

ROOT OF THE DAY

mit / miss — Latin *mittere, missum* — to send, to let go · “send; let go”

remit — re- (back) + mit (send) = to send back → to send a case back to a lower authority; as a noun, the area of authority sent to a body (a committee's remit)

remission — re- (back) + miss (let go) + -ion = a letting go → the reduction of a prisoner's sentence, or of a debt or penalty

omission — ob- (away) + miss (let go) + -ion = a letting go by → a failure to act; criminal law punishes an 'act or omission'

emissary — e- (out) + miss (sent) + -ary = one sent out → an agent sent on a diplomatic or official mission

intermittent — inter- (between) + mit (let go) = letting gaps come between → stopping and starting at intervals

manumission — manus (hand) + miss (let go) = a letting go from the hand → the formal release of a slave from bondage

compromise — com- (together) + pro- (forth) + miss (sent) = a mutual promise → a settlement in which each side gives up part of its claim

POWER WORDS

arrogate v.

“A committee cannot arrogate to itself a power that the notification constituting it never conferred.”

Meaning: to claim or seize a power or right without legal justification

Syn: to usurp · **Ant:** to relinquish

HOOK: ad- (to) + rogare (to ask): to ask for something for yourself, and then simply take it.

prevaricate v.

“Asked directly whether the grounds of arrest had been served, the officer began to prevaricate.”

Meaning: to speak or act evasively to avoid telling the whole truth

Syn: to equivocate · **Ant:** to speak candidly

HOOK: Latin *praevaricari*, to walk crookedly: a witness who prevaricates never walks a straight line to the answer.

abscond v.

“The court refused bail because the accused had absconded twice before.”

Meaning: to leave hurriedly and secretly, especially to avoid arrest or legal process

Syn: to flee · **Ant:** to surrender

HOOK: abs- (away) + condere (to put, hide): to put yourself away where the law cannot find you.

unequivocal adj.

“The Bench was unequivocal: the gravity of the offence cannot justify a breach of Article 22.”

Meaning: leaving no doubt; clear and unambiguous

Syn: categorical · **Ant:** ambiguous

HOOK: un- + aequus (equal) + vox (voice): not speaking with two equal voices at once.

gratuitous adj.

“The judgment criticised the gratuitous remarks made against the accused in the remand order.”

Meaning: uncalled for and without good reason; also, given free of charge

Syn: unwarranted · **Ant:** justified

HOOK: Latin *gratuitus*, freely given: a gratuitous remark is handed out free when nobody asked for it.

impute v.

“The law will impute knowledge of the defect to a company whose directors ignored repeated warnings.”

Meaning: to attribute a quality, fault or knowledge to someone, often by legal presumption

Syn: to ascribe · **Ant:** to absolve

HOOK: in- (into) + putare (to reckon): to reckon something into someone's account.

palpable adj.

“Where the error is palpable on the face of the record, the court may correct it in review.”

Meaning: so obvious that it can be easily perceived; plain

Syn: manifest · **Ant:** imperceptible

HOOK: Latin *palpare*, to touch: an error so plain you could almost touch it.

inveigh v.

“Opposition members continued to inveigh against the questionnaire as a tick-box exercise.”

Meaning: to protest or complain bitterly (usually 'inveigh against')

Syn: to rail against · **Ant:** to praise

HOOK: Latin *invehi*, to attack (literally, to be carried into): you charge into the target with words.

expropriate v.

“The State may expropriate land for a public purpose, but only under a law that provides for compensation.”

Meaning: (of the State) to take property from its owner, especially for public use

Syn: to confiscate · **Ant:** to restore

HOOK: ex- (out of) + proprius (one's own), as in property: to take something out of someone's ownership.

tendentious adj.

“A questionnaire that permits only 'yes' or 'no' answers risks producing tendentious results.”

Meaning: promoting a particular cause or point of view; biased

Syn: partisan · **Ant:** impartial

HOOK: From 'tendency': a tendentious report leans one way from the very first line.

attenuate v.

“Exemptions for dairy and sugar attenuate the gains that either side can claim from the trade pact.”

Meaning: to reduce the force, effect or value of something

Syn: to weaken · **Ant:** to intensify

HOOK: ad- + tenuis (thin), as in tenuous: to make something thinner and weaker.

CONFUSABLE PAIRS — DON'T MIX THESE UP

stationary vs **stationery**

stationary: not moving (adj.)

stationery: writing materials such as paper, pens and notebooks (n.)

TIP: stationERy is papER; stationARy means the vehicle sTays.

credible vs **credulous**

credible: believable; worthy of trust (adj.)

credulous: too ready to believe things; gullible (adj.)

TIP: A credible witness is believed; a credulous juror believes anything. -ible = can be; -ulous = too full of.

complement vs **compliment**

complement: a thing that completes or goes well with another (n./v.)

compliment: an expression of praise (n./v.)

TIP: A complEment complETes; a compliMent is what I like to hear.

continual vs **continuous**

continual: happening repeatedly, with breaks in between (adj.)

continuous: going on without any break (adj.)

TIP: Continual complaints come again and again; a continuous hum never stops.

Continuous = unbroken.

imply vs **infer**

imply: to suggest something without saying it directly (v.)

infer: to draw a conclusion from evidence or hints (v.)

TIP: The speaker implies; the listener infers. The passage implies, the reader infers.

IDIOMS & ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTION



Idioms in context

- **put the cart before the horse** — to do things in the wrong order
"Circulating a finished questionnaire before members had discussed it put the cart before the horse."
- **rubber-stamp** — to approve something automatically, without proper scrutiny
"Critics feared that the magistrate's approval would become a rubber-stamp for every police request for re-arrest."
- **a fig leaf** — something used to conceal an embarrassing fact or a lack of substance
"The consultation was dismissed as a fig leaf for decisions that had already been taken."
- **the tip of the iceberg** — a small, visible part of a much larger problem
"Reported adverse drug reactions are only the tip of the iceberg, since most patients never report them."

