

# “D”

## DABBLER N.

neophyte, beginner

☑ **Syn.** amateur, dilettante

★ **Ant.** adept, professional

✍ The dabblers of yore are today the serious players of share market.

## DAINTY Adj.

pleasant to the palate, tasteful; small, dwarfish, petite

☑ **Syn.** charming, lilliputian, delicate

✍ We were given tea and some dainty cakes.

## DALLY V., DALLIANCE N.

to lose time by idleness; playful flirtation

☑ **Syn.** hand about, dawdle, loiter

★ **Ant.** hurry, rush, hasten, speed

✍ The government is dallying over the issue of privatisation of telecommunication.

✍ Her dalliance at work place resulted in her removal from the job.

## DANGLE V.

to hang loosely or with a swinging motion

☑ **Syn.** hand down, suspend, droop

✍ He dangled the puppet in front of the children.

## DANK Adj.

damp

☑ **Syn.** moist, humid, soggy, wet

✍ The rooms of the village school are dank and dirty.

## DASTARDLY Adj., DASTARD N.

cowardly

☑ **Syn.** shameful, immoral, base, low

★ **Ant.** dignified, righteous

✍ The bombing of the houses is yet another dastardly attack on innocent people.

## DAUB V., N.

to paint carelessly, to smear

☑ **Syn.** spread, slap, apply, splatter

✍ A canvas daubed with paint is often passed off as modern art.

## DAUNT V.

to frighten, to subdue, to lessen the courage of, to cow

☑ **Syn.** deter, discourage

★ **Ant.** arouse, awaken

✍ The daunting inflation rate had the finance minister worried.

## DAZE V., N.

to stun, to stupefy, to confuse

☑ **Syn.** shock, astound, bemuse, baffle

✍ The drop in BSE sensex has dazed the economic pundits.

✍ She was wandering around in a daze after she got the highest marks in the university.

## DEARTH

lack, insufficiency

☑ **Syn.** scarcity, shortage

★ **Ant.** abundance, surfeit

✍ The dearth of supplies was proving to be a greater threat than the firepower of the enemy.

## DEBACLE N.

a complete break up or collapse or failure

☑ **Syn.** disaster, undoing, cataclysm

★ **Ant.** success, accomplishment

✍ Liberalisation may prove to be a debacle in countries that do not give it a sustained and consistent push backed up by regular policy reforms and political will.

## DEBASE

to degrade or lower in quality or stature

☑ **Syn.** demean, humiliate

★ **Ant.** dignify, ennoble

✍ The president's shameful actions debased the stature of his office.

## DEBAUCH

to corrupt, mislead from virtue or duty

☑ **Syn.** indulge in, degenerate

★ **Ant.** straighten up, redeem

✍ After the unscrupulous count debauched the minister, the conspiracy against the king began to take shape.

## DEBILITATE

to weaken, enfeeble

☑ **Syn.** enervate, devitalise

★ **Ant.** strengthen, invigorate

✍ Debilitated by the flu, the postman was barely able to finish his rounds.

## DEBONAIR Adj.

elegant, courteous, of a good appearance

☑ **Syn.** suave, smart, refined, charming

★ **Ant.** graceless, clumsy, ungainly

✍ The debonair actor was very popular among girls.

## DEBRIS (DAYBREE) N.

wreckage, ruins, rubbish, garbage, waste

☑ **Syn.** remains, fragments, rubble, trash

✍ The car was buried in the debris which the landslide had swept down the hill and this made recovery very difficult.

## DEBUNK V.

expose as false, exaggerated, worthless

☑ **Syn.** show up, deflate, discredit

✍ Ramer Pillai's claim to generate petrol from plants was debunked finally.

**DEBUTANTE**

young woman making first formal entry into high society

- ⌘ The debutante spent hours dressing for her first ball.

**DECEITFUL** Adj.

crafty, cunning, dishonest

- ☑ **Syn.** deceiving, fraudulent, devious
- ★ **Ant.** honest, truthful, sincere, candid
- ⌘ The deceitful looks on his face made me wary of the proposal.

**DECIDUOUS**

losing leaves in the fall, short-lived, temporary

- ★ **Ant.** evergreen
- ⌘ Deciduous trees are bare in winter.

**DECIPHER** V.

to decode

- ☑ **Syn.** interpret, translate, crack
- ⌘ Only a chemist can decipher a doctor's handwriting.

**DECLIVITY** N.

a place that declines or slopes downwards

- ⌘ The hill people utilise the declivity of land for setting up water mills.

**DECOR** N.

general decorative effect of a room, scenery

- ☑ **Syn.** furnishings, interior decoration
- ⌘ Red seats and cream walls may not be the most elegant decor but it's a friendly pub.

**DECOROUS**

proper, tasteful, socially correct

- ☑ **Syn.** mannerly, dignified
- ★ **Ant.** indecorous, immodest
- ⌘ He was always very decorous in the company of women.

**DECORUM**

proper behavior, propriety

- ☑ **Syn.** etiquette, modesty
- ★ **Ant.** impropriety, immodesty
- ⌘ The way he handled the fork and knife, it was clear that he lacked the decorum to fit into high society.

**DECOY** N.

an animal, person or thing used to entrap a victim

- ☑ **Syn.** lure, trap, snare, distraction, bait
- ⌘ They used a girl hitchhiker as the decoy to get him to stop.

**DECREE** N.

a judicial decision, an order by an authority

- ☑ **Syn.** ruling, verdict, announcement
- ⌘ Ayatollahs' decree to assassinate Rushdie made life difficult for the author.

