan for* action that their culture has set up.” (Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death*)

I suggest you change your whole *plan of* battle.

PLAN (V)

“The future that we study and *plan for* begins today.” (Chester O. Fischer)

“He *planned for* the future of his empire.” (M. Puzo, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

I’m *planning on* a scholarship.

“Do you *plan on* staying with Muriel forever?” (A. Tyler, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

She *plans to* leave tomorrow.

PLANT (V)

“In response to the Earth Day message, as many as 1 billion trees will be *planted across* the continents.” (Cathy Spencer, *Omni* mag.)

I *planted* a number of these *in* my window boxes and they are flowering very nicely.

Why don’t you *plant* a bomb (i.e. place a bomb) surreptitiously *under* his window?

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

PLASTER (V)

“Rags of foam, torn off the wavetops, were *plastering* themselves *against* the wheelhouse window.” (Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*)

I will *plaster* his photo all *over* the fence.

The whole fence was *plastered with* posters.

PLAY (V)

“The actors were not inclined to *play for* laughs.” (*The Economist* mag.)

“There are more good pianists *playing in* New York every evening than *in* the whole of Europe.” (Jan Morris)

It seems that “music and language *play out on* separate neural circuits in the brain’s two hemispheres.”

(*Discover* mag., Oct. ‘96)

“The creative mind *plays with* the objects it loves.”

(Carl Jung)

PLEASE (V)

I was *pleased as* Punch (i.e. delighted).

She was *pleased at* finding a parking spot.

Velvet is *pleasing to* the touch.

I will *please* them *by* leaving this house.

Well, aren’t you *pleased with* me?

PLEASURE (N)

I get great *pleasure from* this computerized game of chess.

A good cook, she takes *pleasure in* watching me eat.

“The *pleasure of* pale colours.”

(*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

It’s a *pleasure to* meet you again.

PLENTY

We have *plenty of* time to get there.

There’s *plenty for* me to enjoy right here.

PLOW (V)

She *plowed* (i.e. crashed) *into* my car when I was parked.

He never clears his driveway; just *ploughs through* the snow.

“Fiddler crabs *plow* (i.e. claw) *through* the soil, aerating it and making it easier for grass roots to establish themselves.”

(Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Discover* mag., April ‘93)

PLUG (V)

“When it comes to biopolymers like DNA, the biologists can synthesize most of what Mother Nature has made. I foresee computers that *plug into* the brain and copy it.” (Richard Wolkomir, *Amazing Superstuff*)

PLUNGE (VV)

He *plunged* (i.e. thrust) his dagger *into* the beast’s heart.

The little dog *plunged* (i.e. dove) *into* the icy lake without a moment’s hesitation.

“Each year, the movement of Earth’s crust *plunges* more than a billion tons of water *into* the mantle, where it is mostly absorbed into the rocks.” (Discover mag.)

PLY (v)

She plied me *with* martinis all evening.

POINT (v)

She is *pointing* her finger *at* me.

I *point to* the tallest man in the line-up, who promptly faints.

‘He *pointed toward* a corner *with* his left hand, *to* a short, heavily muscled, glaring man.”

(Edwin Newman, Sunday Punch)

POISONOUS

“Arsenic, though highly *poisonous to* most forms of life, is food for some microbes.” (Scientific American mag.)

POLLUTE

“By the time my infant sons reach retirement age, half the world’s species will be extinct, the air radioactive, the seas *polluted with* oil.” (Jared Diamond, Discover mag.)

PONDER

I had all night to *ponder over* the problem.

POOR

He was *poor as* a church mouse.

She was strong in body but *poor in* spirit.

POPULAR

He was *popular among* his peers.

“Colonialism was seldom *popular in* France *with* the government, intellectuals, and the masses.”

(Sanche de Gramont, The French)

PORE (v)

She *pored over* (i.e. studied closely) her topographical maps for a noise-free location.

POSE (v)

I will be *posing as* (i.e. pretending to be) a beggar *for* that photo?

She will *pose* (i.e. model) *for* you, if you like.

POSSESSED

She is *possessed by* (i.e. in the grip of) a multitude of fears.

They are *possessed of* (i.e. command) both money and power.

“Every human being *possessed* (i.e. in possession) *of* reason.” (Coleridge, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

POSSESSION

He has *possession of* my credit card.

POSSIBILITY

I like the *possibility of* making a fortune in this country.

Note: not *to*

POSTERIOR

That was *posterior to* my leaving the country.

POTENT

It’s the first drug that’s proved *potent against* this disease.

It was very *potent*, too, *in* side-effects.

Her reasoning proved *potent with* the rest of the family.

POUNCE

He *pounced on* the grenade before anyone else could move, and saved our lives.

He *pounces upon* my opinion almost before I can speak.

POUR (vv)

“30,000 doctoral theses in literature *pour from* the universities of the West and Russia every year.”

(George Steiner, Real Presences)

Language (the gift of gab) . . . “lets us cheat death by *pouring out* our knowledge, dreams, and memories *into* younger people’s minds.” (Matt Cartmill, Discover mag., Nov. ’99)

“In the time it takes to read this sentence, millions upon millions of neutrinos, *pouring in from* outer space, will zip through the body of every human being on earth.” (Michael D. Lemonick, *Time* mag., April 8, 1996)

“Every day the earth collides with more than a hundred million meteors, and something like a hundred million tons of extraterrestrial material comes *pouring into* our atmosphere.” (Lyll Watson, *Lifetide*)

“*Pouring* molasses *into* the tritium injection hole in a warhead would make it nuclear safe.” (*Discover* mag., April 1992)

“Of all the discoveries that have *poured out of* neuroscience labs in recent years, the finding that the electrical activity of brain cells changes the physical structure of the brain is perhaps the most breathtaking.” (J. Madeleine Nash, *Time* mag., June 9, '97)

She *poured* the wine *over* his head.

He *poured* all the leftover cream *onto* the pudding

The sea *poured through* the break in the dike.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

POWER (N)

He has *power of* attorney.

“The *power of* heat *to* burn.”

(Jowett, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“We have gained the *power to* contaminate not only a river, neighborhood, or city; we have the *power to* poison the entire planet.” (Bruce Babbitt, *Omn* mag.)

“More *power to* your elbow.”

(Lowell, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

PRACTISE, PRACTICE

“... lest some treachery should be suddenly *practised by* the enemies.” (II Maccabees 14:22, *World Book Dictionary*)

He is *practicing for* a concert.

She was very *practised in* subterfuge.

The athlete *practices* daily *with* his coach.

PRAISE (V)

“She had been good at art as a schoolgirl, often *praised by* her art master.” (M. Amis, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“No member of a crew is *praised for* the rugged individuality of his rowing.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

The actor's performance was *praised to* the skies *for* its brilliance.

PRATE

He *prates* endlessly *of* his conquests.

PRAY

I *prayed to* God *for* forgiveness.

PRE-EMINENT

He was *pre-eminent among* men *for* his holiness.

She was *pre-eminent in* all matters medical.

PREACH

He was *preaching* straight *at* his son in the first pew.

Go ahead. *Preach on* any subject you wish.

I would like you to *preach to* my congregation this evening.

“You can *preach* a better sermon *with* your life than *with* your lips.” (Oliver Goldsmith)

PRECAUTION

This herb is a *precaution against* disease.

PRECEDE

“The car-bombing had been *preceded by* no warning.”

(John Le Carré, *The little drummer girl*)

D *precedes* E *in* the alphabet.

He *preceded* his companion *to* the door.

PRECEDENCE

This concern must take *precedence over* all others.

Note: *precedence on* — British

You must give *precedence to* this matter.

PRECIPITATE

Minerals are *precipitating from* gases dissolving in the water forced from the volcano's fissures.

“No alternative but to perish by the . . . sword, or to **precipitate** (i.e. throw) themselves *into* the ocean.” (Listener, Oxford English Dictionary)

PRECLUDE

I'm **precluded** *from* attending the town meetings

PRECURSOR

“Cowper . . . by his genuine love of nature was a **precursor** of Wordsworth.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

PREDILECTION

She has a **predilection** *for* chocolate, and it shows.

PREDISPOSED

He is **predisposed** *to* fits of temper.

PREDISPOSITION

He has a **predisposition** *to* violence.

PREDOMINATE

“There are some areas where immigrants **predominate** *over* the natives of the place *by* almost two to one.” (Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

PREEN

“The gentlemen . . . **preened** (i.e. flaunted) themselves *in front of* the admiring ladies.”

(K. Mansfield, Oxford English Dictionary)

“He **preened** (i.e. admired himself) *before* a mirror.

The peacock was **preening** (i.e. smoothing its feathers with its beak) *right on* our doorstep.

“He **preened** (i.e. congratulated) himself *on* a purely spontaneous discovery of his own.”

(E. Jones, Oxford English Dictionary)

PREFACE (N)

“This superficial tale, is but a **preface** *of* her worthy praise.” (Shakespeare, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

You should read the **preface** *to* his book first.

PREFACE (V)

She **prefaced** her talk *with* a tale of woe.

PREFER

I **preferred** *to* go to church on weekdays.

She **prefers** cream *to* milk *in* (or *on*) her cereal.

PREFERENCE

“A child's **preference** *for* the right or left hand is set even before birth.” (Discover mag., March '91)

PREFIX (V)

Why don't you **prefix** your name *to* mine instead?

PREGNANT

She is **pregnant** *by* him, but he refuses to marry her.

You're **pregnant** *with* my child, so why won't you marry me?

Their meeting was **pregnant** (i.e. rife) *with* menace.

PREJUDICE (N)

His **prejudice** *against* blacks demeans all his good works.

Her **prejudice** *in favour of* her family is sheer nepotism.

This leave of absence will enable you to go there without **prejudice** *to* your career.

PRELUDE

The orchestra played the **prelude** *to* his last oratorio.

PREOCCUPIED

He is **preoccupied** *with* other concerns than mine.

PREPARATION

My **preparations** *against* the storm did not help a bit.

I am making **preparations** *for* my long trip.

PREPARATORY

He bought himself a new suit, **preparatory** *to* his discharge from the army.

PREPARE

The food was **prepared** *by* my mother.

You should **prepare** *for* this test.

He should be **preparing** *to* meet his maker.

PREREQUISITE

Changes were **prerequisite** *to* the theatre company's survival.

PRESCRIPTION

"The attempt to preserve . . . blue-collar jobs is actually a **prescription** *for* unemployment."

(Peter Drucker, Time mag.)

PRESENT (A)

"This universe around us is made up of mind materially **present** (i.e. existing) *in* our flesh."

(Simone Weil, The need for roots)

"The legends of the place are **present** *to* the imagination *throughout* the discourse." (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

PRESENT (N)

I have two **presents** (i.e. gifts) *for* you, dear.

Now that you have won a new car, make me a **present** *of* your old one.

This is my **present** *to* you for being so kind.

PRESENT (V)

She was **presented** (i.e. introduced) *to* the queen.

"When a man retires and time is no longer a matter of urgent importance, his colleagues generally **present** (i.e. gift) him *with* a clock." (R.C.Sherriff)

PRESERVATION

"When the state considers that taste and style fall within its jurisdiction, and links culture to the **preservation** *of* national values, it does not create, it embalms." (Sanche de Gramont)

PRESERVATIVE

It's usually used as a **preservative** *against* (or *from*) rust.

PRESERVE

I tried to **preserve** it *against* (or *from*) rust, but to no avail.

"Miraculously **preserved** *from* the developers, . . . Rye is arguably the most enchanting town in the British Isles." (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

"Peace is an unstable equilibrium, which can be **preserved** only *by* acknowledged supremacy or equal power." (Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

I am **preserving** one of the flowers you gave me *in* lucite.

"The pattern of growth **preserved** *in* the annual rings of the bristlecone — the oldest living organism on earth — is an excellent record of past weather conditions. Bristlecones can survive more than 4500 years."

(Allan Chen, Discovery mag.)

PRESIDE

I'm **presiding** *at* the next meeting.

He **presided** *over* his class with gentle firmness.

PRESS (V)

He was **pressing** (i.e. forcing) me *against* the wall.

She told me to **press** *for* (i.e. insist on) an interview.

I spent my whole stay in Africa either **pressed** (i.e. squeezed) *for* time or money.

He **pressed** drinks *upon* me (i.e. urged me to drink) all evening.

PRESUME

They're **presuming** *on* (or *upon*) my generosity.

I wouldn't **presume** *to* call on you uninvited.

PRETEND

She is **pretending** *to* be a princess.

He **pretends** *to* (i.e. claims) vast scholarship.

PRETENDER

He's been a **pretender** *to* the throne since 1968.

PRETENSION

My **pretension** *to* broad learning didn't fool him for a minute.

PREVAIL

“If a sense of justice *prevails* (i.e. wins out) *among* the real estate magnates who run Broadway these days, before too long there will also be a Cronyn-Tandy Theatre.” (William A. Henry III, *Time* mag.)

His way will likely *prevail* (i.e. win out) *in* the sports world. Her good humour will *prevail over* (i.e. overcome) your sulky moods.

He is *prevailing upon* (i.e. convincing) her to mend her ways.

PREVENT

“The great thing about human language is that it *prevents us from* sticking to the matter at hand.” (Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of a Cell*)

PREVENTATIVE, PREVENTIVE (N)

It's a very effective *preventative against* rust.

PREVENTATIVE, PREVENTIVE (A)

“Statutes *preventive of* blasphemy and profaneness.” (1822, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

PREVENTION

It is recommended for the *prevention of* nausea.

PREVIOUS

Previous to his illness, he travelled widely.

PREY (N)

She was a perfect *prey for* sociopaths.

We were the *prey of* a business shark.

She was a *prey to* every passing salesman.

PREY (V)

“Viruses. The word comes from the Latin for slimy liquid, stench, poison — and the connotation is appropriate . . . for the untold number of . . . varieties that have been *preying on* animals and plants since long before (man) appeared on earth.” (Claudia Wallis, *Time* essay)

“Let no feeling of discouragement *prey upon* you, and in the end you are sure to succeed.” (Abraham Lincoln)

PRICE (N)

The *price of* that book is ridiculous.

All six had a *price on* their heads.

PRICE (V)

He is *pricing* his home *for* a quick sale.

The stadium seats were *priced to* sell quickly.

PRIDE (N)

I always did take *pride in* my job.

He was a poet and the *pride of* his village.

Too much *pride of* family can be resented.

A *pride* (i.e. group) *of* lions.

PRIDE (V)

I *pride myself on* my honesty.

PRINT (V)

I had her book *printed for* her birthday.

“In the bar code . . . *printed on* . . . packages, the codes identify a product, and provide such information as its color, expiration date, batch number and origin.” (Peter C. Doyle)

“Most experts have awarded the honour of being the first book *printed with* movable type to Gutenberg's two-volume, 1282-page Bible, *printed with* 42 lines of type a page.” (Joseph Wisnovsky, *Time* mag.)

PRIOR

She left the country just *prior to* my arrival.

PRIORITY

The traffic cop has *priority over* the traffic lights.

I'm giving *priority to* this investigation.

PRIVILEGE (N)

It's a *privilege to* be your friend.

I had the *privilege of* a private audience with the pope.

PRIVY

I am *privy to* his final request.

PROBLEM

Is that a real *problem for* you?

“How does an embryo grow from a featureless blob of cells into a critter with a front, middle and rear? Every cell in your body has the same genes . . . Yet some cells become eyes, others become legs, etc. Answer: Certain cells are master switches which govern structures. They’re called homeotic genes. But here’s a *problem for* evolutionists: Each homeotic gene governs a slice of our body from front to rear. (Or a micro-thin slice of our heads from top to bottom!) The homeotic genes themselves are all bunched together — and they lie in the same front-to-back order as the slices they regulate. Another problem: How do homeotic genes regulate brain growth?” (Larry Gonick, Discover mag.)

It’s a *problem of* scale.

He is quite a *problem to* his parents.

PROCESS (V)

“One is *processed by* the freeways (in Los Angeles).”
(Jane Morris)

That new cereal is now being *processed for* human consumption.

PROCLAIM

“*Proclaim* liberty *throughout* all the land *unto* all the inhabitants thereof.”

(Inscription on Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, U.S.A.)

They are *proclaiming* their success *on* TV tonight.

He *proclaimed* his freedom *over* the public broadcasting system.

PROCLAIMER

He was a *proclaimer of* free love.

PROCLIVITY

He has a marked *proclivity for* wild generalizations.

“This natural *proclivity of* men *to* hurt each other.”
(Hobbs)

PRODIGAL

She is *prodigal of* her time and talent.

PRODIGY

“This bird . . . is a *prodigy of* understanding.”
(Goldsmith, Oxford Universal Dictionary)

PRODUCE (V)

That film was *produced* (i.e. brought to performance) *by* a very famous actor.

“One tree *produces* (i.e. yields) oxygen *for* 400 people.”
(Irwin Block, The Gazette, Montreal)

“The gadget (PCR or polymerase chain reaction) can automatically *produce* (i.e. generate) a billion faithful copies *from* one small piece of DNA, in just three hours.” (Yvonne Baskin, Discover mag.)

“The body *produces up to* three trillion cells a day.”
(Brad Evenson, National Post)

PRODUCTIVE

“It may be *productive . . . of* incalculable good.”
(Oxford Universal Dictionary)

PROFESSOR

He is a *professor at* McGill University.

PROFICIENT

The whole family is *proficient at* tennis.

He’s very *proficient in* mathematics.

PROFIT (N)

My company could make a *profit of* about one million dollars.

She made a big *profit on* the sale of her car.

You could stop smoking with great *profit to* yourself and those around you.

PROFIT (V)

They stand to *profit by* the sale of their uncle’s art collection.

Why can’t you *profit from* your sister’s experience?

“We could watch teachers at work, and *profit from* doing so.” (E. Blishen, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Mrs Burke . . . has not *profited of* the bathing.”
(Burke, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

PROFUSE

It was **profuse** *of* vegetation
He was **profuse** *in* compliments.

PROGENITOR

“Lord Longford, the *progenitor of* Britain’s fabled Literary Longfords, a family unmatched — possibly in history — for its eight esteemed writers in three generations publishing contemporaneously.”
(Bonnie Angelo, Time mag.)

PROGRESS (v)

I am **progressing** *in* this silly venture *against* my better judgment.
He **progressed** *beyond* the island *into* uncharted waters.
How are you **progressing** *with* that book of yours?

PROHIBIT

They were **prohibited** *from* ever building war planes.
Note: not *to*

PROJECT (v)

They **projected** the photo (i.e. caused it to appear) *against* (or *on* or *onto* or *upon*) the wall.
300 million tons of hazardous waste are **projected** (i.e. planned) *for* 1986.
Can we not **project** (i.e. propel) ourselves *into* the future?
(The Oxford Universal Dictionary)
“The booths **projected** (i.e. protruded) far *into* the streets.” (Macauley)
He was **projected** (i.e. hurled) *over* a wall and *into* a swamp.

PROLIFIC

“Monarchy . . . when it is hereditary is likely to be more *prolific of* stupidity, nepotism, irresponsibility, and extravagance than *of* nobility or statesmanship.”
(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

PROLOGUE

It was a dramatic **prologue** *to* a long and dull play.

PROMPT (A)

He was too **prompt** *in* arriving at conclusions.
She was **prompt** *to* obey.

PROMPT (v)

Prompted *by* feelings of compassion, the couple adopted the young orphan.
“Exposure to a single chemotherapeutic agent often *prompts* a tumour *to* fight off a wide range of drugs.”
(Discover mag.)

PRONE

“Buddhist precepts (hold) that women (are) fundamentally more *prone to* sin than men, and that their only path to expiation lay in total subservience to the male.” (Jack Seward, The Japanese)

PRONENESS

He evinces a **proneness** *to* vulgarity.

PRONOUNCE

Are you expecting me to **pronounce** (i.e. to declare) *for* or *against* the decision of the panel?
The judge will be **pronouncing** *on* the validity of this municipal by-law tomorrow morning.

PROP (v)

Why don’t you just prop it **against** the fence?
The patient was **propped up** *in* bed.
“**Propt** (i.e. propped) **on** a staff, a beggar old and bare.”
(Pope)

PROPEL

“Galaxies are still being *propelled* away *from* each other *by* the force of the colossal explosion that triggered the universe’s birth about 15 billion years ago.”
(T. Dickinson, Maclean’s, quoted by Reader’s Digest)
“A rejection . . . **propelled** her *toward* study.”
(S. Quinn, Oxford English Dictionary)
“He **propelled** her . . . *up* the . . . ramp.”
(B. Bainbridge, Oxford English Dictionary)

PROPENSITY

She showed a **propensity** *for* fast driving.

“A natural **propensity** *in* us *to* do evil.”

(DeFoe, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

He had a **propensity** *to* (or *towards*) uncouth behaviour.

PROPER

The ceremony was **proper** *to* my rank.

PROPINQUITY

“One of the attractions of the place is its **propinquity** *to* the hunting districts of Leicestershire.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

PROPORTIONAL

“The severity of an itch is inversely **proportional** *to* the reach.” (quoted by Allison Sanders, Houston Chronicle)

PROPORTIONATE

“Mental health is directly **proportionate** *to* the number of perceived options available to any individual. One who is mentally disturbed often lives in a world in which almost every door seems to be closed.”

(G. Leonard, Esquire mag., Dec. 1982)

PROSECUTE

I will have you **prosecuted** (i.e. arraigned) *for* defamation.

He **prosecuted** (i.e. carried on) an enquiry *into* all documents related to the fiscal scandal.

“Obliged to **prosecute** (i.e. wage) the war *with* greater vigour.” (J. Colville, Oxford English Dictionary)

PROSPECT (N)

There is just no **prospect** *of* better times ahead.

“Seeing no **prospect** *of* fine weather, I descended to Saas.” (Oxford Universal Dictionary)

“The Tory beast bleeding from all pores, ravaged and perspiring, a pitiful **prospect** *to* the eyes.”

(Allan Fotheringham)

PROTECT

“A geneticist named Alfred Knudson (has discovered that) genes that normally **protect** *against* the cancer (retinoblastoma, for example), somehow get damaged or lost.” (Time mag.)

“The spinal cord is a cable-like bundle of nerves that connects the brain to the rest of the nervous system. It is **protected** *by* the bony spinal column, with 24 vertebrae stacked in a gentle S-curve between the skull and tailbone.” (Don Colburn, Washington Post)

“Saint Vitus’s Dance (Sydenham’s chorea) refers to the Sicilian youth who, as he was about to be martyred in A.D. 303, beseeched the Lord to **protect** *from* the miseries of the ‘dancing mania’ all those who commemorated the day of his death.”

(Tony Dajer, Discover mag.)

“To be **protected** *like* a child.”

(Shakespeare: Henry VI, Oxford English Dictionary)

PROTECTION

My house by the sea needs **protection** *against* the elements.

She will have to ask the police for **protection** *from* him.

PROTEST (V)

It’s high time you **protested** *against* his mistreatment of you.

PROTRUDE

A strange growth **protruded** (i.e. projected) *from* his right ear.

One claw of the baby chick **protruded** *through* (i.e. jutted out from) the shell.

“Critics . . . who **protrude** (i.e. impose) their nonsense *upon* the town.” (Thackeray, Oxford English Dictionary)

PROUD

How could you be **proud** *about* that?

“The intelligent man who is **proud** *of* his intelligence is like the condemned man who is **proud** *of* his large cell.”

(Simone Weil)

Are you too **proud** *to* ask for help?

PROVIDE

We **provided** *against* that eventuality.

I will **provide** *for* you, I promise.

“Without cholesterol we would surely die — every cell in our body depends on the waxy substance to **provide** strength and resilience *to* its outer membrane.”

(Larry Husten, Discover mag.)

“Nature creates ability; luck **provides** it *with* opportunity.” (François de la Rochefoucauld)

PROVOKE

I have been **provoked** *by* them before.

“Trying to **provoke** me *into* losing my temper.”

(L. Nkosi, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Love is not **provoked** *to* anger, takes no account of evil treatment.” (1 Corinthians 13: 1-7, The Bible)

PROXY

I'm the **proxy** *for* my sick father.

PRY

She caught him **prying** *about* the house. (British)

He liked to **pry** *around* the old mill.

I don't like you **prying** *into* my affairs.

PULLULATE

“The city (New York) was **pullulating** *with* rumours.”
(James Brady)

PUN (v)

He **punned** *on* some word of mine every time I spoke up.

PUNCH (v)

He didn't say a word; just started **punching** him *in* the stomach.

Next thing you know, she **punches** him *on* the nose.

I **punched** a hole *through* the siding.

PUNCTUAL

I find her very **punctual** *in* keeping appointments

He is punctual *with* all his homework.

PUNISHABLE

“In England, as late as the 18th century, women, and little children ten years old, were hanged for petty theft. More than 300 ‘crimes’ were **punishable** *by* death.”

(F.M. Esfandiary, Optimism One)

PURGE (v)

The scientist **purged** it *of* all contamination.

PURSUANT

Pursuant *to* my letter yesterday, have you learned anything more about the fellow.

PURSUIT

He was killed in **pursuit** *of* a lawbreaker.

PUSH (v)

He **pushed** me *against* the wall.

“The force of entropy does not make exceptions; it is **pushing** all things *into* dissolution and chaos.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

The mechanic **pushed** the car *onto* the ramp.

The campers **pushed** the canoe *over* the bank and *under* the shelter.

The man was **pushed** *through* the doorway.

PUT

I am **putting in** *for* (i.e. requesting) a raise, but I don't think I'll get it.

“**Put** (i.e. place) all the world's land animals *on* a pair of scales and 10% of the weight would be ants.”

(Dr. Edward O. Wilson and Dr. Bert Holldobler)

I **put** (i.e. presented) the case *to* him *with* all the ardor I could muster.

