



# THE COMPACT OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

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## SECOND EDITION

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# THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

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## The New Oxford English Dictionary Project

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7. Mus. ? = meantone temperament (see MEAN TONE).

1811 BUSBY *Dict. Mus.* (ed. 3). *Modification*, a term applied to that temperament of the sounds of instruments whose tones are fixed, which gives a greater degree of perfection to one key than another, and produces between them a characteristic difference, as in organs, harpsichords, and piano-fortes.

**modification** (modifi'keiʃənəl), *a.* [f. MODIFICATION + -AL.] Having the nature of, or arising from, modification. So *modificationally* *adv.*

1908 *Athenaeum* 11 July 47/2 Many of the unfit are only *modificationally* unfit. 1924 J. A. THOMPSON in *Glasgow Herald* 19 July 4 When we put aside these parasitic diseases and *modificationally* diseases, there remain those that may be called constitutional.

**modificative** (modifi'keiʃənəl), *a.* and *sb.* [ad. med.L. *modificativus*, f. ppl. stem of L. *modificare* to MODIFY; see -ATIVE. Cf. F. *modificatif*, -ive (18th c.).] *a. adj.* That has the property of modifying. *b. sb.* Something that modifies; a modifying word or clause.

1661 FULLER *Worthies*, Gen. (1662) i. 59 The Spirit of Truth it self, where Numbers and Measures are concerned, useth the aforesaid *Modificatives* ['almost', 'very nigh']. 1685 H. MORE *Paraphr. Prophet.* 487 And though it be true that the Settlement of the Reformation is a further Perfection added thereto, yet that is but a *modificative* Addition to it, but that which is the main, the form and substance of the Reformation was before. 1727-41 CHAMBERS *Cycl.* *Modificative*, something that *modifies*, or gives a thing a certain manner of being. *Ibid.* This last kind of words, which serve to *modify* nouns and verbs, since they have no general name in the common grammars, he [Burrer] chuses to call *modificatives*. 1832 BENTHAM *Language Wks.* 1843 VIII. 317/2 In this case put the *modificative* clause before the clause intended to be modified.

**modifier** (modifi'keiʃən(r)), *rare.* [a. L. *modificator*, agent-n. f. *modificare* to MODIFY.] = MODIFIER. Also (repr. Sp. *modificador*) a member of a political party in Spain c1823 which advocated the modification as opposed to the abolition of the constitution.

1822 *Westm. Rev.* Apr. 325 The drift of this gross policy was too obvious; yet with it he aimed to satisfy the *modifiers*. 1889 *Science* 8 Nov. 318/1 Sulphuretted hydrogen, a *modifier* of the skin and of mucous membranes.

**modificatory** (modifi'keiʃən(r)), *a.* [f. prec. + -ORY.] Modifying; tending to modify.

1822 *Westm. Rev.* Apr. 318 The *modificatory* party in Spain believed that the epoch of triumph was now at hand. 1861 MAX MÜLLER *Sci. Lang.* Ser. i. viii. 297 In Turkish... all *modificatory* syllables are placed at the end of the root. 1864 *Ibid.* Ser. ii. vii. (1868) 326 Here 'j' and 'dh' are clearly *modificatory* letters.

**modified** (modifaid), *ppl. a.* [f. MODIFY v. + -ED.] In senses of the verb: Limited, altered, qualified, etc. *modified logic*: see quot 1837-8. *Modified Standard (English)*: see quot. 1934.