**DECREPIT** Adj.

worn out from ages or overuse, weak, dilapidated, run-down

- ☑ **Syn.** old, feeble, frail, weak, infirm
- ★ **Ant.** hearty, vigorous, energetic, vital
- ⌘ A decrepit old man sat on a park bench.
- ⌘ No one should have to live in a house that's so run-down and decrepit.

**DECRY**

to belittle, openly condemn

- ☑ **Syn.** disprove, berate
- ★ **Ant.** approve, appreciate
- ⌘ Governments all over the world decried the dictator's vicious massacre of helpless peasants.

**DEFAMATORY**

slandorous, injurious to reputation

- ☑ **Syn.** libellous, malicious
- ★ **Ant.** complimentary, esteemed
- ⌘ The tabloid was sued for making defamatory statements about the celebrity.

**DEFECTION** N.

desertion

- ⌘ His defection from the charity resulted in a drop in the trust's projections.
- ⌘ Recent changes in policy have resulted in large-scale defection from the party.

**DEFENDANT**

person required to answer a legal action or suit

- ☑ **Syn.** appellant, accused
- ★ **Ant.** plaintiff
- ✗ The defendant sat impassively as witness after witness described the dreadful crimes she had committed.

**DEFERENCE N.**

respectful compliance, submission, devotion, esteem

- ☑ **Syn.** regard, reverence, admiration
- ★ **Ant.** contempt, disrepute, insolence
- ✗ She covered her head out of deference to the custom at that place of worship.

**DEFERENTIAL**

respectful and polite in a submissive way

- ☑ **Syn.** courteous, humble
- ★ **Ant.** arrogant, rude
- ✗ The clerk treated the Supreme Court order very deferentially.

**DEFIANT Adj. DEFIANCE N.**

disobedient, insubordinate, mutinous

- ☑ **Syn.** insolent, rebellious, bold
- ★ **Ant.** compliant, biddable, submissive
- ✗ A defiant Jack Welch went about restructuring the behemoth corporation called GE.

**DEFINITIVE**

clear-cut, explicit, reliable

- ☑ **Syn.** conclusive, ultimate
- ★ **Ant.** provisional, unauthoritative
- ✗ '*Trains at a glance*' is a definitive guide for every railway passenger.

**DEFILE V.**

to pollute, corrupt, sully, besmirch

- ☑ **Syn.** taint, debase, corrupt, debauch
- ✗ Many people believe that the operation to flush out the terrorists was a deliberate defiling of the place of worship.

**DEFLATION**

decrease, depreciation

- ☑ **Syn.** devaluation, reduction
- ★ **Ant.** inflation, rise
- ✗ The deflation of the currency resulted in financial disaster for many ordinary Russians.

**DEFORM**

to disfigure, distort

- ☑ **Syn.** misshape, cripple
- ★ **Ant.** shape, boost
- ✗ Bipasha shrieked at the sight of the deformed features of the circus freak.

**DEFT Adj.**

neat, skillful

- ☑ **Syn.** adroit, clever, nifty, nimble
- ★ **Ant.** clumsy, ungainly, maladroit
- ✗ The deft welder fixed the broken shaft so well that it does not seem to have broken at all.

**DEFUNCT Adj.**

dead, no longer in use or existence

- ☑ **Syn.** obsolete, invalid, redundant
- ★ **Ant.** present, existing, recent, modern
- ✗ The credit cooperative society which functioned so well is now defunct.

**DEGENERATE V., DEGENERATIVE Adj.**

become worse, deteriorate, to sink into a lower or less useful state

- ☑ **Syn.** disintegrate, collapse, relapse
- ★ **Ant.** improve, get better, recover
- ✗ The debate quickly degenerated into a shouting match.
- ✗ Suffering from a degenerative brain disease, he asked for euthanasia.

**DEITY N.**

god, goddess, divinity, idol

- ☑ **Syn.** holy being
- ✗ For many, worshipping a deity is more important than finding employment.

**DELECTABLE Adj., N, DELECTABILITY N.**

delightful, pleasing, delicious

- ☑ **Syn.** appetising, exquisite
- ✗ The delectable performance by the child-artist enthralled many.
- ✗ When I return from my business trips, I love to feast on home-cooked delectables.

**DELIBERATE V. DELIBERATE Adj.**

consider, debate, meditate, mull, contemplate, plan, intentional, calculated, contrived, conscious

- ☑ **Syn.** reflect, think, weigh up, ponder, purposeful, premeditated
- ★ **Ant.** unintentional, unplanned
- ✗ I've been deliberating all morning and I still can't decide what to do.
- ✗ A deliberate act of sabotage has been unearthed in the computer department.

**DELEGATE (v)**

to give powers to another, entrust

(n) – representative, envoy

- ☑ **Syn.** assign, depute
- ★ **Ant.** cling to power, disenable
- ✗ After learning to delegate more work to his assistants, the manager reduced his stress level significantly.

**DELINEATION N., DELINEATE V.**

the act of representing pictorially

- ☑ **Syn.** portrayal, characterisation
- ✗ We sat for hours with the architect as she delineated each aspect of our proposed office complex.

**DELINQUENT Adj., N.**

failing in duty

- ☑ **Syn.** criminal, aberrant, offending
- ★ **Ant.** honest, straight, peaceable
- ✗ The delinquent behaviour of insurance employees has stalled reforms in the insurance sector.
- ✗ People disagree over whether juvenile delinquents should be punished or helped.