Who **put** you *up to* (i.e. suggested you do) this?

He doesn't think he can **put up** *with* it (i.e. suffer it) much longer.



QUALIFY

He was **qualified** *as* an army scout.

“The propositions . . . have been **qualified** (i.e. designated) *as* heretical.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“Anyone who wants the job (of U.S. president) isn’t **qualified** (i.e. fitted) *for* it.”

(Lawrence Sanders, The Passion of Molly T)

She is **qualified** (i.e. competent) *in* a number of disciplines.

“I am **qualifying** myself (i.e. making myself competent) *to* give lessons.”

(Charles Dickens, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

QUARREL (N)

I thought your **quarrel** *about* this house would be over by now.

“In the **quarrel** *between* the Jesuits and the Papacy over the missions in China, it was the Jesuits who were carrying out the words of Christ.”

(Simone Weil, Gateway to God)

What is your **quarrel** *with* him?

QUARREL (V)

They’re **quarreling** *among* themselves again!

What are you **quarreling** *about* (or *over*) now?

I **quarrel** *over* principle; never *about* money.

“He (Jean-Jacques Rousseau) **quarreled** *with* Diderot to whom he owed most of all.”

(Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

QUEST (N)

She is indefatigable in her **quest** *for* stardom.

He’s in Africa again, **in quest** *of* that missing link.

QUEST (V)

He **quested** his whole life *for* the Holy Grail.

QUESTION (N)

“He that was **in question** *for* the robbery.”
(William Shakespeare)

He acknowledged the **question** *from* the floor (i.e. from a member of the House of Commons).

“It was a **question** (i.e. problem) *of* time.”
(Freeman, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

QUESTION (V)

You should **question** him *about* that accident.

QUIBBLE (V)

Why should you **quibble** *about* such a trivial matter?

He **quibbled** *with* her *over* details the whole day long.

QUICK (A)

And be **quick** *about* it (i.e. hurry).

She is **quick** *at* learning languages.

He is very **quick** *of* foot (i.e. moves fast).

Those dancers are **quick** *in* their movements.

She is **quick** *to* criticize.

He is **quick** *with* a pun.

QUIT

I’m glad to be **quit** (i.e. rid) *of* him.

QUOTATION

That **quotation** is not *from* the Bible. It is *from* the Koran.

**QUOTE (N)**

The actor offered a very pertinent **quote** *from* Shakespeare.

QUOTE (V)

He **quoted** (i.e. cited words) *from* Shakespeare at every opportunity.

She is **quoted** (i.e. her words are repeated) *in* yesterday's newspaper.

“The largest number of English words lies somewhere between 400,000 . . . and 600,000 — the largest figure that any expert is willing to be *quoted on*. By comparison, the biggest French dictionaries have only about 150,000 entries; the biggest Russian ones, a mere 130,000.”
(Robert Clayborne, Our marvelous native tongue)

I will give you the statistics, but I do not wish to be **quoted on** them.

I **quoted** (i.e. stated a price) *on* this fabric, not *on* that one.

R

RACE (N)

It was a *race against* the clock.

“Human history becomes more and more a *race between* education and catastrophe.” (H.G. Wells)

“They’re in a *race for* the biggest prize of all: life. It will be a *race to* the finish. Every creature is in a perpetual arms *race with* its diseases, worms and genes.” (*The Economist*)

RACE (V)

She was *racing against* the clock.

Why do you *race down* the street instead of playing in the park?

They *raced for* the beach.

The men *raced into* the barn, looking for the escapee.

The dark river *raced over* the shallows.

The fire engine *raced to* the fire.

The children *raced through* the house.

RACKED

“She was *racked by* a . . . feeling of . . . loss.” (*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“Body all aching and *racked with* pain.” (from the song *Old Man River*)

RADIATE

Roads *radiate* (i.e. fan out) *from* the town *to* all points of the compass.

The new lamp *radiated* (i.e. spread) its light *to* every corner of the room.

RAGE (V)

“The gale . . . *raged above* our heads.” (*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“Do not go gentle into that good night. *Rage, rage against* the dying of the light.” (Dylan Thomas)

“She . . . *raged at* the world that had killed him so needlessly.” (A. Cross, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“The passion for play *raged in* him without measure.” (Macauley, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

RAIL (V)

Rail *against* injustices, not *against* the people who suffer them.

You can *rail at* me all you want, it won’t change my verdict.

RAISE (V)

“In Massachusetts, at the New Alchemy Institute, chickens are being *raised* (i.e. bred) *atop* fish tanks. Their droppings fertilize algae, which the fish then eat.” (Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*)

“Trawler skippers, grand as kings, standing on bollards armed with whistles, *raising* (i.e. mustering) a scratch crew *for* a voyage.” (Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*)

Rome claimed that Romus and Remulus were *raised* (i.e. reared) *by* wolves.

“Several twin studies have reported that identical twins reared apart are actually more alike than those *raised* (i.e. brought up) *in* the same home.” (John Leo, *Time* mag.)

“The progress of science *raised* (i.e. elevated) the authority of the test tube *over* that of the crosier.” (Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lesson of History*)

He *raised* (i.e. lifted) the baby *up to* the waiting hands.

RAMPANT

“Snobbishness has this peculiar and devilish quality of evil, that it is *rampant* (i.e. widespread). *among* very kindly people, with open hearts and houses . . . It is our great English vice.” (G.K. Chesterton)

All neighbourhoods, rich or poor, are now *rampant with* drugs.

RANGE (V)

Their ages *ranged between* 30 and 50.

“The mid-water of the ocean . . . *ranges from* just below the surface *to* 6000 feet or more . . . It contains the greatest number of organisms in the sea . . . great numbers of which have never been seen.”

(Shannon Brownlee, *Discovery* mag.)

The students were *ranged in* rows *according to* age.

The investigation *ranged over* the entire department.

“The Betelgeuse (star), part of the Orion (constellation), is among the giants of the universe. Estimates of its diameter *range up to* an incredible one billion kilometres.” (Doris Hoppe, *Reader's Digest*)

RANK (v)

“Dawn’s followers wanted to show that the Lord’s battalions had been *ranked* (i.e. marshalled) *against* them from the start.” (*The Economist* mag.)

He was *ranked* (i.e. rated) *among* the top scholars *in* his field.

That last storm *ranks* (i.e. is classified) *with* the worst I have ever seen.

RANKLE

His father’s abuse of him has been *rankling in* his memory since childhood.

She *rankled under* the domination of her stepmother.

I guess discrimination has been *rankling with* me all my life.

RAPT

She stood before the Venus de Milo *rapt in* awe.

RATE (v)

The youth *rates high* (i.e. is highly valued) *as* a mechanic.

That lovely cottage is *rated at* (i.e. rented or leased for) 100 pounds a year. (British)

“The beer, Alsatian and icy, comes in steins *rated* (i.e. assigned a value) *from* ‘sérieux’ *to* ‘distingué’.”

(James Brady)

RATIONALE

He wrote a *rationale about* business principles for his company.

“The Precambrian record is now sufficiently good that the old *rationale about* undiscovered sequences of smoothly transitional forms will no longer wash.”

(Stephen Jay Gould, *Discover* mag., 1989)

“The main *rationale for* promoting rapid educational expansion was . . . an economic one.”

(R.G. Myers, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

The *rationale of* the company’s policy was clearly outlined to employees.

RAVE (v)

He came back *raving* (i.e. enthusing) *about* his trip to Ireland.

She *raved* (i.e. screamed imprecations) *at* me all the way down the block.

RAW

Three days later, my feet were still *raw from* the climb.

Her poor hands were *raw with* blisters.

REACH (vv)

He *reached around* the corner and grabbed my arm.

Why not *reach for* the stars?

She *reached over* the fence and pulled the child to safety.

His ape-like arms almost *reached down to* his ankles.

He *reached under* his jacket and pulled out a gun.

REACTION

There was a strong public *reaction against* the new law.

“Every year, a million people — that is, 3 to 5% of all hospital admissions (in U.S.) are admitted primarily because of a negative *reaction to* drugs.”

(Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis*)

REACT

They *reacted* (i.e. responded) violently *against* the new edict.

Acetic acid *reacts* (i.e. induces chemical change) *on* (or *upon*) copper to produce verdigris.

I did not like the way he *reacted* (i.e. responded) *to* that announcement.

“When a liquid *reacts with* (i.e. induces chemical change in) a metal to cause corrosion, electrons pass from one to the other, making an electric current.” (The Economist)

READ

What have you read (i.e. found out) *about* me this time?
What I read *between* the lines (i.e. thought was implied) disturbed me no end.

He read (i.e. studied) *for* an exam virtually all week.

Don't read more *into* (i.e. see more in) it than is baldly stated.

I read (i.e. was informed) *of* his accident only last evening.
“St. Ambrose “*read to* himself, a habit unknown to the classical world.” (St. Augustine)

READINESS

His readiness *for* any eventuality was a comfort.

Their readiness *to* fight was legendary.

Her readiness *with* a quip was a delight.

READY

I was ready *for* anything.

“The female octopus has her vagina in her nose. If the male octopus approaches the female when she is not *ready for* mating, the female octopus will bite off his penis (one of eight) and swim away with it.” (Omni mag., May '91)

They said they were ready *to* go anywhere with me.

She was always ready *with* a witty reply.

REAPPEAR

“ . . . that odd Gallic power of assimilation which, after centuries, has *reappeared in* the relations between the modern French and the Mohammedan world.”

(Hilaire Belloc, The Crusades)

The Virgin Mary *reappeared to* the little girl the next day.

REAR (V)

The child was reared (i.e. brought up) *by* foster parents.

Too many parents are rearing (i.e. raising) their children *on* junk food.

She rears all her children *with* the same infinite patience.

REASON (N)

I'm sure there's a good reason *for* his being late.

You have ample reason *to* proceed with that project.

REASON (V)

You have too few facts to reason *about* that subject.

It was a waste of time to reason *with* him *on* any subject.

REBEL (N)

She is a rebel *against* anything her father stands for.

He is a rebel *to* God and Country.

REBEL (V)

Why rebel *against* (i.e. object strenuously to) this law; most people approve of it.

“We rebelled *at* having to stay in on so fine a day.”

(World Book Dictionary)

REBUKE (V)

“He rebuked (i.e. reprimanded) them *for* their cowardice and want of faith.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The congregation was rebuked (i.e. chided) *into* silence.

RECEDE

“In 1927 the astronomer Edwin Hubble discovered that the universe really is expanding; galaxies at the farthest reaches of the universe are *receding from* our own at near-light speeds.” (David H. Freedman, Discover mag., 1990)

His memory of the event had receded *into* the mists of the past (i.e. had been forgotten).

RECEIPT

I want a receipt *for* that payment.

When will you acknowledge receipt *of* my donation?

RECEIVE

The courtier was received *by* the king *with* courtesy.

“Men will not *receive* the truth *from* their enemies, and it is very seldom offered to them by their friends.”

(Alexis de Tocqueville)

“The human brain *receives* millions of simultaneous reports *from* eye cells.”

(Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*)

RECIPE

That is a *recipe for* disaster.

RECIPROCITY

“It is also worth noting that American business enjoys much greater economic *reciprocity with* Europe than with Japan.” (Daniel Burnstein, *New York* mag.)

RECKLESS

He charged on, *reckless of* the peril.

RECKON

I *reckoned* (i.e. counted) *on* (or *upon*) at least three days of grace.

“God . . . will *reckon* (i.e. deal) *with* us roundly *for* the abuse.” (Cowper, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

Well, for a start, *reckon without* (i.e. don't count on) me.

RECLINE

She *reclined against* an enormous cushion.

“His public works in marble and bronze . . . *recline on* their plinths *in* cities from London to Chicago, from Melbourne to New York . . . No other major artist in the past century, not even Rodin, completed as many . . . as (Henry) Moore.” (Robert Hughes, *Time* mag.)

RECOGNITION

“The new club member sought *recognition by* the chair.” (World Book Dictionary)

“I have done special . . . courses, yet there's no *recognition for* this.” (Oxford English Dictionary)

“The actor soon won *recognition from* the public.” (Woman mag., *Oxford English Dictionary*)

His lone medal was *in recognition of* a rather dubious exploit.

RECOGNIZE, RECOGNISE

She *recognized* him *as* the man who had followed her around the shopping centre.

“T cells (a type of white blood cell or lymphocyte) *recognize* an invader (virus) *by* telltale molecules on its surface called antigens, then instruct other lymphocytes called B cells to *unleash a flood of antibodies.*”

(Jeff Miller, *Discover* mag.)

“He *recognized in* the other's . . . smile that the time had come for politicking.”

(G. Vidal, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

RECOIL (v)

At first his intuition *recoiled from* the thought.

I saw him *recoil from* her.

“The good or evil we confer on others, very often . . . *recoils* (i.e. comes back) *on* ourselves.”

(Fielding, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

RECOMMEND

I *recommend* (i.e. prescribe) garlic *as* a cure for a cold.

She was *recommended for* (i.e. praised as worthy of) the job *by* a number of people.

“Asked once what three novels he would *recommend* (i.e. mention with approbation) *to* a creative writing student, Faulkner said: ‘Anna Karenina, Anna Karenina, Anna Karenina.’”

RECOMPENSE (v)

“The length of the journey will be *recompensed* (i.e. made up for) *by* the goodness of the way.”

(Fuller, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

Why should you *recompense* him merely *for* doing his job?

RECONCILE

How can you *reconcile* yourself *to* (i.e. accept) this sorry state of affairs?

“I could never have become *reconciled* (i.e. acquiesced) *to* the blind adulation of the leader.”

(S. Rosenberg, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

I find it hard to *reconcile* (i.e. harmonize) what you said last night *with* what you did this morning.

Try to **reconcile** (i.e. balance) those figures *with* last year's report.

RECORD (V)

"French Canada possessed an indomitable will to live, witnessed in the first decade after the conquest by the attainment of the highest birthrate (65.3 per 1000) ever **recorded for white people**."

(Mason Wade, The French Canadians)

"Word for word . . . their conversation had been **recorded** . . . *in* the fluent writing."

(E. Bowen, Oxford English Dictionary)

"Data storage, holographic style, could, in theory, **record all the material in the Library of Congress (U.S.) on a medium about the size of a sugar cube**."

(National Geographic mag.)

RECUMBENT

He stood **recumbent against** his front door.

I found her **recumbent on** the neighbour's lawn.

REDOLENT

Her winter coat was still **redolent of** mothballs.

REDOUND

If that doesn't **redound** (i.e. accrue) *to* my credit, what will?

REDUCE

"Under the Treaty (of Versailles) . . . Hungary's population was **reduced from 20 million to 8 million**, its carefully integrated industrial economy was wrecked and 3 million Hungarians handed over to the Czechs and Romanians."

(Paul Johnson, The History of the Modern World)

If you stand back from the crowd, you'll see how it **reduces to** the lowest common denominator.

REEK (V)

Whenever she gets a cold, she **reeks of** her garlic remedy.

The town **reeks with** despair.

REFER

"Sam was fourteen when he was **referred** (i.e. sent) *for* treatment." (R.F. Hobson, Oxford English Dictionary)

"'Classical' **refers** (i.e. is related) **specifically to** ancient Greek and Roman art and literature or European music of the latter half of the 18th century, music by such men as Haydn and Mozart."

(Michael Gartner, Advertising Age mag.)

"The King **referred** (i.e. handed over) the matter *to* the council."

"When the poet Swinburne wrote of 'a small sweet world of wave-encompassed wonders,' he was **referring to** the Channel Island of Sark — the smallest independent British state in the Commonwealth."

(John Gatrell, This England mag.)

"I must . . . **refer** you back *to* him for further consideration."

(G.B. Shaw, Oxford English Dictionary)

REFERENCE

His **reference to** my past misdeeds was uncalled for.

Note: Never *about*

REFINE

Let me **refine on** (or *upon*) (i.e. clarify) your last statement.

REFLECT

"The light **reflected** (i.e. bounced back) *by* our planet (earth) illuminates the sleeping moon much more brightly than moonlight silvers our own night."

(David R. Scott, National Geographic mag.)

His bias is **reflected** (i.e. implied) *in* his every statement.

I am **reflecting** (i.e. thinking) *on* (or *upon*) that for a bit.

REFRAIN (V)

Please **refrain from** smoking.

He **refrained from** kicking me at the last second.

REGALE

The party **regaled** themselves *on* strawberries and cream.

She **regaled** me *with* stories *throughout* the evening.

He likes to **regale** me *with* his misadventures.

REGARD (N)

He has no **regard** *for* the feelings of others.

With **regard** *to* the latest happening, I think we should forget it.

Give my **regards** *to* your sister.

REGARD (V)

“In Victorian England, the intelligentsia **regarded** (i.e. considered) Dickens *as* ‘the author of the uneducated, undiscriminating public’.” (Tom Wolfe, Harper’s mag.)

They **regarded** (i.e. observed) me *with* profound suspicion.

REGENERATE

“The severed fingertips of a young child can **regenerate in** about 11 weeks.” (Omni mag., April ‘92)

It **regenerates** the spirit *in* me.

REGRET (N)

His lack of **regret** *at* abandoning the farm surprised me.

She showed absolutely no **regret** *for* her past life.

REGULAR (A)

He’s most **regular** *in* his habits.

REIGN (V)

Queen Victoria **reigned** *over* Britain more than 62 years.

“Let peace, concord and unanimity **reign among** all Christian people . . . for without peace we cannot please God.” (Charlemagne, Article 62)

REJECT (V)

I **rejected** his application *for* several good reasons.

He is **rejecting** Helen *in favour of* Pauline.

REJOICE

She **rejoiced** *at* (or *in*) my good fortune.

“Love **rejoices** not *over* wickedness, but **rejoices with** the truth.” (1 Corinthians 13: 1-7, The Bible)

RELAPSE (V)

She **relapsed** *into* a deep coma.

RELATE

That is not the story you **related** *to* (i.e. told) me yesterday.

This by-law **relates** (i.e. refers) only *to* homeowners.

“Basque (is) Europe’s most ancient language . . . and no more **related** (i.e. connected) *to* any language in the world than the Basque people, with their peculiar blood type distribution and cranial formation, are **related to** any other race.” (Travianian, Shibumi)

You’ll find my story **relates** closely *with* (i.e. is much the same as) hers.

RELATION

I’m sure there’s a **relation** *between* those two incidents.

She was a **relation** (i.e. relative) *of* George Washington, the first president of the United States of America.

“The **relation of** every man *to* his Lord.” (Freeman)

We have always had good **relations** *with* our union.

RELATIONSHIP

“The **relationship between** all the living and non-living parts of the Earth organism are a complex of self-stabilizing systems with the inbuilt goal of keeping planetary conditions at an optimum for the maintenance of life.” (Robert Muse, The Montreal Star)

His **relationship** *to* her was rather tenuous.

RELATIVE (A)

Relative *to* that particular charge, I must plead guilty.

RELATIVE (N)

He’s a **relative** *of* my wife.

RELAX

You should **relax** *from* your chores every half-hour.

“The most exciting world I know,” says (A.K.) Dewdney, as he **relaxes in** his small campus office, “is the universe of the mind.” (Peter Stoler, Time mag.)

RELAY (V)

She **relayed** every detail of the happening *to* her friends *by* phone.

RELEASE (V)

She **released** (i.e. 'fired') the arrow *at* the target.

"According to figures **released** (i.e. divulged) *by* American Banker, Dai-Ichi Kangyo, is now the largest banking company in the world."

(Gordon M. Henry, Time mag. 1989)

"Carbon dioxide levels have increased 25 percent since 1958 — with 5 billion tons of carbon **released** (i.e. let out) *into* the atmosphere each year *from* the burning of fossil fuels." (Robert Keating, Omni mag.)

The terrorists said the captives would be **released** (i.e. freed) *in* three days, certainly *within* the next week, *into* the custody of the court.

"Nuclear reactors produce plutonium which can cause cancer if inhaled. It has a half-life of 24,000 years, and therefore causes permanent contamination once **released** *to* (i.e. let out into) the environment."

(Patrick Moore, Ph.D., Some facts about Chernobyl)

RELEGATE

After that latest escapade, he was **relegated** *to* a job in the laundry room.

I think I will **relegate** this so-called antique *to* the attic.

RELEVANCE

"The dolphin is capable of remembering totally arbitrary events of no **relevance** *to* its natural world, of no **relevance** *to* what is biologically important."

(Louis Herman, Omni mag.)

RELEVANT

That is not **relevant** *to* the subject under discussion.

RELIEF

Do you know of any **relief** *for* a leg cramp?

I wish I could find some **relief** *from* this terrible headache.

He has dedicated his life to the **relief** *of* the poorest of the poor.

Her resignation proved a **relief** *to* her whole staff.

RELIEVE

Can you do anything to **relieve** me *from* (i.e. free me of) these damn hiccoughs?

"Neither trees nor bushes to **relieve** the eye *from* the russet . . . of absolute sterility."

(Sir W. Scott, Oxford English Dictionary)

Yesterday, I was **relieved** *of* (i.e. freed from) a chore that's been the bane of my life.

"Your coming **relieves** me *of* the bother of writing a long letter." (World Book Dictionary)

RELISH (N)

She had no **relish** (i.e. desire) *for* the task ahead.

I have an insatiable **relish** *of* (i.e. delight in) the fragrance of roses.

RELUCTANT

She was **reluctant** *to* try again.

RELY

You should **rely** *on* (or *upon*) your instincts.

REMAIN

He was **remaining** (i.e. staying) *in* office *in spite of* the scandal.

That's all that **remains** (i.e. is left) *of* the cheese you sent us.

Now it **remains** (i.e. belongs) *to* me to finish the job.

That's all that **remains** (i.e. is left) *to* me *of* my father's fortune.

He insisted that his aunt **remain** (i.e. stay) *within* the family.

REMAND

She was **remanded** *in* (i.e. recommitted to) custody.

The officer **remanded** the soldier (i.e. sent the soldier back) *to* his post.

(The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

REMARK (N)

“Perhaps the most frequently quoted *remark about* dance in recent years is George Balanchine’s maxim, ‘Ballet is woman’.” (Martha Duffy, Time mag.)

I agree with your *remarks on* the significance of this play.

REMARK (V)

He *remarked on* (or *upon*) my habit of answering a question with a question.

I was *remarking to* him how well he looked when he told me of his recent serious illness.

REMARKABLE

Montreal is *remarkable for* the number of its churches. There are more than in Rome.

REMEDY (N)

Garlic is his *remedy for* just about every ailment.

A *remedy of* this kind will do more social harm than good.

REMEMBER

“George Bernard Shaw is “best *remembered* (i.e. recalled) *as* an inexhaustible source of good lines.”

(The Economist mag.)

She *remembers* (i.e. recalls) me *for* the wrong reason.

Please *remember* (i.e. mention) me *to* him.

Now, *remember* (i.e. do not forget) *to* wipe your feet.

REMIND

Remind me tomorrow *about* the gloves you left in my office.

“They *remind* me *of* English people in South Africa, caught between the awful passions of blacks and Afrikaners, feeling themselves at once superior, superfluous and ill done by.” (Jan Morris, Destinations)

REMINISCENT

Their views are *reminiscent of* the nineteenth century.

REMISS

“*Remiss in* the duties . . . of Religion.”

(Bentley, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

It is very *remiss* (i.e. negligent) *of* me.

REMONSTRATE

You should *remonstrate against* that by-law.

The taxpayers will *remonstrate* (i.e. object) *to* their MP *about* this new levy.

I *remonstrated with* him again and again, but to no avail.

“The teacher *remonstrated with* (i.e. reproved) the boy *about* his low grades.” (World Book Dictionary)

REMORSE

He showed absolutely no *remorse for* his heinous crime.

REMOTE (A)

He exiled himself to a place very *remote from* his home town.

REMOVE

“A single protein, called P-glycoprotein, in the membrane of a cancer cell, acts like a pump, *removing* lethal chemicals *from* the cell’s interior.” (Discover mag.)

He was *removed to* the prison during the night.

RENDER

“*Render* (i.e. give) . . . *unto* Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and *unto* God the things that are God’s.”

(Matthew 22:21)

“We win justice quickest by *rendering* (i.e. giving) justice *to* the other party.” (Mohandas K. Gandhi)

RENOWNED

She was *renowned for* her charitable work.

“Newton, in his own day, was *renowned as* a theologian.”

(William F. Rickenbacker)

RENT (V)

“They would sometimes *rent* a cottage *at* Sizewell.”

(Oxford English Dictionary)

“UCLA study of poverty finds it now costs as much per square foot to *rent* an apartment *in* L.A.’s worst ghettos as it does to *rent in* Beverly Hills.”

(James Brady, *Advertising Age* mag.)

“The sea captains’ houses were *rented out for* the season.”
(R.P. Jhabvala, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

“I persuaded her to *rent* their . . . potato barn *to* me.”
(K. Vonnegut, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

REPAIR (V)

He *repaired* (i.e. betook himself) *in* shame *to* the next village.

Note: Repair, when it means fix up, needs no prepositions.

REPEAT

“Repeat the pledge *after* me.” (*World Book Dictionary*)

He *repeated* the warning *for* effect.

“You can *repeat* poems *from* memory.”
(*World Book Dictionary*)

“We are quirky, if glorious, accidents, not to be *repeated on* this planet.” (Stephen Jay Gould, *Discover* mag., Oct. ‘96)

“A . . . rugged . . . shape tends to *repeat throughout* the picture.” (Listener, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

Please don’t *repeat* that rumour *to* my brother.

REPENT

“You must *repent of* obstinate opinion.”
(from *A Man for all Seasons*)

REPENTANCE

He never showed any *repentance for* his crimes.

I expect *repentance of* your misdeeds.

