

## **unscrupulous** |\_n\_skro\_py\_|\_sl

adjective

having or showing no moral principles; not honest or fair.

DERIVATIVES

**unscrupulously** adverb

**unscrupulousness** noun

## **vacuous** |\_vaky\_w\_|\_sl

adjective

having or showing a lack of thought or intelligence; mindless : *a vacuous smile* | *vacuous slogans*.

• archaic empty.

DERIVATIVES

**vacuity** |va\_kyo\_\_t\_|; v\_|\_l noun

**vacuously** adverb

**vacuousness** noun

ORIGIN mid 17th cent.(in the sense [empty of matter] ): from Latin *vacuus* 'empty' + **-ous** .

## **vindictive** |vin\_diktiv|

adjective

having or showing a strong or unreasoning desire for revenge : *the criticism was both vindictive and personalized*.

DERIVATIVES

**vindictively** adverb

**vindictiveness** noun

ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *vindicta* 'vengeance' + **-ive** .

## **virulent** |\_vir(y)\_|\_ntl

adjective

**1** (of a disease or poison) extremely severe or harmful in its effects.

• (of a pathogen, esp. a virus) highly infective.

**2** bitterly hostile : *a virulent attack on liberalism.*

DERIVATIVES

**virulence** noun

**virulently** adverb

ORIGIN late Middle English (originally describing a poisoned wound): from Latin *virulentus*, from *virus* 'poison' (see **virus** ).

## **wanton** |\_wäntnl

adjective

**1** (of a cruel or violent action) deliberate and unprovoked : *sheer wanton vandalism.*

**2** (esp. of a woman) sexually immodest or promiscuous.

• poetic/literary growing profusely; luxuriant : *where wanton ivy twines.*

• poetic/literary lively; playful : *a wanton fawn.*

noun archaic

a sexually immodest or promiscuous woman.

verb [ intrans. ] archaic or poetic/literary

**1** play; frolic.

**2** behave in a sexually immodest or promiscuous way.

DERIVATIVES

**wantonly** adverb

**wantonness** noun

ORIGIN Middle English *wantowen* [rebellious, lacking discipline,] from *wan-* [badly] + Old English *togen* [trained] (related to **team** and **tow** <sup>1</sup>).