

## conifer

### meaning

pine tree; cone-bearing tree

### example

According to geologists, the conifers were the first plants to bear flowers.

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## constraint

### meaning

compulsion; repression of feelings

### example

There was a feeling of constraint in the room because no one dared to criticize the speaker.

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## culmination

### meaning

attainment of highest point

### example

His inauguration as President of the United States marked the culmination of his political career.

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## culvert

### meaning

artificial channel for water

### example

If we build a culvert under the road at this point, we will reduce the possibility of the road at this point, we will reduce the possibility of the road's being flooded during the rainy season.

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## desolate

### meaning

rob of joy; lay waste to; forsake

### example

The bandits desolated the countryside, burning farms and carrying off the harvest.

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## dire

### meaning

disastrous

### example

People ignored her dire predictions of an approaching depression.

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## discombobulated

### meaning

confused; discomposed

### example

The novice square dancer became so discombobulated that he wandered into wrong set.

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## enfranchise

### meaning

admit to the rights of citizenship (especially the right to vote)

### example

Although blacks were enfranchised shortly after the Civil War, women did not receive the right to vote until 1920.

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## factitious

### meaning

artificial; sham

### example

Hollywood actresses often create factitious tears by using glycerine.

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## finale

meaning

conclusion

example

It is not until we reach the finale of this play that we can understand the author's message.

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## flippancy

meaning

trifling gaiety

example

Your flippancy at this serious moment is offensive.

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## foist

meaning

insert improperly; palm off

example

I will not permit you to foist such ridiculous ideas upon the membership of this group.

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## futile

meaning

ineffective; fruitless

example

Why waste your time on futile pursuits?

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## hapless

meaning

unfortunate

example

This hapless creature had never known a moment's pleasure.

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## immutable

meaning

unchangeable

example

Scientists are constantly seeking to discover the immutable laws of nature.

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## impenetrable

meaning

not able to be pierced or entered

example

How could the murderer have gotten into the locked room? To Watson, the mystery, like the room, was impenetrable.

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## inebriety

meaning

habitual intoxication

example

Because of his inebriety, he was discharged from his position as family chauffeur.

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## lectern

meaning

reading desk

example

The chaplain delivered his sermon from a hastily improvised lectern.

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## **maim**

meaning

mutilate; injure

example

The hospital could not take care of all who had been mangled or maimed in the railroad accident.

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## **mediocre**

meaning

ordinary; commonplace

example

We were disappointed because he gave a rather mediocre performance in this role.

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## **mollycoddle**

meaning

pamper; indulge excessively

example

Don't mollycoddle the boy, Maud! You'll spoil him.

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## **nettle**

meaning

annoy; vex

example

Do not let him nettle you with his sarcastic remarks.

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## **optimist**

meaning

person who looks on the bright side

example

The pessimist says the glass is half-empty; the optimist says it is half-full.

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## **panacea**

meaning

cure-all; remedy for all diseases

example

There is no easy panacea that will solve our complicated international situation.

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## **pestilential**

meaning

causing plague; baneful

example

People were afraid to explore the pestilential swamp.

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## **ponderous**

meaning

weighty; unwieldy

example

His humor lacked the light touch; his jokes were always ponderous.

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## **premonitory**

meaning

erving to warn

example

You should have visited a doctor as soon as you felt these premonitory chest pains.

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## prune

### meaning

cut away; trim

### example

With the help of her editor, she was able to prune her manuscript into publishable form.

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## random

### meaning

without definite purpose, plan, or aim; haphazard

### example

Although the sponsor of the raffle claimed all winners were chosen at random, people had their suspicions when the grand prize went to the sponsor's brother-in-law.

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## reprobate

### meaning

person hardened in sin, devoid of a sense of decency

### example

I cannot understand why he has so many admirers if he is the reprobate you say he is.

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## saboteur

### meaning

one who commits sabotage; destroyer of property

### example

Members of the Resistance acted as saboteurs, blowing up train lines to prevent supplies from reaching the Nazi army.

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## sardonic

### meaning

disdainful; sarcastic; cynical

### example

The sardonic humor of nightclub comedians who satirize or ridicule patrons in the audience strikes some people as amusing and others as rude.

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## sensual

### meaning

devoted to the pleasures of the senses; carnal; voluptuous

### example

I cannot understand what caused him to drop his sensual way of life and become so ascetic.

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## slacken

### meaning

slow up; loosen

### example

As they passed the finish line, the runners slackened their pace.

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## somber

### meaning

gloomy; depressing

### example

From the doctor's grim expression, I could tell he had somber news.

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## subsequent

### meaning

following; later

### example

In subsequent lessons, we shall take up more difficult problems.

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## tanner

### meaning

person who turns animal hides into leather

### example

Using a solution of tanbark, the tanner treated the cowhide, transforming it into supple leather.

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## temperate

### meaning

restrained; self-controlled

### example

Noted for his temperate appetite, he seldom gained weight.

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## tempo

### meaning

speed of music

### example

I find the conductor's tempo too slow for such a brilliant piece of music.

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## vintner

### meaning

winemaker; seller of wine

### example

The poet wondered what the vintners could buy that would be half as precious as the wine they sold.

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## arbitrate

### meaning

act as judge

### example

She was called upon to arbitrate the dispute between the union and the management.

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## beget

### meaning

father; produce; give rise to

### example

One good turn may deserve another; it does not necessarily beget another.

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## cavil

### meaning

make frivolous objections

### example

I respect your sensible criticisms, but I dislike the way you cavil about unimportant details.

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## ensorious

### meaning

critical

### example

ensorious people delight in casting blame.

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## conflagration

### meaning

great fire

### example

In the conflagration that followed the 1906 earthquake, much of San Francisco was destroyed.

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