REPLACE

“When death is imminent, the brain apparently realizes that pain can no longer be useful as an alarm to spur escape. So the pain is turned off and *replaced by* a kind of blissful surrender.” (Dr. Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of a Cell*)

“(Our) individual cells . . . are continually being *replaced*, not just *on* the skin . . . but *in* the bones. Friends may look unchanged to you . . . but, if several years have elapsed, there will not be a single cell present that was there last time you met.” (Lyall Watson, *Supernature*)

“The Roman Catholic Church labored to reduce slavery, family feuds, and national strife, to extend the intervals of truce and peace, and to *replace* trial by combat or ordeal *with* the judgments of established courts. It softened the penalties exacted by Roman or barbarian law, and vastly expanded the scope and organization of charity.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lesson of History*)

Starting in 1950, “a titanic double rush *replaced* nearly 100,000 Jews *with* blacks in Lawndale, Chicago.”

(John Hersey, *Esquire* mag.)

REPLENISH

We *replenished* our garden *with* enriched soil.

REPLETE

He sat there smiling, eyes half-closed, *replete with* good food and wine.

REPLY (N)

She still has not received a *reply from* her sister in Italy.
I’m waiting for a *reply to* my last letter.

REPLY (V)

The sooner you *reply to* my last letter, the better.

He will be *replying to* the mayor on Sunday.

He *replied to* me *with* vehemence.

“Lancashire scored 189 . . . Somersetshire . . . *replied with* 90 for three.” (Daily News, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

REPORT (N)

“This squares with some *reports from* Russia of artificial diamonds that can scratch real ones.”

(*The Economist* mag.)

REPORT (V)

I am *reporting at* noon sharp.

They *reported for* duty *within* two days.

The journalist enjoyed a stint abroad *reporting* (i.e. news-gathering) *for* the New York Times.

I suggest you do not *report on* him till Monday.

When are you expected to *report to* the commission?

REPOSE (V)

The cat is **reposing** *beneath* the porch.

She **reposed** *in* the wing chair like a cast-off doll.

The photographer insisted that the rajah's daughter **repose** *on* a bed of rose petals.

"Almost every glacier **reposes** *upon* an inclined bed." (Tyndall, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

They would **repose** every afternoon *under* the chestnut tree.

REPRESENT

Although a broad-minded man, he was **represented** (i.e. portrayed) *as* a wild-eyed bigot *by* the tabloids.

He is **representing** (i.e. serving as an elected member for) the Toronto constituency *in* the House of Commons.

She **represents** (i.e. speaks for) Labour *on* that committee.

REPRESENTATIVE (A)

His art was **representative** *of* his era.

REPRESENTATIVE (N)

He is a **representative** *for* the mining industry.

She is a **representative** *of* the Museum Association.

REPROACH (N)

Their scandalous behaviour was a **reproach** *to* the union movement.

REPROACH (V)

"He **reproached** Fitzurse *for* ingratitude for past kindness." (Froude)

She is **reproaching** him *with* intolerance.

REPUGNANCE

"A deep **repugnance** (i.e. antipathy) *against* ecclesiastical tyranny." (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

"In it there is more than the usual **repugnance** (i.e. inconsistency) *between* the title and the purport." (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

"There is buried deep in him a profound and stubborn **repugnance** (i.e. aversion) *to* the trouble of following

anybody else's argument."

(G.K. Chesterton, Generally Speaking)

REPUGNANT

His unrelieved pessimism was **repugnant** *to* her.

REPUTATION

He has a **reputation** *for* stylishness.

"This very old woman had the **reputation** *of* a Witch all over the country." (Addison, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

REQUEST (N)

Please overlook all **requests** *for* money.

REQUIRE

"The brain is best understood in terms of three functioning units: alertness, information processing, and action. While each has its own role . . . the harmonious interaction of all three is **required** *for* optimal functioning."

Why is so much **required** *of* me?

(Dr. Richard Restak, The Brain: The Last Frontier)

Here's what I **require** *of* you.

I am **required** *to* do many things I do not like doing.

REQUISITE (A)

Punctuality and neatness are the only virtues **requisite** *for* this job.

"There are . . . two points **requisite** *unto* salvation." (Thomas More, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

REQUISITE (N)

The only **requisites** *for* this job are commonsense and a will to work.

RESCUE (V)

I'm counting on you to **rescue** me *from* that dance tomorrow evening.

RESEARCH (N)

His **research** *in* electromagnetism won him great fame.

In all Karl Marx's "*researches into* the inequities of British capitalists . . . he never succeeded in unearthing one (worker) who was paid literally no wages at all, Yet such a worker did exist in his own household."

(Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*)

Should research *on* human embryos be banned?

RESEMBLANCE

His *resemblance to* the President is uncanny.

RESEMBLE

"People tend to mate with individuals who *resemble* themselves *in* every conceivable way."

(Jared Diamond, *Discover* mag.)

The two little girls *resembled* each other *like* two peas in a pod.

RESENTMENT

His *resentment of* the slight fisted his hands.

RESERVE (V)

None of the most productive land was *reserved for* new immigrants.

I will *reserve* that table *for* you.

The use of this men's room is *reserved to* the staff. (British)

RESIDE

"(Umbilical) cord blood is a rich source of blood cells, (especially) stem cells, the immature cells that after birth *reside* only *in* bone marrow and give rise to all blood cells." (Shawna Vogel, *Discover* mag.)

He *resides on* that spit of land over there.

She is *residing in* a large cardboard box *under* the bridge.

RESIGN

I'll *resign from* (i.e. quit) this job tomorrow.

The writer was *resigned to* (i.e. had accepted) his obscurity.

RESISTANCE

"One of the extraordinary properties of holograms is their *resistance to* damage or loss of memory. A tiny fragment

or chip broken anywhere from the plate essentially holds all the information of the whole plate."

(Yatri, *Unknown Man*)

RESISTER

"The Holocaust of 1942-45, in which Jews died by the millions, and Germans and *resisters to* Naziism by the hundreds of thousands." (*The Economist* mag.)

RESOLUTE

She was most *resolute of* purpose.

They were *resolute in* their intention to reach the top.

RESOLVE (V)

The dark mass *resolves into* (i.e. proves to be) an army truck careering towards us.

Once they were *resolved* (i.e. decided) *on* a course of action, there was no stopping them.

I *resolve to* make my application tomorrow.

RESORT (N)

It's a *resort* (i.e. refuge) *for* fallen dictators.

That's the last *resort* (i.e. recourse) *of* thieves.

RESORT (V)

Bereft of an income, he *resorted to* busking in the metro.

He is *resorting to* a life of crime.

RESOUND

"And echoing praises . . . *resound* (i.e. ring) *at* your return." (Cowper, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

"There *resounded* (i.e. echoed) *from* the smithy the ring of a hammer." (T. Hardy, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

"A name to *resound* (i.e. be praised) *for* ages." (Tennyson, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

"His last words . . . *resounded through* (i.e. echoed down) the narrow passage."

(G. Santayana, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

My ears *resounded* (i.e. echoed) *to* the beat of my heart.

Our family meals always *resound* (i.e. are filled) *with* laughter.

RESPECT (N)

“Man is still a savage to the extent that he has little *respect* for anything that cannot hurt him.” (Ed Howe)

They keep silent to show *respect* *to* the dead.

RESPITE

I enjoyed the *respite* *from* the noise.

RESPOND

“The defendant is held to *respond* (i.e. give satisfaction) *in* damages.” (U.S., Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“Most of the cells in the cortex (newest part of the brain) *respond* (i.e. answer) *only to* lines of a particular orientation, between them catering for orientations at all degrees from vertical to horizontal and back.”

(Hugh Montefiore, The Probabilities of God)

I'm sure he will eventually *respond* (i.e. act in response) *to* your plea.

He is *responding* (i.e. giving a reply) *with* great energy.

RESPONSE

“The *responses* *from* 137 people *to* the questionnaire . . . indicate that healthy men and women cry more often . . . than do sick ones.”

(Samuel A. Schreiner, Jr., Reader's Digest mag.)

“The *response* *of* the mainstream scientific and philosophical communities *to* the challenge posed by the Anthropic Revolution (based on the Anthropic Principle) has been . . . something of an intellectual scandal.”

(Patrick Glynn, National Review, May 6, 96)

The *response* *of* the crowd was almost frightening.

My *response* *to* you is very simple: No!

“In *response* *to* stress, biological survival requires genetic change; it necessitates a turning away from doomed replication.” (William L.H. Moon, Blue Highways)

RESPONSIBLE

“Doctor Wilder Penfield started out to prove that the brain is *responsible* *for* the mind. As he studied thousands of patients . . . he finally concluded that the mind is totally independent of the brain.”

(Bookjacket comment: The Mystery of the Mind by Dr. Penfield)

From now on, you're only *responsible* *to* me.

RESPONSIVE

“(Our) auditory system is *responsive* *from* 20 *to* approximately 10,000 hertz — vibrations per second. That range is divided into about 25 frequency bands, each a third of an octave wide.” (Discover mag.)

“Most people continue to be emotionally *responsive* *to* music *throughout* their lives.”

(James Shreeve, Discover mag.)

REST (V)

The ashes of Héloïse and Abélard *rest* (i.e. repose) *in* the same grave, near the Seine in Paris.

“The basis of optical technology *rests* (i.e. is based on) *on* the behavior of the infinitesimal packets of radiant energy known as photons.” (High Technology mag.)

“The whole case for the defence *rests* (i.e. depends) *on* the evidence of one person.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

Like it or not, the final decision *rests* *with* me (i.e. is mine to make).

RESTORE

“The quiet place, the pure air . . . will *restore* you (i.e. bring you back to health) *in* a few days.”

(Charles Dickens, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“We have to *restore* (i.e. give back) *dignity* *to* all the occupations. There is nothing above anything. A great dinner is as good as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.”

(Mason Williams)

“The innocent were *restored* (i.e. reinstated) *to* their rank and fortunes.” (Gibbon, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

RESTRAIN

Can't you *restrain* him *from* messing up my room?

RESTRAINT

He shows *restraint* *in* eating, but not *in* drinking.

You cannot put any *restraint* *on* an inveterate gambler, short of locking him up in jail.

RESTRICT

The athlete's career was **restricted** (i.e. limited) *by* a knee injury.

To **restrict** (i.e. keep) anyone *from* participating in politics is undemocratic.

Laws were passed to **restrict** (i.e. limit) citizens *in* their movements.

This snobbish club **restricts** (i.e. limits) memberships *to* the very rich.

You could have been the greatest novelist in America, if you could have come to know just one man who wasn't **restricted** (i.e. limited) *to* boozing and womanizing . . . "Please quit saving Spain and start saving Ernest Hemingway."

(Sinclair Lewis, about the book To have and have not)

RESULT (V)

"In language, a beautiful and desirable simplicity is but an appearance, and **results** (i.e. arises) *only from* the good order and sovereign economy of the various parts of speech." (Anatole France)

His profligate spending will **result** (i.e. end) *in* bankruptcy. "The huge round stone **resulting with** a bound (i.e. rebounding) thunders impetuous down."

(Pope, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

RETAIN

The lawyer was **retained** (i.e. engaged) *by* the company *for* an annual fee.

The author decided to **retain** (i.e. keep) chapter four *in* his final draft.

Some species have **retained** (i.e. held on to) primordial characteristics *throughout* billions of years of evolution.

RETIRE

The company president decided to **retire** (i.e. resign from the business world) *at* the age of 65.

"The task of a rear guard **retiring** (i.e. retreating) *before* a victorious enemy . . . is one of the most delicate of operations." (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The athlete **retired from** (i.e. quit) the race.

The prima donna **retired in** high dudgeon *from* the operatic production.

"Diogenes **retired into** a tub and St. Jerome *into* a cave." (G.K. Chesterton, Generally Speaking)

"Shakespeare . . . **retired** (i.e. withdrew) *to* his native place before he was old." (L. Hunt, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

RETRIEVE

He tried desperately to **retrieve** (i.e. recall) his wife's face *from* his failing memory.

RETROACTIVE

He received compensation **retroactive to** the date of his application.

RETURN (V)

"Weight is **returned** (i.e. given back) *for* weight *to* any person who carries their gold and silver to the Tower." (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

When did you **return** (i.e. come back) *from* England?

"The only way to eliminate the greenhouse problem completely would be to **return** (i.e. restore) the world *to* its pre-industrial state." (Andrew C. Revkin, Discover mag.)

RE-USE

"If organisms could not **re-use** old material *in* strikingly new ways, how could evolution ever produce anything novel." (Stephen Jay Gould, Discover mag., Oct. '96)

REVEAL

"DNA, an enormously complex molecule that has **revealed** less than 1 percent of its secrets *to* geneticists." (Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind).

REVEL (V)

Stalin seemed to **revel in** mass murder.

REVENGE (N)

She took **revenge on** me *for* all the unhappiness I caused her.

REVENUE

The **revenues from** this province have declined since 1981.

“This . . . supplied a **revenue** *to* the Crown.”
(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

REVERENCE

His **reverence** *of* the Middle Ages is legendary.
She shows great **reverence** *for* Christian beliefs.

REVIVE

He **revived** (i.e. brought back) Lazarus *from* the grave.
“There is one problem and only one in the world: **to revive** (i.e. restore) *in* people some sense of spiritual meaning.” (Antoine de Saint-Exupery, Wartime Writings)
“Even as a dying coal **revives** (i.e. flares up again) *with* the wind.” (Shakespeare)

REVOLVE

Soon, the juggler had ten plates **revolving** *on* swaying poles.
They thought the sun **revolved** *around* (or *round*) the earth.

REWARD (N)

That's my **reward** *for* your being so reliable.
Why should you not reap the **reward** *of* your hard labour?

REWARD (V)

I would like to **reward** you *for* all your years of faithful service.
“Service to a just cause **rewards** the worker *with* more real happiness and satisfaction than any other venture in life.”
(Carrie Chapman Catt)

RHYME (V)

“The couplet where a stick **rhymes** *to* Ecclesiastick.”
(Steele, Universal Oxford Dictionary)
Time **rhymes** *with* clime.

RICH

“Comets are known to be **rich** *in* organic matter.”
(Tom Waters, Discover mag.)

RID

“Emotional tears may **rid** the body *of* toxic substances . . . and relieve stress.”
(W. H. Frey II, Medical World News/Reader's Digest)
“They (Venetian artisans) were the first ones to use manganese to **rid** glass *of* its greenish tinge.”
(Johanne Durocher Norchet, The Gazette, Montreal)

RIDDANCE

Good **riddance** *to* the whole lot of you!

RIDE (V)

“The tradesman . . . is **ridden** (i.e. controlled) *by* the routine of his craft.” (Emerson, World Book Dictionary)
“The novel **rode out** *of* Spain *on* the horse and donkey of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, and the modern short story had its early masters in Russia, France and England. But the hard-boiled detective was born in America.”
(R.Z. Sheppard, Time mag.)
You're **riding** *for* a fall (i.e. heading for trouble), my friend.
The youngster loved to **ride** (i.e. be driven around) *in* her father's car.
The ship **rode** (i.e. sailed) *into* port.
(World book Dictionary)
We **ride** *to* hounds (i.e. go hunting with the dogs) this afternoon; will you join us?

RIFE

“The activity and noise of a city day were **rife** *in* the street.”
(Dickens, Universal Oxford Dictionary)
“Language **rife** *with* rugged maxims hewn from life.”
(Tennyson, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

RIGHT (N)

“Leading families claimed proprietary **rights** (i.e. claims) *over* early saints.”
(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)
“*Bill of Rights*, a Bill declaring the **Rights** and Liberties *of* England, and the Succession to the Crown.”
(Universal Oxford Dictionary)
“I have no **right** (i.e. obligation) *to* maintain idle vagrants.”
(Smollett, Universal Oxford English Dictionary)

RIPE

These times are **ripe** *for* revolution.

RISE (N)

“The capital market’s failure was that it did not anticipate a historically outlandish **rise** (i.e. increase or jump) *in* interest rates.” (The Economist, May 28, ‘88)

(Umbilical) “cord blood is a rich source of blood cells, (especially) stem cells, the immature cells that after birth reside only in bone marrow and **give rise to** (i.e. originate) all blood cells.” (Shawna Vogel, Discover mag.)

RISE (V)

“Even the historian who thinks to **rise above** betrays his secret predilection in his choice of materials, and in the nuances of his adjectives.”

(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

The townspeople **rose up** *against* oppression.

My gorge **rises** *at* this unjust edict.

“If . . . your core (body) temperature **rises** *beyond* 105 degrees Fahrenheit, you’re talking kidney disfunction, muscle breakdown, disruption of brain functions, even death.” (Eric Adler, Kansas City Star)

The general **rose** *from* the ranks on sheer ability.

It was his ambition to **rise** *in* the banking world.

The glider **rose** *on* a cushion of air.

“U.S. industry **rose to** world leadership by shamelessly borrowing and refining British and German innovations.”

(Louis S. Richman, Fortune mag.)

RISK (N)

To travel to exotic climates and countries without inoculations is to incur the **risk** *of* serious infections, chiefly malaria.

The woman rescued her cat at the **risk** *of* her own life.

“If you drive carefully, there is no **risk** *of* being fined.” (World Book Dictionary)

He proved a **risk** *to* everyone around him.

RISK (V)

“To **risk** the certainty of little *for* the chance of much.” (Johnson)

RIVAL (N)

We were **rivals** *for* the same girl’s hand.

I am the **rival** *of* my brother.

There have been few rivals in history *to* Hitler as a demagogue.

ROB

“No passion so effectually **robs** the mind *of* all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.” (Edmund Burke)

ROISTER

He **roistered** happily *with* the town’s most disreputable elements.

ROLL (VV)

The swarm of skateboarders **rolled** *by* the church *into* and *across* the square, *through* the park, *over* the culvert, *down* the lane, and *under* the bridge.

ROOM (N)

“The environment is not in any danger: the threat is that we’ll sour the conditions that support human life. Is there **room** (i.e. space) *for* mankind on planet Earth? It’s up to us.” (Gregg Easterbrook, Newsweek mag.)

We need to reserve more **rooms** (i.e. lodgings) *for* our guests.

Rooms (i.e. lodgings) *to* let.

There are ten **rooms** *in* that house.

ROOT (V)

“Massive works of intellect do not spring from the abstract workings of the brain and the imagination; they are **rooted** (i.e. have their roots) *in* the personality.”

(Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

The scream **rooted** (i.e. nailed) her *to* the spot.

“The reedy mudbanks opened into a broad mall of moored yachts, every one **rooted** (i.e. anchored) *to* its own reflection.” (Jonathan Raban, Coasting)

ROUGH

Aren't you being too **rough** *on* your sister? She was only trying to help.

That man is being too **rough** *with* (i.e. abusive to) his child.

ROUND (v)

She **rounded** *on* me in sudden anger.

ROUSE

He was suddenly **roused** *from* a deep sleep.

ROUT

The cavalry was **routed** *by* the cannonade.

"He is being **routed** *from* a stage in Harlem by a group of demonstrators." (Tom Wolfe)

ROW (v)

I'm just going to **row** *to* (i.e. use oars to reach) the island.

"Everyone must **row** (i.e. stroke) *with* the oars he has." (English proverb)

Do you want me to **row** (i.e. quarrel) *with* you *about* (or *over*) that silly business?

RUDE

You are being very **rude** *about* my small mental lapse.

That's very **rude** *of* you, I must say.

Why are you being so **rude** *to* me?

RULE (v)

The Supreme Court **ruled** *against* the widow's wish to give her husband a Christian burial.

"The world can only be **ruled** *by* fear." (Adolf Hitler)

"What madness **rules** *in* brain-sick men." (Shakespeare)

RULING (N)

"A bold new **ruling** *by* the American Medical Association (says it is) not unethical for doctors to discontinue all life support for patients in irreversible coma, even if death is not imminent." (Claudia Wallis, Time mag.)

The judge made a **ruling** *on* a point of law.

RUMMAGE

"To modern man, raised on an almost complete divorce between the arts and sciences, Leonardo's (Da Vinci) insatiable **rummaging** *in* every subject seems strange." (The Economist mag.)

He **rummaged** *through* even her most personal things.

RUN (VV)

"If you board the wrong train, it's no use **running** (i.e. racing) *along* the corridor in the other direction." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

"Davis's fault, deadlier than the San Andreas fault, **runs** (i.e. courses) *beneath* Griffith Observatory, Dodger Stadium, and downtown Los Angeles."

(Mark B. Roman, Discover mag.)

I **ran** *into* (i.e. met) him at the station.

"The Japanese have been the first (of the Asian countries) to realise that technology-based service economies . . . **run** (i.e. operate) more *on* people's inventiveness than *on* their discipline." (The Economist)

Let me **run** *through* this again (i.e. repeat this) for you.

Would you please **run** (i.e. race) *to* the corner store for me?"

RUPTURE (N)

There was a long-standing **rupture** *between* them.

You're causing a **rupture** *with* your dad.

RUSH (VV)

He is **rushing** *across* the lobby to greet me.

When the soldiers found themselves badly outnumbered, they began to **rush** (i.e. make a beeline) *for* the bridge.

They **rushed** (i.e. ran) *into* the house and hid in the closet.

She **rushed** (i.e. hurried) *to* the defence of her son.

RUST (V)

Uncoated iron **rusts** *in* the rain.

"When the bracken **rusted** (i.e. turned to the color of rust) *on* their crags." (Tennyson)

S

SACCHARINE

His panegyric on his company president was too *saccharine for* my taste.

SACRED

Symbols are *sacred to* tribal peoples.

SACRIFICE (N)

They made a *sacrifice of* their lives.

“The religion of patriotism: the worship of the Nation as the supreme object of affection: the *sacrifice of* general unity *to* local feeling.” (Hilaire Belloc, Richelieu)

SACRIFICE (V)

They're *sacrificing* their present comfort *for* their long-term security.

He refused to *sacrifice* objectivity *to* the flow of his narrative.

SAD

I'm *sad about* that turn of events.

SADDLE (V)

Don't *saddle* me *with* your problems.

SAFE

I really thought my house was *safe against* fire.

Granny was *safe at* home.

Please keep me *safe from* all harm.

His money was *safe in* his pocket.

I think it's *safe to* go on.

The child felt *safe with* her elder sister.

SAIL (V)

I'm *sailing* (i.e. leaving by ship) *for* England tomorrow.

“Then all the great people *sailed in* state (i.e. went in a dignified manner) *from* the room.”

(C. Bronte, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

They *sail* (i.e. travel the sea) *on* a gorgeous yacht.

She *sailed* (i.e. navigated) solo *to* Liverpool, then *to* Amsterdam.

SAKE

“Growth for the *sake of* growth is the ideology of the cancer cell.” (Edward Abbey quoted in The Nine Nations of North America)

SALE

The *sale of* that famous painting was an even more famous scam.

I would have forbidden that *sale to* her for any of a dozen reasons.

SANCTION (N)

So far, that's the most effective *sanction against* crime.

I'm sure they will give their *sanction for* this hospital to be built.

SANGUINE

His character was *sanguine by* nature.

I'm *sanguine of* (or *about*) my chance to win office.

SATE

“Hunger that wouldn't be *sated by* anything less than a full investigation.” (G. Kendall, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Will ravenous hunger be *sated with* a meager pill?”

(Gregory Jaynes, Life mag.)

He *sates* his pangs of hunger *with* junk food.

SATIATE

They **satiated** them *with* food and drink.

SATIRE

“He made books out of his intellectual **satires** *against* intellectuals.” (Alfred Kazin)

“Their very names are a **satire** *upon* all governments.” (Junius Letter, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SATISFACTION

“I demand **satisfaction** for all the wrongs you’ve done me. *Satisfaction of all desires is not conducive to well-being.*” (Eric Fromm, Oxford English Dictionary)

SATISFACTORY

Well, that’s most **satisfactory** *to* me.

SATISFY

The committee **satisfies** itself *by* inquiry that no wrongdoing has occurred.

Will you never be **satisfied** *with* what you have?

SATURATE

The bedding was **saturated** *by* the rain leaking through the tent.

“One of the most important functions of the nose in modern humans is to modify (wet) the air that we breathe in. Air has to be ninety-percent *saturated with* water . . . by the time it reaches the lungs.”

(Robert Franciscus, Discover mag.)

SAVE

I’m **saving** (i.e. putting money aside) *for* a rainy day.

The smallness of the country **saved** it *from* (i.e. spared it) the temptations of aggressive nationalism.

I **save** (i.e. economize) *on* the return trip.

SAVING (N)

“Potentially huge *savings in* health-care costs are engendered. One estimate puts medical bills avoided by

pollution control (in the U.S.) at \$40 billion per year.” (Gregg Easterbrook, Newsweek mag.)

And that, my friend, is a **saving** *of* almost 30 percent.

SAVOUR, SAVOR

That **savours** *of* malice.

I **savoured** (i.e. imparted a flavour to) the rice *with* saffron.

SAY (V)

“If the makers of technology mean what they *say about* sophistication, the next stage beyond high tech will be clean tech.” (Gregg Easterbrook, Newsweek mag.)

I’ll **say** this much *for* you: you’ve got a lot of nerve.

Don’t **say** such terrible things *to* me.

What do you **say** *to* (i.e. think of) a walk in the park?

SCAN

“Bars and stripes of the Universal Product Code, or UPC, **flag** the identity of groceries when *scanned by* a laser linked to a computer.” (National Geographic)

SCANTY

He’s **scanty** *of* hair and very pale.

SCARE (V)

I was **scared** *by* the slightest noise.

He’s **scared** *of* his own shadow.

He will **scare** him *to* death.

SCATTER

“Lymph nodes (are) bits of tissue *scattered* (i.e. strewn) *about* (or *around*) the body where white blood cells and other immune cells exchange the signals that promote healthy immune function.”

(Daniel C. Weaver, Discover mag.)

