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*Prepared by*

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rush, a rapid headlong course; chiefly in phr. *in* (on, or with) a random (= OF. *en un randon*); hence Sc. a straight course, direct line. Obs.

In common use from c 1300 to the early part of the 16th c.

c 1305 *Land Cokayne* 132 in E.E.P. (1862) 159 be monkes lityly nost adun. Ac fure flepp in o randun. 1375 BARBOUR *Bruce* v. 632 He... Raucht him sic rout in randoun richt. c 1450 *Merlin* vii. 118 Than they... ronnen a-gein hym with as grete randoun as their horse myght hem bere. c 1477 CAXTON *Jason* 57 The ship... hurtlyd again the ground in suche a random and force that hit was all to broken. 1513 DOUGLAS *Eneis* l. vi. 149 Behald twelf swannin in randoun glaid and fair [L. *ordine longo*]. 1523 L.D. BERNERS *Pross* l. clvii. 191 The frenchemen... came on them with great randon, their speeres... came on them with great randon, their speeres... together by long randome. 1600 HOLLAND *Wayes* vii. xxiv. 265 The barbarous people... fled in this randon beyond their tents. 1611 *Speed Hist. G. Brit.* ix. xx. (1632) 664 The Kings vanguard... giuing in among them with full randon, slew first their Captaines as resisted. 1889 'MARK TWAINE' *Conn. Yankee* xv. 180 Two knights came together with great randon.

† b. A rush or stream (of words, fire). Obs.

c 1440 *Promp. Parv.* 423/1 *Randone*, or longe range of wordys, or other thyngys, *haringe*. c 1450 *Merlin* 219 The dragon... caste out of his throte so grete randoun of fire in to the aire... that it semed all reade.

2. Phr. at (the) random or random.

† a. *Hawking*. (See quot. 1486). Obs.

1486 *Bk. St. Albans* Djb, If the fowle spryng not bot flee a long after the Reuer and the hawke nym then ye shall say she slew it at the Randoun. 1600 W. WATSON *Deacordon* (1602) 145 They [results] have, like great fawsons or hawkes of the Tower, firmly seized vpon the pray, kild, at randon, wing, or souce.

† b. *Mil.* Applied to some method of encounter in a tournament (contrasted with at the tilt). Obs.

1538 ELYOT, *Decurio*, Iustus, as at the tylte or randon. 1587 HOLYSHED *Chron.* III. 833/2 At the randon and turneie the duke of Suffolke hurt a gentleman. a 1648 L.D. HERBERT *Hen. VIII* (1683) 52 The Lawes on Horse-back were, that with Sharp Spears they should run fue Courses at Tilt, and fue more at Randon.

† c. ? At full speed. Obs. rare-1.

1632 LITHGOW *Trav.* vi. 264 Wee found twelve... Turkes, ready to receive vs... who forthwith opened at randon the two great Brazen halves of the Doore.

3. Phr. at random, orig. at great speed, without consideration, care, or control; hence,

a. with vbs. of action or occurrence: At haphazard, without aim, purpose, or fixed principle; heedlessly, carelessly, etc. (Cf. also sense B. 1 b.)

Chiefly used with verbs of moving, striking, throwing, speaking, thinking, or taking; in early use esp. in the phr. *to run at random* (very common down to c 1650).

1565 JEWEL *Replie Harding* viii. §16 Least he happen... to renne at randon. 1591 SHAKS. *1 Hen. VI.* v. iii. 84 He talks at randon: sure the man is mad. 1592... *Ven. & Ad.* 940 Hatefully at randon doest thou hit. 1616 DRUMM. OF HAWTH. *Poems* 1. Cjb, Psyche's louer hurles his Darts at randon. 1662 GERBIER *Principles* 16 Not to Build at Randome, as the Custome of too many ill Builders is. 1729 BUTLER *Serm. Hum. Nat.* ii. Wks. 1874 II. 32 Man cannot be considered as a creature left by his Maker to act at random. 1796 H. HUNTER tr. *St. Pierre's Stud. Nat.* (1796) I. Pref. 9 A few passages, not selected, but picked up at random. 1833 J. HOLLAND *Manuf. Metal* II. 33 This composition is then dropped upon the surface... at random, leaving the effect to chance. 1862 SIR B. BRODIE *Psychol. Inq.* II. vi. 193 Eclipses... formerly were supposed to occur at random. 1898 W. A. WHITWORTH *Expectation of Parts* 7 If a magnitude *s* be divided at random into *n* parts, the expectation of each part is  $s/n$ . 1921 *Biometrika* XIII. 309 An event happens at random once in a period *m*, therefore its chance of occurring in an interval of time or space  $\delta t$  is  $\delta t/m$ . 1931 H. JEFFREYS *Scientific Inference* iii. 24 We select at random *m* of the objects... We need a definition of what we mean by at random. We mean that every possible selection of *m* objects from the original *N* is equally probable. 1951 *Jrnl. Ecol.* XXXIX. 172 The principle of contagion... is that the groups are distributed at random and that the number of individuals in each group is also random.

