

# The Great Gatsby — Key Vocabulary

by F. Scott Fitzgerald

48 key English words, graded A2–C2 — each with a simple definition and an example. Learn them before you read, or review them after.

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## A2 words (10)

**abandon** /ə'bændən/

A2

the trait of lacking restraint or control

*“she danced with abandon”*

**abroad** /ə'brɔ:d/

A2

in a foreign country

*“markets abroad”*

**absence** /'æbsəns/

A2

the state of being absent

*“he was surprised by the absence of any explanation”*

**absolutely** /,æbsə'lʊtli/

A2

completely and without qualification

*“an absolutely magnificent painting”*

**accident** /'æksədənt/

A2

an unfortunate mishap

*“winning the lottery was a happy accident”*

**accompany** /ə'kæmpəni/

A2

be present or associated with an event or entity

*“French fries come with the hamburger”*

**accuse** /ə'kjuz/

A2

bring an accusation against

*“The neighbors accused the man of spousal abuse”*

**acknowledge** /æk'nɒlɪdʒ/

A2

declare to be true or admit the existence or reality or truth of

*“He admitted his errors”*

**actor** /'æktər/

A2

a theatrical performer

*"he's a principal actor in this affair"*

**actual** /'æktʃəwəl/

A2

presently existing in fact and not merely potential or possible

*"the predicted temperature and the actual temperature were markedly different"*

## **B1 words** (10)

**absolute** /'æbsə,lut/

B1

something that is conceived or that exists independently and not in relation to other things

*"no mortal being can influence the absolute"*

**abstract** /'æb,strækt/

B1

a concept or idea not associated with any specific instance

*"he loved her only in the abstract--not in person"*

**accidentally** /,æksə'dɛnəli/

B1

without advance planning

*"they met accidentally"*

**adapt** /ə'dæpt/

B1

make fit for, or change to suit a new purpose

*"Adapt our native cuisine to the available food resources of the new country"*

**adjust** /ə'dʒəst/

B1

alter or regulate so as to achieve accuracy or conform to a standard

*"Adjust the clock, please"*

**adjustment** /ə'dʒəstmənt/

B1

making or becoming suitable

*"an allowance for profit"*

**aggressive** /ə'grɛsɪv/

B1

having or showing determination and energetic pursuit of your ends

*"an aggressive businessman"*

**alarm** /ə'lɑ:m/

B1

fear resulting from the awareness of danger

*"I was horrified at the thought of being late for my interview"*

**alcohol** /'ælkə,hɒl/

B1

a liquor or brew containing alcohol as the active agent

*"alcohol (or drink) ruined him"*

**alert** /ə'lɜ:t/

B1

condition of heightened watchfulness or preparation for action

*"bombers were put on alert during the crisis"*

## B2 words (10)

**abnormal** /æb'nɔ:rməl/

B2

not normal

*"abnormal powers of concentration"*

**abound** /ə'baʊnd/

B2

be abundant or plentiful

*"The room abounded with screaming children"*

**abrupt** /ə'brʌpt/

B2

marked by sudden changes in subject and sharp transitions

*"abrupt prose"*

**abruptly** /ə'brʌptli/

B2

quickly and without warning

*"he stopped suddenly"*

**absent** /'æbsənt/

B2

go away or leave

*"He absented himself"*

**absorb** /əb'zɔ:rb/

B2

become imbued

*"The liquids, light, and gases absorb"*

**abstraction** /æb'strækʃən/

B2

a concept or idea not associated with any specific instance

*"he loved her only in the abstract--not in person"*

**absurd** /əb'sɜ:d/

B2

a situation in which life seems irrational and meaningless

*"The absurd is the essential concept and the first truth"*

**accelerator** /æk'sɛlə'reɪtər/

B2

a pedal that controls the throttle valve

*"he stepped on the gas"*

**accidental** /,æksə'dɛnəl/

B2

a musical notation that makes a note sharp or flat or natural although that is not part of the key signature

*"with an inadvertent gesture she swept the vase off the table"*

## C1 words (9)

**abortive** /ə'bɔ:tɪv/

C1

failing to accomplish an intended result

*"an abortive revolt"*

**accentuate** /æk'sɛntʃueɪt/

C1

to stress, single out as important

*"Dr. Jones emphasizes exercise in addition to a change in diet"*

**admiringly** /əd'maɪrɪŋli/

C1

with admiration

*"he looked at his wife admiringly"*

**affront** /ə'frɒnt/

C1

a deliberately offensive act or something producing the effect of deliberate disrespect

*"turning his back on me was a deliberate insult"*

**agonizingly** /'ægə,naɪzɪŋ,li/

C1

in a very painful manner

*"the progress was agonizingly slow"*

**ajar** /ə'dʒɑː/

C1

slightly open

*"the door was ajar"*

**ambiguously**

C1

in an ambiguous manner

*"this letter is worded ambiguously"*

**amorphous** /ə'mɔːrfəs/

C1

having no definite form or distinct shape

*"amorphous clouds of insects"*

**amputate** /'æmpjə,tet/

C1

remove surgically

*"amputate limbs"*

## C2 words (9)

**absently**

C2

in an absentminded or preoccupied manner

*"he read the letter absently"*

**abstractedly**

C2

in an absentminded or preoccupied manner

*"he read the letter absently"*

**accusingly** /ə'kjuzɪŋli/

C2

in an accusing manner

*"he looked at her accusingly"*

**adventitious**

C2

associated by chance and not an integral part

*"poetry is something to which words are the accidental, not by any means the essential form"*

**alertly** /ə'lɜːtli/

C2

in mentally perceptive and responsive way

*"she got through the day alertly, despite being on drugs"*

**apathetically**

C2

in an apathetic manner

*"she behaves apathetically these days"*

**appal**

C2

strike with disgust or revulsion

*"The scandalous behavior of this married woman shocked her friends"*

**aquaplane**

C2

a board that is pulled by a speedboat as a person stands on it and skims over the top of the water

*"the car aquaplaned"*

**blear**

C2

make dim or indistinct

*"The fog blurs my vision"*

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Read it along with audio — tap any word to hear it and see it highlighted in the sentence:

<https://readingcorner.uk/books/the-great-gatsby/vocabulary>