Those billions of galaxies **scattered** *across* the far reaches of the visible universe.

“The small shot . . . **scattered** (i.e. dispersed) *among* them.” (DeFoe, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

She wants me to **scatter** (i.e. sprinkle) her ashes *around* the backyard.

Pieces of the plane were **scattered** (i.e. dispersed) *over* the countryside.

“The ground was **scattered** (i.e. strewn) *with* elephant’s teeth.” (DeFoe, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SCEPTICAL

I’m very **sceptical** *about* that.

Aren’t you **sceptical** *of* his sudden friendliness?

SCHEDULE (V)

He’s **scheduling** that *for* next week.

The ship is **scheduled** *to* make five cruises this season.

SCHOOL (V)

How about **schooling** (i.e. instructing) her *in* the right procedures?

Both boys were **schooled** (i.e. educated) *at* home.

SCOFF (V)

Only the ignorant **scoff** *at* the religious beliefs of others.

SCORE (V)

The ground was **scored** (i.e. marked) *by* a hayrick.

The concerto was **scored** (i.e. composed) *for* two pianos.

“**Scoring** (i.e. drawing a line through) the lease *from* corner to corner *with* his . . . pen.”

(H. Martineau, Oxford English Dictionary)

Her name had been **scored** *on* (i.e. carved in) the bark of a tree.

His face was **scored** *with* (i.e. deeply etched by) worry lines.

He was severely **scored** (i.e. criticized) *for* his antisocial behaviour.

“In debate he was quick to **score** *off* (i.e. get the better of) an opponent.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

SCORN (V)

His speech was marked by disagreement with and **scorn** *for* his opponent’s position.

“A Briton’s **scorn** *of* arbitrary chains.”

(Cowper, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SCORNFUL

I am very **scornful** *of* his latest claims.

SCOURGE (V)

He was **scourged** by the guard *with* a whip.

SCOWL (V)

She **scowled** *at* the face in her mirror.

He **scowled** *on* her suggestion to dine early.

SCRAMBLE (N)

There was a **scramble** *for* the door.

The **scramble** *of* European nations *for* parts of Africa in the 19th century led to war.

“A **brisk scramble** (i.e. ramble) *to the top*.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SCRAMBLE (VV)

They **scrambled** *through* the house, *up* the stairs, *into* the bedroom, and *over* and *under* the bed.

You had better **scramble** *for* cover.

The baby **scrambled** *to* his feet.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SCRATCH (V)

The berry pickers were **scratched** (i.e. wounded superficially) *by* the bushes.

His name was **scratched** *off* (i.e. eliminated from) the list.

The hen **scratched** (i.e. clawed) the ground *for* the corn.

The child **scratched** (i.e. scored) her name *on* her pencil box.

They were reduced to **scratching** (i.e. raking) the earth *with* their fingernails.

SCREECH (V)

She was **screeching** *like* a banshee.

The old car **screeched** *to* a stop.

SCROUNGE (V)

“They **scrounged for** new products.” (Time mag.)

“Employers are **scrounging** technical whizzes *from* wherever they can find them.” (The Economist)

He **scrounged off** her friends.

SCULPTURE (V)

The figure had been **sculptured** (i.e. carved) *by* a great artist.

They who **sculptured** (i.e. carved) loveliness *in* stone.

Sculptured (i.e. carved) *on* the frieze was the story of the Nativity.

There’s an ‘iron age’ factory in New York whose fire escapes are **sculptured** (i.e. decorated) *with* the figures of athletes.

SEAL (V)

He **sealed** his letter *with* wax.

SEARCH (N)

The **search** after knowledge is a lifetime occupation.

“For decades astronomers have been **searching for** lasers in space . . . clouds of gas where the conditions are right for light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.” (Discover mag., Dec. 1995)

Ahab roamed the seas in **search of** his enemy, the white whale, Moby Dick.

SEARCH (VV)

A worker bee, **searching for** nectar, may visit 800 blossoms in one hour.

The investigator began to **search into** every detail of her testimony.

They **searched for** her *in* the house, *under* the porch, even *inside* the fireplace.

Note: As for all VVs, this versatile verb can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SEASON (N)

There was even a **season for** volunteer work.

“**Season of** mists and mellow fruitfulness!” (John Keats)

SEASON (V)

The veterans had been **seasoned** (i.e. toughened) *by* hard combat.

She **seasons** (i.e. flavors) the rice *with* saffron.

SEAT (V)

“The whole world was **seated** (i.e. situated) *in* wickedness.” (Otto, Bishop of Bansberg)

“The garden, **seated** (i.e. planted) *on* the level floor.” (Dryden, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“A portion of which was **seated** (i.e. furnished) *with* pews, and used as a church.”

(Scott, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SECEDE

Most ethnic minorities now want to **secede from** the engulfing majority.

SECLUDE

“No plunder taken in war was used by the captor until the Druids determined what part they should **seclude** (i.e. keep apart) *for* themselves.”

(Goldsmith, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The ‘old money’ mansions are **secluded** (i.e. screened) *from* public gaze.

His house was **secluded** (i.e. shut off) *from* the world *by* shrubbery.

I plan to **seclude** (i.e. screen) you *from* view *with* a high hedge.

SECRET (N)

“The **secret of** a long life is to be slightly stressed and slightly underfed.” (A famous gerontologist)

SECRETARY

“Erasmus was fortunate to become **secretary to** the Bishop of Cambrai.” (Paul Johnson)

SECURE (A)

She felt **secure in** the knowledge that her mother was coming home.

SECURE (v)

The burghers of the medieval town felt safe in the knowledge that its fortifications **secured** (i.e. safeguarded) it *against* attack.

The money was **secured** (i.e. backed up) *by* bonds.

She was able to **secure** (i.e. obtain) tickets *for* the ballet.

To what extent is the commercial venture **secured** (i.e. protected) *from* loss?

SECURITY

A good alarm system is **security** (i.e. protection) *against* thieves.

A pension fund offers **security for** (i.e. freedom of care in) one's old age.

SEE (vv)

Would you **see after** (i.e. look out for) my things?

He will **see you after** business hours.

It takes human eyes one hour to adapt completely to **seeing in** the dark.

With uncanny ability, the psychiatrist was able to **see into** the patient's hidden motives.

Much work remains to be done, but he promises to **see to** (i.e. do) it.

I will **see** (i.e. escort) you *to* the door.

“What seems to distinguish (Thomas Gold) from the average scientist . . . is an uncanny ability to **see through** the surface of phenomena to their basic workings.” (David Osborne, National Geographic)

That should **see you through** (i.e. meet your needs) *till* tomorrow.

“Viruses are 10 to 100 times as small as the typical bacterium, and in fact far smaller than the wavelength of visible light. That makes them too diminutive to be **seen with** the most powerful optical microscopes.”

(Claudia Wallis, Time mag.)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SEEK

They professed to be **seeking after** (i.e. searching for) wisdom and truth.

A clear answer is what I **seek from** (i.e. ask of) you.

A fitting tribute to the regiment was being **sought of** (i.e. asked of) the President.

“Every cell in your body is **seeking** (i.e. looking for) fulfillment *through* joy, beauty, love, and appreciation.” (Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

SEIZE

The parent was **seized by** remorse for abandoning his child.

They would **seize** (i.e. fasten) *on* (or *upon*) any excuse to get drunk.

She was suddenly **seized** (i.e. frozen) *with* terror.

SELECT (v)

He was **selected** by the draft board *for* military duty.

I hope the director will **select me for** the next play.

“Antibody response (immune system) occurs when one antibody type is **selected from** millions of pre-existing antibody types . . . That cell type then rapidly multiplies, so that the body can mount a swift and forceful response to its invaders.” (Sir Macfarlane Burnet)

She hopes you enjoy the strawberries; they were **selected with** care.

SELL (v)

“In the (celebrated Children's Crusade) . . . thousands of children were **sold**, the boys *as* slaves, the girls *into* brothels in North Africa, and even in Europe at Brindisi. None ever reached the Holy Land.”

(James Brady, Advertising Age)

“Cheap oil, and the billions of barrels extracted and **sold at** prices that actually dropped in value between the 1950s and the 1970s, completely subsidized the rise of industrial societies in Europe and America.”

(J.-J. Servan-Schreiber, The World Challenge)

His paintings **sold for** peanuts (i.e. very little) before he died.

I **sold** my watch *to* a friend last night.

SEND (vv)

The evangelist was **sent among** the people to convert them.

I sent the letter *by* air mail.

“Without the (the blood-brain barrier), the simple act of eating or exercising would *send* so many hormones and neurotransmitter-like chemicals *into* the brain that the neurons would fire uncontrollably, resulting in seizures and even death.” (Natalie Angier, *Discover* mag.)

The little girl was sent *on* an errand.

“Years later, R. Buckminster Fuller was to *send* a famous cable *to* the Japanese artist Isamu Noguchi explaining Einstein’s key equation in exactly 249 words, a masterpiece of compression.”

(Paul Johnson, *A history of the modern world*)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SENIOR

I am senior *to* you by a decade.

SENSIBILITY

Although endowed with every blessing, she lacked sensibility (i.e. appreciation) *of* her good fortune.

Wordsworth possessed a fine sensibility *to* (i.e. awareness of) the beauties of nature.

SENSIBLE

I am deeply sensible *of* this honour, your lordship.

SENSITIVE

“Males are more *sensitive to* bright light and can detect more subtle differences in light. Women have a more acute sense of smell and are more *sensitive to* loud noises.” (*Omni* mag., May ‘91)

Human brains have no nerve endings *sensitive to* pain (the pain of a headache comes not from the brain, but from the constriction of blood vessels in the scalp. (Sharon Begley with John Carey and Ray Sawhill, *Newsweek* mag., 1983)

SENSITIVITY

Dickens revealed great sensitivity *to* the suffering of the poor in Victorian England.

SENTENCE (V)

Writer Edmund Wilson believed that life was one elaborately constructed sentence after another, and that he had been sentenced *to* the sentence.

I sentence you *to* ten years in prison.

SENTIMENT

Do you have any sentiment *for* the past at all?

“A sentiment *of* bitterness rose in his mind against the government.”

(Sir Walter Scott, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

SEPARATE

“The United States and Britain are two nations *separated by* a common language.”

(George Bernard Shaw, *Time* mag.)

“Semi-porous plastic films are being engineered to *separate* virtually any type of molecule *from* a complex solution.” (Gordon Graff)

“The illusion that we are *separate from* one another is an optical delusion of our subconscious.” (Einstein)

A custom of the tribe was to separate the hair *into* braided strands.

SEQUEL

The sequel *of* his visit was death.

There should be a sequel *to* that play.

SERVE (V)

“The horse . . . was of incalculable military value, *serving* (i.e. acting) *as* the tank, the truck and the jeep of warfare until the twentieth century.”

(Jared Diamond, *Discover* mag.)

“His grown-up sons . . . served *at* the counter inside.”

(R. Campbell, *World Book Dictionary*)

“His monasteries were served (i.e. attended to) *by* priests from without.” (K.H. Digby, *World Book Dictionary*)

“During World War I, nearly a fifth of Germany’s Jews *served in* the German armed forces (92,000, with 78 percent at the front and 12,000 killed in action). Eleven thousand five hundred were awarded Germany’s Iron Cross.” (Hirsh Goldberg, *The Jewish Connection*)

To serve *on* a jury is one of the obligations of citizenship.

“Instead of stopping the movement, the opposition’s tactics had only **served to** give (i.e. was instrumental in giving) it greater momentum.”

(M. W. King, Oxford English Dictionary)

In his youth, he **served under** two flags.

The clerk **served** (i.e. waited on) her customers *with* courtesy and skill.

“He had **served with** distinction *in* the war against Napoleon.” (Lytton Strachey, World Book Dictionary)

SERVICE (N)

“He was allowed the **service of** a boy.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

My **services to** this company have been forgotten.

SET (VV)

The director was **set against** (i.e. opposed to) having the actress play the leading role.

The old woman **set** her house *in* order (i.e. made all the necessary arrangements) and prepared for death.

The dogs were **set upon** (or *on*) (i.e. ordered to attack) the criminal.

They are **set apart by** red hair.

She **set forth** (i.e. started out) *with* grim determination.

He **set himself up** (i.e. posed) *as* an expert on antiques.

Because of the boy’s tragic deformity, he was **set apart** (i.e. isolated) *from* the other children.

The gem was **set** (i.e. embedded) *in* gold.

A small statue had been **set** (i.e. placed) *on top of* the bookcase.

The youth’s bad behaviour was **set down to** (i.e. blamed on) ignorance.

The agent **set** (i.e. established) the price of the house well *under* its true value.

In self-defense, the man **set** (i.e. unleashed) his fierce dog *upon* the intruder.

The rules were **set down** (i.e. detailed) *with* unmistakable clarity.

He **set out** (i.e. started out) *to* find the dogs.

The two boxers **set to** (i.e. began fighting) *with* a will.

The craftsman was instructed to **set** (i.e. encrust) the bracelet *with* diamonds.

Note: The word ‘set’ has over 200 different meanings. It’s impossible to cover them all with examples, except for the most common usages. However, in the vast majority of cases, the verb set is transitive and requires no preposition. So the examples above, with their rightful prepositions in context, should help to put you right.

SETTLE (VV)

“Biology has **settled for** observing how life works, without asking often enough what life actually is.”

(The Economist)

“There is no businessman sharper than your Indian (from India), when given half a chance to make a fortune . . . Wherever they **settle** (i.e. alight) *in* the world outside . . . Indian capitalists easily outsmart the local competition.” (Jan Morris, Journeys)

The young couple gradually **settled into** their new way of life.

We **settled** (i.e. agreed) *on* (or *upon*) a method of dealing with the problem.

A heavy fog **settled over** (i.e. covered) the countryside.

Under threat of legal action, the company **settled** (i.e. came to an understanding) *with* the union.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SEVER

The judge was reluctant to **sever** (i.e. part) the child *from* her mother.

Watch me **sever** (i.e. cut) that pumpkin *in* two.

The party **severed** (i.e. divided) *into* two political factions.

“King William was able to **sever** (i.e. cut) diplomatic relations *with* France.”

(W.S. Churchill, Oxford English Dictionary)

SEVERE

You are being altogether too **severe for** my liking.

Aren’t you being too **severe in** your judgment?

He was terribly **severe on** the poor man. (British)

She was too **severe with** her brood.

SHAKE (V)

The bare branches **shook** *in* the wind.

The hurricane is **shaking** his home *to* pieces.

“Alone among the animals, he (man) is *shaken with* the beautiful madness called laughter.”

(G.K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*)

SHAMBLE (VV)

She **shambled** *across* the floor, then settled into her wheelchair.

The two **shambled down** (or *up*) the crooked lane.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SHAME (V)

Leave it to me; I'll **shame** him *into* coming to visit his mother.

I **shamed** him *into* a confession.

He was **shamed out of** his bad habits by his hero's example.

I will **shame** him *with* photos of his misconduct.

SHAPE (V)

He is **shaping** (i.e. forming) some snow *into* a ball.

“The Milky Way is *shaped* (i.e. formed) *like* a phonograph record with a tennis ball stuck in the center.” (Marcia Bartusiak, *Discover* mag.)

The employee could not **shape up** (i.e. measure up) *to* the demands of the job.

SHARE (N)

If I can't have a **share of** your fortune, at least I can have a **share in** your enjoyment of it.

SHARE (V)

She made sure I **shared in** her good fortune.

“Keep your fears to yourself, but **share** your courage *with* others.” (Robert Louis Stevenson)

SHATTER

The whole window **shattered** *into* pieces.

That stuff **shatters** *like* glass.

“In the seventeenth century . . . iconoclastic Puritans . . . *shattered* their way *through* the nation's (England's) cathedrals.” (*The Economist*)

SHEATHE (V)

The deep-sea diver was **sheathed in** rubber *from* head *to* toe.

Why don't you **sheathe** the roof *with* copper?

SHEEN

The sideboard glowed with the **sheen of** old silver.

The child's hair had a golden **sheen on** (or *upon*) it.

Buff it till there's a **sheen to** it.

SHELTER (N)

They ran for **shelter** *beneath* the eaves of the church.

“This the true nature of home — it is the place of Peace; the *shelter* not only *from* injury, but *from* all terror, doubt and division.” (John Ruskin)

We found **shelter** *from* the rain *under* a porch.

The fugitives found **shelter in** a barn.

The boys built a snow fort and took **shelter** *within* its walls.

SHELTER (V)

We **sheltered** the calves *beneath* (or *under*) the porch.

Sheltered by his diplomatic immunity, the representative acted without concern for the consequences.

She **sheltered** her flowers *from* the icy wind.

They **sheltered** the vintage car *in* a barn.

SHIELD (V)

The protein transferrin **shields** tissues *from* iron's harmful effects.

SHIFT (N)

There's a **shift in** the wind.

SHIFT (V)

You're being over-protective; let her **shift** (i.e. fend) *for* herself.

He **shifted** (i.e. switched) *from* one extreme *to* the other in a matter of minutes.

I am **shifting** (i.e. moving) this stack of papers over *to* the window.

SHINE (N)

That's quite a **shine** (i.e. gloss) you put *on* your shoes.

He took a **shine** (i.e. a liking) *to* me.

SHINE (V)

"Nor did he **shine** (i.e. excel) *in* conversation, as Italians must." (Alfred Kazin)

At last, fortune is beginning to **shine on** (i.e. favour) her.

"It is galaxies that **shine out from** the gravitational potholes in our cosmos." (Nigel Henbest and Heather Couper, The Guide to the Galaxy)

"The light from the candlesticks **shone upon** her golden head." (I. Murdock, Oxford English Dictionary)

"Few people know that the moon can create rainbows . . . so they rarely look for them on nights when a full moon **shines** (i.e. glows) *through* a light mist."

(James C. Simmons, American Way/Reader's Digest)

SHIP (V)

Shipping cargo *around* the Cape can still be a dicey venture.

"I **shipped** (i.e. embarked) *at* Rye, in Sussex."

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

As far as I know that order was **shipped from** Atlanta last Saturday.

Between 1870 and 1880, approx. 20 million "bison were slaughtered, and their bones **shipped to** a factory in Michigan (U.S.A.) where they were ground into fertilizer." (Hollie Watson, The Chronicle, Montreal)

The army reinforcements were **shipped through** the Suez Canal.

SHOP (V)

I am **shopping for** a new pair of pants *at* the local mall.

She **shops in** halter and shorts late at night; that's asking for trouble in this neighbourhood.

We **shopped for** high-tech products *in* about 20 countries.

Are you **shopping with** your mother this week?

SHORT (A)

Isn't this suit rather **short in** the sleeves?

I've been **short of** breath lately.

I'm afraid he is **short on** talent.

SHORTEN

"Floating-point operations per second is a measure of arithmetic speed (in computers) that is usually **shortened to 'flops'.**"

(Russell Mitchell/John W. Verity, BusinessWeek mag.)

SHOT (N)

"Even land viruses hang out in the sea, patiently waiting in limbo for a **shot at** their targets."

(David H. Freedman, Discover mag.)

Although his remark was a **shot in** the dark, it was right on target.

SHOW (N)

A **show of** hands revealed support for the resolution.

SHOW (VV)

Her paintings were **shown at** the museum.

She **showed by** her manner that she was displeased.

Don't let your anger **show in** your face.

Please **show** (i.e. usher) him *into* the house.

Under these trying conditions, his abilities do not **show to** advantage (i.e. shine forth).

"Its bright surface **showed against** (i.e. reflected on) the dark material of her dress."

(I. Murdock, Oxford English Dictionary)

"We are **showing** (i.e. performing) *at* the Orpheum" (World Book Dictionary)

He **showed** (i.e. revealed) his hostility to the proposal *by* his manner.

What do you have to **show for** (i.e. what are the results of) all that work?

“I had meant to . . . pivot about and **show** (i.e. display) myself *from* every side *to* papa.”

(M. Keane, Oxford English Dictionary)

“A fellow in white **showed** (i.e. led) us *into* the ward where Lewis was.” (J. Dickey, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Small ruffians . . . had . . . bottoms **showing through** ragged trousers.” (J. Moore, Oxford English Dictionary)

Show that ring *to* me.

“Her imperfect and unequal gait . . . **showed to** peculiar disadvantage.” (Scott, World Book Dictionary)

Her evening gown did not **show to** advantage (i.e. look its best) *in* the poor light.

“If the observer is ‘above’ the sun, say, in an airplane, the rainbow will **show up** (i.e. appear) *as* a perfect circle.”

(James C. Simmons: American Way/Reader’s Digest)

The athlete failed to **show up** (i.e. present himself) *for* the contest.

The singer did not **show up** (i.e. perform) well *in* the competition.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SHOWDOWN

“A **showdown with** a virulent pathogen (bacterium or virus) can require as much energy as a **showdown with** a rhino. Immune activity does not come cheap.”

(Discover mag.)

SHOWER (V)

Then flower petals will **shower down on** her.

They **showered** ticker tape *onto* the returning soldiers.

“Honours began to **shower upon** him.”

(N. Annan, Oxford English Dictionary)

He **showered** his fellow-actors *with* his spittle.

SHREWDNESS

“There was in Beth a mixture of the novelist’s narcissism and infernal **shrewdness about** others.” (Alfred Kazin)

SHRINK (V)

“In (what was) the Soviet Union, the area covered by the Aral Sea has **shrunk by** 40% since 1960.”

(The Economist mag.)

Indian chiefs taught their warriors not to **shrink from** pain or danger.

The cloth **shrank to** half its size.

My sweatshirt **shrank in** the wash.

My socks **shrink with** each washing.

SHROUD (V)

“Like all (electric) currents, (corrosion) **shrouds** (i.e. wraps) itself *in* a magnetic field.” (The Economist)

SHRUG (V)

The doctor **shrugged** tiredly *into* his white coat.

SHUDDER (V)

They **shuddered at** the sight of the utter devastation.

She **shuddered with** fright.

SHUT

The doors of the college were **shut against** any who disagreed with its official policy.

The farmer **shut** his cattle *in* the barn *for* the night.

We were unable to **shut** our eyes *to* the grim facts of the scandal.

Because he did not submit his application in time, he was **shut out of** (i.e. barred from) the competition.

SHUTTLE (V)

“The little steamboat . . . **shuttled** back and forth *across* the lake.” (G. Huntington, Oxford English Dictionary)

“Perdita was . . . **shuttled** back and forth *from* Kenwin *to* London.” (B. Guest, Oxford English Dictionary)

The protein transferrin **shuttles** iron *through* the bloodstream.

Mission control **shuttled** two astronauts *to* the Russian space station.

SHY (A)

She's **shy** (i.e. wary) *of* strangers.

The result was only 3 points **shy** (i.e. short) *of* theoretical perfection.

He is **shy on** (i.e. lacking) good manners.

He's always been **shy** (i.e. bashful) *with* people.

SHY (V)

That horse **shies** (i.e. rears) *at* its own shadow.

Most men still **shy from** (i.e. avoid) kitchen chores.

SICK

I'm **sick at** (or *of*) the sight of you. (i.e. you make me ill.)

They were **sick** (i.e. yearning) *for* their homeland.

The refugees arrived **sick** (i.e. ill) *in* mind and body.

We're **sick** (i.e. tired) *of* the same menu every day of the week.

She was **sick to** death *of* his inane remarks.

He was **sick with** fear.

SIDE (V)

In the event of a party split, they may **side with** or *against* the radical wing.

SIEGE

They laid **siege to** the town at least three times.

The **siege of** the city lasted many long months.

SIGHT (N)

Just wait till she catches **sight of** him.

The **sight of** you makes me sick.

SIGNIFICANCE

"The **significance of** that concert **for** what's going on here tonight is incalculable." (Patrick Watson)

SIGNPOST

"X-ray indications of gas across the top of the liver and under the diaphragm (are) a clear ***signpost to*** any perforated ulcer." (Arthur Hailey, *The Final Diagnosis*)

SIMILAR

That's very **similar to** your last painting.

"Computers' speed and complexity double every 18 months, and this will probably continue until computers have a ***similar complexity to*** the human brain." (Stephen Hawking, world-famous scientist, *London Daily Telegraph*, Jan., 2000)

SIMILARITY

There is a **similarity between** the needs and habits of infancy and extreme old age.

In demonstrating the **similarity of** sound *to* light, the teacher wished to stress the dynamic nature of the universe.

A family bears a striking **similarity to** a state.

SIMULTANEOUS

The ringing of the church bell was **simultaneous with** my ringing of the door bell.

SIMULTANEOUSLY

The lightning strike happened **simultaneously with** the clap of thunder.

SIN (V)

"To ***sin against*** a fellow human creature is also to ***sin against*** God." (G.K. Chesterton)

SINCERE

She was **sincere in** her belief that it was all for the best.

SINK (V)

The ship struck a rock and slowly **sank beneath** the waves (i.e. foundered).

The sun **sinks** (i.e. goes down) *in* the west.

The city **sank into** wickedness.

The beast **sank** its fangs (i.e. bit) *into* my arm.
He **sank to** (i.e. collapsed onto) the floor *under* the weight of his woes.

SIT

Churchill **sat** (i.e. posed) *for* Karsh's most famous portrait. It behooves us not to **sit in** judgment of (i.e. judge) others. "When you plant a bamboo tree, for the first four years nothing happens. A bulb **sits** (i.e. lies buried) *in* the ground for four years, sending everything down into its root structure. Then, in the fifth year, it shoots up to 80 feet." (Chinese proverb)

The old couple liked to **sit near** (or *by*) the fire and chat about bygone days.

"On the highest throne in the world, man **sits on** his arse." (Montaigne)

The congregation found it hard to **sit through** (i.e. endure) their pastor's sermons.

A kind soul will **sit with** a neighbour (i.e. keep him or her company) in times of trouble.

