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adjustable, *adj.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /ə'dʒʌstəbl/, U.S. /ə'dʒəstəb(ə)l/

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: Formed within English, by derivation. **Etymons:** ADJUST *v.*², -ABLE *suffix*.

Etymology: < ADJUST *v.*² + -ABLE *suffix*.

Capable of being adjusted (in various senses of the verb); *esp.*
capable of being altered or modified.

- 1768 J. STONHOUSE *Universal Restitution farther Defended* viii. 130 The evils resulting from the permissive will of God, being..all adjustable in the purposed operation of his aionian kingdom [etc.].
- 1775 N. MASKELYNE in *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) **65** 500 Which wanted nothing to make it an excellent instrument but to have the plumb-line made adjustable.
- 1795 SIR W. HERSCHEL in *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) **85** 388 The plate on the west is fixed, but that on the east is adjustable.
- 1832 C. BABBAGE *Econ. Machinery & Manuf.* iii. 23 The opening of the valve..being adjustable at the will of the engine man.
- 1869 R. F. BURTON *Explor. Highlands Brazil* II. 231 Two picks working in slot or cradle, with a slot-joint adjustable to the piston.
- 1900 *Illustr. London News* 25 Aug. 291/2 (*advt.*) Adjustable Bath Chair or Spinal Carriage.
- 1910 *Bankers Mag.* May 766/1 The interest on mortgages is adjustable.
- 1946 *Sun* (Baltimore) 7 Oct. 2/5 Sales of bronze and copper screen cloth were allowed on an adjustable prices basis.
- 2001 *Pract. Householder* Jan. 31/3 Table lamps, floor lamps, and adjustable anglepoise lights are good investments.

COMPOUNDS

adjustable pitch *n.* a pitch of a propeller or screw which can be adjusted when it is at rest; frequently *attributive*.

- 1858 *Abridgements Specif. Marine Propulsion* Index 322/1 Blades with adjustable pitch.
- 1909 *Car* 5 May 451/1 Look to your propeller which..has an adjustable pitch.

- 1934 *Flight* 15 Feb. 156/1 The airscrews are of the three-bladed adjustable-pitch type.
- 1961 M. G. SAY *Electr. Engineer's Ref. Bk.* (ed. 10) II. 61 A particular type of this propeller turbine is known as the Kaplan, and here the blades have an adjustable pitch enabling them to accommodate themselves to a wide range of operating conditions.
- 2009 V. NELSON *Wind Energy* vi. 116 The three methods of regulating output are passive stall, where the wind turbine operates at fixed rotational speed with fixed-pitch blades; active stall, where the wind turbine operates at fixed rotational speed with adjustable pitch; and variable pitch, where the wind turbine operates at variable rotation speed with adjustable pitch blades.

adjustable-rate *adj.* chiefly *U.S.* designating a mortgage or other loan having an interest rate which may be modified in response to economic conditions; of or relating to such a loan; = *variable-rate adj.* at VARIABLE *adj.* and *n.* Additions.

- 1939 *N.Y. Times* 15 Apr. 30/5 The Greater New York Saving Bank of Brooklyn yesterday announced that it had put into effect a new 'adjustable rate plan' for preferred mortgage loans.
- 1975 *Hartford (Connecticut) Courant* 31 Oct. 67/2 Society for Saving to offer adjustable rate mortgages.
- 1995 *New Republic* 20 Mar. 19/1 Swaps—deals in which a company that holds fixed-rate debt exchanges interest payments with another company, which owes money on an adjustable-rate loan.

adjustable spanner *n.* a spanner with a jaw which can be adjusted to grip bolts, nuts, etc., of different sizes; = MONKEY WRENCH *n.* 1.

- 1866 *Alphabet. Index of Patentees & Applic. for Patents of Invention 1865* 217 A combined adjustable spanner, tube cutter and pipe wrench.
- 1914 H. M. ADAM & J. H. EVANS *Metal-Work* II. xiii. 115 An adjustable spanner will also be found very useful.
- 1984 T. PETTIT *Metalwork Made Simple* xvi. 181 Adjustable spanners..are sturdy tools, having the advantage of rapid adjustment with the thumb of the hand holding the wrench.
- 2000 P. VINCENT *Mountain Bike Maintenance* 51/1 (*caption*) To get maximum leverage from an adjustable spanner, hold the tool at its end.

adjustable wrench *n.* *North American* = MONKEY WRENCH *n.* 1; cf. *adjustable spanner n.*

- 1852 *Jrnl. Franklin Inst.* July 8 List of American Patents... For an Improved Adjustable Wrench.
- 1943 *McKean County Democrat (Smethport, Pa.)* 2 Sept. 2/6 Every farmer has a hammer and a saw, a couple of screwdrivers, a pair of pliers and an adjustable wrench in his tool shed.
- 2002 *Amer. Woodworker* June 65 Use a handscrew or an adjustable wrench to twist the stretcher into position, if needed.

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