

Lesson 2

Care and Precision

Some tasks, such as dusting furniture or washing a car, can be performed quickly, while other tasks demand accuracy. If balancing a checkbook, following a recipe, or repairing a bicycle is not done carefully, for example, the results may be confusing, unacceptable, or even dangerous. The words in this vocabulary lesson describe different aspects of care and precision that we encounter daily.

WORD LIST

diligence
fastidious
foresight
judicious
meticulous
minutiae
prudent
punctilious
selective
systematic

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WORD LIST

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **diligence** (dīl'ə-jəns) *noun* Constant and earnest effort to accomplish a task; careful attention. (From the Latin word *diligere*, meaning "to love")

RELATED WORDS *diligent adjective; diligently adverb*

EXAMPLE The study of organic chemistry requires *diligence* because one must memorize many formulas.

2. **fastidious** (fā-stīd'ē-əs) *adjective* a. Difficult to satisfy or please; exacting. b. Possessing or displaying careful attention to detail. (From the Latin word *fastidium*, meaning "loathing")

RELATED WORDS *fastidiously adverb; fastidiousness noun*

EXAMPLE Mrs. Armitage was such a *fastidious* housekeeper that she asked all visitors to remove their shoes at the front door.

3. **foresight** (fōr'sīt') *noun* The ability to see what is likely to happen and to prepare for it accordingly; careful thought or concern for the future.

RELATED WORD *foresee verb*

EXAMPLE Mr. Figone had the *foresight* to invest in the company when it began to produce personal computers.

1. _____

2. _____
SEE meticulous.

3. _____

4. **judicious** (jōō-dish'əs) *adjective* Having or exhibiting sound judgment; sensible; wise. (From the Latin word *judicium*, meaning "judgment")

RELATED WORDS *judiciously* *adverb*; *judiciousness* *noun*

EXAMPLE *Judicious* biographers select facts carefully and critically.

5. **meticulous** (mə-tik'yə-ləs) *adjective* a. Extremely careful and precise. b. Excessively concerned with details. (From the Latin word *meticulosus*, meaning "timid")

RELATED WORDS *meticulously* *adverb*; *meticulousness* *noun*

EXAMPLE The *meticulous* volunteer made a list of the thousands of butterfly specimens in the science museum.

6. **minutiae** (mī-nōō'shē-ē', mī-nyōō'shē-ē') *noun* Minor or trivial details. (From the Latin word *minutus*, meaning "small")

RELATED WORDS *minute* *adjective*; *minutely* *adverb*

EXAMPLE The *minutiae* of the company's financial report were listed in an appendix.

7. **prudent** (prōōd'nt) *adjective* Exercising caution, good judgment, or common sense in handling practical matters; giving thought to one's actions and their consequences. (From the Latin *pro-*, meaning "forward," and *videre*, meaning "to see")

RELATED WORDS *prudence* *noun*; *prudently* *adverb*

EXAMPLE *Prudent* people generally try to save part of their wages.

8. **punctilious** (pūngk-til'ē-əs) *adjective* a. Attentive to the finer points of etiquette and formal conduct. b. Very careful and exact.

RELATED WORDS *punctiliously* *adverb*; *punctiliousness* *noun*

EXAMPLE Eric was *punctilious* in returning borrowed books.

9. **selective** (sī-lēk'tiv) *adjective* a. Careful in choosing; particular; discriminating. b. Highly specific in activity; *selective pesticides*. (From the Latin *se-*, meaning "apart," and *legere*, meaning "to choose")

RELATED WORDS *select* *verb*; *selectively* *adverb*; *selectiveness* *noun*

EXAMPLE As prices for goods and services have increased, consumers have become increasingly *selective* in their purchases.

10. **systematic** (sīs'tə-māt'ik) *adjective* a. Having a system, method, or plan; carried out in a step-by-step procedure. b. Orderly in arranging things or getting things done; purposefully regular. (From the Greek *syn-*, meaning "together," and *histanai*, meaning "to cause to stand")

RELATED WORDS *system* *noun*; *systematically* *adverb*; *systematize* *verb*

EXAMPLE Biologists have a *systematic* procedure for classifying the forms of animal life.

4. _____
USAGE NOTE Don't confuse with *judicial*, which refers to things related to courts of law.

5. _____
USAGE NOTE *Fastidious*, *meticulous*, and *punctilious* all concern "fussiness." *Fastidious* suggests difficulty of being pleased, *meticulous*, anxious attention, and *punctilious*, attention even to minutiae.

6. _____
USAGE NOTE The word *minutiae* is most often used in its plural form. The singular is *minutia*.

7. _____

8. _____
SEE *meticulous*, above.

9. _____

10. _____