SKATE (VV)

She'll be **skating in** the ice show next week.

You're **skating on** very thin ice right now.

He **skated over** the blue line and fired the puck into the empty net.

SKILFUL

The craftsman was very **skilful at** repairing antique clocks.

To be **skilful in** one's occupation is a great asset.

The milliner is **skilful with** her needle.

SLAM (V)

"(Elephants) can easily lift a 2-ton rhino with their trunk and **slam** it *to* the ground . . . and they can drop their body temperature 16 degrees just by flapping their ears." (Hammond Innes, The Big Footprint)

SLASH (V)

"Refinements in assembly-line robotics will help **slash** (i.e. reduce) the blue-collar force *to* 5 percent by 2030." (Life mag.)

The prisoner **slashed at** the guard with a knife.
He was **slashed** (i.e. cut to ribbons) *with* a scourge.

SLATED

He's **slated** (i.e. destined) *for* a fall.

The building is **slated** (i.e. scheduled) *to* be completed by 1999.

SLEEP (VV)

Most people are able to **sleep at** night.

Bats **sleep by** day and hunt for food by night.

"How sweet the moonlight **sleeps upon** this bank!" (Shakespeare)

They **slept in** full battle gear, and *with* their helmets on.

I **slept under** the bridge that night.

SLIDE (VV)

I **slid** the money *across* the table.

The wheels-up plane **slid along** the runway.

I **slid** the puck *by* the defence.

He **slid down** the hill and *into* the pond.

Go on, **slide** it *past* the post.

"In a strike-slip fault (San Andreas), plates move sideways. In a thrust fault (such as Davis's), one **slides under** the other. An earthquake results when the plates lock and then break free" (Mark B. Roman, Discover mag.)

SLIP (VV)

"Transparent, bristling with weapons and possessing a Houdini-like ability to **slip between** other cells, the white cells are the body's chief fighters" (against disease). (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, In His Image)

She **slipped down** the steps, breaking her arm.

I want to **slip** (i.e. change) *into* something comfortable.

He **slipped on** a banana peel and fell heavily.

The spy somehow managed to **slip past** the sentry.

They are **slipping through** the curtains *onto* the stage.

She **slipped** gratefully *under* the covers.

SLOW (A)

Although **slow in** (or *of*) speech, his mind worked quickly.

We should be **slow** *to* anger and tolerant of human frailty.

SLUR (N)

There's a bit of a **slur** (i.e. a defect) *in* his speech.

You're casting a **slur** (i.e. disparaging remark) *on* (or *upon*) his character.

SMART (V)

The boy scouts were made to **smart** (i.e. feel remorse) *for* negligence in losing their equipment.

The firemen's eyes are **smarting** (i.e. stinging) *from* the intense smoke.

"This rankled and **smarted** (i.e. festered) *in* her breast, like a poisoned arrow." (Charles Dickens)

The slaves **smarted** (i.e. suffered) *under* the yoke of the pharaoh's tyranny.

SMASH (V)

The vessel **smashed** *against* the rocks.

"NASA (has) revealed the chilling truth: at best, the crew of the doomed shuttle (the Challenger) knew, if only for a few seconds, that something was terribly wrong. At worst, they remained conscious for two minutes and 45 seconds, until the crew compartment, still largely intact, **smashed into** the Atlantic."

(Micheal D. Lemonick, Time mag.)

He **smashed** (i.e. banged) his fist *on* the table.

The sculpture had been **smashed to** pieces.

SMELL (V)

The administrator could **smell** trouble *from* an angry community.

The great open reading room somehow always **smelled of** fresh varnish.

We could **smell** whisky *on* his breath.

The deal **smelt to** high heaven.

"Snakes **smell with** their tongues."

(David Louis, Fascinating Facts)

SMILE (V)

The baby **smiled at** her mother.

She **smiled into** my eyes.

Thinking of her forthcoming vacation, the secretary **smiled to** herself.

Let us hope the sun **smiles on** our picnic.

Fortune has **smiled upon** him since his arrival in this country.

SMITE

"I am so deeply **smitten thro'** (through) the helm That without help I cannot last till morn." (Tennyson)

He was **smitten with** (or *by*) her beauty.

SMOTHER

The soft music was **smothered** (i.e. stifled) *beneath* the roar of city traffic.

The child actor felt **smothered** (i.e. overwhelmed) *by* excessive public adulation.

The whole room was **smothered in** (i.e. filled with) flowers.

She **smothered** (i.e. covered) her baby *with* kisses.

He **smothered** (i.e. suffocated) his wife *with* a pillow.

SNAP (V)

This guard dog will **snap at** (i.e. try to bite) any intruder. Be careful.

That tree branch will surely **snap** (i.e. break) *under* your weight.

Her eyes **snapped** (i.e. flashed) *with* anger.

SNARL (V)

The senator is **snarling** (i.e. growling angrily) *at* the witness.

"The human desire for security . . . can so easily become **snarled** (i.e. ensnared) *by* panic." (O.E.D.)

We became **snarled** (i.e. entangled) *in* the traffic.

Grandmother's knitting **snarled** (i.e. became entangled) *into* knots.

SNEER (V)

The sisters **sneered at** (i.e. looked down on) anyone not as privileged as themselves.

SNEEZE (V)

He dared to **sneeze** (i.e. sneer) *at* my offer.
The little girl **sneezed** *into* his large handkerchief.

SNIFF (V)

The dog **sniffed** *around* the building as if searching for something.
He **sniffed** *at* the bottle, then drank it down.
“It is not only Rome that **sniffs** heresy *in* independent thought or action.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)
The bloodhounds **sniffed** *through* the dense brush till they caught the scent of their prey.

SNUG (A)

Snug *as* a bug in a rug. (Old saying which means feeling very comfortable.)
“The children were tucked all **snug** *in* their beds.”
The town lay **snug** *under* its blanket of snow.
Snug *within* its cave, the bear hibernated.

SOAK (V)

The occupants of the sailboat were **soaked** *by* the squall.
She **soaks** *in* the bathtub *till* she is as wrinkled as a prune.
The sherry is **soaking** *into* the trifle.
The rain **soaked** *through* the overhanging branches.

SOAR (VV)

A plane **soars** *above* the clouds.
The mighty rocket thundered, then **soared** *into* space.
The eagle is **soaring** *over* the mountain.
The towers of the great cathedral **soared** *to* heaven.
The flames **soared up** *in* a sudden gust of wind.
Her mood **soared** *with* the change in her circumstances.

SOLACE (N)

Money is a **solace** *for* the loss of youth.
He found **solace** *in* the promise that she would come home soon.
Well that's a **solace** *to* me.

SOLUBLE

It's even **soluble** *in* milk.

SOLUTION

She wanted a **solution** *by* that evening.
“For every problem, there is a **solution** that is simple, plausible and wrong.” (Otto, Bishop of Bansberg)
The simple **solution** *for* him is to stop drinking.
I want a **solution** *of* (or *to*) that problem *by* tomorrow.

SOP (V)

The boy is **sopping** the doughnut *in* his hot chocolate.
“The water just **sops** *through* the turf.”
(The Oxford Universal Dictionary)
The floor was **sopped** *with* waste from the plugged drain.

SORE

You're either **sore** *about* something or *at* me.
The writer's eyes were **sore** *from* overwork.
The athlete's feet were **sore** *with* overexertion.

SORRY

I'm **sorry** *about* that.
She was actually **sorry** *for* me.
They were **sorry** *to* hear that.

SORT (V)

The books had been **sorted** *into* six categories.
I am **sorting** *through* all that mess.
The weather **sorted** (i.e. harmonized) well *with* his present mood.

SOUND (V)

“His real purpose was to **sound** (i.e. query) the . . . governor *about* the political situation.”
(J. Carey, Oxford English Dictionary)
“A gun **sounded** (i.e. boomed) *from* the bank.”
(A. Schlee, Oxford English Dictionary)
Some of the compositions **sound** (i.e. echo) *like* pastiches of past composers.

“The music . . . **sounded** (i.e. reverberated) *in* his head *with* a steely tone.”

(J. Steinbeck, Oxford English Dictionary)

The reporter **sounded** me out (i.e. queried me) *on* the subject, but I disclosed nothing.

“The street **sounds** (i.e. reverberates) *to* the soldiers’ tread.” (H.E. Housman, Oxford English Dictionary)

SOURCE (N)

“He cannot find any **source** for his nagging doubts.” (George Garrett, Death of a Fox)

Can you find the **source** *of* those rumours?

“Religion was an anchor and a **source** *of* strength and guidance.” (E. Roosevelt, O.E.D.)

SOW (V)

The seeds of conflict were **sown** (i.e. planted) *in* an ancient injustice.

Why don’t you **sow** (i.e. seed) the whole field *with* daisies?

SPAR (V)

You’re **sparring** *with* me (i.e. contesting my words) again.

Why **spar** (i.e. joust) *with* windmills.

SPARKLE (V)

The lake is **sparkling** *in* the sun.

A diamond necklace **sparkled** *on* her bosom.

The river **sparkles** *through* the countryside.

The cast of the musical **sparkled** *with* energy and verve.

SPEAK (VV)

The member of the caucus said he intended to **speak** *against* the bill, and without notes.

Although her views were controversial, the sociologist was often invited to **speak** *at* meetings *about* social problems.

“Children have a fairly easy time learning a second language if they hear it **spoken** frequently *before* puberty, allowing them the chance to **speak** it themselves.” (Geoffrey Montgomery, Discover mag.)

He was **speaking** *for* (i.e. on behalf of) the classical world *against* its barbarian invaders.

She **spoke** *from* the depths of her sorrow.

“One can never **speak** enough *of* (i.e. extol enough) the virtues, the dangers, the power of shared laughter.”

(Françoise Sagan)

The professor has read widely and is ready to **speak** *on* (i.e. discuss) any topic.

If I **speak** *to* the dog, he obeys instantly.

The M.P. caught the Speaker’s eye and **spoke** *to* (i.e. addressed) the question.

“The stories **spoke** *to* (i.e. were related to) the difficulties with his father and *to* his feelings after the death of a brother.” (Robert Wright, Time mag.)

Speak *with* her and try to change her mind.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SPECIAL

You’re very **special** *to* me.

SPECIALIZE, SPECIALISE

“Paul Goodman . . . **specialized** *in* the short, sharp, jabbing, personal style even when he wrote about housing problems.” (Alfred Kazin)

The factory’s assembly line has been **specialized** *into* a dozen different operations.

SPECIFIC

You had better be very **specific** *to* the question.

SPECULATE

He **speculated** (i.e. gambled) *in* stocks and bonds all his life.

It is foolish to **speculate** *on* (i.e. try to guess) the length of one’s life.

SPECULATION

There’s a lot of **speculation** (i.e. conjecture) *about* that just now.

Speculation *in* (i.e. buying and selling of) stocks and bonds is growing by leaps and bounds.

Speculation *on* (i.e. trying to guess) the length of one’s life is a waste of time.

SPEED (VV)

He is **speeding** *across* the state **to** his ailing mother.

They **speed** *along* this road, then cut through the park.

“We **sped** along . . . *at* 50 miles an hour.”

(Scott Fitzgerald, O.E.D.)

He **sped** *down* the road, *around* the bend and *out of* sight.

We were **speeded** *in* a taxi *towards* a hotel.

He loved **speeding** *through* the night.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SPEND

The millionaire **spends** his wealth *for* the good of the community.

“In 1970, U.S. drug companies **spent** \$4,500 *in* advertising *per* doctor *to* reach each of the 350,000 practitioners.” (Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

“Money **spent** *on* ourselves may be a millstone about the neck; **spent** *on* others, it may give us wings like eagles.” (Raymond Hitchcock)

SPEW

She **spewed** the champagne *all over* her dress.

The yellow press is **spewing** invectives *at* the social reformers.

“Sulphur and nitrogen oxides **spew** *from* power plants and cars, producing the acid rain that is destroying our lakes and trees.” (Robert Keating, Omni mag.)

SPILL (V)

The rats **spilled** *from* the stricken ship **onto** the dock **like** an unfurling carpet.

The invaders **spilled** (i.e. poured) *through* the mountain pass and laid waste the countryside.

SPIT (V)

She **spat** *at* his portrait on the wall.

How can I not hit him? He just **spat** *in* my face.

“One new study . . . discovered that an exploding star 200,000 light-years from Earth is **spitting** huge amounts

of oxygen *into* space.”

(Alexandra Witze, Dallas Morning News)

The boy **spat** *over* the neighbour’s fence.

SPLASH (V)

She parachuted beyond the landing zone and **splashed** (i.e. fell with a splash) *into* the lake.

A passing car **splashed** (i.e. splattered) mud *on* her new dress.

You’re **splashing** paint all *over* me.

SPONGE (V)

The name had been **sponged** (i.e. wiped) *from* the blackboard.

You’ve been **sponging** *on* (i.e. exploiting) me since last June.

She **sponges** (i.e. moistens) her cheeks *with* cold water.

SPRAY (V)

Lethal chemicals are **spraying** *from* the wrecked truck.

The hose suddenly **sprays** water *into* the air.

“60 to 90 percent of the chemicals **sprayed** *on* crops are used only to beautify produce, not to improve its quality.” (Cathy Spencer, Omni mag.)

They’re **spraying** chemicals all *over* the countryside.

The painting was **sprayed** *with* a fixative.

SPREAD (VV)

“A quarter of a billion years ago . . . volcanic eruptions in Siberia disgorged more lava than a million Mount Saint Helenses, enough to form a layer ten feet deep if it were **spread** *around* the globe.” (Discover mag., Dec. 1995)

Rumors were **spread** *by* the refugees fleeing from the war zone.

The news **spread** *from* one village *to* the next.

“In zero-g (no gravity) space flight, body fluids **spread** more evenly *into* the upper extremities. The result is stuffy sinuses, puffy eyes, and shrunken legs.”

(David Noland, Discover mag.)

The children **spread** (i.e. smeared) the honey *on* their toast.

“In August 1986, bubbles of carbon dioxide accumulating at the bottom of the lake (Lake Nyos in

Cameroon) . . burst to the surface; a blanket of dense carbon dioxide and water vapor spread over nearby villages, killing cattle and 1,700 people.”

(Discover mag., Oct. 1988)

Low morale has spread through (or throughout) the work force.

“Originating on the eastern rim of the Mediterranean nearly 2,000 years ago, (Christianity) spread rapidly to Syria, and thence Paul took it to his native land, present-day Turkey.” (Richard N. Ostling, Time mag.)

The fire spread with great speed.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SPRING (VV)

Most people would spring at the opportunity to tour the world.

A strong friendship had sprung up between them.

“The notions of political and economic freedom both spring from the workings of the Christian conscience as a historical force; and it is thus no accident that all the implantations of freedom throughout the world have ultimately a Christian origin”.

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

The new growth had sprung up over the ashes of the old forest.

The doe sprang to its feet and vanished in the woods.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SPUR (N)

The decision was made on the spur of the moment.

It proved a spur (i.e. prod) to me.

SPUR (V)

“He spurred his horse into the waves.”

(Gibbon, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

“Ire, that spurr'd him on to deeds unjust.”

(Cary, The Oxford Universal Dictionary)

He is spurring his steed to a last, desperate effort.

SPURT (N)

A spurt of steam came from the engine.

SPURT (V)

Oil from the car's engine suddenly spurts out at the mechanic.

“I walked about wartime London . . with that everlasting cold damp on my skin and the sweet smell of soft coal spurting into the air from all the chimneys.”

(Alfred Kazin)

Imports from Asia spurred to unprecedented levels.

SPY (V)

I have a feeling I am being spied upon by agents

He spies for a huge conglomerate.

Stop spying into my affairs.

I hated the way my neighbour was forever spying on me through her curtains.

I spy with my little eye...

SQUARE (V)

“This squares with some reports from Russia of artificial diamonds that can scratch real ones.”

(The Economist mag.)

SQUEAL (V)

“Ghosts did shriek and squeal about the street.” (Shakespeare) Note: about in the sense of ‘up and down’.

Pigs either squeal in pain or with fright.

You would not squeal on (i.e. betray) me, I know.

SQUEEZE (V)

They squeezed (i.e. pressed) around him, not wanting to miss a word.

The farmers were squeezed (i.e. hard-pressed) between low prices and high freight rates.

The horse trader always tried to squeeze (i.e. press) a buyer for more money.

We managed to squeeze (i.e. save) a few dollars from our budget.

“By czarist ukase, some five million Jews were squeezed (i.e. crammed) into a region of the sub-Baltic provinces

known as the Pale of Settlement.”

(John Hersey, Esquire mag.)

The child **squeezed** the paste *out of* the tube.

They **squeezed** (i.e. forced their way) *through* the fence and escaped.

SQUINT (v)

He **squinted** *at* me as I walked by.

The clown **squinted** *through* his fingers *at* the audience.

STAFF (v)

“The secretary’s office was **staffed** *by* some 50 clerks.”

(J.P. Hennessy, O.E.D.)

His army headquarters is **staffing** *with* misfits and incompetents.

STAGGER (vv)

Both were **staggering** *along* the sidewalk.

I want you to **stagger** *across* the room, then collapse on the couch.

He **staggered** *down* the walk.

My dad **staggered** *into* the house.

She **staggered** *over to* me.

STAKE (v)

I am **staking** (i.e. betting) my last dime *on* his coming through.

Would you **stake** (i.e. treat) me *to* a meal?

STAMP (v)

The boy refused to **stamp** *on* (i.e. crush) the spider.

“He **stamped** the mud *off* his boots before entering the house.” (Graham Greene, O.E.D.)

She is **stamping** (i.e. printing) the company name *over* the entire surface of the lid.

Thousands of boxes sat on the dock, **stamped** (i.e. marked) *with* the names of world-famous manufacturers.

STAND (vv)

“There are men and classes of men that **stand** (i.e. tower) *above* the common herd.” (R.L. Stevenson)

The Indian tribes were unable to **stand** (i.e. defend themselves) *against* the European invasion of their ancestral lands.

She will **stand** *by* (i.e. support) you, never fear.

Women are no longer prepared to **stand** *for* (i.e. endure) wage discrimination.

You **stand** (i.e. are) *in* great danger of being hurt.

“3-D copies of artifacts could **stand** *in* (i.e. substitute) *for* the real thing.”

(Paul Wallich, Scientific American mag., Dec. ‘94)

To a man, they are ready to **stand** *up for* (i.e. defend) their rights.

“It is as though the British Isles are tilted permanently to one corner — the southeast corner, bottom right, where London **stands** seething *upon* the Thames.”

(Jan Morris, Journeys)

“Being a nation means **standing** *up to* (i.e. confronting) your equals, whereas being an empire only means kicking your inferiors.” (G.K. Chesterton)

If you **stand** *back* (i.e. keep your distance) *from* the crowd, you’ll see how it reduces to the lowest common denominator.

The captain **stood** *out* (i.e. kept his distance) *from* the shore, till he was sure his ship would not run aground.

The actress wore a flame-red gown that would **stand** *out* (i.e. be eye-catching) *in* the crowd.

“Newton once said that to make his discoveries, he **stood** *on* the shoulders of giants.”

(Hirsh Goldberg, The Jewish Connection)

“Tennyson’s feet were set on things transitory and untenable . . . Yet he was so perfect a poet that I fancy he will still be able to **stand** *even upon* such clouds.”

(G.K. Chesterton, Essays)

We will **stand** *with* you to the end, whatever the danger.

STARE (v)

We **stared** *after* him *in* utter disbelief.

The glass eyes of the idol **stare** *at* you *with* unblinking malevolence.

“He **stared** *down* the length of the train.”

(O. Manning, O.E.D.)

Death is **staring** the besieged garrison *in* the face.

“A Chicago hotel porter can produce photographs by **staring** *into* cameras.” (Lyllal Watson, Supernature)

START (v)

The performance is scheduled to **start at** 8 p.m., and we hope it **starts on** time.

She **started** (i.e. reacted visibly) **at** the sight of him.

We should **start by** noon.

The teenager **started for** home early.

“Science **starts, not from** large assumptions, but **from** particular facts discovered by observation or experiment.” (Bertrand Russell)

His father gave him \$10,000 to **start in** business.

The sun’s heat on the stone bench made him **start** (i.e. jump) **to** his feet.

It’s the only way you can **start** (i.e. begin) that job **with** a clean slate (i.e. make a fresh start).

“It **starts with** the heart, 8 to 15 ounces of hard-working, hollow muscle that beats three million times a year, pumping a million barrels of blood — enough to fill three supertankers — over the average lifetime.” (Roderick Jamer, CARP news)

STARVE

Are you **starved for** (i.e. deprived of) good company?

They are **starving** their people **into** submission.

“The (human) fetus produces an enzyme that **starves** the mother’s immune system **of** an essential nutrient.” (Discover mag., Feb. ’99)

“The total (world) panda population today may not exceed 1,000. More than 100 **starved to** death in the mid-1970s.” George B. Schaller, National Geographic)

STAY (N)

Their **stay** (i.e. sojourn) **in** the resort hotel was unsatisfactory.

The judge granted a **stay** (i.e. reprieve) **of** execution.

STAY (VV)

We decided not to **stay** (i.e. remain) **for** the second act.

“Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night **stays** (i.e. stops) these couriers **from** the swift completion of their appointed rounds.” (Inscription on the Main Post Office, New York City, adapted from Herodotus)

“He is in perfect peace whose mind is **stayed** (i.e. fixed) **on** Thee.” (The Bible)

She **stayed** (i.e. waited) **to** the end.

The babysitter will stay (i.e. remain) **with** the child **till** you return.

“Calories are both biologically and socially healthy only as long as they **stay within** the narrow range that separates enough from too much.”

(Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

STEADFAST

She remains **steadfast in** her belief that you are innocent.

“You must be **steadfast to** your principles.”

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

STEAL (V)

“The law locks up both man and woman who **steals** the goose **from** off the common; but lets the greater felon loose who **steals** the common **from** the goose.” (Anon.)

He **stole** (i.e. sneaked) **into** the kitchen.

The cat would **steal** (i.e. creep) **round** the porch **after** dusk.

STEEP (V)

She is **steeping** (i.e. soaking) the tea bag **in** boiling water for two minutes.

“The whole of modern thought is **steeped in** (i.e. imbued with) science.” (Huxley, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

He is **steeped** (i.e. thoroughly involved) **in** crime.

Let the tea bag **steep till** the tea is quite dark.

“The scholar . . . **steeped** (i.e. immersed) **to** the lips **in** Greek.” (W. Irving, Oxford English Dictionary)

STEER (VV)

The boy **steered** (i.e. directed) his bicycle **around** the sharp curve.

Seamen in ancient times were able to **steer** (i.e. navigate) **by** the stars.

In the rising gale, the captain **steered** (i.e. headed) *for* the harbour.

You would be wise to **steer away from** (i.e. avoid) flattery. Children need to be **steered** (i.e. guided) *in* the right direction.

The policeman **steered** us *through* the unruly crowd.

STEM (V)

“No hate is ever as strong as that which **stems from** love.” (German saying, People mag.)

“Intuition **stems from** knowledge.” (Bill Bernbach)

This is a custom that **stems back to** very early times.

STEP (N)

Well, it's a **step in** the right direction.

He hit the man before he took one **step into** the room.

She sat down on the bottom **step of** the long staircase.

STEP (VV)

A few large stones enabled the visitors to **step across** the stream.

“Alice was drunk and she **stepped** carefully *along* the passage.” (J. Carew, Oxford English Dictionary)

Shall we **step out for** a breath of fresh air?

“You can never **step in** the same river twice.” (Heraclitus)

“I caught him as he was **stepping into** a taxi.”

(L. Hellman, Oxford English Dictionary)

The young actress **stepped** (i.e. slipped) deftly *into* the role.

The old woman **stepped off** the sidewalk, not noticing the light had changed to red.

If you don't look sharp, you'll **step on** the violets in the grass.

The little boy had to **step onto** a stool to reach the cookies.

The elderly man always made sure he **stepped over** the potholes in the sidewalk.

Alice **stepped through** the looking-glass into Wonderland.

The soldiers **stepped** (i.e. marched) smartly *to* the beat of the drums.

She avoided **stepping under** the mistletoe.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions, whichever best describes the action that follows.

STEW (V)

Trust me: **stew** (i.e. cook) it *in* orange juice *for* ten minutes.

It is futile to **stew** (i.e. fret) *over* traffic congestion.

Stew (i.e. cook on medium heat) the meat *until* tender, then add the vegetables.

STICK (V)

You've got to **stick at** it (i.e. persevere), if you want to succeed.

A true friend will **stick by** (i.e. not leave) you *in* an emergency.

His car is **stuck in** the mud about a mile back.

The campaign workers were asked to **stick** (i.e. glue) labels *on* envelopes.

“A Greek bas-relief to **stick over** my chimney-piece.” (H. James, O.E.D.)

“The great thing about human language is that it prevents us from **sticking to** the matter at hand.”

(Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

STICKLER

I'm a **stickler for** neatness.

STIGMA

That one small misdemeanor has cast a **stigma on** me *for* life.

STIGMATIZE, STIGMATISE

He **stigmatized** that new car *as* a lemon.

“Ill-dressing, over-dressing she **stigmatized** (i.e. branded as ignominious . . . *with* impatient movements of the hands.” (V. Woolf, Oxford English Dictionary)

STIMULATE

“An algae extract *stimulates* animals’ immune systems *by* 225%, and cells in culture *by* 2000%.”

(Ricki Lewis, Discover mag.)

“(Dr. Steven) Rosenberg . . . used a natural body chemical to *stimulate* cells from the immune system *to* destroy human cancers.” (Joe Levine, Time mag.)

His writing *stimulates* your brain *to* the nth degree.

STINK (v)

His house *stinks of* cigarette smoke.