1496 SIR G. HAVE *Law Arms* (S.T.S.) 126 Vassallia ar behaldyn to thair baroun in speciale jurisdiction modifit, and to the king in generale. 1668 *Min. Baron Crt. Stutchill* (1905) 53 Three pounds seven shillings for the modified pryce thereof. 1690 LOCKE *Hum. Und.* ii. xviii. 57 The names, which in several arts have been... applied to several complex ideas of modified actions. 1837 DISRAELI *Venetia* ii. 11, An uncertain light, or rather modified darkness, that seemed the day. 1857-8 SIR W. HAMILTON *Logic* iv. (1860) I. 60 What I have called *Modified Logic* is identical with what Kant and other philosophers have denominated *Applied Logic* (*Angewandte Logik*, *Logica applicata*). 1845 *Proc. Philol. Soc.* II. 166 The modified word is not, as with us, the predicate or qualifying noun, but the subject or leading one. 1845 McCULLOCH *Taxation* i. i. (1852) 61 Proprietors of estates subject to a variable land-tax have, in fact, only a *modified* right of property in them. 1868 OUSELEY *Harmony* xv. 175 We may also take the third below... and thus get a new bass, or as it is called, a *modified* bass. 1866 HUXLEY *Physiol.* xii. (1869) 314 The crystalline lens is composed of fibres which are the modified cells of the epidermis. 1913 H. C. WYLD in *Mod. Lang. Teaching* IX. 262/2 London English is a totally different thing from Received Standard: it is merely one of the many provincialisms, such as are heard in large cities, which fall under the designation of *Modified Standard*. 1914 — *Short Hist. English* ix. 236 It seems probable that the influence of *Modified Standard*, that is, of forms of English differentiated out of Received Standard by factors of social isolation, will have to be admitted and studied in the future. 1924 — in *S.P.E. Tract* xxxix. 604 Thousands of persons speak a form of English which is neither a local dialect, nor what some would call 'good English'. For this latter type... I proposed the term *Modified Standard*... to cover all the various types of English... which... while they adhere, on the whole, to the Standard, especially in accidence and syntax, are nevertheless more or less deeply affected, either by provincialism, or by vulgarity, in pronunciation. 1940 J. H. JAGGER *English in Future* i. 15 Changes (in Standard English)... have been mainly due to the influence of the various forms of *Modified Standard*—to accept Professor Wyld's terms—upon each other and upon Received Standard.

**modifier** (modifi'keiʃən(r)), *f.* [f. MODIFY v. + -ER.] 1. a. One who or a thing which modifies (see the vb.).

1883 *Acts Gen. Assemb. Ch. Scoll.* (Maitland Cl.) II. 636 A request shall be made to the *modifiers* for that effect. 1987 *Ibid.* 726 The brethren agree, that certain of their number be adjoined with the Lords *Modifiers*, to perfyte the

assignations of this present year. 1682 H. MORE *Annot. Glanvill's Lux* O. 198 That universal Spirit of Nature is most certainly the Mover of the Matter of the World, and the Modifier thereof. 1757 HUME *Nat. Hist. Relig.* vi. in *Four Diss.* 47 That a limited deity... should in the end be represented as sovereign maker and modifier of the universe. 1860 MAURY *Phys. Geog.* (Low) xxi. 474 A powerful modifier of climate is the latent heat of vapour in the air. 1868 G. MACDONALD *R. Falconer* I. 243 We shall have... more modifiers and completers, and fewer inventors. 1890 Anthony's *Photogr. Bull.* III. 372 Colored media recommended as screens or modifiers of the light.

*b. Genetics.* Any gene which modifies the phenotypic expression of a gene at another locus.

1915 T. H. MORGAN et al. *Mechanism Mendelian Heredity* viii. 203 The F<sub>2</sub> from the crosses to self-color indicate that such *modifiers* are really present in the rats. 1919 *Jrnl. Exper. Zool.* XXVIII. 337 (heading) Specific *modifiers* of eosin eye color in *Drosophila melanogaster*. 1931 E. B. FORD *Mendelism & Evolution* iii. 49 If, however, another mutation controlling similar characters were to arise, such an old and ineffective gene might show itself as a 'specific modifier'. 1968 R. D. MARTIN tr. *Wickler's Mimicry in Plants & Animals* ii. 33 Such *modifier* genes can switch the other genes on or off or alter their functional level so as to improve the correspondence of the mimic with the model. 1971 LEVITAN & MONTAGU *Textbk. Human Genetics* xvi. 595 This [sc. gene interaction] is a very broad term and covers everything from genes whose interaction... is so intimate that they must be considered part of the same operating unit, to genes whose activities impinge only in a most indirect manner (and so are thought of as vague 'modifiers').

