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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

husky *ADJECTIVE* **huskier, huskiest**

a husky voice is low-pitched and slightly hoarse

▷ **huskily** *ADVERB*▷ **huskiness** *NOUN***husky** *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- dre- 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