**DELIRIOUS** Adj., **DELIRIUM** N.

wandering in mind, insane; state of extreme happiness

- ☑ **Syn.** deranged, maniacal, raving
- ⌘ Sophie had a high temperature and was delirious all last night.
- ⌘ Preeti has been in a state of delirium since Rohit asked her out.

**DELTA**

tidal deposit at the mouth of a river, a Greek alphabet

- ⌘ The delta of a river is a very impressive aerial sight.

**DELUDE** V., **DELUSION** N.

to deceive, to cause to accept what is false as true

- ☑ **Syn.** deceive, cheat, con, fool, trick
- ⌘ The thieves deluded the old lady into thinking that they were telephone engineers.
- ⌘ Simon laboured under the delusion that success was at hand.

**DELUGE** N., V.

a flood, an excessive overflow; to inundate

- ☑ **Syn.** torrent, surfeit, overabundance
- ★ **Ant.** drought, dearth, famine
- ⌘ A deluge of fan mail irked Britney Spears.

**DELVE** V.

to make deep research, probe, investigate, inquire

- ☑ **Syn.** research, dig
- ★ **Ant.** scan, browse through
- ⌘ Some historians have delved deep into the past trying to unearth mysteries related to the evolution of man.

**DEMARCATIION**

borderline, act of defining or marking a boundary or distinction

- ☑ **Syn.** separation, delimitation
- ⌘ The Berlin Wall formed a clear demarcation between East and West Germany.

**DEMEANOUR** N.

behaviour of a person, conduct, behaviour, comportment, bearing

- ☑ **Syn.** manner, conduct, character
- ⌘ She has the demeanour of a woman who is content with her life.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

study or data relating to human population

- ⌘ Demographics seem to indicate that the population of the world will double within the foreseeable future.

**DEMOLISH** V., **DEMOLITION** N.

destroy, raze, nullify, overthrow

- ☑ **Syn.** knock down, bulldoze, flatten
- ★ **Ant.** build, construct, erect, make
- ⌘ The Australian pace attack demolished the Kiwi batting line-up for just 87 runs.
- ⌘ The demolition squad of municipal corporation has taken up the task of removing encroachments.

**DEMOTE**

to reduce to a lower grade or rank

- ☑ **Syn.** downgrade, humiliate
- ★ **Ant.** promote, aggrandise
- ⌘ The army will demote any soldier who disobeys orders.

**DEMUR**

to express doubts or objections

- ☑ **Syn.** protest, dissent
- ★ **Ant.** accept, agree
- ⌘ Mr Seth demurred when the suggestion was put to him.

**DEMURE** Adj.

sober, modest, staid, calm, undisturbed

- ☑ **Syn.** sedate, reserved, shy, retiring
- ★ **Ant.** bold, brave, daring, courageous
- ⌘ A Miss World candidate must know how to be demure.
- ⌘ She gave him a demure smile.

**DENIGRATE** V.

to defame, asperse, degrade, deprecate

- ☑ **Syn.** disparage, belittle, malign
- ★ **Ant.** praise, admire, extol, eulogise
- ⌘ I was very hurt when he denigrated my efforts.

**DENIZEN** N.

inhabitant

- ☑ **Syn.** occupant, resident, dweller
- ⌘ Dimple is one of the longer-serving denizens of the accounts department.

**Mini Revision Test**

*Match each word in the first column with its meaning in the second column.*

- |               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1. debilitate | a. flood                  |
| 2. decorous   | b. express disapproval of |
| 3. definitive | c. conclusive             |
| 4. deluge     | d. weaken                 |
| 5. deprecate  | e. proper                 |

**Answer Key - Mini Revision Test**

- 1.(d)    2.(e)    3.(c)    4.(a)    5.(b)

**DENOUEMENT N.**

the outcome of a sequence of events, the end result

- ☑ **Syn.** conclusion, finale, completion
- ★ **Ant.** start, create, found, establish
- ✗ The denouement in Shakespeare's tragedies have a cathartic effect on the audience.
- ✗ The 'Tehelka' denouement was strikingly unexpected.

**DENOUNCE**

to accuse, blame

- ☑ **Syn.** condemn, criticise
- ★ **Ant.** praise, appreciate
- ✗ Shalini denounced her coworkers for stealing pencils from the office.

**DENUDE**

to make bare, uncover, undress

- ☑ **Syn.** strip, expose
- ★ **Ant.** cover, shroud
- ✗ The mountain was completely denuded by uncontrolled logging.

**DEplete V.**

to empty, reduce, exhaust, drain

- ☑ **Syn.** drain, diminish, lessen
- ★ **Ant.** increase, augment, amplify
- ✗ With all emergency grain supplies depleted, the nation was headed towards famine.

**DEPLORE V., DEPLORABLE Adj.**

to regret, to lament, bemoan

- ☑ **Syn.** condemn, criticise, deprecate
- ★ **Ant.** approve, support, commend
- ✗ Even though I deplore the CEO's decision, I'll have to accept it.
- ✗ The inmates in Tihar jail live in deplorable housing conditions.

**DEPLOY**

to spread out strategically over an area, dispel

- ☑ **Syn.** arrange, disband
- ★ **Ant.** gather, garner
- ✗ The general deployed his troops all over the region, overwhelming the enemy through sheer numbers.

**DEPOSE**

to remove from a high position

- ☑ **Syn.** overthrow, overturn
- ★ **Ant.** crown, empower
- ✗ After being deposed from his throne, the king spent the rest of his life in exile.

**DEPRavity N.**

amorality, debauchery, degeneracy, perversion

- ☑ **Syn.** corruption, evil, decadence
- ★ **Ant.** goodness, decency, honesty
- ✗ The depravity of the men running Hitler's concentration camps was unimaginable.