2. *spec. in Gram.* (see MODIFY v. 6). *a.* A word, phrase, or clause which modifies another.

1865 TYLOR *Early Hist. Man* ii. 26 A third construction [sc. of sentences] is common... the modifier after the modified. 1924 H. E. PALMER *Gram. Spoken Eng.* ii. 68 Possessives used as *Modifiers*. (Generally known as 'possessive adjectives'.) 1933 L. BLOOMFIELD *Lang.* xii. 194 A prepositional expression and an accusative expression... appearing in entirely different syntactic positions (e.g. as a modifier of verbs: *it beside John*, or of nouns: *the boy beside John*). 1961 R. B. LONG *Sentence & its Parts* 490 In the commonest type of syntactic combination, a word-or-multiple word unit, a head, combines with another or others, a modifier or modifiers, and determines the syntactic character of the total combination. 1970 G. C. LERSCHY *Survey Structural Ling.* vi. 107 *Modifiers*... such as grammatical number, or article, which are centripetal... indicate the value—singular or plural, definite or indefinite—of the particular element to which they are attached.

*b.* A phonetic sign or symbol which modifies a character.

1899 H. SWEET *Practical Study of Languages* iii. 21 Thus, if there is a special mark or modifier to express voice, the absence of that modifier necessarily implies breath. 1921 *Encycl. Brit.* XXI. 462/1 The Organic Alphabet especially makes a large use of 'modifiers'—characters which are added to the other symbols to indicate nasal, palatal, &c., modifications of the sounds represented by italic letters in the Narrow Romic transcription; thus (ln) = nasalized (l).

**modify** (modifai), *v.* Also 4-7 *modifie*, -fy(e). [a. F. *modifier* (14th c.), ad. L. *modificare*, -ari to limit, moderate, f. *mod-us* MODE: see -FY.]

†1. *trans.* To limit, restrain, keep within bounds and measure. *Obs.*

1390 GOWER *Conf.* III. 157 A king after the reule is holde To *modifie* and to adresee His yiftes upon such largesse That he mesure nocht excede. *Ibid.* 233 The reule of Policie, Wherof a king schal *modifie* The feischly lustes of nature. c1440 *Promp. Parv.* 341/1 *Modifyyn*, or settyng yn mene course of reasone.

†2. To appease, assuage. *Obs.*

1430-40 LYDG. *Bochas* ix. xxxi[i]. (1494) Gijib, Tyrauntys hertis thys vertue doth appee, *Modifyeth* their cruell fell wodenesse. 1433 — *St. Edmund* II. 857 Thus kan the lord... The rage of beestis appee and *modifie*. 1546 LANGLEY *Pol. Verg. De Invent.* i. xi. 21 b, (Orpheus) by the swetes of his armony delited and *modifed* the grosse hartis and rude myndes of men.

†3. *refl.* To control one's feelings. *Obs.*

1530 PALSGR. 630/2, I *modifye*, I temperate, *je me modifie*. What though he speke a haasty worde you muste *modifye* your selfe.

2. To alter in the direction of moderation or lenity; to make less severe, rigorous, or decided; to qualify, tone down, moderate. (Tends to merge in the wider sense 4.)

