

Glossary of Legal Terminology English - German

(472 words)

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legal word (explanation)- *n.* (noun), *v.* (verb), or *adj.* (adjective) translation of word (*description, definition or synonym in target language*)

abstract (summary)- *n.* die Zusammenfassung, die Kurfassung, das Abstract, der Auszug

accessory (assistant in a crime)- *n.* der Mittäter/die Mittäterin (bei einem Verbrechen)

acid (LSD, an hallucinogenic drug)- *n.* das Acid (das LSD)

accomplice (assistant in a crime)- *n.* der Komplize/die Komplizin

accusation (written charge)- *n.* die Anklage

accused (defendant)- *n.* der/die Angeklagte

acquit (to decide as innocent, let free)- *v.* freisprechen

acquittal (clearing of a person from a charge; finding the defendant not guilty)- *n.* der Freispruch

action (lawsuit)- *n.* der Prozess

addict (someone who is addicted to drugs)- *n.* der/die Süchtige

adjudicate (to judge)- *v.* als Richter tätig sein

adjudication (deciding of a case through judicial or administrative hearing)- *n.* die Beurteilung

admissible (acceptable)- *adj.* zulässig

admission (disclosure of adverse facts)- *n.* das Zugestehen eines Sachverhalts

adoption (legal process establishing a parental relationship between adoptive parent and child born of other parents)- *n.* die Adoption; die Übernahme

advisement of rights (making a person aware of their rights)- *n.* die Beratung der Anrechte

affidavit (official sworn statement)- *n.* die eidesstattliche Versicherung

affidavit of prejudice (sworn statement alleging a potential judge is biased)- *n.* die eidesstattliche Versicherung des Vorurteils

agreement (mutual promises)- *n.* das Abkommen; der Vertrag; die rechtliche Vereinbarung

aid and abet (to assist in a crime)- *v.* Beihilfe leisten (+ dat.)

alibi (defendant's story of innocence when a crime is committed, allegedly by another)- *n.* das Alibi

- alien** (foreign-born immigrant who is not naturalized)- *n.* der Ausländer/die Ausländerin
- alimony** (support payment to divorced spouse)- *n.* die Unterhaltszahlung
- allegation** (statement of fact the party intends to prove)- *n.* die Behauptung
- alleged** (asserted as a true fact, but not yet proven)- *adj.* angeblich
- amend** (to revise)- *v.* berichtigen, ändern (Gesetzentwurf, Auftrag, usw.)
- amendment** (modification of a document)- *n.* der Abänderungsantrag
- amphetamine** (a stimulant and appetite-suppressing narcotic)- *n.* das Amphetamin
- angel dust** (PCP, an hallucinogenic drug)- *n.* das PCP
- answer** (defendant's formal document setting out defense in a civil case)- *n.* die Erwiderung (auf + *akk.*); die Antwort
- anthrax** (an infectious disease of livestock which can be transmitted to humans)- *n.* der Milzbrand
- appeal** (a review of a case by a higher court)- *n.* die Berufung; (to file a case in a higher court)- *v.* die Berufung einlegen
- appearance** (party's presence in court)- *n.* der Auftritt im Gericht
- arbitration** (judging of a dispute)- *n.* die Vermittlung; die Schlichtung; das Schiedsgerichtsverfahren
- argument** (debate in front of the court)- *n.* die Auseinandersetzung
- argumentative** (fond of arguing)- *adj.* argumentative; widerspruchsfreudig
- arraign** (to formally advise defendant of the charges at an initial court appearance)- *v.* vor Gericht bringen; anklagen (**for** wegen + *akk.*)
- arraignment** (legal procedure to advise defendant of the charges; initial court appearance)- *n.* die Anklageerhebung
- arrest** (law enforcement's taking of a suspect into formal custody)- *n.* die Verhaftung
- arson** (beginning a criminal fire)- *n.* die Brandstiftung
- assault** (attack on another person)- *n.* die Vergewaltigung; die Tötlichkeit; der Überfall
- assault, aggravated** (higher degree of assault)- *n.* die verschärfte Tötlichkeit; der verschärfte Überfall
- assault with a deadly weapon** (attacking a person with a weapon that could potentially take a life)- *n.* die Tötlichkeit mit lebensgefährlicher Waffe

assignee (counsel assigned to defendant)- *n.* der/die Bevollmächtigte; der Rechtsnachfolger/die Rechtsnachfolgerin

at issue (in question; the issue being addressed)- *adj.* (die Streitfrage) worum es geht

attest (to affirm under oath)- *v.* bestätigen; beglaubigen

attorney (legal representative)- *n.* der [Rechts]anwalt/die [Rechts]anwältin

attorney of record (the person who has been recorded in the case file as the counsel for that case)- *n.* der/die Bevollmächtigte; der/die Prozessbevollmächtigte

