

# Nota Bene: D

## D

**dasein:** being there  
**dalliance:** a lighthearted undertaking; carefree spending of time  
**dank:** damp and chilly  
**de novo:** anew  
**debacle:** utter collapse or rout  
**debauchery:** licentiousness; overindulgent sexual expression  
**debilitating:** weakening; sapping the strength of  
**debonair:** suave; sophisticated and charming  
**deduction:** inferring with necessity a particular conclusion from general premises  
**decadence:** characterized by declining moral standards  
**Decalogue:** ten words; The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17)  
**decan:** a group of three divisions (houses) in the twelve signs of the zodiac  
**decelerate:** to slow down  
**decimation:** almost complete destruction  
**decision theory:** the theory of how to make decisions under conditions of uncertain information  
**decorum:** social propriety; dignified conduct  
**decrepit:** enfeebled, as by old age  
**decry:** to criticize or condemn  
**deductive validity:** an inference is deductively valid when the premises cannot be true without the conclusion also being true  
**deduction:** to logically derive a conclusion or conclusions from some starting point or assumption  
**deescalate:** to diminish in size, intensity, or extent  
**defamation:** act of harming someone by libel or slander  
**defer:** to graciously submit to another's will; to delegate  
**degenerate:** having regressed or descended to a lower state; a person without any standards of morality  
**deja vu:** already seen; the experience of seeming to have seen or experienced a present event at some time in the past  
**deify:** to elevate to the level of divinity or godhood  
**deign:** to consider (an action) appropriate or suitable to one's station or reputation; to assent or condescend to something  
**delectable:** highly pleasing; enjoyable (especially of a food)  
**deleterious:** harmful or injurious  
**deliberate:** to think about an issue before reaching a decision  
**delineate:** to outline; to describe the primary features thereof  
**delusion:** an accepted (but undetected) falsehood  
**demagogue:** a leader who plays dishonestly on the prejudices and emotions of his followers  
**demarcate:** to establish the limits of  
**dementia:** a mental illness characterized by loss of reason  
**democracy:** rule of the people; modern democracies are often exercises in pragmatism  
**demographic:** relating to the statistical study of population  
**demure:** modest; reserved and shy in appearance  
**dernier ressort** (French): the last resort  
**denote:** to indicate or make clear  
**dénouement:** the final resolution of the intricacies of a plot  
**denunciation:** the act or example of denouncing; accusing another person of a specific misdeed  
**denying the antecedent:** a formal logical fallacy, so named so when the consequent *q* in a conditional

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argument is claimed to be false because the antecedent  $p$  is false. Symbolized as: given  $p \Rightarrow q$ , then  $\sim p \Rightarrow \sim q$ . This logical argument is not always true.

**deplorable:** extremely reproachful; worthy of censure

**depravity:** corruption, moral reprehensibility

**deprecate:** to belittle or make known one's disapproval of

**dereliction:** willful neglect; shirking of responsibility

**derisive:** expressing ridicule or scorn

**derivative:** imitating or borrowed from a particular source; in mathematics, the measure of velocity (or any type of change) at an instant

**desecrate:** to abuse the sacred character of a thing

**desiccate:** to dry out, to wither; to drain of vitality

**desideratum:** a thing to be desired

**despondency:** dejection, depression

**despotic:** oppressive and tyrannical

**desultory:** lacking in consistency, constancy, or visible order

**determinism:** the view that there is no contingency, for every event is necessary (according to some laws); thus the view that every event is the theoretically predictable consequence of antecedent causes

**deus ex machina:** an improbable solution, artificially introduced to resolve a difficulty or untangle a dramatic plot

**deviate:** to depart from a standard

**dexterous:** skillful

**diabolical:** devilish, evil

**diagnostic:** to evaluate the condition of a person or thing

**dialectic:** to arrive at a truthful conclusion by means of a logical argument

**diatribe:** abusive or bitter speech or writing

**dichotomy:** division into two halves, pairs, or sets

**didactic:** teaching; instruction with the purpose of establishing moral clarity

**dies:** day (daily)

**dieu et mon droit** (French): God and my right

**diffident:** hesitant, reserved, shy

**digress:** to wander from the main path or the main topic

**dilapidated:** to fall into disrepair

**dilatory:** likely to cause delay

**dilettante:** a dabbler, something who takes up an art, an activity, or a subject merely for amusement or in a desultory or superficial way

**diminution:** reduction or decrease due to outside influence

**ding-en-sich:** essence of a thing

**diplomacy:** the conduct of relations among nations

**dirge:** song or hymn of grief

**disabuse:** to correct a fallacy, to clarify

**disburse:** to pay out or distribute

**discern:** to detect, notice, or observe

**discombobulate:** to confuse or throw into an awkward predicament

**discomfort:** to cause to come into disorder

**disconcerting:** ruffled, upset

**discordant:** characterized by conflict

**discourse:** formal and orderly exchange of ideas, a discussion

**discredit:** to cause disbelief in the accuracy of some statement or the reliability of a person

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**discreet:** showing good judgment in speech and behavior  
**discrete:** separate, unconnected  
**discursive:** proceeding by reasoning or argument rather than intuition  
**disdain:** to treat with contempt  
**disgruntle:** to cause to become cross or discontented  
**disingenuous:** lacking in frankness, candor, or sincerity  
**disjunction:** a truth-functional connective meaning “or” and symbolized by a wedge  
**disjuncts:** the two logical sentences involved in a disjunction  
**disparage:** to speak or write debasingly of  
**disparity:** difference in quality or kind  
**dissemble:** to pretend, to simulate  
**disseminate:** to scatter across a broad spectrum; to spread far and wide  
**dissipate:** to spread out or scatter  
**dissolution:** the act of dissolving into fragments or parts  
**dissonance:** lack of musical harmony; lack of agreement between ideas  
**dissuade:** to convince to take alternate action  
**disport:** to play or frolic  
**distillation:** an essence or extract  
**diu:** by day (**diurnal**)  
**diverge:** to move in different directions; in mathematics, when an infinite series does not sum to a finite number  
**divide et impera:** divide and rule  
**division:** in logic, an informal fallacy in which a mistaken inference is drawn from the attributes of a whole to the attributes of the parts of the whole; the reverse of the fallacy of composition  
**docile:** easily taught  
**dogmatic:** holding firmly to a particular set of beliefs with little or no basis  
**dolt:** a stupid or foolish person  
**domesticate:** to make accustomed to home life  
**domicile:** a residence  
**dominus illuminatio mea:** may the Lord guide me  
**dormant:** temporarily inactive; as if asleep  
**dossier:** a collection of documents offering detailed information  
**droll:** wryly amusing  
**dröss:** something that is trivial or inferior; an impurity  
**dualism:** the general perspective that reality or man’s experience is properly interpreted by two different kinds of explanation, the one religious and the other non-religious; thus the endorsement of a sacred/secular distinction (this should be distinguished from the specific metaphysical doctrine given the same name that means the view that there are two ultimate and irreducible principles for explaining reality: mind and matter [body])  
**dubious:** doubtful, uncertain  
**dum licet utere:** while time is given, use it  
**dupe:** someone who is easily cheated  
**dyslexia:** unusual trouble with spelling or reading caused by a brain condition  
**dysphoria:** an unwell feeling (opposite of **euphoria**)