The gym *stank with* the sweat of two generations of athletes.

STIPULATE

The judge *stipulated* one week of public service *for* every parking ticket.

STOCK (v)

“Housewives *stocked up against* a shortage.”

(Times, O.E.D.)

The whole warehouse was *stocked with* flowers.

They are *stocking* the warehouse *to* the ceiling *with* rolls of newsprint.

STOOP (v)

The poor light made her *stoop* (i.e. bend) *over* her work. She would not *stoop* (i.e. lower herself) *to* dishonesty.

“The youthful charioteers . . . *stoop* (i.e. bend down) *to* the reins, and lash with all their force.”

(John Dryden, World Book Dictionary)

STOP (vv)

He *stopped* his car *against* the curb.

“If you aspire to the highest place, it is no disgrace to *stop at* the second, or even the third, place.”

(Marcus Tullius Cicero)

Let us *stop by* the edge of the stream.

I will not *stop you from* doing that.

They *stopped right on* the line.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

STORE (v)

“Lead isn’t excreted but is *stored for* many years *in* tissue, chiefly *in* the bone, from which it is released back into the blood stream to wreak cellular havoc.”

(Michael Weisskopf, Discover mag.)

STORM (v)

Yesterday, he was *storming* (i.e. raging) *about* the size of his bed; today, who knows?

She would *storm* (i.e. rage) *at* me for days on end.

He *stormed* (i.e. hastened in anger) *down to* the lawyer’s office.

The team *stormed back* (i.e. resurged) *for* a winning goal.

Don’t *storm* (i.e. burst angrily) *into* my office like that.

Listen to her *storming* (i.e. stomping) *up and down* the stairs.

STRAIN (v)

She can relax now that she no longer has to *strain after* fame.

I never saw a cat *strain at* its leash.

STRANGLEHOLD

The Nazis established a *stranglehold on* education.

(Not *over*)

STRAY (vv)

The artist liked to *stray* (i.e. wander) *about* the city in search of subjects to paint.

The children *strayed* (i.e. wandered) *among* the flowers in the park.

Do not *stray* (i.e. go) *beyond* this point.

“Only the human mind is designed to . . . drift away in the presence of locked-on information, *straying* (i.e. drifting) *from* each point in a hunt for a better, different point.” (Lewis Thomas, The Lives of a Cell)

The child was apt to *stray* (i.e. wander) *off* the playground and *into* the street.

The disbanded soldiers *strayed back to* their homes.

STRESS (N)

“Though the faculties of the mind are improved by exercise, yet they must not be put to a **stress** *beyond* their strength.” (Locke, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The **stress** *on* you these days is enough to make you ill.
“I always put a great deal of **stress** *upon* his judgment.” (DeFoe, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

STRETCH (VV)

“It would take about 250 million atoms laid side by side to **stretch** *across* a distance of only 1 inch . . . And it would take about 100,000 nuclei, side by side, to **stretch** *across* the width of a single atom.”

(I. Asimov, Twentieth Century Discovery)

She **stretched** the facts *beyond* credibility.

“The capillaries that interweave a human brain occupy less than 5 percent of the organ’s volume, but if laid end to end they’d **stretch** *for* 400 miles.”

(Natalie Angier, Discover mag.)

“The DNA is so narrow and compacted that all the genes in all my body cells would fit into an ice cube; yet if the DNA were unwound and joined together end to end, the strand could **stretch** *from* the earth *to* the sun and back more than four hundred times.”

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

The clothesline **stretched** *from* porch *to* fence.

“The Amazon forest (Brasil) is the largest in the world. It **stretches** *over* an area ten times the size of France.” (Thomas Sterling, The Amazon)

“We (astronauts) are on a still and arid world (the moon) where each blazing day and each subfreezing night **stretch** *through* 355 earth hours.”

(David R. Scott, National Geographic)

The legs of the oilrig seemed to **stretch** *under* the ice *like* the tentacles of a giant octopus.

STREW (VV)

He is **strewing** the garbage *across* his driveway.

All his books were **strewn** *around* the room.

Old tires were **strewn** *behind* the shed.

More laundry was **strewn** *in* the lane.

She **strewed** her beachwear *on* the sand.

“The newspapers which were **strewn** *upon* the table.” (Charles Dickens)

The river was **strewn** *with* islands.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

STRICT

I thought you were very **strict** *about* that.

She was very **strict** *in* her Lenten duties.

Your are being very **strict** *with* me.

STRIKE (VV)

“Lightning **strikes** the earth *about* 100 times every second.” (David Louis, Fascinating Facts)

The coal miners plan to **strike** *against* their employers (i.e. stop working) *on* Thursday.

Blindly, she **struck** (i.e. swung her fist) *at* me.

He was **struck** (i.e. hit) a glancing blow *by* the falling tree.

At least a third of that nation is **stricken** *by* AIDS.

They’re always **striking** *for* (i.e. stopping work to obtain) higher wages.

We must **strike** *off* (i.e. remove from) our list any member who refuses to pay his dues.

Why should they **strike** (i.e. stop work) *over* that?

He was so **struck** *with* (i.e. captivated by) her beauty, that he asked to meet her.

That weekend, I was **stricken** *with* the flu.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

STRIP (V)

He climbed into the ring and **stripped** *for* action (i.e. removed excess garments).

“Much harsher terms were agreed to after World War I, including a ‘big’ Poland which cut Prussia in two and **stripped** (i.e. divested) Germany *of* its Silesian industrial belt . . .” (Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

He **stripped** (i.e. undressed) down *to* his underwear.

STRIVE

It is futile to **strive** *against* the tide of public opinion.

Why **strive** *after* such an impossible goal?

“Often . . . it is the most talented engineers who have the hardest time learning when to stop *striving for* perfection.” (Tracy Kidder, The soul of a new machine)

It is foolish to **strive** *over* trivial matters.

“Strive not *with* a man without cause.” (The Bible)

STRUGGLE (v)

It is useless to **struggle** (i.e. try to go) *against* the tide.

He is a man who **struggles** (i.e. works hard) *for* everything he gets.

The relatives **struggled** (i.e. fought) fiercely *over* the division of the estate.

Have courage, we will **struggle** *through* (i.e. cope with) this crisis.

She **struggled** (i.e. tried desperately) in vain *to* free herself.

The boxer **struggled** *to* his feet (i.e. stood up with effort).

“Freda, whose perfume was **struggling** *with* (i.e. failing to overcome) the building’s resident odors.”

(Edwin Newman, Sunday Punch)

STUDENT

He was a **student** *of* history.

Bill, a graduate **student** *in* history, could not get a job.

STUMBLE (vv)

She **stumbled** *across* (i.e. happened on) my diary last Sunday.

The child **stumbled** (i.e. fell) *against* the top of the staircase.

“In case the Prelacy for England should **stumble** *at* (i.e. not be able to accept) the Supremacy of Rome.”

(Bacon, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The proud possessor of a cut-and-dry creed will be **stumbled** (i.e. shaken) *by* this new milestone.”

(W.G. Collingwood, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The Post Office . . . continues to **stumble** (i.e. blunder) *from* one . . . disaster *to* another.”

(Precision Marketing, Oxford English Dictionary)

The path in the forest was rough and the campers often **stumbled** (i.e. fell) *into* holes.

“If a detective investigating a crime . . . **stumbles** (i.e. chances) *on* a series of mysterious coincidences, he will look for a human hand behind them.”

(Patrick Glynn, National Review mag.)

“Pepy’s knack for **stumbling** (i.e. happening) *upon* psychological truths.”

(T. Mallon, Oxford English Dictionary)

He **stumbled** *upon* this discovery by accident.

SUBJECT (A)

“There should be as little merit in loving a woman for her beauty, as a man for his prosperity, both being equally *subject to* change.” (Alexander Pope)

SUBJECT (N)

Anti-vivisectionists believe animals should not be **subjects** *for* medical experiments.

The **subject** *of* his thesis is the impact of acid rain on deciduous trees.

SUBJECT (v)

They are **subjecting** him *to* one humiliation after another.

SUBMERGE

The broken ship was **submerged** *beneath* ten fathoms of water.

The land was quickly **submerged** *by* the invading sea.

Just **submerge** it *in* water.

The whole meeting was **submerged** *in* controversy.

SUBMIT

This is **submitted** *for* your approval.

Do you wish to **submit** your case *to* arbitration?

SUBORDINATE (v)

“They will **subordinate** goodness *to* efficiency; though the very name of good implies an end, and the very name of efficiency implies only a means to an end.”

(G.K. Chesterton, Generally Speaking)

SUBSCRIBE

“I *subscribe to* Einstein’s religion. It’s an oceanic feeling; there’s that great big thing out here that’s pretty marvelous.” (Lawrence Krauss, astrophysicist)

“By 1919 virtually all European intellectuals of the younger generation . . . *subscribed to* the proposition that the right to national self-determination was a fundamental moral principle.”

(Paul Johnson: The History of the Modern World)

SUBSERVIENCE

“According to Buddhist precepts, women’s only path to expiation (for their greater proneness to sin) lays in total *subservience to* the male.” (Jack Seward, The Japanese)

SUBSERVIENT

“Temporal matters were of necessity *subservient to* the spiritual.” (Paul Johnson)

SUBSIST

The survivors *subsisted* (i.e. lived) *on* roots, nuts and berries.

“Which charter *subsists* (i.e. continues to exist) to this day and is called Magna Carta.”

(Chesterfield, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

A club cannot *subsist* (i.e. survive) *without* membership fees.

SUBSTITUTE (V)

A novel about the U.S. must *substitute* status *for* class.

“The Pope *substituted* John de Columna, a Cardinal Legate *in place of* (or *in lieu of*) Pelagius.”

(Fuller, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SUBTRACT

Her new job has *subtracted* a dozen years *from* her appearance.

SUCCEED

I never *succeeded* (i.e. had success) *as* a writer.

He never *succeeded at* anything.

The new play *succeeded beyond* all expectations.

“In all Karl Marx’s researches into the inequities of British capitalists . . . he never *succeeded in* unearthing one (worker) who was paid literally no wages at all. Yet such a worker did exist in his own household.”

(Paul Johnson, Intellectuals)

In a dynastic system, the first-born son must *succeed* (i.e. come next in order) *to* the throne.

Try it; you won’t *succeed with* me.

SUCCESSFUL

“While capitalist nations, including the U.S. and the emerging countries of Asia, have been highly *successful at* creating wealth, socialism has largely proved an economic drag.” (John Greenwald, Time)

She was *successful in* all her endeavours.

I promise you; you won’t be *successful with* me.

SUCCUMB

“During the Middle Ages . . . the accumulation of more money than one needed was considered the lowest form of avarice. This approach to life continued to be held in the Catholic countries of Europe which did not *succumb to* the Reformation.”

(Pierre Berton, The Smug Minority)

He is *succumbing to* her charms.

SUCK

“Black holes . . . and wormholes are cousins . . . A traveler *sucked into* one mouth of a wormhole and *down* the throat might emerge from the second mouth only a few moments later, but halfway across the cosmos.”

(David H. Freedman, Discover mag.)

SUE

I intend to *sue* him *for* all he’s got.

We intend to *sue* the columnist *for* defamation of character.

SUFFER

I will go on *suffering for* my beliefs.

“Beer drinkers *suffer* abnormally *from* rectal cancer.”

(Leonard Gross: How Much Is Too Much?)

I refuse to *suffer in* silence.

“Will he **suffer** (i.e. permit) us *to* leave.”
(Reader’s Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

SUFFICE

That will **suffice** *for* the moment.

SUFFUSE

Her poor face was **suffused** *with* sorrow.

SUITABLE

That movie was **suitable** *for* adults only.
Make it **suitable** *to* the occasion.

SUIT (V)

“Freud’s methods of therapy have proved, on the whole, costly failures, more **suited to** cosset the unhappy than cure the sick.”

(Paul Johnson, The History of the Modern World)

“Light is **suited to** carrying enormous numbers of precise digital signals at high speed over long distances.”
(Stephen Koepp, Reader’s Digest)

SUPERIOR (A)

The Sherpa is **superior** *in* his capacity to tolerate reduced amounts of oxygen at great heights.
You act as if you’re **superior** *to* me.

SUPERIOR (N)

He’s considered the **superior** *of* Rabelais.

SUPPLEMENT (N)

It came as a weekend **supplement** *to* the newspaper.

SUPPLEMENT (V)

They **supplement** my salary *by* giving me a bonus.
They **supplemented** my salary *with* some stock in the company.

SUPPLEMENTARY

That file is **supplementary** *to* the docket I gave you yesterday.

SUPPLY (N)

“Blood-forming stem cells . . . can both renew themselves and produce trillions upon trillions of blood cells, an inexhaustible **supply for** the life of their host body.”
(Peter Radetsky, Discover mag.)

A generous **supply of** candied fruit is needed for this cake recipe.

“An endless **supply of** oxygen, amino acids, nitrogen, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sugars, lipids, cholesterols, and hormones surge past our (100 trillion) cells, carried on blood cell rafts or suspended in the (blood) fluid. Each cell has special withdrawal privileges to gather the resources needed to fuel a tiny engine for its complex chemical reaction.”

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, In His Image)

SUPPLY (V)

Money was donated to **supply** books *for* the children’s library.

“Parkinson’s (disease) casts its imprisoning spells by slowly destroying a tiny section of the brain, the size and shape of a quarter called the substantia nigra. The substantia nigra **supplies** the neurotransmitter dopamine *to* a larger area in the center of the brain, the striatum, which controls movement.”

(Jeff Goldberg, Discovery mag.)

He **supplies** milk *to* our neighbourhood schools for free.
India **supplies** us *with* much of our tea.

SUPPORT (N)

Believing the amendments to be retrogressive, the M.P. withdrew his **support for** (i.e. backing of) the legislation.
He garnered **support** (i.e. backing) *from* unexpected quarters.

His **support** (i.e. backing) *of* the candidate was unwavering.

SUPPORT (V)

The roof is **supported** (i.e. held up) *by* this bearing wall.
“This luxury was **supported** (i.e. sustained) *by* a thriving trade.” (Macauley, Universal Oxford English Dictionary)

I expect you to **support** (i.e. encourage) me *with* your applause.

SUPREME

His idea proved **supreme** *over* all others.

SURE

Everybody's crazy except the two of us, and I'm not so **sure** *about* you.

"I wanted to change the world. But I have found that the only thing one can be **sure** *of* changing is oneself."

(Aldous Huxley)

He is **sure** *to* make a fool of himself.

SURETY

Stand **surety** *for* someone.

(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

SURGE (VV)

They **surged** *around* the church, *through* the cemetery, *down* the village's main street, and *into* the stables.

"An endless supply of oxygen, amino acids, nitrogen, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sugars, lipids, cholesterol, and hormones **surge** *past* our (100 trillion) cells, carried on blood cell rafts or suspended in the (blood) fluid. Each cell has special withdrawal privileges to gather the resources needed to fuel a tiny engine for its complex chemical reaction."

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, In His Image)

SURPRISE (N)

That was no **surprise** *to* me.

SURPRISE (V)

She was **surprised** *at* him for bringing up the subject.

She **surprised** me *by* walking into the house at that exact moment.

"I was exceedingly **surprised** *with* the print of a naked foot on the shore."

(DeFoe, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SURRENDER (V)

"Boabdil El Chico **surrendered** the Kingdom of Granada *to* Ferdinand and Isabella on January 2, 1492, bringing to a close over 780 years of Islamic power in Spain."

(John McBride, Mankind)

Two of the enemy **surrendered** *to* our chaplain.

SURROUND (V)

"If the planet Neptune . . . be **surrounded** *by* an atmosphere." (Tyndall, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

"Gregory **surrounded** himself *with* hard-working monks." (Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

He is **surrounding** his property *with* a hedge.

He looked out to find himself **surrounded** *by* the border patrol.

She sat there **surrounded** *with* flowers.

SURVIVE

"For two decades now (1977) about fifty languages have died each year; half of those spoken in 1950 **survive** only *as* subjects for doctoral theses."

(Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

He **survived** *by* sheer strength of will.

Artifacts that **survive** *from* prehistoric times tell archeologists much about early humans.

Camels can **survive** *in* the desert *on* very little water.

"The true miracle of modern medicine is diabolical. It consists in making not only individuals but whole populations **survive** *on* inhumanly low levels of personal health." (Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Need)

SUSCEPTIBILITY

"Researchers have identified patterns of genes that raise a person's **susceptibility** *to* heart attacks, emphysema, insulin-dependent diabetes, multiple sclerosis and certain cancers."

(Kathleen McAuliffe, U.S. News & World Report)

SUSCEPTIBLE

She was **susceptible** *to* wild fantasies.

The weather was **susceptible** *of* sudden change.

SUSPECT (v)

I would **suspect** you *of* anything and everything.

SUSPEND

The boy was *suspended* (i.e. dismissed) *from* school for destructive behaviour.

The smoke from the tall factory chimney remained *suspended* (i.e. hanging) *in* the sultry air.

“An endless supply of oxygen, amino acids, nitrogen, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sugars, lipids, cholesterol, and hormones surge past our (100 trillion) cells, carried on blood cell rafts or *suspended in* the (blood) fluid. Each cell has special withdrawal privileges to gather the resources needed to fuel a tiny engine for its complex chemical reaction.”

(Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *In His Image*)

The crane operator **suspended** the car *over* the man's head.

Work on the highway must be **suspended** (i.e. delayed) *till* (or *until*) more funds are made available.

SUSPICIOUS

Americans have always been more **suspicious** *of* government.

SWAP (v)

“Every few years, the flu virus shows up in humans with a new protein coat. Meanwhile, it hangs out in pigs — where it can *swap* mild genes *for* deadly ones.”

(John Langone, *Discover* mag., Dec. '90)

I will **swap** my watch *for* your football helmet.

SWARM (vv)

“The crowd were **swarming** (i.e. thronging) now . . . *about* the garden rails.”

(Tennyson, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“The ideas **swarming** (i.e. teeming) *in* men's minds.”

(Jowett, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“Native doctors **swarm** (i.e. abound excessively) *in* Mongolia.” *Universal Oxford Dictionary*

The men of the neighbouring tribe **swarmed** (i.e. clambered) *up* the hill.

“Although continually bombarded by solar radiation, the sturdy fullerenes (60-atom geodesic spheres of

carbon) would survive and prosper, ultimately *swarming through* the cosmos.”

(Gary Taubes, *Discover* mag., Sept. '90)

The great square **swarmed** *with* students.

SWATHE (v)

She was **swathed** *in* silk.

The girls were **swathed round** *with* ribbons.

SWEAR

Swearing (i.e. cursing) *about* breaking a cup won't mend it.

Don't you dare **swear** (i.e. curse) *at* me.

I **swear** (i.e. take an oath) *by* all that's sacred.

Garlic? I **swear** *by* (i.e. have every confidence in) it.

Are you willing to **swear** (i.e. testify) *to* that on the Bible?

SWEEP (v)

The bride **swept** (i.e. glided) **down** the aisle like a ship in full sail.

A walk along the seashore will **sweep** (i.e. remove) the cobwebs **from** your brain.

“Change — **dazzling, dizzying, dumbfounding change** — is *sweeping* you *into* a world different from any in history.” (*High Technology* mag.)

The sailor was **swept off** the ship's deck in a storm.

The bay **sweeps to** the north for over a hundred miles.

It was necessary to **sweep** a passage *through* the minefield before the army could advance.

SWEET

I am **sweet on** (i.e. enamoured of) that girl.

His breath was **sweet** (i.e. redolent of) *with* the fragrance of wine.

SWIM (vv)

He **swam along** the side of the pool, *through* the underwater passage *into* the next pool, and then *under* the raft.

They were able to **swim to** shore.

Note: As for all VV (versatile verbs), they can be followed by a variety of prepositions; whichever best describes the action that follows.

SWINDLE (v)

“Lamotte . . . had . . . **swindled** a sum of three hundred livres *from* one of them.”

(Carlyle, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

He **swindled** the old lady *out of* her pension *by* playing on her credulity.

SWIRL (vv)

Autumn leaves **swirled** *against* the windows.

“Starlings **swirling** *from* the hedge.”

(M. Arnold, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“Continents of cloud were . . . **swirled** *from* peak *to* peak.”

(W.T. Watts-Dunton, Oxford English Dictionary)

“At absolute zero (-459.67 °F or 0 K) atoms still vibrate. Electrons still **swirl** *in* a cloud *around* the nucleus . . . But the atomic order is perfect . . . all atoms are in the same quantum state.” (William Booth, Washington Post)

The swollen river **swirled** *over* the dam and *under* the bridge.

SWITCH (v)

The fastest electronic transistors take only a few picoseconds (trillionths of a second) to **switch** *between* on and off states.

He **switched** *from* a smile *to* a scowl in the blink of an eye.

She **switched** *to* English without a pause.

SWOOP

“Sea-gulls were **swooping** *down* and *around* the tall masts.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

The eagle **swooped** *down from* his lofty crag.

The bluejay **swooped** *upon* the shelled peanut before it hit the ground.

SYMBOL

They’re making a mockery of that **symbol** *of* peace.

The **symbol** *for* that is a circle with a bar through it.

SYMBOLIC

That’s **symbolic** *of* death in battle.

SYMPATHIZE, SYMPATHISE

While I **sympathize** *with* him, I can’t condone his action.

I’m afraid he **sympathises** *with* her schemes.

SYMPATHY

They felt **sympathy** *for* any person whom the mayor had blacklisted.

“They enjoy the **sympathy** *of* kindred souls.”

(Universal Oxford Dictionary)

It is evident that his **sympathy** *with* the people’s rebellion got him into trouble.

SYMPOSIUM

“Almost every important conference on immunology or neuroscience now includes a **symposium** *on* the interactions between the brain and the immune system.” (Rob Wechsler, Discover mag.)

SYMPTOMATIC

“The breaking of that trust (in words) . . . is **symptomatic** *of* breach of trust with God.” (The Economist)

SYNCHRONIZE

Let me **synchronize** my watch *with* yours.

SYNONYM

A **synonym** *for* happy is joyful.

“Hobbism . . . became the popular **synonym** *for* irreligion and immorality.” (Green, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

SYNONYMOUS

“Silicon Valley (is) a name **synonymous** *with* computers.” (Discovery mag.)

T

TACK (v)

The captain was **tacking** *around* the end of the island.
He somehow **tacked** *by* our rowboat without hitting it.
The pilot **tacked** *through* the ships at anchor.

TAINT (v)

Our family reputation is now **tainted** (i.e. besmirched) *by* your misconduct.
A lot of farm soil is now **tainted with** (i.e. contaminated by) selenium.
She is now **tainting** (i.e. tincturing) her doll *with* raspberry juice.

TAKE (vv)

“With the Fall of New France, and the commencement of British rule, the Jesuits in Canada were forbidden to recruit any new members. They dwindled away. Their property was **taken over by** the Crown.”
(Edgar Andrew Collard, *Of Many Things*)
“Ambulances **take** clinics (i.e. extend the reach of the clinics) **beyond** the few miles a sick child can be carried.”
(Ivan Illich, *Towards a History of Needs*)
They **took** the town *by* storm (i.e. proved wildly popular).
The grandmother was much **taken by** (i.e. attracted to) the child’s personality.
She **took** me *for* (i.e. thought me) a fool.
You will be sorry you **took** me *for* granted (i.e. treated me too casually).
They **took** everything *from* (i.e. robbed) me.
He **took** her *in* (or *into*) his arms (i.e. embraced) ever so gently.
She was **taken in** (i.e. fooled) *by* his honest face.
She **took** him *into* her confidence (i.e. she confided in him).
They **took** his words *on* faith. (i.e. they believed him)
The children **took to** her (i.e. accepted her) at once.

I will **take** it *under* advisement (i.e. think about it).

She **took** it *upon* herself (i.e. presumed) to inform his wife of his infidelity.

That last swim sure **took** it *out of* (i.e. exhausted) me.

Your decision to **take up** (i.e. join forces) *with* this radical group was a mistake.

“You can’t **take** it *with* you. (i.e. you leave this world without possessions).”

(George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart)

TALK (v)

“(Dr. Larry Scherwitz) found that the more a man habitually **talked about** himself, the greater the chance he would actually have a coronary.”

(Dr. Deepak Chopra, *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*)

“It is, perhaps, the strongest mark of the divinity of man that he **talks of** this world as a ‘strange world,’ though he has seen no other.” (G.K. Chesterton)

“By making an array of hormones, the immune system can **talk to** practically every other system in the body.”
(Ed Blalock, *Discover* mag.)

You’re talking *through* your hat (i.e. talking nonsense).

Please talk **to** (or **with**) me; I’m lonesome.

TALLY (v)

That simply doesn’t **tally** (i.e. agree) *with* what you told me yesterday.

TAMPER

There are natural misgivings about **tampering with** a person’s genetic make-up.

TANTAMOUNT

This act of yours is **tantamount to** murder.

TARGET (V)

He was **targeted** (i.e. singled out) *as* the next victim.

“The ocean may be a holding tank for viruses **targeted at** every form of life on the planet, wet or dry — including human beings.” (David H. Freedman, Discover mag.)

“The airline industry was being **targeted** (i.e. singled out) *for* a recruiting drive.”

(S. Brill, Oxford English Dictionary)

TASTE (N)

“We have developed a **taste for** the mysterious.”

(Lyll Watson, Supernature)

“The poems leave a nasty **taste in** the mouth; the **taste of** a snarl and a sneer.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

Add just a **taste of** honey to that recipe.

TAUNT (V)

She **taunted** (i.e. provoked) him *with* racial slurs.

TAX (N)

They were declared non-exempt from **tax on** their private property.

“A **tax on** German linen encourages home manufactures.” (Hume, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

TAX (V)

She was **taxed** (i.e. burdened) *by* her heavy responsibilities.