b. Similarly with sbs. Somewhat rare.

a 1653 GOUGE *Comm. Hebr.* xiii. 20 To shew that Christ is a Shepherd not at random for any sheep, but that he hath a peculiar flock belonging unto him. 1667 MILTON *P.L.* iv. 930 Thy words at random, as before, Argue thy inexperience. 1784 COWPER *Task* II. 522 Their answers, vague And all at random, fabulous and dark.

c. (to leave) in a neglected or untended condition. Now rare.

1582 N. LICHEFIELD tr. *Castanheda's Cong. E. Ind.* 162 b, The Caruel... being thus left at random... fell vpon certaine Rockes. 1642 ROGERS *Naaman* 537 Leaving thy flock and charge at random. 1848 KEBLE *Serm. Pref.* 12 How can there be any comparison of safe or unsafe, if all be left at random?

† d. (to leave or live) at liberty, free from restraint or control. Obs.

1569 in Bolton *Stat. Irel.* (1621) 313 Libertie to... lieue at randan. 1590 SPENSER *F.Q.* III. x. 36 The gentle Lady, loose at randon lefte, The greene-wood long did walke. 1632 LITHGOW *Trav.* ix. 388 There was not a Bandit left at randon in all Sicilia. 1694 R. L'ESTRANGE *Fables* (J.), In the days of old the birds lived at randon in a lawless state of anarchy.

4. A random course (now rare). Also, that which is random; random state, randomness.

In early use perh. directly from sense 1, but latterly influenced by the phr. at random.

1561 SACKVILLE & NORTON *Gorboduc* i. ii. 127 When such beginning of such liberties... Shall leave them free to randon of their will. c 1624 LUSHINGTON *Serm. Resurr.* in *Phenix*

(1708) II. 480 We follow not the random of their roving, but take the sum of their saying. 1670 COTTON *Espernon* I. 11. 58 Making stories, as it is his custom at the random of his own passion, and fancy. 1813 G. EDWARDS *Meas. Traic Pol.* 86 As if the ant and bee... had... proceeded in chaotic randoms upon points actually unascertained in nature. 1929 R. BRIDGES *Testament of Beauty* II. 44 As when a high moon thru' the rifted wrack gleameth upon the random of the windswept night. 1969 *Listener* 13 Nov. 678/3 'There's a lot of random in our songs,' says Paul [McCarty].

II. *techn.* † 5. *Gunnery*. The range of a piece of ordnance; properly, long or full range obtained by elevating the muzzle of the piece; hence, the degree of elevation given to a gun, and *spec.* that which gives the utmost range (45°). Obs.

1571 DIGGES *Pantom*. Pref. Aijb, Science in great Ordinance especially to shoote exactly at Randons. 1588 LUCAR tr. *Tartaglia's Colloq. Shooting* 4 How a Table of Randoms may be made for any peece of ordnance. 1661 S. PARTRIDGE *Double Scale Propri.* 85 How far will a Cannon carry her Bullet at the best Random, that carrieth it at point-blank 360 paces. 1669 STURMY *Mariner's Mag.* v. 71 The next Shot was at five degrees Random, and at that mounture the shot was conveyed 416 Paces. 1731 J. GRAY *Gunnery* 81 The random and direction of a piece on the plane of the horizon being given... find it's random on an inclined plane. fig. 1667 DENHAM *Direct. Painter* 1. 26 The Duke himself... was not out of dangers random set. 1697 J. SERGEANT *Solid Philos.* Aiv, Fancy let loose to fly at its full Random, and driven forward with a quick Wit.

† b. Phr. at random, at any range other than point-blank. Obs.

1588 LUCAR tr. *Tartaglia's Colloq. Shooting* App. 62 To know how he shoote in the said peece at random. 1612 CAPT. SMITH *Map Virginia* 24 Forty yards will they shoot level or very near the mark, and 120 is their best at Random. 1669 STURMY *Mariner's Mag.* v. 67 How to make a good Shot either of Point-blank, or at Random. 1698 FRYER *Acc. E. India* & P. 137 Two unshapen Sakers... one of which at random killed a Rajah some four months ago.

6. *Mining*. The direction (of a rake vein, etc.).

1653 MANLOVE *Lead Mines* 261 Break-offs, and Buckers, Randum of the Rake. 1747 HOOSON *Miner's Dict.* Djb, Observe whether such leading keep its course according to the Randome of the Vein already cut. 1866 *Durham Mining Lang.*, We must lower the sump from yon level down to the random of Wiregill lower-level.