**DEPREdATION N., DEPREDATE V.**

state of being ravaged, act of plundering

- ☑ **Syn.** ravages, devastation, havoc
- ✗ Depredation of the forests is destroying hundreds of species each year.

**DEPRECATE**

to belittle, disparage

- ☑ **Syn.** disapprove of, deplore
- ★ **Ant.** praise, overrate
- ✗ Anand deprecated his own contribution, and highlighted the efforts of his coworkers.

**DEPRECIATE**

to lose value gradually

- ☑ **Syn.** devalue, cheapen
- ★ **Ant.** appreciate, raise
- ✗ Tax laws allow a fixed rate of depreciation on assets.

**DERELICT Adj., N.**

forsaken, abandoned, neglected; a destitute homeless social misfit

- ☑ **Syn.** dilapidated, ruined, vagrant
- ✗ Having lost his possessions in betting, Farhan now lives the life of a derelict.
- ✗ There are plans to redevelop the derelict building near the station.

**DERIDE V., DERISION N., DERISIVE Adj.**

to laugh at, to mock, to treat scornfully

- ☑ **Syn.** scoff, put down, mock, scorn
- ★ **Ant.** approve, agree, commend
- ✗ I was derided for making such a stupid suggestion.
- ✗ Dressed in a short skirt, Rupali became an object of derision among her friends.

**DERIVE**

to take from a certain source

- ☑ **Syn.** procure, acquire
- ★ **Ant.** originate, cause
- ✗ Maple syrup is derived from the sap of maple trees.

**DERMATOLOGIST N., DERMATOLOGY N.**

one who studies the skin and its diseases

- ✗ You need not consult dermatologists for each and every skin problem; a good beautician can do the job as well.

**DEROGATE**

to belittle, disparage

- ☑ **Syn.** denigrate, discredit
- ★ **Ant.** praise, applaud
- ✗ The sarcastic old man never stopped derogating the efforts of his daughter, even after she won the Nobel Prize.

**DEROGATORY Adj.**

detracting, injurious, disparaging, belittling, negatively critical

- ☑ **Syn.** insulting, offensive, deprecating
- ★ **Ant.** complimentary, admiring, kind
- ✗ Writers usually welcome helpful criticism but derogatory remarks tend to put them on the defence.

**DESCRY**

to discover by the eye, to spot or perceive

- ✎ The famous Amarnath cave was descried by a Muslim shepherd who had lost his way.
- ✎ I descried a ray of hope in her words.

**DESECRATE V.**

to treat sacrilegiously, to defile or profane something sacred or very special

- ☑ **Syn.** damage, vandalise, despoil
- ★ **Ant.** consecrate, sanctify, make holy
- ✎ It's a crime to desecrate the country's flag.

**DESOLATE Adj., DESOLATION N.**

lonely, comfortless, having no inhabitants, deserted, barren, lifeless

- ☑ **Syn.** isolated, bleak, wild, barren
- ★ **Ant.** populous, full of people, packed
- ✎ The house looked out over a bleak and desolate landscape.
- ✎ Two years of continuous drought brought desolation to the region.

**DESPISE V., DESPICABLE Adj.**

deride, disdain, look down on

- ☑ **Syn.** hate, abhor, loathe, scorn
- ★ **Ant.** love, revere, respect
- ✎ She despised him for the way he treated her sister.
- ✎ One cannot be a despicable rogue and dream of social acceptance.

**DESPONDENCY N., DESPONDENT Adj.**

a feeling of dejection, despair or hopelessness

- ☑ **Syn.** sadness, misery, depression
- ★ **Ant.** Cheerfulness, joyfulness, cheer
- ✎ The large-scale destruction filled the populace with a spirit of despondency.

**DESPOTISM N., DESPOT N.**

dictatorship, tyranny, autocracy

- ☑ **Syn.** absolutism
- ★ **Ant.** democracy, equality, consensus
- ✎ In the French Revolution, the Bastille was a symbol of the despotism of the monarchy.

**DESTITUTE Adj., DESTITUTION N.**

entirely lacking in, very poor, indigent, poverty stricken

- ☑ **Syn.** impoverished, insolvent, needy
- ★ **Ant.** in the black, in the chips
- ✎ The destitute refugees of Bosnia looked to the UN for help.
- ✎ Continued destitution can lead one to move towards crime.

**DESULTORY Adj.**

jumping from one thing to another, without any rational connection, without set plan, random, haphazard, casual

- ☑ **Syn.** unfocussed, indiscriminate
- ★ **Ant.** methodical, systematic, precise
- ✎ Research requires scientific method and not a desultory approach.

**DETAIN V., DETENTION N.**

retain, keep, hold, grasp

- ☑ **Syn.** arrest, capture, confine, control
- ★ **Ant.** release, free, discharge, liberate
- ✎ The customs detained the lady due to suspicion of smuggling.
- ✎ While in detention, I pondered over my criminal career and felt remorseful.

**DETER V., DETERRENT N., Adj.**

to hinder or prevent

- ☑ **Syn.** daunt, dissuade, prevent
- ★ **Ant.** encourage, cheer, persuade
- ✎ A dog deters the thieves from attempting a theft.
- ✎ A nuclear bomb is usually just a deterrent and not intended for actual use.

**DETERMINE**

having defined limits, conclusive

- ☑ **Syn.** fixed, quantified
- ★ **Ant.** indeterminate, vague
- ✎ The priest violated the determinate rules of caste by shaking hands with the sweeper.