I should **tax** you *with* (i.e. accuse you of) plagiarism.

TEACH

I prefer to **teach** my children *by* example.

Religion isn't for children. Instruction is for children.

“This is the great, great difference between the Jewish children and the other children. The Jewish people have instructed their children, while the Christians have always **taught** religion *to* their children.”

(Julius Horowitz, The W.A.S.P.)

TEAM (V)

They **teamed up** (i.e. joined forces) *for* action.

“**Teamed** (i.e. working) *with* a laser, a single fiber (of glass or plastic) can, in one second, transmit 200 books letter by letter.” (Allen A. Boraiko, National Geographic mag.)

TEASE (V)

All the children **teased** him *about* his shaved head.

“Every spare day that I could **tease** (i.e. comb) *from* the calendar has been spent afloat.”

(Jonathan Raban, New York Times)

She **teased** (i.e. tickled) her sleeping husband's ear *with* a feather.

TEEM

The small pond **teemed with** goldfish.

TEETER

“The peewees . . . **teeter along** its stony shores all summer.” (Thoreau)

He spent his life **teetering on** the brink of disaster.

TELL

When are you going to **tell** me *about* your trip to Spain?

He **told** me *of* his grief at his wife's death.

Jealous, she **told** (i.e. snitched) *on* her older sister at every opportunity.

Don't go around gossiping; **tell** it *to my face*.

TEMPER (V)

The climate of the east coast is **tempered by** the Gulf Stream.

She **tempered** her scolding of the child *with* a kiss.

TENACIOUS

He is very **tenacious of** his young wife's right to speak.

TEND

“In ancient China, the Tao Te Ching proclaimed the same truth: “Whatever is flexible and flowing will **tend to** grow, whatever is rigid and blocked will wither and die.” (Dr. Deepak Chopra, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind)

“People *tend to* mate with individuals who resemble themselves in every conceivable way.”

(Jared Diamond, *Discover* mag.)

Frankly, I am *tending towards* his version of the event.

TENDENCY

There is a *tendency of* a few of us *to* sloth.

TERRIFY

She is *terrified at* the prospect of her first flight.

The old man is now *terrified even by* a clap of thunder.

Truth is, I'm *terrified of* his Great Dane.

TERROR

She ran, *in terror of* her life (i.e. of being killed).

Their *terror* (i.e. abject fear) *of* the king was palpable.

He is a *terror* (i.e. embarrassing) *to* his friends when he's drunk.

TEST (V)

Though *tested by* endless misfortunes, he never succumbed to discouragement.

“Only 10 percent of the 35,000 pesticides introduced since 1945 have been *tested for* potential health effects.”
(Cathy Spencer, *Omni* mag.)

He was a grizzled veteran, *tested in* war *on* the battlefields of Europe.

She says she will not *test me in* grammar, but *on* my command of English.

Let me *test it with* a hammer blow.

TESTIFY

She will *testify* (i.e. give evidence) *against* her husband, if guaranteed protection.

I will gladly *testify to* the truth of his statement.

TESTIMONIAL

“He exposed the *testimonials to* patent medicines *from* senators and congressmen.”

(Bok, *Americanization of Edward Bok*)

TESTIMONY

In *testimony of* his lifetime of service to the company, they presented him with a new car.

My friends bore *testimony to* my good reputation.

TETHER (V)

They *tethered* him *with* a chain *to* the flagstaff.

THANKFUL

I will be *thankful to* you *for* the rest of my life.

She was extremely *thankful for* his support during that period of her life.

THICK

They were *thick* (i.e. close in association) *as* thieves.

The great hall was *thick* (i.e. crowded) *with* people.

THINK

I will give you plenty of time to *think about* your crime.

It's about time you *think for* yourself.

Did you *think of* me when you decided to do this?

“Every time a man puts a new idea across, he faces a dozen men who *thought of* it *before* he did. But they only thought of it.” (Oren Arnold, *Forbes* mag., 1970)

THIRST (N)

(Robert Louis Stevenson) had not only a *thirst for* happiness, but a faith in the possibility of happiness.
(G.K. Chesterton, *Generally Speaking*)

THIRST (V)

“Blessed are they who . . . *thirst after* righteousness.”
(Matthew)

They were *thirsting for* knowledge about the rest of the world.

THORN

The poor boy has a *thorn in* his foot.

THOUGHT (N)

How about a **thought for** those who died on this battlefield.

The very **thought of** appearing on stage terrifies me.

We never gave a **thought to** the people below our apartment.

THOUGHTFUL

It was very **thoughtful of** your brother to meet me at the airport.

THREAT

The **threat of** immediate punishment kept them at bay.

“The greatest **threat to** dolphins is the tuna net.”

(Justine Kaplan, Omni mag.)

THREATEN

The sheriff **threatened to** put me in jail.

He **threatened her with** all manner of mayhem.

THRILL (V)

They **thrilled at** the idea of visiting Ireland in the spring.

We were **thrilled by** the light and sound presentation.

I **thrill to** the song of the nightingale.

THRIVE

Inventiveness **thrives on** freedom.

THROUGH

Don't go; I'm not **through with** you yet.

THROW (VV)

“A computer model suggests that the AIDS virus kills us with sheer diversity, **throwing** more virals strains **at** our immune system than it can handle.”

(Rachel Nowak, Discover mag., 1992)

I am **throwing** my hat **into** the ring (i.e. offering myself as a candidate)

Why not **throw** that fish back **into** the lake?

Mommy, Jack **threw** my hat **over** the fence!

Throw all the small, rounded stones **under** the porch.

“He was **thrown** (i.e. brought down) **at** football and hurt his knee.”

(British Medical Journal, Oxford English Dictionary)

“The fuzzy shadows **thrown** (i.e. cast) **by** the nightlamp.”

(J. Gardner, Oxford English Dictionary)

She was **thrown** (i.e. catapulted) **from** her horse.

“A quiet stretch of water that, below zero, freezes in a few instants if a pebble is **thrown into** it.”

(Primo Levi, Discover mag.)

Caution was **thrown to** the winds.

“They are **thrown . . . upon** Rocks and Sands.”

(D. Pell, Oxford English Dictionary)

THUMB (V)

You're **thumbing** your nose **at** me again.

TIDE (V)

This purchase should **tide** me **over** the next few days till payday.

TIE (V)

“Coke's (i.e. cocaine's, crack's) **high** is directly **tied to** dopamine levels.”

(J. Madeleine Nash, Time mag., May 5, '97)

The poor man is **tied to** his wife's apron-strings.

She **tied** her hair back **with** a yellow ribbon.

The bad news **tied in** (i.e. was connected) somehow **with** the trouble the night before.

TILT

Don Quixote is famous for **tilting** (i.e. charging) **at** windmills.

“It is as though the British Isles are **tilted** (i.e. inclined) permanently **to** one corner — the southeast corner, bottom right, where London stands seething upon the Thames.” (Jan Morris, Journeys)

“He **tilts** (i.e. lunges) **with** piercing steel **at** bold Mercutio's breast.” (Shakespeare)

TIME

“The *time to* relax is when you don’t have *time for* it.”
(Sydney J. Harris)

“The old castle has stood here *time out of mind*” (i.e. longer than one can remember).
(Frederick T. Wood, English Prepositional Idioms)

TINKER (V)

He tinkered *with* the problem at every opportunity.

TIPPLE (V)

He was *tippling from* a mug.

TIRE (V)

She quickly *tires of* playing cards.

“Pessimism is not in being *tired of* evil, but in being *tired of* good.” (G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man)

They found they were *tired by* the massaging that was meant to relax them.

I am *tired from* too much partying and not enough sleep.
She is *tired of* his constant carping.

TOAST (N)

She is the *toast of* the season in Cannes.

Why don’t we propose a *toast to* him at our next luncheon meeting?

TOGETHER

“On communist instructions, the Duce (Mussolini) and his mistress were taken out . . . and shot. Their bodies, *together with* others, were strung up head downward on meathooks in a petrol station.”

(Winston Churchill, The Iron Curtain)

TOLERANCE

“Many patients develop a *tolerance for* . . . drugs and must switch medications.” (Andrew Purvis, Time mag.)

He showed a marked *tolerance in* his views.

“Optical discs, which combine the advantages of very large data-storage capacity, *tolerance of* rough handling, and very low error rates, are on the verge of catalyzing a new market for mass computer storage.”
(Steven Weissman, 1989)

TOLERANT

He is *tolerant in* his approach to the subject of treason.

“France . . . especially between the wars, was the most agreeable country in the world in which to live, and in many ways the most *tolerant of* foreigners; provided they did not cause trouble.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of the Modern World)

“Rome was *tolerant towards* the two great philosophical and religious cultures which confronted it: Hellenism and Judaism.”

(Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

TOLL (N)

“Britain’s 5 million cats wreak an annual *toll of* some 70 million animals and birds.” (Time mag.)

It would take weeks to assess the *toll of* this earthquake *on* the state.

TOUCH (V)

They *touched him for* (i.e. made him part with) more than he could afford.

He hardly *touched on* the subject.

She was *touched with* genius.

TOUT (V)

The athlete was *touted* (i.e. promoted) *as* the next Olympic star.

The hustler was *touting* (i.e. soliciting) *for* the circus event all over town.

He *touted* (i.e. canvassed) the whole neighbourhood *for* votes.

“*Touted on* his talent *by* several dubious sources I wrote what could only be termed a ‘puff piece’” about another young designer. (James Brady)

TOWER (v)

He towered *above* the crowd.

She towers *over* me.

TOY (v)

She toyed *with* me, like a cat with a mouse.

TRACE (v)

The criminals were traced (i.e. tracked down) *by* the detective *through* their associates.

“When DNA from cellular structures that are only passed on through the mother’s egg is examined, all racial groups can be *traced* (i.e. tracked) back *to* a common female ancestor only about 200,000 years ago.” (David Suzuki, *Down to Earth/Montreal Gazette*)

“To trace (i.e. draw) *with* his pencil a path to the centre of the maze.” (G. Greene, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

TRACK (v)

You’re tracking (i.e. leaving a trail of) dirt *over* my clean floor, and all *through* the house.

I tracked (i.e. followed the marks of) the lion back *to* its lair.

TRADE (v)

I will trade (i.e. exchange) my Mercedes *for* your membership in that club.

They trade *in* (i.e. barter with) alcohol and gun powder, oblivious of the resulting mayhem.

He traded *on* (i.e. took advantage of) my respect for his father.

He will trade (i.e. do business) *with* me, but *with* no one else.

TRAFFIC (N)

The traffic (i.e. trade) *in* land mines is growing, in spite of warnings by the U.N.

I refuse any traffic (i.e. dealings) *with* you.

TRAFFIC (v)

He trafficked *in* (i.e. bought and sold) anything and everything.

I will not traffic (i.e. do business) *with* that man!

TRAIN (v)

She was training *as* a nurse when I met her.

They are training *for* the next Olympic Games.

“The corpus callosum, the bundle of nerve fibers that connects the two halves of the brain, is larger in musicians who have *trained from* an early age.”

(*Discover* mag., Oct. ‘96)

We should all be trained *in* the martial arts.

TRAITOR

She is a traitress *to* her country.

“Unless I prove false traitor *to* myself.” (Shakespeare)

TRANSCRIBE

“The Agamemnon . . . transcribed (i.e. translated) *by* Robert Browning.” (*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“For any protein to be synthesized, the gene that specifies its composition must be *transcribed* (i.e. converted) *from* DNA *into* molecules of messenger RNA. Then the RNA must be translated into copies of the protein.”

(J. S. Cohen and M. E. Hogan, *Scientific American* mag.)

“A few plain, easy rules, chiefly transcribed (i.e. copied) *from* Dr. Cheyne.” (*Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

“His entire speech was transcribed *in* the newspapers, word for word.” (*World Book Dictionary*)

TRANSFORM

“A government that governed least was admirably suited to liberate the individualistic energies that *transformed* America *from* a wilderness *to* a material utopia, and *from* the child and ward *to* the rival and guardian of Western Europe.” (Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lesson of History*)

“Now . . . even an amateur can *transform* a modest machine (computer) *into* an Alexandria of facts, an Athens of wisdom.”

(Sana Siwolop, *Touching All The Bases*)

TRANSLATE

He spent his life translating books *from* French *into* English.

“The Bible has been *translated into* over 1,000 languages.” (Hirsch Goldberg, *The Jewish Connection*)
Her faith was such that her mother’s death simply meant that she had now been translated (i.e. elevated) *into* a better world.

“For any protein to be synthesized, the gene that specifies its composition must be transcribed from DNA into molecules of messenger RNA. Then the RNA must be *translated into* copies of the protein.”

(J. S. Cohen and M. E. Hogan, *Scientific American* mag.)

Someone is now translating my book *into* Greek.

He was translated (i.e. elevated) *to* a much higher position upon his return from active service overseas.

TRANSLATION

The prince paid for the translation *of* the Bible *into* Urdu.

TRANSLATOR

“These intermediary programs, which serve as *translators of* user programs, are known as ‘system software’.” (Tracy Kidder, *The Soul of a New Machine*)

TRANSMISSION

“Poisons, such as cocaine, bolulinus, and atropine, can jam the chemical *transmission across* synapses (in the brain).” (Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *In His Image*)

That first transmission *through* a glass fiber was startlingly clear.

They finally made the transmission *over* phone lines.

TRANSMIT

We will be transmitting this message *across* the U.S.A. by next spring.

“We have cracked the DNA core . . . We have learned how DNA *transmits* its instructions *to* the cell.”

(Reported by Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*)

“Fiber-optic technology makes it possible to *transmit* 10,000 simultaneous conversations *through* a single pair of glass ‘wires’.”

(Allen A. Boraiko, *National Geographic* mag.)

TRANSMUTE

They dreamt of transmuting lead *into* gold.

TRANSPLANT

“Within the next two months, medical researchers at the National Institutes of Health (U.S.A.) will perform the first authorized gene *transplants into* humans.”

(Dick Thompson, *Time* mag., 1995)

TRANSPORT (v)

“Before World War II, less than 4 percent of all food was *transported into* the region from abroad.”

(Ivan Illich, *Toward a History of Need*)

“Water, as an essential component of blood, *transports* oxygen as well as infection-fighting cells and antibodies *to* where they are needed in your body.”

(Jane E. Brody, *Family Circle* mag. & *Reader’s Digest*)

TRAP (v)

She found herself trapped (i.e. wedged) *between* the cliff and the incoming tide.

He was trapped (i.e. caught) *by* an off-duty policeman.

“Fortunately for man’s survival . . . germs are repelled by the tough barrier of the skin, overcome by the natural pesticides in sweat, saliva and tears, dissolved by stomach acids or *trapped in* the sticky mucous of the nose or throat before being expelled by a sneeze or cough.” (Leon Jaroff, *Time* mag.)

His jack collapsed and trapped (i.e. imprisoned) him *under* the car.

TRAVEL (vv)

“Unlike electrons, which . . . often interfere with one another as they *travel along* a medium like copper wire, photons can easily *travel in* parallel straight lines and even pass through one another undisturbed.”

(Stephen Koepp, *Reader’s Digest*)

He has been travelling *for* a beer company *for* years.

“To achieve the simultaneous contraction of these muscles (the powerful muscles in its cone-shaped mantle), electric signals must *travel from* the brain *down* the entire length of the squid’s body — as far as 12

inches —*in* less than a hundredth of a second, an astounding feat of neurotransmission.”

(Mark Kemp, Discover mag.)

I met my wife the last time I traveled *through* Spain.

She always travels *under* an assumed name.

Don't you remember? I vowed never to travel *with* you again.

TREACHEROUS

He proved treacherous *to* all the members of his sect.

TREASON

“*Treason against* the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort.”

(Article 111, Section 3, Constitution of the United States)

TREASURE (V)

“Spectators dipped pieces of cloth in the blood and treasured them *as* relics.” (Paul Johnson)

These books are treasured *by* artists and collectors *for* their beautiful graphics.

TREAT (V)

They were treated (i.e. dealt with) *as* pariahs.

I was treated *to* a superb dinner.

He deserves to be treated (i.e. regarded) *with* respect.

They treated the paper *with* (i.e. subjected the paper to) a variety of chemicals.

TREMBLE

I tremble *at* the thought of his coming to my home.

She trembles *for* my safety whenever I travel.

He trembled *with* anger when she walked into the room.

TREND

There is a trend *to* (or *towards*) multi-coloured hair just now.

TRESPASSER

I want all trespassers *on* my property to be prosecuted.

TRIBUTE

All the newspapers in town published tributes *to* the courage of the city's mayor.

TRICK (V)

“Pierre Givaudon bathed a wheat-rye seedling with . . . colchicine, which somehow *'tricked'* (i.e. deceived) its (combined) 21 chromosomes *into* doubling. The hybrid produced some fertile kernels (triticale). Man had broken a genetic barrier.” (Reader's Digest, Dec. 1975)

That child tricked (i.e. conned) me *into* giving her a second lollipop.

TRIFLE (V)

Please don't trifle *with* me.

TRIGGER (V)

“Lesch-Nyhan syndrome, one of 3000 known genetic disorders, is *triggered by* a defect in a single gene out of the 100,000 in the chromosomes.” (Time mag.)

I can't help it anymore; that bell triggers me *into* action.

TRIM (V)

She trimmed (i.e. decorated) the dress *with* lace.

I trimmed (i.e. pruned) the tree *with* a pair of long-handled shears.

TRIUMPH (N)

“For Hegel, history ended with Napoleon's *triumph over* the Prussian forces . . . in 1806.” (John Elson, Time mag.)

TRIUMPH (V)

The battle lasted well into the afternoon, but he finally triumphed *over* his enemies.

TRIUMPHANT

He proved triumphant *over* all the difficulties that beset him.

TROUBLE (N)

He was trouble *to* me from the time he was born.

I have a feeling you're in **trouble** *with* the law.

TROUBLE (V)

I did not want to **trouble** (i.e. worry) you *about* that.

May we **trouble** (i.e. inconvenience) you *for* another drink?

Why should she **trouble** you *with* (i.e. involve you in) her problems?

Aren't you **troubled** *about* his physical condition?

Why is it that I am only **troubled** *by* beggars when I am at peace with myself?

She is **troubled** *with* a pain in her chest.

TRUCK (N)

I will have no **truck** (i.e. have nothing to do) *with* the likes of you.

TRUE

"While electronic devices (in integrated circuits) speed up as they shrink, that's not true *of* the wires that connect them." (Jeff Hecht)

You have not been **true** (i.e. faithful) *to* me.

True (i.e. according) *to* habit, he took his tea with lemon.

TRUST (N)

I want you to put your **trust** *in* him; he's a good person.

TRUST (V)

He will lie; you can **trust** him *for* that.

"For great art, God is necessary. Artist and audience alike must either trust *in* the presence of the divine to give validity to the work, or, failing that, they must at least struggle to come to terms with His absence."

(The Economist, paraphrasing George Steiner)

You must **trust** me *to* pay you back in full.

They **trusted** their child *to* behave properly.

TRY (N)

May I have a **try** *at* cutting that cloth.

TRY (V)

They want you to **try** (i.e. apply) *for* that job.

She will be **tried** (i.e. prosecuted) *for* leaving her child unattended.

TUG (V)

The desperately sick child **tugged** *at* my heart.

He **tugged** *at* my sleeve, begging for money.

They **tugged** *with* all their might.

TUMBLE (V)

He hurt himself **tumbling** *down* those stairs.

They **tumbled** *out of* the house and *into* a waiting car.

She **tumbled** *over* me as I lay prone on the grass.

When did you **tumble** *to* (i.e. realize) what he was trying to do?

TUNE (V)

Please **tune in** *to* station CKOX.

TURN (N)

Now you take a **turn** *at* driving the car.

She has taken a **turn** *for* the worse.

Isn't this your **turn** *to* speak?

It's my **turn** *with* the computer.

TURN (V)

The whole world will **turn** *against* him.

"Acid pollution is devouring the treasures of Venice, turning stone *into* crumbling gypsum."

(David Ansley, Discover mag.)

"This distributors' margin — turning \$1 million of raw material (poppies and coca leaves) *into* \$5 billion of revenue — makes drug smuggling the world's most profitable business." (The Economist)

"Prefrontal lobotomy turned 50,000 Americans *into* human vegetables before this form of surgery was discredited." (Newsweek mag.)

"A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back *on* the crowd." (James Cook)

Are you going to **turn** *upon* (i.e. against) me now?

She **turned** *to* me in desperation.

She **turned** *to* a life of crime.

He seemed to **turn** *to* stone.

TYPE (v)

The play's protagonist was **typed** (i.e. categorized) *as* evil incarnate.

She **types** (i.e. typewrites) *at* a great rate of speed.

“Just as red blood cells can be **typed** (i.e. categorized) *according to* their trademark surface proteins *as* being A, B, AB, or O, white blood cells can be similarly typed.”

(Terence Monmaney, *Discover* mag.)

TYPICAL

The ‘epicanthic fold’ is a small fold of skin over the inner corner of the eye, **typical** *of* Mongoloid peoples, Chinese, etc.

TYRANNIZE

In spite of the terrible mauling of his army during the Gulf War, Hussein still **tyrannizes** *over* his people *in* Irak.

U

UNACCUSTOMED

Unaccustomed as I am *to* public speaking . .

UNAFFECTED

“Everything which is related to beauty should be *unaffected by* the passage of time. Beauty is eternity here below.” (Simone Weil, Waiting on God)

UNANIMOUS

“Both the Soviet Union and China are *unanimous in* their condemnation of artificial methods (of birth control).”

(Dr. John Billings, developer of the WHO Ovulation Method)

The police are virtually *unanimous on* the death penalty for premeditated murder.

UNAWARE

He was totally *unaware of* my presence.

UNCERTAIN

You can be *uncertain of* your audience, but never be *uncertain of* your facts.

UNCONCERNED

He was totally *unconcerned* (i.e. not worried) *about* my state of health.

They were totally *unconcerned at* (i.e. indifferent to) the panic they were generating.

They proved *unconcerned* (i.e. uninvolved) *in* the machinations to unseat the mayor.

You seem *unconcerned with* the competition.

UNCONNECTED

In spite of his claims, he was *unconnected to* the family. Are you pretending to be *unconnected with* this matter?

UNCONSCIOUS

She walked through the house *unconscious of* the mess the vandals had left.

“Insensible *to*, but *unconscious of*; indifferent *to* but oblivious *of*.” (Fowler, The King’s English) (italics, ours)

UNCOUPLE

“Malarmé (was the) first to *uncouple* words *from* any necessary relation to the world.”

(George Steiner, The Economist)

UNCOUTH

He was *uncouth in* dress and speech.

UNDAUNTED

Undaunted by the odds, he charged into the fray.

UNDESERVING

I’ve got to say I’m *undeserving of* your kind words.

UNEASY

Paul was very *uneasy about* his friend’s sudden appearance at the scene.

I was *uneasy at* the thought of crossing him.

UNEQUAL

He proved *unequal to* the demands on him.

UNFAITHFUL

You have been *unfaithful to* me since the day we married.

UNFAMILIAR

I’m sorry, but that flag is *unfamiliar to* me.

They were *unfamiliar with* computers.

UNFAVORABLE, UNFAVOURABLE

The rough sea is **unfavorable** *for* a boat race.
The final vote was **unfavorable** *to* me.

UNFIT

The weather is **unfit** *for* man or beast.
You are **unfit** *to* wear that uniform.

UNFRIENDLY

You have been **unfriendly** *to* me from the start.
Try to not to be so **unfriendly** *with* my family.

UNGRATEFUL

Why are you so **ungrateful** *to* your mother *for* everything she has done?

UNHAPPY

I am very **unhappy** *about* your conduct last night.
“All happy families resemble one another, but every unhappy family is **unhappy** *in* its own individual way.”
(Tolstoy)

UNIFORM (A)

That window should be **uniform** *with* the one on the other side of the door.

UNINTELLIGIBLE

Your message is completely **unintelligible** *to* me.

UNINTERESTED

Forgive me, but I am totally **uninterested** *in* your politics.

UNION

A **union** *between* the two mammoth corporations ended their fierce rivalry.
The **union** *of* those two nations bodes ill for Europe.
My country's **union** *with* yours would make me very happy.

UNIQUE

“All DNA is structurally **unique** *to* its owner — whether a human, a flower, or a bacterium.” (David Holzman)

UNITE

My family is **united** *to* yours by marriage.
“We were born to **unite** *with* our fellowmen, and to join in community with the human race.” (Cicero)

UNKNOWN

He was **unknown** *to* everyone but his immediate family.

UNLEASH

“Isaac Newton published his monumental *Principia* and **unleashed** *on* the world the science of mechanics.”
(Tony Rothman, *Discover* mag.)

UNLUCKY

My brother is **unlucky** *at* both cards and love.
That's **unlucky** *for* me!
I have been **unlucky** *in* everything I have tried.
She has always been **unlucky** *with* bulk purchases.

UNMOVED

“The mountain remains **unmoved** *at* seeming defeat by the mist.” (Rabindranath Tagore)

UNPERCEIVED

They sneaked past the gate, **unperceived** *by* the guards.

UNPOPULAR

She was very **unpopular**, particularly *amongst* the students in her class.
I was very **unpopular** *at* parties.
They were **unpopular** *because of* (or *on account of*) their prison records.
He was very **unpopular** *with* the unions.

UNPRACTISED, UNPRACTICED

He was too young, too **unpractised** *in* the arts of love.

UNPREPARED

I was totally **unprepared** *for* the raw beauty of Spain.

UNQUALIFIED

He couldn't have been more **unqualified** *for* the job.
I am **unqualified** *in* virtually all the arts of peace; that's why I stayed in the army.

