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hurdling *NOUN*
the athletic sport of racing over hurdles
▷ **hurdler** *NOUN*

hurl *VERB* **hurls, hurling, hurled**
to throw something with great force

> Christopher peeled the rumpled sleeve from his arm, and hurled the coat down on the floor. — *Anne Fine, Madame Doubtfire*

hurly-burly *NOUN*
a rough bustle of activity

hurray or **hurrah** *EXCLAMATION*
a shout of joy or approval; a cheer

hurricane *NOUN* **hurricanes**
a storm with a violent wind

hurry *VERB* **hurries, hurrying, hurried**
1 to move or do something quickly
2 to make someone be quick
▷ **hurried** *ADJECTIVE*
▷ **hurriedly** *ADVERB*

hurry *NOUN*
the act of hurrying; a need to hurry

hurt *VERB* **hurts, hurting, hurt**
1 to cause pain or injury to someone
2 to feel painful ◆ *My leg is hurting.*
3 to upset or offend someone ◆ *I didn't mean to hurt your feelings.*

hurt *NOUN*
physical or mental pain or injury

hurtful *ADJECTIVE*
a hurtful remark or action is one that upsets or offends someone
▷ **hurtfully** *ADVERB*

hurtle *VERB* **hurtles, hurtling, hurtled**
to move rapidly in a wild, barely controlled way

> Mother came hurtling down the steps, her expression dour and fierce as always. — *Malorie Blackman, Noughts and Crosses*

husband *NOUN* **husbands**
the man a woman is married to

husbandry *NOUN*
1 the cultivation of crops and breeding of farm animals
2 the careful management of resources

hush *VERB* **hushes, hushing, hushed**
to become silent or quiet, or to make someone do this
to hush something up is to prevent it from becoming generally known

hush *NOUN*
a silence and lack of activity

hush-hush *ADJECTIVE*
(*informal*) highly secret or confidential

husk *NOUN* **husks**
the dry outer covering of some seeds and fruits

husky❶ *ADJECTIVE* **huskier, huskiest**
a husky voice is low-pitched and slightly hoarse
▷ **huskily** *ADVERB*
▷ **huskiness** *NOUN*

husky❷ *NOUN* **huskies**
a large powerful dog with a thick coat, used in the Arctic for pulling sledges

hustings *PLURAL NOUN*
a meeting for political speeches and campaigning just before an election

hustle *VERB* **hustles, hustling, hustled**
1 to hurry
2 to push or jostle someone roughly

hut *NOUN* **huts**
a small roughly made house or shelter

hutch *NOUN* **hutches**
a box or cage for keeping rabbits or other animals as pets

hyacinth *NOUN* **hyacinths**
a plant that grows from a bulb and produces bell-shaped fragrant flowers
WORD HISTORY from *Hyacinthus*, a youth in Greek legend who was accidentally killed by Apollo: the flower sprang from his blood

hybrid *NOUN* **hybrids**
1 a plant or animal produced by combining two different species or varieties
2 something made by combining parts or characteristics of two different things

hydra *NOUN* **hydras** or **hydrae**
a microscopic freshwater animal with a tubular body and a ring of tentacles round the mouth
WORD HISTORY named after the *Hydra* in Greek mythology, a water snake with many heads that grew again if they were cut off (because if a hydra is cut up, each section can grow into a whole animal)

hydrangea (*say* hy- **drayn**- ja) *NOUN* **hydrangeas**
a shrub with pink, blue, or white flowers growing in large clusters

hydrant *NOUN* **hydrants**
a water pipe with a nozzle that a fire hose can be attached to

hydraulic *ADJECTIVE*
worked by the force of water or other fluid under pressure

hydrochloric acid *NOUN*
(*Science*) a strong colourless acid containing hydrogen and chlorine

hydroelectric *ADJECTIVE*
using water power to produce electricity
▷ **hydroelectricity** *NOUN*

hydrofoil *NOUN* **hydrofoils**
a boat fitted with special vanes that lift it clear of the water, enabling it to travel at speed over the surface