One-word substitution

- a person who has escaped or is fleeing from the law → **fugitive**
- the offence of marrying while a lawful spouse is still living → **bigamy**
- the condition of dying without having made a valid will → **intestacy**
- a court order directing a party to do, or refrain from doing, a specific act → **injunction**
- the killing of a king or queen → **regicide**

WORDS IN THE WILD — FROM TODAY'S NEWSPAPER

- **countenance** — (verb) to tolerate, approve or permit something; 'cannot be countenanced' = cannot be allowed
"The Bench rejected this squarely: a violation of the Constitution 'cannot be countenanced' and has to be dealt with strictly, and this is not dependent on the nature or gravity of the offence." — CLAT Gurukul Daily Brief, 22 Sep 2026 — 'SC re-arrest guidelines and Article 22'
- **furnish** — (verb) to supply or provide formally, especially information or documents
"They must first furnish the grounds of arrest in writing and then obtain the approval of the Judicial Magistrate." — CLAT Gurukul Daily Brief, 22 Sep 2026 — 'SC re-arrest guidelines and Article 22'
- **fetter** — (noun, usually plural) a restraint or check on freedom of action; literally, a chain for the ankles
"The Punjab government argued that, given the gravity of the allegation, the police 'should not face fetters'." — CLAT Gurukul Daily Brief, 22 Sep 2026 — 'SC re-arrest guidelines and Article 22'
- **transient** — lasting only for a short time; impermanent
"At its heart, he said, is a relationship between a father and a son, but it is also about letting go, about one's relationship with home and about the transient nature of life — emotions he described as universal." — CLAT Gurukul Daily Brief, 22 Sep 2026 — 'Naga film Angh wins the TIFF Platform Prize'

LEGAL & LATIN TERMS EVERY ASPIRANT MUST KNOW

- **ad valorem** — according to value; a duty or tax charged as a percentage of the value of the goods
- **ignorantia juris non excusat** — ignorance of the law is no excuse (contrast: a mistake of fact can be a defence)
- **delegatus non potest delegare** — a delegate cannot further delegate; a power entrusted to one authority must be exercised by it
- **expressio unius est exclusio alterius** — the express mention of one thing excludes others not mentioned
- **generalia specialibus non derogant** — a general provision does not override a special provision on the same subject
- **noscitur a sociis** — a word is known by the company it keeps; its meaning is read from the words around it
- **ex turpi causa non oritur actio** — no action arises from a base or illegal cause; a court will not help a claimant who founds a claim on an illegal act
- **nemo debet bis vexari pro una et eadem causa** — no one should be troubled twice for the same cause; the basis of the rule against double jeopardy
- **actio personalis moritur cum persona** — a personal action dies with the person
- **falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus** — false in one thing, false in everything; Indian courts do not apply it and instead separate the truth from the falsehood in testimony
- **salus populi suprema lex** — the welfare of the people is the supreme law
- **in pari delicto** — in equal fault; where both parties share the wrong, the law leaves the loss where it falls

PRACTICE DRILL

1. 'Remission', 'omission' and 'emissary' share a root meaning:
A) to hold · B) to send or let go · C) to carry · D) to speak
2. A committee that 'arrogates' a power to itself:
A) delegates it to a sub-committee · B) refuses to exercise it · C) claims it without legal authority · D) exercises it only in emergencies
3. In 'a violation of the Constitution cannot be countenanced', the word 'countenanced' means:
A) tolerated or permitted · B) calculated · C) recorded · D) appealed against
4. An accused who has 'absconded' has:
A) confessed to the offence · B) been released on bail · C) appealed against conviction · D) fled secretly to avoid legal process
5. A court refuses to enforce a contract to share the profits of smuggling. The maxim that best supports the court is:
A) ad valorem · B) ex turpi causa non oritur actio · C) noscitur a sociis · D) salus populi suprema lex
6. Choose the correct sentence:
A) A notebook in Gaza now costs five times what it did, a stationery trader said. · B) The stationary shop sold pens and notebooks. · C) The truck remained stationery at the border for a week. · D) She bought new stationary for the examination.
7. An official who answers a direct question evasively, to avoid telling the whole truth, is said to:
A) inveigh · B) impute · C) expropriate · D) prevaricate
8. If a speaker suggests something without stating it and the listener draws the conclusion, then:
A) the speaker infers and the listener implies · B) both imply · C) the speaker implies and the listener infers · D) both infer
9. A report described as 'tendentious' is one that is:
A) biased in favour of a particular view · B) brief and factual · C) written by a committee · D) legally binding
10. The approval of a senior authority that is given automatically, without any real scrutiny, is called a:
A) red line · B) rubber-stamp · C) fig leaf · D) watershed

Answer key: 1-B · 2-C · 3-A · 4-D · 5-B · 6-A · 7-D · 8-C · 9-A · 10-B

ETYMOLOGY TRAIL

Today's words are sent out from Latin *mittere*, to send or let go. An emissary is one sent out; an omission lets a duty slip by; remission lets go of part of a sentence; and a committee must stay within its remit instead of trying to **arrogate** powers it was never given. When the Supreme Court was **unequivocal** that a breach of Article 22 cannot be countenanced, it refused to let the police **prevaricate**, and told them to furnish the grounds of arrest in writing first. Magistrates must not rubber-stamp arrest, because a fetter on police power is the price of personal liberty, and liberty is no transient favour.

