

50 Difficult Words—Norman Schur's 1000 Most Important Words

1. **Anathema:** something someone vehemently hates
2. **Atavistic:** reverting to or suggesting a remote ancestor or primitive type
3. **Captious:** apt to notice and make much of trivial faults or defects; petty
4. **Caveat:** a warning or caution; admonition
5. **Cosset:** to treat as a pet; pamper; coddle.
6. **Dichotomy:** division into two parts, kinds, etc.; subdivision into halves or pairs
7. **Draconian:** unusually severe or cruel
8. **Eschew:** to abstain or keep away from; shun
9. **Exegesis:** critical explanation or interpretation of a text or portion of a text
10. **Expunge:** to strike or blot out; erase; obliterate
11. **Fleckless:** having no sense of responsibility; indifferent; lazy
12. **Fecund:** producing or capable of producing offspring, fruit, etc. ; prolific
13. **Fulsome:** offensive to good taste, esp. as being excessive; overdone or gross
14. **Germane:** closely or significantly related; relevant; pertinent.
15. **Hackneyed:** made commonplace or trite; stale; banal.
16. **Harbinger:** anything that foreshadows a future event; omen; sign
17. **Hegemony:** leadership; predominance
18. **Incipient:** beginning to exist or appear; in an initial stage
19. **Inculcate:** to implant by repeated statement or admonition; teach persistently
20. **Jejune:** without interest or significance; dull; insipid
21. **Jingoism:** professing patriotism loudly and excessively, favoring vigilant preparedness for war and an aggressive foreign policy; bellicose, chauvinism.
22. **Kitsch:** of tawdry design, appearance, or content created to appeal to popular or indiscriminating taste.
23. **Kowtow:** to act in an obsequious manner; show servile deference
24. **Modicum:** a moderate or small amount
25. **Morass:** a marsh or bog; any confusing or troublesome situation, esp. one from which it is difficult to free oneself; entanglement.
26. **Mordant:** sharply caustic or sarcastic, as wit or a speaker; biting
27. **Moribund:** in a dying state; near death
28. **Obfuscate:** to confuse, bewilder, or stupefy
29. **Otiose** ineffective or futile; superfluous or useless
30. **Panache:** a grand or flamboyant manner; verve; style; flair
31. **Peccadillo:** a very minor or slight sin or offense; a trifling fault
32. **Pedestrian:** lacking in vitality, imagination, distinction, etc.; commonplace
33. **Philistine:** lacking in or hostile to culture
34. **Presage:** to predict or foreshadow
35. **Puckish:** mischievous; impish
36. **Qualm:** an uneasy feeling or pang of conscience as to conduct; compunction
37. **Quintessential:** possessing the pure and concentrated essence of a substance
38. **Rancor:** bitter, rankling resentment or ill will; hatred; malice
39. **Recidivism:** repeated or habitual relapse, as into crime

- 40. **Seamy:** unpleasant or sordid; low; disagreeable
- 41. **Slake:** to allay (thirst, desire, wrath, etc.) by satisfying
- 42. **Spleen:** ill humor, peevish temper, or spite
- 43. **Stolid:** not easily stirred or moved mentally; unemotional; impassive
- 44. **Sybarite:** a person devoted to luxury and pleasure
- 45. **Tawdry:** gaudy; showy and cheap
- 46. **Trenchant:** vigorous; effective; energetic
- 47. **Umbrage:** offense; annoyance; displeasure
- 48. **Vacuous:** expressing or characterized by a lack of ideas or intelligence; inane
- 49. **Wanton:** done, shown, used, etc., maliciously or unjustifiably; lewd
- 50. **Yen:** a desire or craving: I had a yen for apple pie.