UNRELATED

"Dyslexia is **unrelated** *to* intelligence. Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill and Woodrow Wilson are all believed to have been dyslexic."
(New York Times)

UNROLL

"The present is the past rolled up for action, and the past is the present **unrolled** *for* understanding."
(Will and Ariel Durant, The Lesson of History)

UNSAFE

That swimming pool is **unsafe** *for* small children.

UNSATISFACTORY

Your pledge of support is **unsatisfactory** *to* me.

UNSOUND

He was **unsound** *in* his arguments.
Are you trying to say I am **unsound** *of* mind?

UNSTEADY

I wish you were not so **unsteady** *of* purpose.
He was so **unsteady** *on* his feet, I thought he was drunk.

UNSUITABLE

You are **unsuitable** *for* duty in my regiment.
So what are you saying? That my dress is **unsuitable** *to* the occasion?

UNTIRING

Gilles was **untiring** *in* his pursuit of my daughter.

UNTRUE

That is **untrue** (i.e. false) *of* all the members of my family.
Why do you think I am being **untrue** (i.e. unfaithful) *to* you?

UNUSED

I am **unused** *to* that sort of treatment.

UNWILLING

They were **unwilling** *for* their families to be seen in public. (British)
I was **unwilling** *to* be punished for something I had not done.

UNWITTING

They walked into the mall, **unwitting** *of* the bomb scare.

UNWORTHY

What you did yesterday is truly **unworthy** *of* you.

UPBRAID

I was **upbraided** (i.e. reproached) *for* leaving the church halfway through the sermon.
She **upbraids** me (i.e. finds fault) *with* my customary lack of punctuality. (British)

UPSET (A)

She was very **upset** *about* their loss of the precious stamps.
I was **upset** *by* his demeanor.

USE (N)

I have no **use** *for* you or your silly prattle.
They should be able to find some **uses** *for* your invention.
May I have the **use** *of* your lawnmower for about half an hour?

USE (V)

"For the sole purpose of transporting people, 250 million Americans allocate more fuel than is **used** *by* 1.3 billion Chinese and Indians for all purposes."
(Ivan Illich, Towards a History of Needs)

U

USEFUL - USELESS

228

They were free to **use** the earth's riches *for* good or evil.

"There are now about 200,000 chemical compounds *used* commercially *in* North America."

(Globe & Mail, 1980)

"Hebrew was considered so important in early America that three major universities (Yale, Columbia and Dartmouth) *used* it *on* their seals."

(The Jewish Connection)

They were not **used** (i.e. accustomed) *to* such poverty.

I am not **used** *to* working with my hands.

USEFUL

"Mitochondrial DNA has a unique characteristic that makes it very *useful for* tracing lineages. It is carried in the egg, but not in the sperm, so it is passed on to children only from their mothers."

(David Noonan, Discover mag., Oct. '90)

That shovel should be very **useful** *to* me.

USELESS

It's a good knife, but **useless** *for* this task.

Sorry, but you're **useless** *to* me.

**VACATION (v)**

We always vacation *in* Florida.

I vacationed *in* Tadoussac *with* my friends *for* two weeks.

VAIN

She was exceedingly vain *of* her blond good looks.

VALUE (v)

He was valued *as* a guide throughout Africa.

“The world’s largest marketplace for securities is the New York Stock Exchange, which last year traded shares *valued at* 970 billion vs. \$392 billion for the runner-up Tokyo Exchange.” (Time mag., 1986)

The agricultural college was highly valued *for* its progressive approach.

VANISH

“Lead, a potent poison, has nearly *vanished from* the U.S. sky.” (Mark Roman, Discover mag.)

“If the cock be heard to crow, the charm will *vanish into* air.” (Hogg, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“The three imperial monarchies of east and central Europe (Hohenzollerns, Habsburgs and Romanovs) all *vanished within* a year (1918).” (Paul Johnson, A history of the Modern World)

VARIANCE

I am at variance *with* him *on* virtually every subject.

VARY

Their conduct clearly *varied from* the norm.

The new shipment of socks *varied in* colour, size, length and, of course, price.

VENGEANCE

He exacted his vengeance *on* everyone who passed by.

VENT

She vented her displeasure *on* her sisters.

VERSED

He is well versed *in* everything that’s impractical.

VEST (v)

“Not all governments *vest* the power *in* the people.” (Michael Gartner)

“A Christian Church *vested with* the plenitude of Christ’s teaching.” (Paul Johnson, A History of Christianity)

VETO (N)

You can expect me to place a veto *on* that crazy motion of yours.

VEXED

He is either vexed *about* something or *at* someone.

I can tell that you’re vexed *with* me.

VIE

The whole family vies *with* me *for* the last piece of chocolate.

VIGILANT

“It was Dwight D. Eisenhower, a general and a Republican, who gave us the term military-industrial complex and told us to be *vigilant about* this unlicensed and uncontrolled power in our society.”

(John K. Galbraith, Guide to economics)

VISIBLE

The lake is visible *to* us *from* the top of the hill.

“When we look at the faintest galaxies *visible with* current telescopes, we see them as they were about

V

12 billion years ago, when the universe was already a few billions of years old.” (Mitchell Waldrop, Discover mag.)

VISIT (v)

She was **visited** *by* more friends than she knew she had.
Why is every misfortune **visited** *upon* me?
He is **visited** *by* every variety of flu that comes along.

VITAL

“Colonies were never **vital** *to* France’s survival, as they were to England’s.” (Sanche de Gramont, The French)

VOGUE

There was a short-lived **vogue** *for* tattoos.
The **vogue** *of* torn jeans persists to this day.

VOID

His whole speech was **void** *of* meaning.

VOLUNTEER (v)

He **volunteers** *for* work every morning.
They **volunteered** *to* paint the barn for him.

VOTE (v)

You can **vote** *for* or *against* me, I don’t really care.
They **voted** *on* the issue just before the House adjourned.
I **voted** *to* have him removed from office.

VOUCH

I need someone to **vouch** *for* me.

VOUCHSAFED

“We came together with a closeness seldom **vouchsafed** *to* friends.”
(Gen. Jan Christian Smuts, speaking about Churchill)

VULNERABLE

Streams and rivers that course through forests of conifers are more **vulnerable** *to* acidification.
“Cancer cells are particularly **vulnerable** *to* health . . .
Healthy tissue protects itself.”
(Mark Roman, Discover mag.)

**WAIT (V)**

Wait *for* me, please!

“The universe is full of magical things, patiently *waiting for* our wits to grow sharper.” (Eden Phillpotts)

“Electronics (computers) takes over much of the intellectual slog, and releases the mind for higher flights. There is much freedom *waiting in* those machines.” (Lance Morrow, Time mag. essay)

“Even land viruses hang out in the sea, patiently *waiting in* limbo for a shot at their targets.” (David H. Freedman, Discover mag.)

She waits *on* him hand and foot.

He waited *up for* her *till* long after midnight.

WAKE (V)

“They cannot . . . be *waking* (i.e. be still up and about) *at* this late hour.”

(Charles Dickens, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

I like to *wake to* the songs of the birds.

She finally *woke up to* the fact that her husband is unfaithful.

She *woke with* a start.

“You promised to *wake* (i.e. stay up) *with* me the night before my wedding.”

(C. Bronte, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

WALK (VV)

They *walked around* the corner, *down* the street and *up* the alley next to the church.

She *walked beyond* the edge of town.

“From 1914 to 1918 (during World War II), it was possible to *walk* 750 kilometres. *from* Nieuport in Belgium all the way *to* the French border with Switzerland, entirely by trench.”

(Stephen Smith, The Gazette, Montreal, Nov.9, '96)

He *walked through* the door uninvited.

I like to *walk under* the trees *with* my wife *in* the evening.

WALLOW

She seemed to like to *wallow in* despair.

WANDER (V)

“There was no evidence . . . but strange whispers *wandered about* the camp.”

(Macaulay, The Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“They said he was *wandering in* his head yesterday.” (Dickens)

They *wandered into* our courtyard by mistake.

My eyes *wandered over* the lovely countryside.

“In some the gout *wanders through* the whole body.” (The Universal Oxford Dictionary)

WANT (V)

I'm afraid that child is *wanting in* (i.e. short of) intelligence.

The museum never *wants for* money (i.e. is never short of funds).

“He is . . . *wanted* (i.e. under warrant for arrest) internationally *for* theft.”

(S. Pritchett, Oxford English Dictionary)

WAR (N)

“The *war against* Iraq was over in weeks.” (The Economist)

It boiled down to a *war of* words.

“27,000 official forms have been scrapped in a Whitehall *war on* red tape.”

(Daily Mail, Oxford English Dictionary)

WAR (V)

In such a big tribe, they *warred among* themselves.

They have *warred on* their neighbours *throughout* history.

“To live is to *war with* trolls in heart and soul.”

(Bjornson to Ibsen)

WARM (A)

She came into my arms still **warm** *from* the sun.

WARM (V)

She was **warmed** *by* his smile, even before she walked into his room.

The young mother is **warming** her child *by* the fire.

He might have **warmed** *to* (i.e. felt more kindly towards) her paintings, if he hadn't disliked her so.

WARN

They were **warned** *against* leaving their trash around.

I will **warn** him *of* her coming.

The child was **warned** *by* his mother not *to* climb the cliff.

WARNING (N)

It stands as a **warning** *against* all wife beaters.

The prophet Jeremiah gave advance **warning** *of* dire things to come.

WARRANT (N)

I'm afraid there's a **warrant** out *for* him.

The constable has a **warrant** *for* his arrest.

WARY (V)

I am not only **wary** *of* her dog, I am also **wary** *of* her.

WASH (V)

She liked to **wash** her clothes *in* the lake.

Say that again, and I'll **wash** out your mouth *with* soap.

You had better **wash** up *for* the pastor's visit.

He **washed** every wood panel *with* care.

WASTE (V)

"In 1936 in the U.S., free competition had given way to oligopoly and monopolistic competition and, because of the latter, too many resources were being **wasted** *on* advertising and salesmanship."

(John K. Galbraith, *A Life In Our Times*)

WATCH (V)

"We could **watch** teachers *at* work, and profit from doing so." (E. Blishen, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

She **watched** (i.e. stood guard) *at* the window *for* him all day.

Watch (i.e. be on the lookout) *for* me at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

Watch out *for* (i.e. guard against) the vagrants when you walk down that street.

She was **watching** me *through* the back window.

Drunk out of his mind, the old actor **watched** *from* the wings, as his young stand-in performed brilliantly.

WAVER

"He never **wavered** *in* his conviction that God looked down on Eric Gill and saw that he was good."

(Fiona MacCarthy, *The Economist*)

WEAN

The farmer **weaned** the tiny colt *from* the mare.

I am **weaning** these kittens *from* the mother right now.

WEAR (V)

The youth liked to **wear** (i.e. sport) his hair *in* a pony tail.

The habitués of the pub liked to **wear** away (i.e. spend) the night *in* song.

"Autumn **wore** (i.e. lasted) *into* winter."

(D. Madden, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

"The New England winter had begun to **wear** (i.e. weigh heavily) *on* her." (M. Piercy, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

She was **worn** out (i.e. debilitated) *by* drink and drugs.

They were **worn** out *from* (i.e. exhausted by) the long trip.

"She would **wear** a gown *to* rags, because he had once liked it." (Thackeray, *Universal Oxford Dictionary*)

"Steyne **wore** (i.e. bore) the scar *to* his dying day." (Thackeray, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

He was **worn** out *with* (i.e. drained by) worry.

WEARY

I am **weary** *of* your incessant complaints.

WEAVE (V)

“He *wove* (i.e. wended) his way *through* the endless swindles and machinations of the railway rings.” (Alastair Sweeny, George-Etienne Cartier)

“Untruth is so maliciously *weaved* (i.e. intertwined) *with* untruth.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

WEDGE (V)

I will *wedge* our car *between* the hedge and the house, and leave the driveway free.

They found him *wedged* *between* the roots of a giant tree.

He was *wedged* *in* the space *between* the fireplace and the sideboard.

WEEP

She *weeps* *at* the strains of violins.

The old man *wept* *about* anything and everything.

I *weep* *for* her every night.

He *wept* *like* a child.

She *wept* *over* the grave till darkness fell.

WEIGH

“The hummingbird . . . a wisp of a bird *weighing* *about* 1/15 of an ounce.”

(Gladys Francis Lewis, The Reader's Digest)

“Anticipating the discovery of pulsars, Thomas Gold had written about the possible existence of stars so dense that one cubic centimeter of their mass would *weigh* *over* a billion tons.” (David Osborne, National Geographic mag.)

She *weighed* *under* 90 pounds soaking wet.

That pumpkin could *weigh* *up to* 100 lbs.

“The girl's testimony *weighed* heavily *with* (i.e. proved important to) the jury.”

(The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary)

He *weighed* *in* at 240 lbs.

WELCOME (A)

You are *welcome* *at* my home anytime!

If you want this photo of mother, you are *welcome* *to* it.

WELCOME (V)

You *welcomed* me *into* your family, and I'll always be grateful.

Welcome *to* my home, dear friend.

They *welcomed* me *with* open arms.

WEND

Wend your way (i.e. travel) north *by* familiar trails.

“*Wend* *on* your way (i.e. depart), in the name of God and St. Dunstan.” (Sir W. Scott, Oxford English Dictionary)

Many cases are now *wending* their way *through* the courts.

The river *wended* its way (i.e. flowed) *towards* the ocean.

WET (A)

I was *wet* *from* head *to* toe.

The boys were *wet* *with* sweat *from* all their exertions.

WET (V)

“The red hot clinker . . . was *wetted* *down* *by* the trimmer.” (Ships Monthly, Oxford English Dictionary)

“House-broken dogs *wet* *on* the parlor rug.” (John Steinbeck, Oxford English Dictionary)

“They kissed his feet, and *wetted* them *with* tears.”

(John Bunyan, Oxford English Dictionary)

She was *wetting* the counter top *with* a sponge.

WHET

“Poor Mikhail Gorbachev: the minute his back is turned, one of his supposedly loyal lieutenants *whets* a knife *for* it.” (The Economist mag.)

WHIRL (V)

He *whirled* her *around* the room.

WHISTLE (V)

Why did I slap his face? Because he *whistled* *at* me.

She is *whistling* *in* the dark (i.e. trying to bolster her courage).

As far as I'm concerned, he can *whistle* *for* (i.e. go without) his supper.

His refusal to acknowledge the crisis was like **whistling past** the graveyard.

WHIZ (VV)

He ducked as the stone came **whizzing by** his ears.

She is constantly **whizzing** (i.e. bustling) **off to** meetings.

A bullet **whizzed past** his head.

“The exploded cork **whizzed through** the air.”

(Disraeli, Oxford English Dictionary)

The children enjoyed watching the fireworks **whizz up into** the night sky.

WIDE

He fired three times, but always **wide of the mark**.

WILD

To tell the truth, I'm **wild about** you.

He was **wild with** enthusiasm **about** her scheme.

WILL (N)

“Oppression and extermination can repress the **will to** freedom for decades, sometimes generations, but inevitably it reappears.”

(Charles Krauthammer, Time mag.)

I have the **will to** do it, but not the strength.

WIND

“He . . . **winds** (i.e. wends) . . . his oblique way **amongst** innumerable stars.” (Milton, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“A new age in the treatment of diseases may be upon us . . . Artificial strings of nucleic acids can pair with RNA, or **wind** (i.e. coil) **around** the double helix of DNA, and in effect silence the genes responsible for many illnesses.” (J.S. Cohen and M.E. Hogan, Scientific American mag.)

“There were queues **winding out from** the platform barriers.” (O. Manning, Oxford English Dictionary)

The opportunist is able to **wind** (i.e. insinuate) himself **into** a position of influence.

“Thread comes **wound on** (i.e. coiled around) spools.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

“The lowing herd **winds** (i.e. meanders) slowly **o'er** the lee.” (Oxford English Dictionary)

“Today's American Jew is about 2 1/2 times as likely to **wind up** (i.e. end up) **in** Who's Who as the population at large.” (Charles E. Silberman, A Certain People)

Wind (i.e. wrap) this scarf **round** your neck; it's very cold outside.

A path **winds** (i.e. turns and twists) **through** the park.

The parade **wound** (i.e. wended) its way **to** the stadium.

The Egyptian mummy was **wound** (i.e. wrapped) **with** bandages.

WINDED

He was badly **winded** (i.e. had his breath knocked out of him) **by** a blow to the stomach.

Winded (i.e. made breathless) **by** his exertions, the athlete collapsed.

WINK (V)

Why do you have to **wink at** me every time you look at me?

They **winked at** (i.e. shut their eyes to) the illegality of it.

“Davis **winked to** (i.e. signaled) his friends that it was all right.” (Universal Oxford Dictionary)

WINKLE

“Japan spends four times more each year buying American technology than America manages to **winkle out of** (i.e. delicately pry out, bit by bit from) Japan.” (The Economist)

WIPE

He always **wipes** his boots **on** the mat before entering.

She is **wiping** the tears **from** her baby's face.

The waitress **wiped** the table **with** a soiled cloth.

He is **wiping** his boots **on** (i.e. humiliating) the poor girl.

That brute is **wiping** the floor **with** (i.e. inflicting a crushing defeat on) his opponent.

WISH (V)

“Freedom is a powerful animal that fights barriers, and sometimes makes people **wish for** higher fences.”

(Lance Morrow, Time mag.)

I wouldn't wish that *on* my worst enemy.
Wish *on* a lucky star.

WIT

Careful now! You must have your wits *about* you at all times.

"Uncle Bill . . . is evidently the wit *of* the party."
(Charles Dickens)

WITHDRAW

I have to *withdraw* (i.e. remove myself) *from* the team for the rest of the summer.

She *withdrew* (i.e. retired) *to* the library.

WITHHOLD

She *withheld* the news *from* him until the day he left.

WITNESS (N)

Please don't bear *witness against* me.

I was a *witness of* the court.

They need two *witnesses of* the event

Through TV, millions were *witnesses to* his heroism.

WONDER (V)

I sometimes *wonder about* you.

They *wondered at* her patience under the circumstances.

WORK (V)

"There is a universal tendency for things to be arranged in the least intricate, most probable way. The characteristic of life is that it *works against* this tendency, creating complexity where there was none."

(James Lovelock, *The Economist* mag.)

They have been *working at* that hospital since it was built.

She first *worked for* him *as* his secretary.

"Natural selection has no consciousness and cannot *work for* future benefits."

(Stephen Jay Gould, *Discover* mag., Oct. '96)

"As late as the 1950s, out of 170 million Africans south of the Sahara, only 8 million *worked for* wages at any one time in the year."

(Paul Johnson, *A History of the Modern World*)

"As every Kipling reader knows, many Indian elephants *work for* their living. African elephants cannot be trained." (*The Economist* mag.)

The headboard of the king's bed "is a marvel of beasts and nymphs and satyrs, leaves, flowers and fruits *worked* (i.e. carved) *into* the wood." (George Garrett, *Death of a Fox*)

Cadherins (calcium-dependent adhesion molecules) keep, for example, a human embryo from falling apart by gluing similar cells together. But, it turns out, they don't *work like* glue at all. They *work like* a zipper."

(Josie Glausiusz, *Discovery* mag.)

"Children of four *worked in* the mines (of Britain) and mill women gave their infants opium to keep them quiet." (John W. Dodds, *The Age of Paradox*)

"Home is where the harbour is for the 6000 or so barge families who live, *work*, and play *on* the Seine and its system of canals."

(Charles McCarry, *National Geographic* mag.)

"A study in California found that pregnant women, who *worked on* video-display terminals for 20 hours or more a week, had twice the risk of miscarrying as other clerical workers." (Anastasia Toutefix, *Time* mag.)

"The Spirit took over and *worked through* many people."

(Paul Johnson, *The History of Christianity*)

She *worked under* the illusion that what she was doing mattered.

I *worked under* him (i.e. he was my superior) about 20 years.

"We know in our hearts that we are in the world for keeps, yet we are still tackling 20-year problems with 5-year plans staffed by 2-year personnel *working with* 1-year appropriations."

(H. Cleveland, Minnesota's Institute of Public Affairs)

"Italian artisans *working with* the famous Murano glass in the 16th century were forbidden under pain of death to leave their Venetian island, so precious and guarded were the secrets of glass-making."

(Dorota Kozinska, *The Gazette*, Montreal)

WORM (V)

He is *worming* himself *into* the old man's confidence.

She *wormed it out of* him, kiss by kiss.

WORRY (N)

It's the **worry** *of* it all, my dear.

He's been a **worry** *to* her all his life.

WORRY (V)

“One reason for **worrying** *about* deforestation is that it adds to the carbon in the earth's atmosphere. Growing trees lock up carbon; burning or rotting trees release it.”
(The Economist)

“I am **worried** *for* your dignity.”

(John Le Carré, The Night Manager)

She **worries** *over* him till he's ready to scream.

WORTHY

She's **worthy** *of* every compliment.

WRANGLE

They **wrangle** *about* money on every payday.

If they're not **wrangling** *over* the menu, they're **wrangling** *about* the seating.

WRAP (V)

“Again she **wrapped** her arms *about* me.”

(Richardson, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

He found the flag **wrapped** *around* a tree.

I will **wrap** it *in* foil.

“The house is **wrapped** *in* slumbers.” (Charles Dickens)

“**Wrapt** (i.e. absorbed) *in* a pleasing fit of melancholy.”

(Milton, Universal Oxford Dictionary)

She was completely **wrapped up** (i.e. engrossed) *in* her work.

WRATH

Her **wrath** *about* that failure was boundless.

They let their **wrath** *at* the failings of a few affect their attitude to the whole Church.

He vented his **wrath** *on* everyone around him.

WREAK

Terrorists **wreak** havoc *on* the whole community.

WREST

“Now some scientists are making diamonds that may be even better than those **wrested** *from* the bowels of the earth.” (The Economist)

WRESTLE

She **wrestled** *against* the thought all night long.

I'd **wrestle** *with* the devil *for* a living wage.

WRINKLE (V)

Her skin was deeply **wrinkled** *by* years of chain-smoking.

She **wrinkled** her eyes *against* the sun.

“The finest skin **wrinkles** *in* a few years.”

(Addison, The Universal Oxford Dictionary)

WRITE

“Anticipating the discovery of pulsars, Thomas Gold had **written** *about* the possible existence of stars so dense that one cubic centimeter of their mass would weigh over a billion tons.” (David Osborne, National Geographic mag.)

“History is **written** *by* the victor.” (The Economist)

“When the poet Swinburne **wrote** *of* ‘a small sweet world of wave-encompassed wonders,’ he was referring to the Channel Island of Sark — the smallest independent British state in the Commonwealth.”

(John Gattrell, This England mag.)

“An estimated 70% of the world's mail is **written** *in* English as is 80 percent of electronic information.”
(Reuter/The Economist)

“The Oath of Strasbourg is the oldest known text **written** *in* French.” (Arthur Kaptainis, The Gazette, Montreal)

“How did the ageing process become **written** *into* living cells? Nobody knows.”

(Hugh Montefiore, The Probability of God)

“Colonial history has been **written** *with* a white hand.”
(Leonardo Boff, Brazilian theologian)

WROTH

She couldn't be more **wroth** *about* her loss of privilege.

They were **wroth** even *at* the house he lived in.

I am **wroth** *with* you for telling her.

**YEARN (v)**

I have been *yearning after* her since I was six years old.
 “Some corner of the psyche . . . *yearns for* high kings and heroes on flying horses.”
 (James Walsh, *Time* mag., Dec. 5, ‘94)

YEARNING (N)

Expatriated since childhood, she has a strong *yearning for* things English.
 Nostalgia is a *yearning for* the past.

YEN

She had a *yen* (i.e. longing) *for* travel.

YIELD

She *yielded* willingly *to* his greater strength.

ZEAL

Their *zeal for* the New Order led to terrible excesses.
 She showed great *zeal in* the pursuit of her career.

ZEALOUS

I wish you were as *zealous for* my cause.
 You would not be so *zealous in* support of my interests.

ZERO (v)

He *zeroed in on* the target and released the bomb.

ZEST

Her new *zest for* life surprised everyone.

ZIGZAG (v)

She *zigzagged* her way *through* the traffic.

ZIP

“In the time it takes to read this sentence, millions upon millions of neutrinos, pouring in from outer space, will *zip through* the body of every human being on earth.”
 (Michael D. Lemonick, *Time* mag., April 8, 1996)

ZONE (v)

They *zoned* (i.e. designated) the neighbourhood *as* commercial.
 “‘Little Bit’, a dolphin, *zoned in on* him (a quadraplegic boy) and nuzzled him gently.”
 (Justine Kaplan, *Omn*i mag.)

ZOOM

I want to *zoom in* (i.e. focus) *on* that ship out there.
 The tiny, remote-controlled plane *zoomed* (i.e. flew) *through* my open window and *into* my room.
 The missile *zoomed out of* the sky.

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SUZANNE HARTUSCH, TEACHER, CANADA

About the authors . . .

In my work with students from many parts of the world at the Centre for the Development of Writing at the Faculty of Education, McGill University, I had difficulty explaining why one preposition was used and not another -- the reason being that there is rarely a 'why'.

So, when Charles introduced me to his preposition project, I recognized that a resource of this kind would be the answer to every writer's prayer.

Elizabeth Champion Speyer,
M.A. Education, McGill;
M.A. History, Concordia

My mother tongue is English, but all my formal education was in French. With the result that, when I began my writing career in English, I faced most of the problems that plague those for whom English is the second language. Should I write different from? than? or to? Should I say exempt from? empathize with? cater to?

Such questions dogged me throughout my 47 years in advertising. And I searched in vain for help. I wish someone had compiled a guide to prepositions like this one -- in time for me to use.

Charles N. Prieur,
President of GoodEnglish.com