**DETONATION N., DETONATE V.**

explosion

- ☑ **Syn.** ignition, discharge, blast, bang
- ✎ India detonated an underground nuclear device at Pokharan.
- ✎ The aircraft blew apart after the detonation of a bomb disguised as a radio.

**DETOUR N., V.**

diversion, digression, excursion

- ☑ **Syn.** deviation, alternative route
- ✎ The trains had to detour due to the accident.

**DETRIMENTAL**

causing harm or injury

- ☑ **Syn.** injurious, ruinous
- ★ **Ant.** benign, beneficial
- ✎ It is well known that cigarette smoking is detrimental to health.

**DEVIATE**

to stray, wander

- ☑ **Syn.** drift, digress
- ★ **Ant.** conform, stay on course
- ✎ As long as you don't deviate from the trail, you should be back in the camp before sunset.

**DEVIOUS Adj., DEVIOUSNESS N.**

indirect, roundabout, strayed, cunning

- ☑ **Syn.** deceitful, tricky, designing, wily
- ★ **Ant.** straightforward, clear cut
- ✎ We knew from Greg's devious behaviour that he was planning a surprise.
- ✎ You have to be a bit devious if you're going to succeed in business.

**DEVOUR V., DEVOURING Adj.**

to swallow greedily, to eat up

- ☑ **Syn.** consume, get through, demolish
- ✗ The booming industrialisation has devoured the agricultural land.

**DEXTEROUS Adj., DEXTERITY N.**

skillful, adroit, deft, adept

- ☑ **Syn.** handy, nimble, agile
- ★ **Ant.** gauche, clumsy, all thumbs
- ✗ A dexterous plastic surgeon would be much in demand.
- ✗ Her dexterity in mathematical calculations amazes many.

**DIABOLIC or DIABOLICAL Adj.**

wicked, like a devil, extremely unpleasant, very bad

- ✗ The diabolic plans to capture power did not succeed.
- ✗ With a diabolical smile, Shanker advanced towards a cowering Sangeeta.

**DIALECTIC N.**

the art or practice of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments

- ✗ The dialectic is a formal method of argument, in which new positions are reached by testing opposing views against one another.

**DIATRIBE N.**

a continued discourse, a long bitter speech,

- ☑ **Syn.** tirade, invective, harangue, rant
- ✗ After dinner he launched into a long diatribe against the government's policies.

**DICHOTOMY**

division into two parts

- ☑ **Syn.** split, disjunction
- ✗ Movies often show a simple dichotomy between good guys and bad guys.

**DICTUM N.**

something said, a saying, an authoritative saying, dictat

- ☑ **Syn.** maxim, motto, cliché, truism
- ✗ He has always followed the famous American dictum, 'don't get mad, get even'.

**DIDACTIC**

excessively instructive

- ☑ **Syn.** doctrinal, heuristic
- ✗ The father was overly didactic with his children, turning every activity into a lesson.

**DIFFERENTIATE**

to distinguish between two items

- ☑ **Syn.** discriminate, discern
- ✗ Navin hoped that his fiancée would not be able to differentiate between a real diamond ring and the ring he had bought her.

**DIFFIDENT Adj., DIFFIDENCE N.**

not self-confident, lacking self confidence, shy, unassertive

- ☑ **Syn.** unsure, indecisive
- ★ **Ant.** confident, sure, dashing
- ✗ Diffidence is sure to mar your chances of selection in the interview.
- ✗ There's no need to be so diffident about your achievements – you've done really well!

**DIFFUSION N., DIFFUSE V.**

wordiness; spreading in all directions like a gas

- ☑ **Syn.** dispersion, distribution, flow
- ✗ Your painting suffered from a diffusion of lines.
- ✗ He was one of the first scientists to study the process of diffusion in gases.

**DIGRESS V., DIGRESSION N.**

to depart from the main subject

- ☑ **Syn.** deviate, wander, stray, ramble
- ✗ The lecturer temporarily digressed from what she was saying to answer a question.

**DILAPIDATED Adj.**

ruined because of neglect

- ☑ **Syn.** decrepit, decaying, ramshackle
- ★ **Ant.** pristine, immaculate, unspoiled
- ✗ It needs no pointing out to the authorities that be, that our historical buildings are dilapidated.

**DILATORY Adj., DILATE V.**

slow, given to procrastination, tardy; to expand

- ☑ **Syn.** remise, slack, negligent, lagging
- ★ **Ant.** prompt, punctual, quick
- ✗ In the era of TQM there is no place for dilatory attitudes.
- ✗ The ophthalmologist instilled a few drops of the medicine to dilate the patient's pupils.

**DILETTANTE N.**

a dabbler in art, science or literature, an amateur, novice, neophyte

- ☑ **Syn.** amateur, dabbler
- ✗ He's a bit of a dilettante as far as wine selection is concerned.

**DILIGENT Adj., DILIGENCE N.**

steady and earnest in application, industrious, assiduous

- ☑ **Syn.** hard working, meticulous
- ★ **Ant.** lazy, indolent, idle, languid
- ✗ Leo is very diligent about his work.
- ✗ It is diligence that is required to crack a competitive exam like CAT.

**DISAFFECTED**

discontented and disloyal

- ☑ **Syn.** dissatisfied, disgruntled
- ★ **Ant.** contented, loyal
- ✗ The king discovered a plot by disaffected elements in the army and immediately punished the conspirators.

**DISBAND V.**

dissolve, disperse

- ☑ **Syn.** break up, scatter, separate
- ☒ It is not impossible to disband the gangs of the underworld dons in Mumbai.