hydrogen *NOUN*
a lightweight highly flammable gas that combines with oxygen to form water

hydrogen bomb *NOUN* **hydrogen bombs**
a very powerful bomb using energy created by the fusion of hydrogen isotopes (deuterium and tritium)

hydrolysis *NOUN*
(*Science*) the chemical reaction of a substance with water, usually resulting in decomposition

hydrometer *NOUN* **hydrometers**
an instrument for measuring the density of liquids

hydrophobia *NOUN*
extreme fear of water, as a symptom of rabies

hyena *NOUN* **hyenas**
a wild doglike animal that hunts in packs and makes a shrieking howl

hygiene (*say* hy- jeen) *NOUN*
the practice of keeping things clean in order to remain healthy and prevent disease
▷ **hygienic** *ADJECTIVE*
▷ **hygienically** *ADVERB*

hymn *NOUN* **hymns**
(*Religion*) a religious song, usually a Christian song praising God
▷ **hymn book** *NOUN*

hype *NOUN*
(*informal*) extravagant publicity or advertising

hyperactive *ADJECTIVE*
a hyperactive person is unable to relax and is always moving about or doing things

hyperbola (*say* hy- **per**- bol- a) *NOUN* **hyperbolas**
(*Mathematics*) the curve formed when a cone is cut by a plane that makes a larger angle with the base than the side of the cone does

hyperbole (*say* hy- **per**- bol- ee) *NOUN* **hyperboles**
a deliberate exaggeration that is not meant to be taken literally, e.g. 'I've got a stack of work a mile high'

hypermarket *NOUN* **hypermarkets**
a very large supermarket, usually outside a town

hypertext *NOUN*
(*ICT*) a system allowing many links between related sections of text

hyphen *NOUN* **hyphens**
(*Language*) a short dash used to join words or parts of words together

hyphens

Hyphens connect two or more words which make up a compound noun or adjective. Sometimes, the hyphen is part of a fixed compound, like *close-up*, *free-range*, or *orang-utan*; but hyphens can join any pair or group of words to form a new compound: an *ultra-squidgy sandwich*; *that morning-after-the-night-before feeling*.

Hyphens are often useful to avoid ambiguity. Note, for example, the difference between *a cross-section of the audience* (= a typical sample) and *a cross section of the audience* (= an annoyed group). You do not need a hyphen for compound adjectives which follow a noun (*an out-of-date hairstyle* but *a hairstyle which looks out of date*), or for compounds which begin with an -ly adverb (*a well-written autobiography* but *a badly scripted film*).

Hyphens are also used in compound numbers and fractions, such as *thirty-two* and *four-fifths*, and in some place names, such as *Henley-on-Thames* and *Aix-en-Provence*.

See also the panel on **compounds**.

hyphenate *VERB* **hyphenates, hyphenating, hyphenated**
(*Language*) to write a word or group of words with a hyphen
▷ **hyphenation** *NOUN*

hypnosis (*say* hip- **noh**- sis) *NOUN*
a specially induced state like a deep sleep, in which a person can be made to follow the commands of someone else

hypnotize *VERB* **hypnotizes, hypnotizing, hypnotized**
to put someone in a state of hypnosis, so that their thoughts and actions may be influenced
▷ **hypnotism** *NOUN*
▷ **hypnotic** *ADJECTIVE*
▷ **hypnotist** *NOUN*
USAGE NOTE This word can also be spelled hypnotise.

hypochondriac (*say* hy- po- **kon**- dree- ak) *NOUN* **hypochondriacs**
a person who is abnormally anxious about their health and believes they are ill even though there is nothing wrong with them
▷ **hypochondria** *NOUN*
WORD HISTORY from Greek *hypochondrios* 'under the breastbone' (because the organs there were once thought to be the source of depression and anxiety)

hypocrisy (*say* hi- **pok**- ris- i) *NOUN*
the pretence that you are more virtuous or have higher standards than is really the case