

# Nota Bene: N

## N

- nabob:** originally, a person who returned to Europe from India with great riches; a wealthy person who is accustomed to luxury
- nadir:** the point on the imaginary celestial sphere directly beneath a given position or observer (opposite of zenith); lowest point or point of greatest adversity or despair
- name:** grammatical category for a word that refers to or identifies an object
- nanosecond:** one billionth of a second; used to indicate the shortest conceivable period of time
- napalm:** a type of burning plastic used as a weapon in war
- narcissistic:** possessed by self-love
- narcolepsy:** the disorder of suddenly and unpredictably falling asleep
- narcoma:** a hazy state between sleep and wakefulness reminiscent of or signaling use of narcotics
- nascence:** beginning to exist or develop
- naturō abhorret a vacuō:** nature abhors a vacuum
- ne plus ultra:** the utmost extent; do not go beyond this point; the highest possible embodiment (of something)
- nebula:** a cloud of interstellar gas or dust; means “fuzzy”
- nebulous:** vague, cloudy or hazy
- nebulochastic:** hazy and confused
- necessary and sufficient conditions:** in causal reasoning, the meaning of “cause” where inferences are made both from cause to effect and from effect to cause; in deductive reasoning, two statements that are materially equivalent are necessary and sufficient conditions for one another, since they imply one another; i.e.,  $p$  “if and only if”  $q$  (in symbols,  $p$  iff  $q$  or  $p \Leftrightarrow q$ )
- necessity:** it *must* be the case that ...
- necrology:** a list of people who have recently died
- necromancy:** witchcraft; the supposed practice of gaining insight by means of communication with the dead
- negation:** denial; it is *not* the case that ...; symbolized by the tilde ( $\sim$ );  $\sim p$  means “it is not the case that  $p$ ”
- nefarious:** evil
- nem. con. or nem. dis.:** no one dissenting; unanimously
- nemesis:** an opponent motivated by revenge
- neolithic:** latter part of the so-called “Stone Age”; something so unsophisticated as to belong to a much earlier era
- neophyte:** a recent convert
- nepotism:** favoritism toward relatives in professional matters
- nether:** lower; removed
- neurology:** the study of the nervous system and its diseases
- nexus:** a linkage or connection
- niggardly:** stingy
- nirvana:** a point or state of spiritual perfection where one’s physical existence is beyond concern (a tenet of Buddhism)
- noblesse oblige:** nobility obligates; the moral obligation of those few who are leaders to lead
- nocturnal:** occurring during the night
- noisome:** putrid, fetid, noxious
- nolens volens:** whether willing or not (willy-nilly)
- nom de guerre** (French): wartime name; a name taken or bestowed during wartime
- nom de plume** (French): a literary title
- nomenclature:** a system of names for purposes of organization

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**nomina:** names

**nominalism:** the view that only particulars are real; universals are only a name given to an observable similarity

**non compos mentis:** not of a sound mind

**non sequitur:** a statement that does not follow logically from what preceded it

**nonchalance:** the quality of being unconcerned with worldly cares

**nonentity:** something that does not exist

**nonfeasance:** failure to perform (a given duty)

**nonpareil:** a person without parallel or equal

**nota bene:** take careful note (abbreviated N.B.)

**notorious:** famous, especially for evil actions or qualities

**noumena:** things apprehended by thought, independent of the senses

**nouveau riche** (French): someone recently wealthy; a description of someone who has recently gained an enormous amount of wealth, a wealth that brings with it a tactless or overbearing attitude

**novus ordo seclorum:** A New Order of the Ages (on the Great Seal of the United States)

**nox:** night (**nocturnal**)

**noxious:** harmful; injurious

**nubile:** sexually mature (i.e., prepared for marriage); used almost exclusively in reference to young women

**nugatory:** worthless or in vain

**nullibiety:** a state of being nowhere

**numerology:** the supposed practice of divining the future through analyzing the occult significance of numbers

**numismatic:** pertaining to coins, medals, paper money

**nunc aut nunquam:** now or never