7. (From B. 3.) a. *Building*. Stone of irregular sizes, or a piece of this.

1886 in *Rochdale Gloss.*

b. *Dyeing*. Clouded yarn.

1874 W. CROOKES *Dyeing & Calico-Print.* xii. 102 Scarlet Random [etc.].

8. *Printing*. (See quots.)

1888 C. T. JACOBI *Printers' Vocab.* 110 Random, a special frame used by compositors in making-up. 1898 J. SOUTHWARD *Mod. Printing* I. iv. 29 Making-up Frames... consist of an ordinary whole frame, fitted with a 'random'—that is, a sloping board, corresponding to a case, with ledges running along it transversely. 1910 A. BENNETT *Clayhanger* I. xii. 101 Under the furniture rack was the 'random', full of galleys. 1922 W. H. SCLATER *What Compositor should Know* I. 82 Randoms, on which new composition is placed for the purpose of being 'made up' into column form or page form. 1966 G. A. GLAISTER *Gloss. Bk.* 341/2 *Random*, the sloping work-top of a composing frame.

B. *adj.* (from phr. at random; see A. 3).

1. a. Not sent or guided in a special direction; having no definite aim or purpose; made, done, occurring, etc., at haphazard.

1655 FULLER *Ch. Hist.* ix. vii. §29 In vain do staid heads make serious comments on light mends random-expressions. 1697 DRYDEN *Æneid* iv. 95 The watchful Shepherd... Wounds with a random shaft the careless Hind. 1728 POPE *Dunc.* 1. 275 She shews... How random thoughts now meaning chance to find. 1764 BURN *Poor Lates* 190 Leaving the poor to be supported by random charity. 1827 ROBERTS *Voy. Centr. Amer.* 172 The random and ill-directed fire of the Spaniards. a 1845 HOOD *Song*, 'O Lady, leave thy silken thread' i, Stoop where thou wilt, thy careless hand Some random bud will meet. 1877 E. R. CONDER *Bas. Faith* iii. 102 The random working of our... intellect.

b. *Statistics*. Governed by or involving equal chances for each of the actual or hypothetical members of a population; also, produced or obtained by a random process (and therefore completely unpredictable in detail); *random distribution*, a probability distribution, esp. the Poisson distribution; *random error*: see ERROR 4 d; *random noise* (see quot. 1954); *random number*, a number selected from a given set of numbers in such a way that all the numbers in the set have the same chance of selection; also, a pseudorandom number; *random process*, (a process characterized by) a sequence of random variables (see also quot. 1937); *random sample*, a sample drawn at random from a population, each member of it having an equal or other specified chance of inclusion (sometimes contrasted with *quota sample* s.v. QUOTA sb. 4); so *random sampling*; *random selection*, a random sample; *random sampling*; *random variable*, *variate*, a variable whose values are distributed in accordance with a probability distribution; *random walk*, the movement of something in successive steps, the direction, length, or other property of each step being governed by chance independently of preceding steps.