authenticate (verify as authentic)- *v.* authentifizieren; die Echtheit einer Sache (gen.) bestätigen

auto tampering (to interfere or meddle with another's automobile)- *n.* dem Auto unbefugt zu schaffen machen

bail (money or property given as security for the release of a defendant awaiting trial)- *n.* die Kautions

bail bondsman (person responsible hired to enforce the conditions of bail)- *n.* der Kautionsaufzwinger/die Kautionsaufzwingerin

bail forfeiture (losing the money spent on bail because defendant violates the conditions of the bail)- *n.* der Kautionsverlust; die Kautionsseinbusse

bail review (official reconsideration of bail)- *n.* die Kautionsüberprüfung

bailiff (officer of the court)- *n.* der Gerichtsvollzieher/die Gerichtsvollzieherin; der Vollstreckungsbeamte/die Vollstreckungsbeamtin

bankruptcy (legal declaration of one's inability to pay debts)- *n.* der Konkurs; der Bankrott

battery (physical attack on another person)- *n.* tätlicher Angriff

battery, spousal (physical attack on one's spouse)- *n.* tätlicher Angriff eines [Ehe]gatten

bench (judge or court)- *n.* der Richterstuhl (judge's bench); das Richteramt (office of judge)

bias (prejudice)- *n.* die Voreingenommenheit

blow (slang for cocaine, a stimulant narcotic)- *n.* das Kokain

body attachment (official attachment of document to case file)- *n.* die Pfändung

bond (certificate of debt redeemable by court if defendant fails to appear in court)- *n.* der Schuldschein

booking number (identification number for case of person under arrest)- *n.* die Buchungsnummer

bookmaking (the business of taking bets)- *n.* die Buchmacherei

brandishing a weapon (carrying a weapon in a threatening manner)- *n.* das Waffenschwingen

breaking and entering (illegally entering a building)- *n.* der Einbruch

breathalyzer (breath test for alcohol)- *n.* das Alkoholtest-Rörchen; der Alkoholtest

bribe (an illegal offer of money, property or services for another service)- *n.* die Bestechung; (to illegally offer money, etc. for services)- *v.* bestechen

brief (written summary of case)- *n.* der Schriftsatz

burden of proof (legal requirement of prosecution to prove the guilt of defendant)- *n.* die Beweislast

burglary (theft, stealing)- *n.* der Einbruch; der Diebstahl

calendar, court (official scheduling calendar for a particular court, usually scheduled by the court clerk)- *n.* das Prozessregister

capital punishment (death penalty)- *n.* die Todesstrafe; das Todesurteil; das Kapitalverbrechen

case (criminal or civil lawsuit)- *n.* das Verfahren

case of action (criminal or civil lawsuit)- *n.* das Verfahren

causation (a causing, something producing an effect)- *n.* die Verursachung

certified (verified as authentic or accurate)- *adj.* bestätigt; (in possession of an official certificate which identifies that its holder is qualified or professional)- *adj.* bescheinigt

chain of custody (order of parental relationships to child)- *n.* die Obhutskette

challenge (to object to the qualifications of a potential jury)- *v.* ablehnen; aufheben

challenge for a cause (party's challenge to disqualify a potential juror)- *n.* die Ablehnung eines Geschworenen/einer Geschworene; die Ablehnung eines Schöffen/einer Schöffin

chambers (judge's office)- *n.* das Richteramt

charge (accusation; indictment)- *n.* die Anklage

child molestation (sexually attacking or abusing a child)- *n.* die Kindesmisshandlung

child support (monetary responsibility to support child)- *n.* die Kinderfürsorge

circumstances, aggravating (fact or situation which increase the degree of responsibility or liability for a criminal act)- *n.* die verschlimmerenden Umstände

circumstances, mitigating (fact or situation which does not justify or excuse an offense but does reduce the degree of liability or responsibility and may also reduce the damages [civil] or punishment [criminal])- *n.* mildernde Umstände

citation (official notice to appear in court, especially in traffic court)- *n.* die Rechtsankündigung; (notation of legal authority)- *n.* die Anmerkung gesetzlicher Befugnis

city attorney (counsel representing the city in municipal court)- *n.* der Staatsanwalt/die Staatsanwältin

civil action (legal action relating to money or property)- *n.* der Zivilprozess; das Zivilverfahren

claim (legal demand, complaint)- *n.* der Anspruch

clerk (court official, judge's administrative assistant)- *n.* der/die Angestellte

cocaine (stimulant narcotic)- *n.* das Kokain

collateral (property pledged to secure a debt, e.g. bail)- *n.* die Sicherheiten (pl.)