c1386 CHAUCER *Knt.'s T.* 1684 Wherfore to shapen þat they shal nat dye He wolde his purpos *modifye*. 1426 LYDG. *De Guil. Pilgr.* 24376, I... prayed hym... that he wolde... *modifeyn* his vengeance, and to with-drawe his lugement. c1480 HENRYSON *Test. Cress.* 299 The pane of Cressaid for to *modify*. 1509 HAWES *Past. Pleas.* xxxiv. (Percy Soc.) 174 Your hasty dome luke that ye *modify*. 1610 DONNE *Pseudo-martyr* 184 For so Mariana *modifies* his Doctrine, that the Prince should not execute any Clergy man, though hee deserue it. 1756 BURKE *Subl. & B.* iv. xxv, The great has terror for its basis; which, when it is *modified*, causes that emotion in the mind, which I have called *astonishment*. 1813 WELLINGTON in *Gurw. Desp.* (1837) X. 382 Upon the whole I conceive that it would be best for the court to *modify* their sentence. 1819 BYRON *Juan* ii. lxxii, They did their best to *modify* their case. 1859 LANG *Wand. India* 402 There is generally a light breeze to *modify* the heat. 1869 TOZER *Hight. Turkey* II. 264 In fairy tales... inconsistencies are... *modified* and softened down. 1873 MISS BRADDON *Milly Darrell* xii, I suppose that medicine was intended to *modify* those attacks of sickness from which she has suffered so much.

3. *a. Philos.* To determine (a substance or other entity) into a particular 'mode' or modes; to give (an object) its particular modality or form of being.

a1643 S. WARD in *Gale Crt. Gentiles* iv. iii. vi. 191 That the previous Concourse of God, as the first cause, doth according to its mode *modifie* and determine all the actions of second causes. 1678 GALE *Crt. Gentiles* iv. iii. vi. 190 He doth by a particular efficacious concourse so *modifie* and determine the entitative act, as that the natural specification and individuation thereof may be ascribed to him as the God of Nature. 1706 PHILLIPS (ed. Kersey), *Modif*... In Philosophy, to give the Modality or manner of Existence. 1727-41 CHAMBERS *Cycl.* s.v. *Spinozism*. Whence it follows, that the substance *modified* by the square figure cannot be the same substance with that *modified* by the round figure.

†4. *b. gen.* To differentiate into a variety of forms; to distinguish or diversify by investing with specific characteristics. *Obs.* (merged in 4).

1669 HOLDER *Elem. Speech* 32 They ['letters'] *modif* and discriminate the Voice without appearing to discontinue it. 1690 LOCKE *Hum. Und.* ii. xviii. 53 Sounds... are *modified* by diversity of notes of different length put together, which make that complex idea called a tune. *Ibid.* 56 Some others of the simple ideas... have been thus *modified* to a great variety of complex ideas. 1698 FRYER *Acc. E. India* & P. 278 More than twice Seven Plates are differently *Modified* to invite the Palate to Luxury. 1704 NEWTON *Opticks* (1721) 101 And therefore the differences of these Colours from one another do not arise from the different Confinnes of Shadow, whereby Light is variously *modified*, as has hitherto been the Opinion of Philosophers. 1777 SIR W. JONES *Ess. Imit. Arts Poems*, etc. 207 As the passions are differently *modified* in different men.

4. To make partial changes in; to change (an object) in respect of some of its qualities; to alter or vary without radical transformation.

1780 BURKE *Corr.* (1844) II. 387, I confess I see no cause to change, or to *modify*, my opinion on that subject. 1791 FEARNE *Cont. Reminders* (ed. 4) I. 108 Words of limitation operate by reference to or connection with other words, and extend or *modify* the estate given by those other words. 1798 MALTHUS *Popul.* iii. vii. (1806) II. 211 Others employ themselves in *modifying* the raw materials of nature into the forms best suited to the gratification of man. 1834 *Tait's Mag.* I. 184/1 Measures of improvement so often *modified*, or, as the word is, 'modified' [by the House of Lords]. 1849 MACAULAY *Hist. Eng.* iii. 1. 321 There are, however, some important parts of his character still to be noted, which will greatly *modify* this estimate. 1863 H. COX *Instit.* i. iv. 18 The Crown must either assent to or reject bills in Parliament, but cannot *modify* them. 1878 HUXLEY *Physiogr.* xvii. 273 The agents which are now at work in *modifying* the crust of the earth.

