

**to-pos-sum** (ə pās'am) *n.*, *pl.* -sums, -sum: see PLURAL, II, D, 1 [*<* AmInd. (Algonquian) name, lit., white beast] 1. any of several American marsupials (family Didelphidae); esp., the American (or Virginian) opossum, a small, omnivorous, tree-dwelling mammal (*Didelphis virginiana*), with a rat-like, prehensile tail, the female of which carries its young in a pouch: it is active at night and pretends to be dead when trapped 2. any of various Australian phalangers



**OPOSSUM**  
(12-20 in. long; tail 10-21 in. long)

**opossum shrimp** a shrimplike crustacean (order Mysidacea), the female of which carries her eggs in a pouch between the legs

**opp.** 1. opposed 2. opposite

**Op-pen-heim** (əp'n hīm') *E(dward)* Phillips 1866-1946; Eng. novelist

**Op-pen-heim-er** (əp'n hīm'mər), J(ulius) Robert 1904-1967; U.S. nuclear physicist

**op-pli-dan** (əp'lī dən) *adj.* [*L. oppidanus < oppidum, town*] of a town; urban — *n.* a person living in a town

**op-pli-late** (əp'lī lāt') *vt.* -lar'ed, -lar'ing [*<* *L. oppilatus*, pp. of *oppilare*, to stop up < *ob-* (see *OB-*) + *pilare*, to ram down < *pilum*, pestle] [*Rare*] to block or obstruct (the pores, bowels, etc.) — **op-pli-la'tion** *n.*

**op-po-nen-cy** (ə pō'nən sē) *n.* opposition; resistance

**op-po-nent** (ə pō'nənt) *n.* [*<* *L. opponens*, pp. of *opponere < ob-* (see *OB-*) + *ponere*, to place: see *POSITION*] a person who opposes; person against one in a fight, game, debate, argument, etc.; adversary — *adj.* 1. [*Rare*] opposite, as in position 2. opposing; adverse; antagonistic 3. *Anat.* bringing parts into opposition; said of a muscle

**SYN.**—**opponent**, an unemotional word, refers to anyone who is opposed to one, as in a fight, game, debate, etc.; **antagonist** implies more active opposition, especially in a struggle for control or power; **adversary** usually suggests actual hostility in the conflict; **enemy** may imply actual hatred in the opponent and a desire to injure, or it may simply refer to any member of the opposing group, nation, etc., whether or not there is personal animosity or hostility involved; **foe**, now a somewhat literary synonym for **enemy**, connotes more active hostility — **ANT.** ally, confederate

**op-por-tune** (əp'ər tōōn', -tyōōn') *adj.* [*ME. < MFr. < L. opportunus*, lit., at or before the port < *ob-* (see *OB-*) + *portus*, PORT] 1. right for the purpose; fitting in regard to circumstances; said of time 2. happening or done at the right time; seasonable; well-timed; timely — **SYN.** see **TIMELY** — **op-por-tune'ly** *adv.* — **op-por-tune'ness** *n.*

**op-por-tun-ism** (-iz'm) *n.* [*<* prec., after *Fr. opportunisme*] the practice or policy of adapting one's actions, judgments, etc. to circumstances, as in politics, in order to further one's immediate interests, without regard for basic principles or eventual consequences — **op-por-tun-ist** *n.*, *adj.* — **op-por-tun-is'tic** *adj.* — **op-por-tun-is'ti-cal-ly** *adv.*

**op-por-tu-ni-ty** (əp'ər tōōn'ə-tē, -tyōōn'-) *n.*, *pl.* -ties [*ME. opportunū < OFr. opportunū < L. opportunus < opportunus*; see **OPPORTUNE**] 1. a combination of circumstances favorable for the purpose; fit time 2. a good chance or occasion, as to advance oneself

**op-pos-a-ble** (ə pō'zə b'l) *adj.* 1. that can be opposed 2. that can be placed opposite something else — **op-pos'a-bil'i-ty** *n.*

**op-pose** (ə pōz') *vt.* -posed', -pos'ing [*ME. opposen < OFr. opposer*, altered (after *poser*: see *POSE*) < *L. opponere*: see *OB-* & *POSITION*] 1. to set against; place opposite, in balance or contrast 2. to contend with in speech or action; resist; withstand — *vi.* to act in opposition — **op-pose'r** *n.*

**SYN.**—**oppose** implies offensive action taken against something that threatens or interferes with one; **resist** implies defensive action taken against something that is already in active opposition to one [one *opposes* legislative action under consideration, one *resists* a measure already passed by refusing to comply with it]; **withstand** usually implies resistance that successfully thwarts or frustrates the attack [can they *withstand* the new onslaught?]