commissioner (public official with authority over court room in initial appearances before going to trial)- *n.* der Kommissar

commit (to institutionalize, e.g. to a mental hospital)- *v.* jmdn. einliefern; (to perpetuate, e.g. a crime)- *v.* begehen; verüben

commitment (incarceration)- *n.* (to prison) die Einlieferung; (to mental hospital) die Einweisung

community property (public property)- *n.* das Gemeindeeigentum

competency (legal capacity to stand trial)- *n.* die Fähigkeit; die Zuständigkeit

complaint (written statement initiating a criminal or civil action)- *n.* die Klage

comply (to act as directed or ordered)- *v.* sich nach etw. richten

composite drawing (drawing of a suspect made by a police artist, based on the description from a witness)- *n.* die Bildmontage

confession (admission of guilt)- *n.* das Geständnis

confiscate (governmental seizure of property)- *v.* beschlagnahmen; konfiszieren

conflict of interest (reason a party to the case might be too personally involved to provide objective services)- *n.* der Interessenkonflikt

consideration (benefit to promisor or detriment to promise)- *n.* der Ersatz; der Ausgleich

conspiracy (an unlawful plot, a plan to do something illegal)- *n.* das Mordkomplott

constitutional right (a freedom guaranteed by the Constitution)- *n.* das Verfassungsrecht

contempt of court (acting against the rules of the court)- *n.* die Ungebühr vor Gericht

continuance (rescheduling a legal proceeding for a later date)- *n.* die Vertagung (**until** auf + akk.)

controlled substance (government-regulated substance)- *n.* beschränktes Genussmittel

convict (an individual who has been found guilty and incarcerated)- *n.* der/die Strafgefangene; (to find a defendant guilty of a crime)- *v.* verurteilen; für schuldig befinden; überführen (einer Straftat)

conviction (finding of guilt in a criminal case)- *n.* die Verurteilung (**for** wegen); die Überführung

coroner (public officer who determines the cause of death)- *n.* der Coroner/die Coronerin

corroborate (to verify)- *v.* bestätigen

counsel (lawyer, legal representation)- *n.* der Rechtsanwalt/die Rechtsanwältin; **counsel for the defense**- der Verteidiger/die Verteidigerin; **counsel for the prosecution/plaintiff**- der Anklagevertreter/die Anklagevertreterin (to advise)- *v.* beraten

counsel table (table where the legal counsel sits)- *n.* (for defense) der Verteidigungstisch; (for prosecution/plaintiff) der Anklagetisch

count (a numbered charge)- *n.* der Anklagepunkt

counterclaim (lawsuit by respondent in response to initial lawsuit in a civil case)- *n.* die Gegenforderung

counterfeit (to falsify)- *v.* fälschen

counterfeiting (falsifying)- *n.* die Fälschung

county jail (temporary place of incarceration until suspect released, put into prison, etc.)- *n.* das Bezirksgefängnis

court (place where trials and legal proceedings occur)- *n.* das Gericht

court house (building where trials and legal proceedings occur)- *n.* das Gerichtsgebäude

court interpreter (bilingual trained person who translates proceedings between languages for all parties in the case)- *n.* der Gerichtsdolmetscher/die Gerichtsdolmetscherin

court order (order issued by the court [judge, etc.] for, or prohibiting, an action)- *n.* der Gerichtsbeschluss

court reporter (court official who types all words of proceeding into a permanent record)- *n.* der Gerichtsreporter/die Gerichtsreporterin; der Gerichtsschreiber/die Gerichtsschreiberin

Court, District (court representing a certain area of a state or country)- *n.* das Bezirksgericht

Court, Federal District (national court with authority over a specified region)- *n.* das Bundesbezirksgericht

Court, Juvenile (court for children)- *n.* das Jugendgericht

Court, Municipal (city court)- *n.* das Gemeindegericht; das Landgericht

Court, Night (court taking place at night)- *n.* das Nachtgericht

Court, Superior (higher court)- *n.* das Höhere Gericht

Court, Supreme (highest court)- *n.* das Oberste Gerichtshof

Court, Traffic (court dealing with traffic violations)- *n.* das Verkehrsgericht

court-appointed counsel (attorney assigned to case by the court, esp. for indigent defendant)- *n.* der gerichtlich eingesetzte Rechtsanwalt/die gerichtlich eingesetzte Rechtsanwältin

courtroom (room where trials and legal proceedings occur)- *n.* der Gerichtssaal

covenant (sealed contract)- *n.* der Vertrag

crack (crack cocaine, a form of cocaine)- *n.* das Crack

credibility (reliability, reputation for truthfulness)- *n.* die Glaubwürdigkeit

crime (unlawful offense)- *n.* das Verbrechen

criminal record (written record of previous offenses)- *n.* das Strafregister

crystal meth (a narcotic)- *n.* das Kristall Meth

custody (care and control of children)- *n.* die Obhut; die Betreuung; der Schutz; (incarceration)- *n.* die Haft

damages (repayment for loss or injury)- *n.* der Schaden[s]ersatz

death penalty (sentence of death for a criminal)- *n.* die Todesstrafe

death row (incarceration for inmates awaiting the death penalty)- *n.* [Reihe von] Todeszellen