1898 *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.* CXCI. 230 Every artificial or even random selection of a group... out of a community changes not only the amount of variation, but the amount of correlation of the organs of its members as compared with those of the primitive group. 1900 *Phil. Mag.* L. 157 (heading) On the criterion that a given system of deviations from the probable in the case of a correlated system of variables is such that it can be reasonably supposed to have arisen from random sampling. *Ibid.* 164 The question we wish to determine is whether the sample may be reasonably considered to represent a random system of deviations from the theoretical frequency distribution of the general population. 1905 K. PEARSON in *Nature* 27 July 294/2 (heading) The problem of the random walk. 1924 *Bell Syst. Technical Jnl.* III. 88 (heading) Deviation of random samples from average conditions. 1925 F. C. MILLS *Statistical Meth.* xvi. 552 Great care is generally needed in securing a purely random selection. The obvious procedure of picking the most readily available cases would by no means meet the condition of random selection. 1927 *Tracts for Computers* xv. p. iii, In order to form this table of random numbers 40,000 digits were taken at random from census reports and combined by fours to give 10,000 numbers. *Ibid.*, These numbers, if truly random, could be used in a very great variety of ways for artificial sampling. 1933 *Forestry* VII. 149 As far as possible a random arrangement of replicated treatments and controls was adopted. 1936 *Jrnl. Ecol.* XXIV. 232 The simplest assumption, and the one most frequently made, concerning the distribution of the individuals of a plant species, is that it is random, i.e. that the chance that an individual shall occur in a given spot is the same for all spots... The chances that 0, 1, 2, 3... individuals shall occur in a sample area large enough to contain very many individuals, are given by the terms of the Poisson series. *Ibid.* 240 Fig. 5 illustrates the divergence from random distribution. 1937 H. CRAMER (title) *Random variables and probability distributions. Ibid.* viii. 90 The set of variables  $Z_i$  will be said to define a homogeneous random process, if, for  $\tau_1 \geq 0, \tau_2 > 0$ , the difference  $U_{\tau_1, \tau_2} = Z_{\tau_1 + \tau_2} - Z_{\tau_1}$  is a random variable which is independent of the variable  $Z_{\tau_1}$  and has a [distribution] [function] which is independent of  $\tau_1$ . 1938 *Jrnl. R. Statist. Soc.* CI. 147 In colloquial speech the word 'random' is applied to any method of choice which lacks aim or purpose; and this usage is also found in certain sciences. In statistics, however, the word has a somewhat different and more definite significance, closely related to probability. 1939 *Jrnl. Franklin Inst.* CCVII. 747 Corresponding to the constrictions in the vocal passages from which are made the unvoiced sounds the Voder contains an electrical 'random noise' source which by itself produces a continuous hissing sound. 1946 C. E. WEATHERBURN *First Course in Math. Statistics* ii. 21 The method thus uses the similarity of the marbles to ensure that the selection is random. 1948 *Tracts for Computers* xxv. (title) *Random normal deviates. Ibid.* p. iii, They may be regarded as fair random samples from a normal universe having a zero mean and a unit standard deviation. 1949, etc. [see PSEUDORANDOM a.]. 1951 *Jrnl. Ecol.* XXXIX. 172 In a random distribution the variance is equal to the mean, and the variance divided by the mean... can be used to test departures from a random distribution. 1952, etc. [see *quota sample*]. 1953 J. B. CARROLL *Study of Language* vii. 204 Communication theory is forced to regard messages as random processes. *Ibid.* 245 We use the term *random process* in the statistical sense; a random process is the sampling at random from a population of potential events. 1954 *J. Sci.* i. 35 Since each individual's sequence of opinions is a random variable (i.e., there is a probability attached to each possible sequence), the total number of individuals holding a given sequence is a random variable. 1954 L. L. BERANEK *Acoustics* xiii. 393 Random noise is an acoustical quantity (e.g., sound pressure) or an electrical quantity (e.g., voltage) whose instantaneous amplitudes occur, as a function of time, according to a normal (Gaussian) distribution curve. A common random noise is that resulting from the random motion of molecules of the air... Random noise need not have a flat (uniform) frequency spectrum. *Ibid.*, White noise need not be random. 1959 *Oxf. Univ. Gaz.* 5 Mar. 678/1 Random variates, probability, and likelihood. 1963 B. FOZARD *Instrumentation & Control of Nuclear Reactors* vii. 71 Radioactive disintegrations are truly random, i.e. the probability of a disintegration is independent of the occurrence of other events. 1967 C. BERNIS-LEE in Wills & Yearsley *Handbk. Managem. Technol.* 5 In an agricultural experiment... to determine the effect of two different fertilizers, N and P for instance, the classical approach would be to compare unfertilized plots with suitably chosen random selections of plots fertilized with N; also to compare with the unfertilized plots a number of plots fertilized only with P. 1967 G. WILLS in *Ibid.* 186 Random samples... ensure that if we are drawing a sample from the 27,000 paint retailers in the United Kingdom each retailer would have an equal chance of being selected. This is not what is generally meant in common parlance by 'random', but it is what the statistician means. 1968 P. A. P. MORAN *Introd. Probability Theory* i. 6 A random variable is also sometimes called a 'variate'. *Ibid.* x. 459 The study of random walks is the study of the sums of random variables, these variables varying in complexity from simple independent distributions in one dimension to random variables of a much more complicated character. 1970 W. B. DAVENPORT *Random Processes* ix. 209 Such an infinite family of random variables is commonly called a random sequence or random process (or stochastic sequence or stochastic process). 1971 [see *quota method*]. 1973 LORD & ROBINSON tr. *Kuttruff's Room Acoustics* viii. 21 The room under investigation... is excited by stationary random noise... with a large frequency bandwidth. 1973 F. E. FISCHER *Fund. Statistical Concepts* vii. 139 We can think of most discrete random variables as counts (how many heads, children, spades, or accidents?) and most continuous random variables as measures (how tall, long, heavy, or intelligent?). 1975 R. B. ELLIS *Statistical Inference* ii. 17 What counts is making sure that the sample really is random, that at any time any item in the population has as much chance of being chosen as any other item in the population. 1975 *Sci. Amer.* May 48/3 A series of numbers is random if the smallest algorithm capable of specifying it to a computer has about the same number of bits of information as the series itself. 1977 *Private Eye* 1 Apr. 5/2 The naive random walk theory... rules out the application of any device based upon the movement of past prices in the

market. 1978 *Sci. Amer.* Apr. 71/2 One way to solve for the role of chance in such a situation is to devise a Monte Carlo computer program, which generates random numbers to determine the distances and angles between consecutive directional changes of simulated tracks.

c. *Psychol.* Of activity, movements, etc.: seeming to be without purpose or direct relationship to a stimulus, sometimes thought of as an organism's initial reaction to unfamiliar stimuli, and giving way to directed action as learning takes place.