**DISBURSE**

to pay out

- ☑ **Syn.** spend, splurge
- ★ **Ant.** gather, retain
- ☒ The government disbursed millions of rupees to reform elementary schools.

**DISCERNING Adj., DISCERN V.**

discriminating, observant, acute, sensitive

- ☑ **Syn.** sharp, astute, shrewd
- ★ **Ant.** haphazard, random, arbitrary
- ☒ A discerning art critic would be forthright in her views.

**DISCLAIM**

to deny, disavow

- ☑ **Syn.** reject, discard
- ★ **Ant.** accept, claim
- ☒ Mridula later disclaimed her silly statement, saying she had never made it in the first place.

**DISCLOSE**

to confess, divulge

- ☑ **Syn.** reveal, make known
- ★ **Ant.** conceal, hide
- ☒ The CIA agent disclosed that he had been selling top secret information to the enemy for years.

**DISCONCERT V.**

to embarrass, to disturb the composure of, to throw into confusion

- ☑ **Syn.** distress, sadden, trouble, offend
- ★ **Ant.** please, gratify, delight, thrill
- ☒ It is quite natural to be disconcerted by the unexpected.

**DISCONSOLATE Adj.**

without consolation or comfort, grief-stricken, cheerless

- ☑ **Syn.** dejected, gloomy, discontent
- ★ **Ant.** satisfied, contented
- ☒ She was disconsolate at the loss of her dog.

**DISCREET Adj., DISCRETION N.**

very prudent, cautious, circumspect, tactful in dealing, wary

- ☑ **Syn.** circumspect, cautious, careful
- ★ **Ant.** tactless, indiscreet, clumsy
- ☒ They are very good assistants, very discreet – they wouldn't go shouting to the press about anything they discovered while working for you.
- ☒ The decision is now at the discretion of the boss.

**DISCREDIT**

to disprove or disgrace

- ☑ **Syn.** confute, dishonour
- ★ **Ant.** prove, honour
- ☒ The war hero was discredited after it was revealed that he had fled in terror from the battle.

**DISCREPANCY**

difference between

- ☑ **Syn.** disparity, variance
- ★ **Ant.** similarity, correspondence
- ☒ The accountants discovered a discrepancy in the books and reported it to the management.

**DISCRETIONARY**

subject to one's own judgment

- ☑ **Syn.** optional, voluntary
- ★ **Ant.** compulsory, obligatory
- ☒ Ambassadors have some discretionary powers, though they must bow to the authority of the secretary of state.

**DISCURSIVE Adj.**

desultory, running from one thing to another, moving from one topic to another, rambling

- ☒ Ms. Wilson's presentation was discursive, yet highly interesting and we enjoyed her digressions into humour.

**DISDAIN N., V.**

a feeling of contempt due to superiority complex, haughtiness

- ☑ **Syn.** scorn, contempt, disregard
- ★ **Ant.** respect, deference, reverence
- ☒ The high caste people still show disdain towards the low caste in rural India.
- ☒ She disdained the idea of sharing her room with her younger brother.

**DISENGAGED**

disconnected, disassociated

- ☑ **Syn.** separate, disentangle
- ★ **Ant.** attach, connect
- ☒ Disengaged from the proceedings, the aged senator didn't notice when the warning bell went off.

**DISGRUNTLED Adj.**

disappointed, disgusted

- ☑ **Syn.** discontented, unhappy, irritated
- ★ **Ant.** contented, happy, pleased
- ☒ Disgruntled elements in the party can cause a real havoc.

**DISHEVELLED V.**

not ordered, ruffled, untidy, unkempt

- ☒ Dishevelled hair is in fashion these days.

**DISILLUSION N., V.**

disappointment, disenchantment, anticlimax

- ☑ **Syn.** disenchant, let down, dishearten
- ★ **Ant.** motivate, encourage, instigate
- ☒ When hard labour goes unapplauded, disillusion sets in.
- ☒ Disillusioned after losing his job, he has become a bitter man.

**DISINCLINED**

averse, unwilling, lacking desire

- ☑ **Syn.** reluctant, recalcitrant
- ★ **Ant.** inclined, willing
- ☒ Harry was disinclined to put in a lot of effort into his homework, since the teacher never checked it.



**DISINGENUOUS** Adj.

crafty, not ingenuous, insincere, deceitful

☑ **Syn.** untruthful, hypocritical

★ **Ant.** straightforward, simple, easy

✗ The disingenuous world of Hindi films catches many a victim unaware.

**DISMAY** N., V

consternation, amazement, dejection; to destroy courage or resolution by exciting dread or apprehension; to cause to lose enthusiasm

☑ **Syn.** shock, consternation, panic

★ **Ant.** soothe, console, reassure, calm

✗ Much to India's dismay, the patent for Basmati rice was granted to a US based company RiceTec.

✗ Aishwarya was dismayed to hear rumours linking him with a billionaire.

**DISPARAGE** V., **DISPARAGING** Adj.

to talk triflingly of, to lower in rank, belittle, downgrade, decry

☑ **Syn.** discredit, underrate

★ **Ant.** admire, commend, honour

✗ Only insecure people disparage others.

✗ On hearing the disparaging remarks about my fiancée, I lost my temper and indulged in a fistfight with the hooligans.

**DISPARATE** Adj., **DISPARITY** N.

basically different, unrelated

☑ **Syn.** unlike, unequal, incongruent

★ **Ant.** similar, alike, parallel, analogous

✗ The two cultures were so utterly disparate that she found it hard to adapt.