decree (order, judgment)- *n.* das Urteil; (to declare)- *v.* erklären; verfügen; beschliessen

default judgment (judgment entered against a defendant who does not plead or defend, often by not appearing in court)- *n.* das Versäumnisurteil

defendant (the accused in a legal proceeding, trial)- *n.* (in a criminal case) der/die Angeklagte; (in a civil case) der/die Beklagte

defense (the defendant/accused and defense attorney)- *n.* die Verteidigung; (evidence offered by an accused to defeat criminal charge)- *n.* die Verteidigung

defense attorney (legal counsel for the accused)- *n.* der Verteidiger/die Verteidigerin

deliberation (careful consideration)- *n.* die Überlegung

deportation (expelling of a non-citizen from the country)- *n.* die Deportation; die Ausweisung (from aus)

deposition (oral statement given under oath)- *n.* die [eidesstattliche Zeugen]aussage

Deputy District Attorney (Deputy D.A.) (assistant to the D.A.)- *n.* der stellvertretende [Bezirks]staatsanwalt/die stellvertretende [Bezirks]staatsanwältin

detention (being retained in custody)- *n.* die Haft

discovery (pre-trial process to obtain facts from other side)- *n.* die Entdeckung

dismiss (to let go)- *v.* abweisen

dismissal with prejudice (a dismissal after a legal decision, based on the merits of the case, barring the plaintiff from prosecuting the same claim at a later date)- *n.* die Abweisung zum Schaden

dismissal without prejudice (a dismissal that does not bar the plaintiff from trying to again prosecute the same claim within a certain time period)- *n.* die Abweisung ohne Schaden; die unbeschadete Abweisung

disorderly conduct (acting in a way which violates public peace or safety)- *n.* ungebührliches Benehmen; ungehöriges Benehmen

disposition (final outcome of a criminal case)- *n.* die Aufstellung

dissolution (termination of a marriage, partnership, etc.)- *n.* die Auflösung; die [Ehe]scheidung

District Attorney (D.A.) (state's legal representative in legal proceedings or a trial)- *n.* der [Bezirks]staatsanwalt/die [Bezirks]staatsanwältin

disturbing the peace (acting in a way which violates public peace)- *n.* die Ruhestörung

diversion (order for criminal defendant to participate in alternative program, instead of prison)- *n.* die Umleitung, an einem alternativen Programm teilzunehmen

divorce (legal termination of a marriage)- *n.* die [Ehe]scheidung

docket (list of cases before the court)- *n.* die Liste

domestic violence (violence within a family)- *n.* die häusliche Gewalt

double jeopardy (trying a person twice for the same crime)- *n.* die Doppelgefahr

downer (depressant narcotic)- *n.* das Sedativ[um]

driving while intoxicated (DWI)- *n.* unter Alkoholeinfluss fahren; Trunkenheit am Steuer

drug (substance used in or as a medicine or to alter the functioning of one's body)- *n.* die Droge; das Rauschgift

drug abuse (excessive or illegal use of a drug)- *n.* der Drogenmissbrauch

drunk driving (driving while intoxicated)- *n.* unter Alkoholeinfluss fahren; Trunkenheit am Steuer

due process (legal right of a defendant to a speedy and fair trial)- *n.* das rechtmässige Gerichtsverfahren

ecstasy (e or x; a narcotic)- *n.* die Ekstase

embezzlement (stealing money, property, etc.)- *n.* die Unterschlagung; die Veruntreuung

enhancement (factor that increases criminal penalty)- *n.* die Erhöhung; die Verstärkung; die Steigerung; die Hebung

enter a plea (to plea)- *v.* plädieren

entrapment (to capture by leading into a trap)- *n.* das Gefangensein

equal protection (constitutional guarantee that every person will be treated equally by the government)- *n.* der ebenbürtige Schutz; der angemessene Schutz

eviction (expel from one's residence by the owner)- *n.* die Zwangsräumung

evidence (a statement, object, etc. supporting a point in the case)- *n.* das Beweismaterial

evidence, circumstantial (indirect evidence in a case)- *n.* die Indizienbeweise (pl.)

evidence, direct (evidence directly related to a case)- *n.* der direkte Beweis

evidence, prima facie (evidence which is adequate to establish a fact, unless refuted)- *n.* der Anscheinsbeweis

examination, cross (questioning of a witness by the antagonist party)- *n.* das Kreuzverhör

examination, direct (questioning of a witness by the supporting party)- *n.* das Direktverhör

examination, re-cross (second questioning)- *n.* das weiterkreuze Verhör

examination, re-direct (second questioning)- *n.* das weiterleitende Verhör

executed (signed and delivered)- *adj.* vollstreckt

exhibit (object submitted as evidence)- *n.* das Beweisstück

exhibit, defense's (object submitted by the defense as evidence)- *n.* das Beweisstück der Verteidigung