1905 *Psychol. Bull.* II. 251 Fuhrmann noted prevalence of predicative association and of the egocentric factors; moreover, especially in the beginning of tests, random association. 1911 E. L. THORNDIKE *Animal Intelligence* vi. 242 If the movements are really random, they occur by virtue of some force that works at random. 1927 J. ADAMS *Errors in School* x. 304 The knowledge the psycho-analyst acquires by random-answering is knowledge-by-the-way so far as the instructor is concerned. 1927 M. K. THOMSON *Springs of Human Action* v. 74 Undifferentiated activity (random movement), among the native tendencies none is more primitive and fundamental than activity. 1934 CROZIER & HOAGLAND in C. Murchison *Handbk. Gen. Exper. Psychol.* 20 It is to be noted that there is obtainable in this way a measure of 'random' movements and a key to their interpretation. 1935 K. KOFFKA *Princ. Gestalt Psychol.* xiii. 629 Trial and error may then mean that he gets a 'hunch' from the data... This would no longer be random activity, but activity determined by the nature of the task. 1935 E. L. THORNDIKE *Psychol. of Wants, Interests & Attitudes* ii. 13 The fact of multiple response or varied reaction... has led to the error of assuming that man at least had a tendency to make responses that were random. *Ibid.*, There doubtless is a residuum of behavior that may be called random. 1948 E. R. HILGARD *Theories of Learning* v. 116 Although it was often convenient to talk about 'random' or 'spontaneous' responses, it was not doubted that stimuli were present to elicit them.

2. Of persons: Living irregularly. *rare.*  
c. 1825 *Haulston Tracts* II. No. 6. 'In my time, Sir', said he, 'I've been random and free, but I now prefer order and quiet'. 1873 H. SPENCER *Stud. Sociol.* xv. 371 Continually we remark that men who were random grow steady when they have children to provide for.

3. *techn.* a. Said of masonry, in which the stones are of irregular sizes and shapes. Cf. C. 2 b.

1823 P. NICHOLSON *Pract. Build.* 339 Random Courses—Unequal courses, without any regard to equi-distant joints. 1886 *Chesh. Gloss.* s.v., 'A random wall.'

b. Of tooling: (see *DROVE* v. 2).  
1842 *GWILT Archit.* §1914 Droving is the same as that called random tooling in England, or boasting in London. c. Of yarn = *CLOUDED* 2 a.

1874 W. CROOKES *Dyeing & Calico-Print.* xii. 102 On the large scale the random yarns are coloured in machines.

4. *random shot*, a shot fired at random (orig. in sense 5 b of the sb., but latterly apprehended as in sense 1 of the adj.).

1693 *LUTTRELL Brief Rel.* (1857) III. 9 One of their random shots killed lieutenant coll. Jackson. 1708 *Land. Gaz.* No. 4422/7 The nine Sail stood in fair with us near random shot. 1788 *Gibson Decl. & F.* lviii. (1869) III. 71/6 The first random shots were productive of more sound than effect. 1806 A. DUNCAN *Nelson 100 The.* ship, had approached within random shot of the Leader. 1849 *MACAULAY Hist. Eng.* ix. II. 457 A random shot or the dagger of an assassin might in a moment leave the expedition without a head.

fig. 1785 *BURNS To J. Smith* vi. The star that rules my luckless lot... Has blest me with a random-shot O' cuntry wit. 1809 *MALKIN Gil Blas* vii. vi. ¶2 The random shot of... self-created guides in matters of taste.

5. *random access* (Computers): used to designate a memory or file all parts of which are directly accessible, so that it need not be read sequentially; esp. one in which the access time for any item is effectively independent of the location and the access time of the item last accessed.