✗ There is disparity in their age but their mental age appears the same.

**DISPASSIONATE** Adj.

calm, impartial

☑ **Syn.** composed, detached, cool

★ **Ant.** fiery, burning, blistering, sizzling

✗ A journalist should be a dispassionate reporter of facts.

**DISPENSE**

to distribute, administer

☑ **Syn.** disburse, allocate

★ **Ant.** collect, receive

✗ Pharmacists require doctors' prescriptions to dispense some medicines to customers.

**DISPERSE**

to break up, scatter

☑ **Syn.** disseminate, sprinkle

★ **Ant.** unite, assemble

✗ The workers dispersed after receiving their paychecks, many of them heading for the local bar.

**DISREPUTE**

disgrace, dishonour

☑ **Syn.** infamy, notoriety

★ **Ant.** honour, esteem

✗ The law firm fell into disrepute after one of its lawyers was found guilty of jury tampering.

**DISSEMBLE**

to pretend, disguise one's motives

☑ **Syn.** deceive, feign

★ **Ant.** reveal, expose

✗ The villain tried to dissemble his exit by trying to look like another shopper but the police was alert enough to nab him.

**DISSEMINATE**

to spread far and wide

☑ **Syn.** promulgate, propagate

★ **Ant.** conceal, suppress

✗ The wire service disseminates information so rapidly that news of events reaches all corners minutes after they happen.

**DISSENT** V., N.

to disagree or differ in opinion

☑ **Syn.** oppose, rebel, dispute

★ **Ant.** concur, be in agreement, consent

✗ In a democracy, dissent has to be respected.

✗ The parties dissented on the issue of women's reservation in Parliament.

**DISSIMULATE** V.

pretend, conceal by feigning

✗ She tries to dissimulate her tensions and worries by her geniality.

**DISSIPATE**

to scatter, to pursue pleasure to excess

☑ **Syn.** evaporate, squander

★ **Ant.** intensify, save

✗ The fog gradually dissipated, revealing all the ships docked in the harbor.

**Mini Revision Test**

*Match each word in the first column with its meaning in the second column.*

- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. didactic    | a. spread seeds      |
| 2. discern     | b. insight           |
| 3. disparage   | c. intended to teach |
| 4. disseminate | d. belittle          |
| 5. dissipate   | e. thin out          |

**Answer Key - Mini Revision Test**

- 1.(c)    2.(b)    3.(d)    4.(a)    5.(e)

**DISSOCIATE**

to separate, remove from an association

- ☑ **Syn.** relate, connect
- ★ **Ant.** associate, detach
- ⌘ Rajesh dissociated himself from the project when he realised the projections were all wrong.

**DISSOLUTION N., DISSOLUTE Adj.**

disintegration; looseness in morals

- ☑ **Syn.** closure, disbanding, suspension
- ⌘ Profligacy and dissolution shown in some Hindi films in a melodramatic manner is loathsome.

**DISTEND V.**

to expand from internal pressure, swell out

- ☑ **Syn.** bloat, balloon, inflate
- ★ **Ant.** deflate, shrink, reduce, puncture
- ⌘ The patient's stomach was distended and the doctors thought it was a bad sign.

**DISTRESS N., V., Adj**

discomfort, misery, suffering, wretchedness

- ☑ **Syn.** pain, sorrow, grief
- ★ **Ant.** peace, calm, tranquility, silence
- ⌘ Many of the horses were showing signs of distress at the end of the race.
- ⌘ Sunita was distressed to see her younger sister in a porn video.

**DISTRUST (n)**

disbelief and suspicion

(v) – be wary of, be suspicious of

- ☑ **Syn.** suspicion, wariness
- ★ **Ant.** trust, faith
- ⌘ An atmosphere of distrust pervaded the office after a rash of burglaries.

**DITHER V., N.**

to tremble, to shiver; a state of indecisive agitation

- ☑ **Syn.** hesitate, dally, dawdle, vacillate
- ⌘ The government is dithering on hard reforms like the exit policy.

**DIVEST V., DIVESTITURE N.**

strip, deprive; disposal of property, title etc. under a government order

- ☑ **Syn.** rid, deny, rob
- ★ **Ant.** add, put in, insert, adjoin
- ⌘ He was divested of his priestly authority when his promiscuity was discovered.
- ⌘ The divestiture of government's less profitable business operations has reduced the burden on the exchequer.

**DIVULGE V., DIVULGENCE N.**

to reveal, to make public, to expose, to make known

- ☑ **Syn.** reveal, acknowledge, concede
- ★ **Ant.** conceal, hide, shroud
- ⌘ The divulgence of trade secrets by disenchanted employees has cost the company dearly.
- ⌘ Sources close to the Prime Minister have divulged that he would like to retire after the next election.

**DOCILE**

tame, willing to be taught

- ☑ **Syn.** tame, pliant
- ★ **Ant.** wild, wilful
- ⌘ Wolves are not as docile as dogs; they are not recommended as house pets.

**DOCTRINAIRE Adj.**

unable to compromise about points of doctrine, dogmatic, unyielding

- ☑ **Syn.** rigid, stern, strict, unbending
- ★ **Ant.** liberal, moderate, tolerant
- ⌘ I prefer talking to a professor who is less doctrinaire and more open to debate.

**DOFF V.**

take off the hat as a greeting or as a sign of respect

- ⌘ His doffing the hat very often has become more a mannerism than an etiquette.

**DOGGED Adj.**

determined, stubborn

- ☑ **Syn.** persistent, resolute, gritty
- ⌘ Her ambition and dogged determination ensured that she rose to the top of her profession.