exhibit, people's (object submitted by the prosecution as evidence)- *n.* das Beweisstück des [Anklage]vertreterers

extortion (getting money, etc. by threat)- *n.* die Erpressung

extradition (transferring a suspect to another state, country, etc. for trial)- *n.* die Auslieferung

eyewitness (person who saw the crime occur)- *n.* der Augenzeuge/die Augenzeugin

failure to appear (FTA) (when person who is required to appear in court does not do so)- *n.* das Nichterscheinen vor Gericht

failure to comply (when person is ordered to do something by the court, and does not)- *n.* das Versäumen sich nach etwas zu richten

fair hearing (a just hearing in which proper protocol is followed)- *n.* der faire Prozess

false imprisonment (finding an innocent person guilty and sentencing them to a prison sentence)- *n.* Inhaftnahme eines Unschuldigen

felony (major crime)- *n.* das Kapitalverbrechen

field sobriety test (test of blood-alcohol level at the place of first contact between the law enforcement officer and the suspect)- *n.* der [Feld]alkoholtest

file (record of case)- *n.* die Akte; (to enter into the case file)- *v.* einreichen

financial responsibility (financial obligations)- *n.* die finanzielle Verantwortung

find guilty (to judge as guilty)- *v.* [an + dat.] schuldig sprechen

finding (discovery)- *n.* der Befund; die Erkenntnis

find not guilty (to judge as innocent)- *v.* [von + dat.] freisprechen

fine (court-imposed monetary penalty)- *n.* die Geldstrafe

fingerprint (mark left by one's finger, used to identify individuals)- *n.* der Fingerabdruck

firearm (weapon that fires a projectile, i.e. gun, rifle, shotgun)- *n.* die Schusswaffe

foreclosure (taking away of the right to redeem a mortgage, etc.)- *n.* die Kündigung

forfeit (a fine or penalty for some crime)- *n.* die Strafe; (to give up, lose)- *v.* verwirken

forgery (falsification; a fake)- *n.* die Fälschung

foster care (temporary care of a child, but not by birth)- *n.* die Pflege

fraud (intentional deception, lie)- *n.* die Täuschung; der Betrug

gambling (game of chance)- *n.* das Glücksspiel; das Wetten

garnish (to issue process for purpose of taking away wages or money to pay a fine)- *v.* garnieren; pfänden

glue sniffing (inhaling glue as a narcotic)- *n.* das Schnüffeln; das Sniefen

good cause (supported reason for doing something)- *n.* gute Sache

grand jury (jury that listens to arguments and decides innocence or guilt of defendant)- *n.* das Grosse Geschworenengericht

grand theft (major theft)- *n.* der Grosse Diebstahl

grounds (reasons)- *n.* der Grund (**on the grounds of**- auf Grund; unter Berufung auf)

guardianship (legal protective representation of one by another, usually of a minor by an adult)- *n.* die Vormundschaft

guilty (legally judged not innocent of committing a crime)- *adj.* schuldig

gun (weapon which fires a projectile; a firearm)- *n.* die Schusswaffe; (rifle) das Gewehr; (pistol) die Pistole; (revolver) der Revolver

habeas corpus (writ declaring that a prisoner must be brought before a court to decide his or her innocence or guilt)- *n.* die Anordnung eines Haftprüfungstermins (Habeaskorpus)

handcuffs (pair of connected rings used to shackle a prisoner)- *n.* die Handschellen (pl.)

harassment (constant attacks or torment)- *n.* die Schikanierung; die Belästigung

hearing (formal proceeding held before judge)- *n.* das Hearing; die Anhörung; die Verhandlung

hearing, contested (legal proceeding in which outcome is put into question by possible administrative misconduct)- *n.* das angefechtene Hearing

hearing, preliminary (first hearing)- *n.* das Vorverfahren

hearsay (rumor, gossip, unsubstantiated story of event)- *n.* das Gerücht; der Klatsch

heroin (narcotic, usually injected into the body)- *n.* das Heroin

hit and run (automobile hits a person and leaves the scene of the accident)- *n./v.* der Unfall mit Fahrerflucht

holding cell (room for detention of suspect while being tried)- *n.* die [Gefängnis]zelle

homicide (murder)- *n.* der Totschlag; der Mord

illegal (not legal; unlawful)- *adj.* illegal; ungesetzlich

immigration (moving from one country to another)- *n.* die Einwanderung; die Immigration

immunity (exemption from a charge or penalty)- *n.* die Immunität (**from** vor + dat.); **immunity from criminal liability**- die Strafunmündigkeit; **immunity from prosecution**- der Schutz vor Strafverfolgung

impeachment of witness (discrediting a witness)- *n.* die Aufrechtbarkeit des Zeugen/der Zeugin; die Infragestellung des Zeugen/der Zeugin; der Zeugenaussage