1953 *Proc. IRE* XLII. 1264/2 The random-access property also makes it easier to operate input, output, and external storage devices out of synchronism with the central computer. 1967 *New Scientist* 5 Oct. 13/1 This type of memory, in which all addresses are directly accessible, is known as random-access, to distinguish it from the slower but cheaper type which is scanned sequentially, used for backing stores. 1969 P. B. JORDAIN *Condensed Computer Encycl.* 414 The true random-access devices are static memories: core, thin film, electrostatic cathode-ray tubes, electronic. Most of the so-called random-access devices—drum, disk, tape loop, magnetic card file... are really cyclic access devices. 1971 *Publishers' Weekly* 9 Aug. 24/3 The advantage of random access disc storage is that all required files for a specific application will be on-line to the computer when that application is being processed. 1975 T. W. PRATT *Programming Languages* iii. 87 A random access file is organized as a set of unordered records. Access is through an address that indicates the position of the record on the external device.

C. *adv.* †1. = At random. *Obs. rare.*  
1618 *BOLTON Florus* (1636) 96 The third lightnings of Annibal flew randome at us by Trasimenus lake. a 1619 *FOTHERBY Aethom.* II. xi. §2 (1622) 313 Neither doe they runne random, nor are they rolled, beside their ancient order.

2. *Comb.*, as *random-blown*, *-cast*, *-fashioned*, *-rubbed* adjs.; *random-wise* adv.

1790 R. MERRY *Laurel Liberty* (ed. 2) 7 Random-cast, beside some stream... Thou ponder'st. 1839 DARLEY *Introd. Beum. & Fl.'s Wks.* (1839) I. 26 Most imaginative authors, perhaps, commence random-wise... and save themselves the trouble of a total invention at first. 1862 *Illustr. Catal. Internat. Exhib., Industr. Dept., Brit. Div.* II.

No. 2253 Castelled circular turret, random rubbed; white quartz. 1871 TENNYSON in *Contemp. Rev.* XIX. 12 Tristram... sank Down on a drift of foliage random-blown. 1906 *HARDY Dynasts* II. v. viii. 287 Ephemeral at the best all honours be... So random-fashioned, swift, perturable!

b. *random-joined* (see quot. 1833 and B. 3 a).  
1833 *LOUDON Encycl. Archit.* §185 Rubble stone, or random joined ashlar work (free stone, rough as it comes from the quarry, laid in irregular courses). 1848 [J. C. WHARTON] *Quarrendon Church* 7 The external walls are built with random-joined squared ashlar.

Hence 'randomish a.', somewhat random; 'randomly adv.'; 'randomness'; also 'randomicity' = prec.

1824 in *Spirit Pub. Jnrls.* (1825) 136 My son Jonathan is but a randomish sort of a chap. 1865 *Ch. Times* 2 Sept. 276/3 Each rode his own hobby... so randomly and violently [etc.]. 1866 J. VENN *Logic of Chance* ii. 30 We must also idealize the 'randomness' of the throwing of the penny. 1872 *BLACKMORE Maid of Sker* 166 If any one cares for that sort of thing, who knows mankind's great randomness. 1891 G. MEREDITH *One of our Cong.* I. xii. 228 He talked randomly of money. 1921 J. M. KEYNES *Treat. Probability* xxiv. 281 Many important differences of opinion in the treatment of probability have been due to confusion or vagueness as to what is meant by Randomness. 1936 *Rev. Sci. Instruments* VII. 459/2 Fluctuations to be expected due to the randomness of the counting. 1938 *Nature* 14 May 881/2 Four tests for randomness... were applied to these numbers, with satisfactory results in each case. 1957 P. GREIG-SMITH *Quantitative Plant Ecol.* iii. 51 Departure from randomness of distribution of a species indicates that one or few factors are determining the performance or survival of the species. 1959 *New Scientist* Dec. 1144/3 An interesting point of this arrangement is that the lengths of the delays can be chosen randomly. 1965 H. M. MORRIS *Twilight of Evolution* ii. 44 The natural tendency of all change is to create a greater degree of disorder and randomness. 1963 T. & P. MORRIS *Pentonville* iv. 75 Half the men in each group were randomly selected on the basis of throwing dice. 1972 *Science* 27 Oct. 392/3 Environmental randomness of various kinds may have important implications in triggering evolutionary sequences that would be impossible or unlikely in non-stochastic environments. 1980 *Jrnl. R. Soc. Arts* Feb. 138/1 The cosmos will end in heat death with all matter randomly diffused.

**random** ('rændəm), *v. rare.* [f. the sb.] *intr.* To do something at random, to occur at random.

1880 'MARK TWAIN' *Conn. Yankee* xxvii. 349 A thought came randoming overthwart this majestic dream. 1921 R. FROST *Let.* 15 Apr. (1964) 127 She wasn't experimenting, poor thing. She was randoming, as Alisande hath it.