— **ANT.** submit, succumb, comply

**op-po-site** (əp'ōzīt) *adj.* [*ME. < OFr. < L. oppositus*, pp. of *opponere*: see *OB-* & *POSITION*] 1. set against, facing, or back to back; at the other end or side; in a contrary position or direction (often with *to*) 2. characterized by hostility or resistance 3. different in every way; exactly contrary; antithetical 4. *Bot.* a) growing in pairs, but separated by a stem b) having one part on the same radius as another, as a stamen in front of a petal — *n.* anything opposed or opposite — *adv.* on opposing sides or in an opposite position — *prep.* 1. fronting; across from 2. *Theater* in a complementary role (of the opposite sex) to [he played *opposite* her] — **op-po-site-ly** *adv.* — **op-po-site-ness** *n.*

**SYN.**—**opposite** is applied to things that are symmetrically opposed in position, direction, etc. [they sat at *opposite* ends of the table]; **contrary** adds to this connotations of conflict or antagonism [they hold *contrary* views]; **antithetical** implies diametrical opposition so that the contrasted things are as far apart or as different as is possible [our interests are completely *antithetical*]; **reverse** applies to that which moves or faces in the opposite direction [the *reverse* side of a fabric]; **antonymous** is

used specifically of words that are so opposed that each contradicts, reverses, or negates the other (see *ANTONYM*)

**opposite number** a person with reference to a comparable position, rank, etc. in a place, organization, or situation

**op-po-si-tion** (əp'ōzish'ən) *n.* [*ME. < L. oppositio < opponere*; see **OPPOSITE**] 1. the act of opposing; condition; resistance; contradiction; etc. 2. any person, group, or thing that opposes 3. a political party opposing the government 4. a check on, the party in power 4. *Astron.* the position of two heavenly bodies when they differ by 180°; esp., the position of a planet when either is on the opposite side of the sun 5. *Law* the refusal of a creditor to release under the bankruptcy law

propositions having the same subject matter but differing in quality, quantity, or both — **op-po-si-tion-ist** *n.*, *adj.*

**op-press** (ə pres') *vt.* [*ME. oppresen < OFr. opprimer < ML. opprēssare < L. opprēssus*, pp. of *opprēssare* against < *ob-* (see *OB-*) + *premere*, to press heavily on the mind, spirits, or senses of] 1. to keep down by the cruel or unjust authority; rule harshly; tyrannize over; crush; trample down b) to overpower; to see **WRONG** — **op-pres'sor** *n.*

**op-pres-sion** (ə presh'ən) *n.* [*ME. < OFr. < L. oppressio*] 1. an oppressing or being oppressed 2. a feeling of being weighed down by worries or problems; physical or mental distress

**op-pres-sive** (ə pres'iv) *adj.* [*ME. < OFr. < L. opprēssivus*; see **OPPRESS**] 1. hard to put up with; causing great discomfort or fatigue 2. cruelly tyrannical 3. weighing heavily on the mind or senses; distressing — **SYN.** see **ONEROUS** — **op-pres'sive-ness** *n.*

**op-pro-bri-ous** (ə prō'brē'əs) *adj.* [*ME. < OFr. < L. opprobrius*] 1. expressing opprobrium; abusive 2. [*Now Rare*] deserving opprobrium; disgraceful

**op-pro-bri-ous-ly** *adv.* — **op-pro-bri-ous-ness** *n.*

**op-pro-bri-um** (-əm) *n.* [*L. < opprobare*, to disgrace < *ob-* (see *OB-*) + *probrum*, a disgrace < *pro-* (see *PRO-*) + *bris*, base of *ferre*, BEAR] 1. the disgrace or infamy of a conduct viewed as grossly shameful 2. anything that causes shame or disgrace 3. reproachful contempt regarded as inferior

**op-pugn** (ə pyōōn') *vt.* [*ME. oppugnere < L. oppugnare < ob-* (see *OB-*) + *pugnare < pugnā*, a fight: see **PUGN**] to oppose with argument; criticize adversely; question; controvert — **op-pugn'er** *n.*

**op-pug-nant** (ə pug'nənt) *adj.* [*L. oppugnans*, **OPPUGN**] [*Rare*] hostile; antagonistic — **op-pug-nant-ly** *adv.*

**Ops** (əps) [*L. lit., strength, riches; for base see Ops*, the wife of Saturn and goddess of the identified with the Greek goddess Rhea

**op-sis** (əp'sis) [*Gr. -opsis < opsis*, a sight < *opsis*, a combining form meaning sight or view] [*Stereoscopic*] [*Rare*] the ratio of the number of bacteria destroyed by phagocytes in an individual serum to the number destroyed in a normal blood serum — **op-sis-ant** *adj.* [*L. op'sis*, a sight < *opsis*, a combining form meaning sight or view] [*Stereoscopic*] [*Rare*] the ratio of the number of bacteria destroyed by phagocytes in an individual serum to the number destroyed in a normal blood serum — **op-sis-ant** *adj.* [*L. op'sis*, a sight < *opsis*, a combining form meaning sight or view] [*Stereoscopic*] [*Rare*] the ratio of the number of bacteria destroyed by phagocytes in an individual serum to the number destroyed in a normal blood serum — **op-sis-ant** *adj.* [*L. op'sis*, a sight < *opsis*, a combining form meaning sight or view] [*Stereoscopic*] [*Rare*] the ratio of the number of bacteria destroyed by phagocytes in an individual serum to the number destroyed in 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