inadmissible (not acceptable)- *adj.* unzulässig

incest (sexual relationship within a family)- *n.* der Inzest; die Inzucht

incriminate (to involve in, or make appear guilty of, a crime or fault)- *v.* belasten

indecent exposure (taking off one's clothes in a public place)- *n.* die Entblössung in schamverletzender Weise

indictment (formal charging with a crime)- *n.* die Anklage[erhebung]

indigent (poor, without money)- *adj.* arm

informant (someone who gives information about a crime; often referring to another criminal who acts as a sort of undercover spy for law enforcement)- *n.* der Informant/die Informantin; der Gewährsmann

information (formal charge)- *n.* die Anklage

infraction (violation of a law, pact, agreement, etc.)- *n.* die Übertretung

injunction (court order prohibiting or ordering an action)- *n.* die richterliche Verfügung

inmate (prisoner)- *n.* der Insasse/die Insassin

innocent until proven guilty- *adj.* unschuldig bis zum Nachweis der Schuld

instrument (legal document)- *n.* die Urkunde

intent (state of mind when performing an act)- *n.* die Absicht (**with intent to do something**- in der Absicht; mit dem Vorsatz, etwas zu tun)

investigation (search by law enforcement to determine truth of events)- *n.* die Untersuchung

jail (place where prisoner is confined)- *n.* das Gefängnis

join (concur)- *v.* zustimmen; beipflichten

joyriding (driving around in a stolen automobile for the enjoyment of doing so)- *n.* die Spritztour [im gestohlenen Auto]

judge (public official with the authority to hear and decide cases in a court of law)- *n.* der Richter/die Richterin

judgment (final decision)- *n.* das Urteil

jurisdiction (range of authority in administering justice)- *n.* die Jurisdiktion; die Gerichtsbarkeit; der Gerichtsbezirk; die Rechtsprechung

juror (member of a jury)- *n.* der/die Geschworene; der Schöffe/die Schöffin; (**alternative juror**-der/die alternative Geschworene; der alternative Schöffe/die alternative Schöffin)

jury (group of members from the public who are assigned the task of deciding the trial's outcome)- *n.* die Geschworenen; die Schöffen

jury box (place in the courtroom where the jury sits)- *n.* die Geschworenenbank; die Schöffenbank

jury foreman/jury foreperson (the chairperson of a jury)- *n.* der Sprecher/die Sprecherin [der Geschworenen/der Schöffen]

jury trial (a trial in which the final decision will be made by a jury of one's peers)- *n.* das Schwurgerichtsverfahren

jury, hung (a jury which is unable to make a final decision in a case)- *n.* Geschworenengericht, das zu keinem einstimmigen Urteil/keinem Mehrheitsurteil gelangen kann

juvenile hall (place of incarceration for underage offenders)- *n.* das Jugendgefängnis

kidnap (to seize and hold a person by force or fraud)- *v.* kidnappen; entführen

kidnapping (seizing and holding a person by force or fraud)- *n.* das Kidnappen; die Entführung

larceny (theft)- *n.* der Diebstahl

lawsuit (legal action between two parties in a civil court, having to do with money or property)- *n.* der Prozess

leading question (a question which leads to a point being proven)- *n.* die Suggestivfrage

lease (contract by which a landlord rents land, property, etc. to a tenant for a specified time)- *n.* (of land, business premises) der Pachtvertrag; (of house, flat, office) der Mietvertrag

lewd conduct (indecent or obscene actions)- *n.* das unzüchtige Verhalten

liability (something that works to one's disadvantage)- *n.* die Haftung

libel (any written or printed matter to injure a person's reputation)- *n.* die Schmähchrift; die Klageschrift; die diffamierende Entstellung

lie detector (machine which measures heart rate to determine if a person is lying)- *n.* der Lügendetektor

life imprisonment (punishment of spending one's life in prison)- *n.* die lebenslange Haft

line-up (a line of a few people for a witness to look at and identify a suspect in a crime)- *n.* die Aufstellung

litigation (lawsuit)- *n.* der Rechtsstreit; der Prozess

loitering (lingering, spending time idly in one area)- *n.* das Herumlungern

lynching (murder by mob action, without lawful trial)- *n.* das Lynchen

malice (purposely committing a crime with the intention of harming another person)- *n.* die Böswilligkeit; die böse Absicht

malicious mischief (harm or damage caused with intention of hurting another person)- *n.* der böswillige Unfug

malpractice (professional misconduct or improper conduct, esp. by a physician)- *n.* das Amtsvergehen; der Amtsmissbrauch

manslaughter (killing of a human being by another, esp. without malice)- *n.* der Totschlag; die fahrlässige Tötung

manslaughter, involuntary (accidental killing of a person)- *n.* der unwillkürliche Totschlag

manslaughter, voluntary (knowingly killing a person, but without malice)- *n.* der freiwillige Totschlag; der willkürliche Totschlag

marijuana (narcotic)- *n.* das Marijuana

mayhem (the offense of maiming a person; any violent destruction)- *n.* zum Krüppel machen; das gewaltige Kaputtmachen, die [mutwillige] Zerstörung

mental health (health of the mind)- *n.* die geistige Gesundheit

Miranda Warning (the rights read to the accused at the time of arrest)- *n.* die Miranda Verwarnung (pl)

misdemeanor (any minor offense with a lesser punishment than a felony)- *n.* das Vergehen; die Übertretung

mistrial (a trial made void because of a mistake made or inconclusive outcome)- *n.* der fehlerhaft geführte Prozess

modification (alteration; change)- *n.* die Modifizierung; die Veränderung; die Einschränkung