**randomization** ('rændəmaɪzəʃən). [f. next + -ATION.] The action, process, or result of randomizing.

1926 *Jrnl. Min. Agric.* XXXIII. 510 A process of randomization by which one is selected at random out of the total number of Latin Squares possible. 1934 *Math. Gaz.* XVIII. 294 The process of randomisation has in recent years come to play such a central part in experimental design that it is of some interest to find that it affords a means of resolving one of the oldest paradoxes which arose in discussions of gaming. 1946 G. W. SNEDECOR *Statistical Methods* (ed. 4) 253 The degree of randomization is no longer evident, but the weekly heights and the block differences are brought into prominence. 1960 *Daily Tel.* 23 Aug. 16/5 Because the experiments were made over five years, using a 'randomisation' method, the Australian results were considered by other experts at the conference to be the first to be absolutely conclusive. 'Randomisation' means that clouds are selected in a completely random manner. 1966 *Lancet* 24 Dec. 1371/2 We tested the randomness of these four groups; except for age-distribution, randomisation was satisfactory. 1980 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 15 Feb. 166 A genuinely open society is, presumably, one in which relative mobility chances have been equalized. But how?.. By the randomization of access to the labour market?

**randomize** ('rændəmaɪz), *v.* [f. *RANDOM* sb., *a.*, and *adv.* + -IZE.] *trans.* To render unpredictable, unsystematic, or random in order or arrangement; to employ random selection or sampling in (an experiment or procedure).

1926 *Jrnl. Min. Agric.* XXXIII. 509 The distinction between errors eliminated in the field, and the errors which are to be carefully randomized in order to provide a valid estimate of the errors which cannot be eliminated, may be made most clear by one of the most useful and flexible types of arrangement, namely, the arrangement in 'randomized blocks'. 1939 H. JEFFREYS *Theory of Probability* iv. 192 Most physicists, of course, will envy workers in subjects where uninteresting systematic effects can be randomized. 1958 *New Scientist* 21 Aug. 659/3 Having produced a beam of the required energy, the Oak Ridge group then try to randomise it by firing it into a magnetic bottle produced by two mirror coils. 1959 *Test House Rep.* No. OTL/M1/5/59 (Inspectorate of Fighting Vehicles & Mech. Equipm. Test House. Oil Test Lab.) 4 A programme of two tests on each of the seven oils was arranged and the tests randomized to eliminate bias. 1967 *Listener* 26 Jan. 134/2 A number of years ago Sir Ronald Fisher made a statistical analysis of the problem and came to the unexpected conclusion that the best rule in each case was not to have any fixed rule at all, but to randomize one's actions by an appeal to chance. 1971 *Jrnl. Gen. Psychol.* LXXXV. 172 The order of these pronouns was randomized. 1977 *Sci. Amer.* Sept. 42/2 Assume that the deck of cards is finite, so that an umpire can indeed randomize them.

Hence 'randomized *ppl.* *a.*, chosen at random; deliberately made random or unpredictable; 'randomizing *ppl.* *a.*, generating random output; 'randomizing *vbl.* *sb.*, the act of rendering random.

1926 *Randomized* [see *RANDOMIZE* v.] 1936 *Nature* 15 Feb. 253/1 It is with applications of the principle of testing null hypotheses by means of randomised and replicated experiments that the first nine chapters of this book deal. 1936 *Jrnl. R. Statist. Soc. Suppl.* No. 3. 118 The tendency of deliberate randomizing is to increase the error. 1938 *Nature* 14 May 881/1 M. G. Kendall and B. B. Smith have designed a randomizing machine. 1955 *Sci. Amer.* Feb. 81/2 The idea is to let chance play a role in the choice of strategy, that is, to use a randomized or 'mixed' strategy. 1962 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 2 Feb. 73/3 To randomized numbers where no fancy boggles The Great Boondoggler goes. 1968 P. A. P. MORAN *Introd. Probability Theory* 1. 44 Decimal digits which were obtained by a 'randomizing machine'. 1970 *Nature* 12 Dec. 1113/1 Each block of twenty trials contained all possible combinations of test stimuli presented in randomized sequence. 1978 *Lancet* 14 Jan. 72/2 The claim that an upright maternal posture during labour improves the efficiency of the uterus to the benefit of both mother and fetus has been investigated in a randomised prospective study.

**randomizer** ('rændəmaɪzə(r)). [f. prec. + -ER.] A device which generates random output.  
1974 *Sci. Amer.* Apr. 112/2 It is very easy to use a penny as a randomizer for deciding between two alternatives with probabilities expressed by rational fractions. 1976 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 13 Feb. 172/4 Chickens... which appear capable of influencing mentally an electronic randomizer controlling the switching mechanism of a lamp.