**DOGMA N., DOGMATIC Adj.**

an authoritative doctrine, a settled opinion; strongly opinionated, dictatorial

- ☑ **Syn.** creed, canon, belief, view, tenets
- ⌘ Raja Rammohan Roy's crusade against dogmas in the dark ages was remarkable.
- ⌘ Rita tended to be dogmatic about what she believed in.

**DOLEFUL**

sad, mournful

- ☑ **Syn.** woeful, sorrowful
- ★ **Ant.** happy, joyous
- ⌘ Looking into the doleful eyes of the lonely puppy, the girl decided to take it home.

**DOLOROUS Adj.**

very sad, melancholic, gloomy

- ⌘ Her music always has a faintly dolorous feel.

**DOLT N.**

stupid person

- ⌘ I have never come across such a pack of dolts.

**DONOR**

benefactor, contributor

- ☑ **Syn.** philanthropist, patron
- ★ **Ant.** recipient
- ⌘ Donors should be tested for diseases before their blood is used for transfusion.

**DORMANT**

at rest, inactive, in suspended animation

- ☑ **Syn.** inert, latent
- ★ **Ant.** active, awake
- ⌘ The volcano seemed dormant, but a devastating eruption was brewing deep beneath.

**DORSAL** Adj.

belonging to the back side, posterior, tail

- ✎ The sight of a shark's dorsal fin above the water is enough to clear the sea of swimmers.

**DOSSIER** N.

a bundle of documents relating to a person, a brief

- ☑ **Syn.** file, record, report, database
- ✎ The secret service probably has a dossier on all of us.

**DOTE** V.

to show excessive love, to treasure

- ✎ People tend to dote on their grandchildren.

**DOUBLE-ENTENDRE**

(*DOUBLE AN TRANDA*) N.

phrase with two meanings: one of them indecent

- ✎ Hindi films teem with double-entendres.

**DOUGHTY** Adj.

valiant, dauntless, fearless

- ☑ **Syn.** tough, feisty, indomitable
- \* **Ant.** feeble, weak, frail, delicate
- ✎ Tilak, the doughty nationalist, put up his case vehemently in the court.

**DOUR** (*DOOR*) Adj.

obstinate, sullen, morose, harsh, stubborn

- ☑ **Syn.** sour, stern, grim, severe, gloomy
- \* **Ant.** kindly, gently, nicely
- ✎ The perpetual dour expression on someone's face can be quite irritating.

**DOWDY** Adj.

slovenly, untidy

- ☑ **Syn.** drab, plain, dated, dull, dreary
- \* **Ant.** chic, stylish, attractive, elegant
- ✎ Physical inefficiency and lack of agility makes a person dowdy.

**DOWRY**

money or property given by a bride's family to the groom's family on the occasion of marriage

- ✎ Her parents were wealthy enough, but Sonal refused to marry anyone who demanded dowry.

**DRAB** N.

a dull colour, dullness, monotonous colour

- ☑ **Syn.** plain, dowdy, dreary, dingy
- \* **Ant.** interesting, attractive, appealing
- ✎ The drab surroundings of an orphanage need to be changed.

**DRAFT** (v)

to plan, outline, to recruit

(n) – rough sketch, outline

- ☑ **Syn.** blueprint, conscript
- \* **Ant.** final version
- ✎ The boys were drafted into the army when they turned 18.

**DRIBBLE** V., N.

to fall in small drops, move a ball by repeated taps or kicks

- ☑ **Syn.** trickle, trip, ooze, seep, salivate
- ✎ The dribbling gains of economic reforms proved to be too slow for a populace impatient for results.
- ✎ David Beckham is adept at dribbling the ball.

**DRUDGERY** N.

a very hard, boring work; uninteresting toil

- ☑ **Syn.** labour, hard work, toil, chore
- ✎ Electronic information retrieval will remove much of the drudgery of research and leave time for the more interesting bits.

**DUBIOUS** Adj.

doubtful, debatable, disputable, equivocal, questionable

- ☑ **Syn.** uncertain, unsure, undecided
- ✎ The dubious credentials of the politician will make interesting scoop material.

**DUPE** V., N.

to deceive others, to trick

- ☑ **Syn.** fool, trick, deceive, con
- ✎ The girls were duped by drug smugglers into carrying heroin for them.

**DUPLICITY** N.

double-dealing, hypocrisy, deception

- ☑ **Syn.** deceit, dishonesty, disloyalty
- \* **Ant.** frankness, integrity, candor
- ✎ Duplicity is the order of the day and if you are honest and straightforward you are in danger.

**DURABILITY** – strength, sturdiness

- ☑ **Syn.** imperishability, permanence
- \* **Ant.** perishability, fragility
- ✎ The all-terrain pickup truck was built for durability.

**DURATION**

period of time that something lasts

- ☑ **Syn.** span, time scale
- ✎ Devi was seasick in her cabin for the entire duration of the voyage.

**DURESS** N.

imprisonment, constraint

- ☑ **Syn.** pressure, force, threat, coercion
- \* **Ant.** persuasion, influence, urging
- ✎ Signing a document under duress would make it null and void.

**DWINDLE** V.

depreciate, devalue, diminish

- ☑ **Syn.** decrease, decline, fall, drop
- \* **Ant.** increase, add to, augment, boost
- ✎ Dwindling currency reserves sent alarm bells ringing in the government.

**DYSPHORIA** N.

morbid restlessness, uneasiness, depression and discontent

- ✎ His dysphoria knew no bounds when he learnt that his friend had managed to get the promotion.