- motion** (a petition for a ruling, formal request)- *n.* der Antrag
- motion denied** (content of petition not allowed by judge)- Antrag verweigert
- motion granted** (content of petition agreed to by judge)- Antrag bewilligt
- mug shot** (identifying photo of a suspect used by law enforcement)- *n.* das Verbrecherfotos
- murder** (unlawful and malicious killing of another person, with intent to do so)- *n.* der Mord (**of** an + dat.)
- narcotic** (illegal or controlled drug)- *n.* das Betäubungsmittel
- negligence** (carelessness)- *n.* die Fahrlässigkeit
- not guilty** (innocent)- *adj.* unschuldig
- null and void** (invalid, without legal force)- *adj.* null und nichtig (**declare something null and void**- etwas für null und nichtig erklären)
- oath** (sworn statement)- *n.* der Eid; der Schwur
- object** (to express disapproval or opposition)- *v.* Einspruch erheben (**I object, Your Honor!** Einspruch, Herr Vorsitzender!)
- objection** (the expressing of disapproval or opposition)- *n.* der Einspruch
- objection overruled** (objection rejected)- Einspruch abgelehnt
- objection sustained** (objection agreed to)- Einspruch stattgegeben
- offender** (person who committed a crime)- *n.* der/die Straffällige; der Täter/die Täterin; der/die Schuldige; der Verbrecher/die Verbrecherin
- offense** (violation of law)- *n.* das Delikt; die Straftat
- offer of proof** (presentation of evidence for the record, but without a jury present, made after the judge has sustained an objection to that evidence, so that the evidence can be preserved on the record for an appeal of the case)- *n.* Darlegen von Beweisen; das Darlegen eines Beweises
- oral copulation, forced** (forced, oral, sexual contact)- *n.* die Zwangsoralkopulation
- ordinance** (statute or regulation)- *n.* die Verordnung
- overrule** (to overturn, esp. an objection)- *n.* ablehnen
- overt act** (an action taken openly and with evident intent)- *n.* der unverhohlene Akt; der öffentliche Akt

pandering (helping one fulfill his or her vices; procuring, pimping)- *n.* das Kuppeln; die Zuhälterei

paralegal (person trained to aid lawyers but not to practice law)- *n.* der Rechtshelfer/die Rechtshelferin; der Advokatsassistent/die Advokatsassistentin

parole (release of a prisoner before his or her sentence is complete, on the promise of future good behavior)- *n.* der bedingte Straferlass

party (plaintiff [People, State, etc.], prosecution or defense)- *n.* die Partei

paternity (fatherhood)- *n.* die Vaterschaft

penalty (punishment)- *n.* die Strafe

penalty assessment (indication of the liability of the losing party in a civil case)- *n.* die Strafersetzung

pending (not yet decided)- *adj.* anhängig (Rechts.); schwebend (Verfahren); laufend (Verhandlungen)

penitentiary (prison)- *n.* die Straf[vollzugs]anstalt; die Zuchthaus; die [Justiz]vollzugsanstalt

People (prosecution)- *n.* die Anklage[vertretung]

perjury (lying while under oath to tell the truth)- *n.* die Falschaussage unter Eid; der Meineid

permanent resident (person living long term in a country)- *n.* der ständige Einwohner/die ständige Einwohnerin

personal estate (the whole of one's property, possessions)- *n.* das bewegliche Vermögen

personal recognizance (one's own care and responsibility)- *n.* die persönliche Verpflichtung

petition (formal request for an order)- *n.* die Petition; die Eingabe; der förmliche Antrag; (for divorce) die Klage; (to formally ask, request)- *v.* ersuchen um; (to petition for divorce) die Scheidung einreichen

petty theft (small scale theft)- *n.* der Begateldiebstahl

pimping (acting as agent for prostitutes)- *n.* die Zuhälterei

plaintiff (the complainant in a civil case)- *n.* der Kläger/die Klägerin

plea (defendant's "guilty," "not guilty" or other answer to a criminal charge)- *n.* die Verteidigungsrede