† **'random, v. Obs. rare.** Also 7-ome. [f. the sb.; in earliest quot. *perh. a. OF. randomer.*]

1. *intr.* ? To flow swiftly. *rare* -1.  
Or *perh. trans.* 'to set in line' referring to the walls.  
c 1470 *Gol. & Gaw.* 248 Apone that riche river, random full evin, The side-wallas war set, sad to the see.  
2. *intr.* To fly at random.  
1602 *Narcissus* (1893) 735 Lett not your judgments randome. 1605 *CAMDEN Rem.* (1637) 204 That it [the bullet of a sling] pierceth helmet and shield, that it reacheth farther, that it randoneth lesse.

**randon**(e, -doun(e, -down(e, obs. ff. *RANDOM*).

|| **randori** ('rændɔəri). [Jap., lit. 'informal practice'.] A (session of) informal practice in Judo.

1913 E. J. HARRISON *Fighting Spirit of Japan* iv. 65 The non-esoteric branches of judo are called randori, in which the pupil freely applies his knowledge in open practice... with others. 1932 — *Art of Ju-jitsu* iii. 30 It is not absolutely necessary for the pupil to master all these details... before beginning 'randori' practice. 1954 E. DOMINY *Teach Yourself Judo* vi. 63 In 'randori' which is free practice you never find an opponent who is willing to lie passively on his back. 1972 *Oxf. Mail* 1 Aug. 10/3 This initial practice very soon develops into 'randori', the form of training in which most players spend most of their judo time. This involves moving about with a partner.

**randring**, obs. Sc. pr. *pple.* *RENDER*.

**ransom**, obs. form of *RANSOM*.

**randum**, -dun, obs. forms of *RANDOM*.

**randy** ('rændi), *a.* and *sb.*<sup>1</sup> orig. *dial.* and *Sc.* Also 7-9 *randie*. [Perh. f. *RAND* v. + -Y; but the original sense of the word is not quite clear.]

*A. adj.* 1. *Sc.* Having a rude, aggressive manner; loud-tongued and coarse-spoken.

In early use always of beggars, and probably implying vagrant habits as well as rude behaviour. Now applied only to women.

1698 *Culross Kirk Session Minutes* 18 Sept., Seven pounds Scots... distributed to the randie beggars. 1723 *MESTON Poems, Knight* (1767) 6 A rambling, randy errant Knight. 1785 *BURNS Jolly Beggars* 1st Recit., A merry core O' randie, gangrel bodies. 1816 *SCOTT Old Mort.* xxvii. It was him and his randie mother began 'a' the mischief in this house. 1894 *CROCKETT Raiders* (ed. 3) 42 Hearing what the pair of old randy wives had to say to me.

2. *a. dial.* Boisterous, riotous, disorderly, dissipated; wild, unruly, unmanageable.

1787 in *GROSE Prov. Gloss.* 1874 SIR J. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH *Ribblesdale* I. 21 Mind you long-horned cattle... they are apt to be randy. 1876 in *dial. glossaries* (Yks., Linc., Chesh., Shropsh., etc.). 1884 *Punch* 8 Mar. 118/1 That young bay you'll find a little randy, With rather more of 'devil' than comes handy.

b. *Wanton, lustful, lewd.* orig. *dial.*

1847 in *HALLIWELL*. 1881- in *dial. glossaries* (Yks., Leic., Warw., etc.). c 1888-94 *My Secret Life* III. 280 She'll be randy directly her belly is filled. 1922 [see *PUSSY* sb. 6]. 1939 J. STEINBECK *Grapes of Wrath* vi. 69 Fust time I ever laid with a girl... snortin' like a buck deer, randy as a billygoat. 1957 W. CAMP *Prospects of Love* II. v. 62 Suffers from too much sex, if anything—he's a randy old man. 1965 F. SARGESON *Mem. Peon* iv. 87, I was randy myself at your age. But be careful. These native girls can put you right into hospital if you don't take care. 1978 K. J. DOVER *Greek Homosexuality* ii. 38 The gangs or clubs of randy and combative young men.

3. *Comb.*, as (sense 2 b) *randy-arsed* adj.; also with *sb.* forming attrib. compounds, as *randy-dog*.

1968 *Randy-arsed* [see *LENGTH* sb. 11 c]. 1963 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 18 Jan. 37/4 Harold Barlow is an Amis character... with that special randy-dog flavour. 1973 M. AMIS *Rachel Papers* 173 Tom, Geoffrey's analogue of my own Sebastian: sixteen, wealthy in pustules, randy-dog smells, sebaceous most hairline, and other adolescentiana.

B. *sb.*<sup>1</sup> *Sc.* and *north. dial.* a. A sturdy rude-mannered beggar; a thorough vagrant.

1788 *BURNS Louis, what rock* ii, Reif randies, I disown ye! 1792 *Statist. Acc. Scotl.* II. 515 Many Randies (sturdy