*b. To alter so as to adapt (to).* *rare.*

1800 *Med. Jrnl.* III. 514 Every medical man... will know how to *modify* its dose and formula to the existing circumstances of his patient.

5. *Scots Law.* To assess, decree (a payment of money, a fine, costs); to award (a payment) to a person; *esp.* to determine the amount of a parish minister's stipend. †Also *absol.*

1457 *Sc. Acts Jas. II* (1814) II. 51/1 Vnder silk payne and vnlaue as be parone or lorde sall *modif*. 1524 *Extracts Aberdeen Reg.* (1844) I. 108 To pass and *modif* the provest and Johnne Colisonis expensis. 1539 *Ibid.* 160 The provest and bailzeis... *modifit* ane mendis for the said mysperonyng, as efter followis. 1569 *Acts Gen. Assemb. Ch. Scoll.* (Maitland Cl.) I. 164 Every Superintendent... shall *modif* the stipends, augment or diminish the same, as occasione shall serve. 1583 *Reg. Privy Council Scot.* III. 598 [The Lords of Council therefore] *modifit* to hir the summe of twentie schillingis to be paid to hir. 1632 LITWOW *Trans.* viii. 351, I received in compensation of my abuses... fifty Florentine Crowns of gold, being *modified* by the Duke him selfe. 1752 J. LOUTHIAN *Form of Process* (ed. 2) 118 May it therefore please your Lordship... to *modif* the Sum for which your Petitioners are to find Bail. 1754 *ERSKINE Princ. Sc. Law* (1809) 53 A commission of Parliament was appointed... for... *modifying* stipends to ministers out of the teinds. 1833 *Act 3 & 4 Will. IV* c. 46 §117 Such penalty... may be recovered by summary complaint to the sheriff... with such expenses therefor as shall be *modified* by him. 1838 W. BELL *Dict. Law Scot.* s.v. *Modification*, The stipend... must be *modified* in grain or virtual, and paid in money.

6. *Gram.* a. To limit or qualify the sense of (a word, phrase, or sentence).

1727-41 (see MODIFICATIVE sb.). 1797 *Encycl. Brit.* (ed. 3) VIII. 72/1 The usual effect of adjectives... is to *modify* or particularise a general term. 1845 *Encycl. Metrop.* I. 70/1 The adverb... is used to *modify* an adjective, or a verb, or another adverb.

*b. To change (a vowel) by 'umlaut'.*

1845 J. M. KEMBLE in *Proc. Philol. Soc.* II. 138 The short u continues to represent the Gothic u... where it has not been dilled into o, or modified by a following i or e into y.

7. *Cryst.* (See *Quot.*)

1823 H. J. BROOKE *Introd. Crystallogr.* 24 The new planes produced by decrements are denominated *secondary* planes, and the primary form, when altered in shape by the interference of secondary planes, is said to be *modified* on the edges or angles on which the secondary planes have been produced. *Ibid.* 96 Crystals rarely present themselves under their respective primary forms; they are usually *modified* by new planes, producing secondary crystals.

**modifying** (modifauŋ), *vbl. sb.* [-ING.] The action of the verb MODIFY.

1643 in *Dundee Charters* (1880) 86 The said Provost... shall compeir... and thair Judiciale consent to the *modifying* of the forsaid sowmes as ane constant yeirly stipend to thair persone. 1692 R. L'ESTRANGE *Fables* ccxv. 188 All this Descanting, and *Modifying* upon the Matter. a1853 W. JAY *Autobiogr.* xvii. (1855) 163 General principles of church-government, which will admit... of considerable *modifying* in their application.

'*modifying*, *ppl. a.* [-ING.] That modifies.

1793 BEDDOES *Math. Evid.* 145 Indeed, except as to the sound of a language, it is indifferent whether these *modifying* words are prefixed or suffixed. 1823 H. J. BROOKE *Introd. Crystallogr.* 113 When the *modifying* planes first