plea bargain (agreement between the prosecution and defense to lower the punishment in exchange for something else, usually for a guilty plea)- *n.* die Verteidigungsredeverhandlungen
(*Praktik, bei der Verteidigung und Anklage übereinkommen, dass der Angeklagte ein [Teil]geständnis ablegt und dafür bestimmte Zusicherungen [milderes Strafmass o,ä] erhält*)

pleadings (documents filed in a case)- *n.* die Schriftsätze

points and authorities (legal precedence)- *n.* Punktel und Befugnisse

polygraph (lie detector test)- *n.* der Polygraph; der Lügendetektor

possession of drugs- *n.* der Drogenbesitz

postponement (pushing back of the date)- *n.* die Verschiebung; der Aufschub

pot (slang for marijuana; a narcotic)- *n.* das Pot

power of attorney (legal authority to act as one's representative and speak for him or her)- *n.* die Vollmacht[surkunde]; anwaltliche Vollmacht

preemptory challenge (one of a party's limited number of challenges that do not need a reason)- *n.* eine Ablehnung im Vorfeld

pre-sentence report (report written to argue for what kind of punishment is appropriate for a guilty party)- *n.* der vorherige Urteilsbericht

prejudice (bias or preconceived opinion)- *n.* das Vorurteil

preponderance of the evidence (the evidence shows that it exceedingly likely that the crime was committed in the way the prosecution argues, and the defendant is, therefore, guilty)- *n.* die erdrückende Beweislast; das Übergewicht der Beweisstücke

presumption of innocence (defendant is believed to be innocent, unless proven guilty)- *n.* die Voraussetzung der Unschuld

pretrial conference (meeting before the trial to try and resolve the case, agree on evidence, etc.)- *n.* die vorgerichtliche Verfahrensbesprechung

pretrial offense (offense committed before the trial begins)- *n.* das vorgerichtliche Delikt; die vorgerichtliche Straftat

priors (previous offenses committed by the defendant)- *n.* das Vorherige; vorherige Delikte; vorherige Straftaten

prison (place of long term incarceration, where convicts fulfill their sentences)- *n.* das Gefängnis

privilege (a special right, favor, etc. granted to a person or group)- *n.* das Priveleg; das Vorrecht

probable cause (a reasonable explanation for why something occurred)- *n.* die wahrscheinliche Ursache

probate (having to do with the verification of official documents, i.e.- wills)- *n.* die gerichtliche Urkundebestätigung (reg. wills) die gerichtliche Testamentsbestätigung; die Testamentseröffnung; die beglaubigte Ausfertigung eines Testaments

probation (suspension of defendant's sentence under supervision of probation officer)- *n.* die Bewährungsfrist

probation department (office which handles cases of probation)- *n.* das Amt für Bewährungshilfe

probation officer (official who supervises convicts who are released on probation)- *n.* der Bewährungshelfer/die Bewährungshelferin

probation, formal (conditional suspension of a convict's prison sentence)- *n.* die offizielle Bewährung

probation, summary (suspension of a guilty party's prison sentence so that, if he or she obeys the conditions, he or she will spend no time in prison)- *n.* die fristlose Bewährung

proof (evidence convincing to the judge or jury)- *n.* das Beweismaterial

prosecution (the state's representative in a court room, seeks to convict the defendant)- *n.* die Anklage

prosecutor (the attorney representing the state)- *n.* der Ankläger/die Anklägerin

prostitution (selling one's body for sex)- *n.* die Prostitution

Public Defender (P.D.) (state-funded counsel assigned to an indigent defendant)- *n.* der öffentliche Verteidiger/die öffentliche Verteidigerin

quash (to set aside, i.e.- an indictment)- *v.* aufheben; zurückweisen

raise an issue (to bring an issue up for discussion)- eine Streitfrage aufwerfen; eine Streitfrage zur Sprache bringen

rap sheet (file/list of previous offenses)- *n.* die Anklageschrift

rape (forced sexual intercourse without consent)- *n.* die Vergewaltigung

rape, statutory (sexual intercourse with a minor)- *n.* der Geschlechtsverkehr mit einer Minderjährigen

rape in concert (unlawful sexual intercourse against the victim's will and by force, while another crime is being committed)- *n.* die Vergewaltigung mit gegenseitigem Verbrechen

reasonable doubt, beyond a (absolutely certain)- unzweifelhaft

rebuttal (contradicting or opposing in a formal manner by argument or proof)- *n.* die Widerlegung; die Zurückweisung

reckless driving (driving wildly, without control)- *n.* die rücksichtslose Fahrweise

regulation (rule; law)- *n.* die Vorschrift

release of information (making information available to the public)- die Veröffentlichung der Anklage

relinquishment (giving up, e.g. giving up a right)- *n.* der Verzicht (**of** auf + akk.)

remand (to send a person back into custody)- *v.* jmdn. in Untersuchungshaft behalten; (to send a case back to a lower court or administrative hearing office)- *v.* das Verfahren im Untersuchungsgericht behalten

remedy (legal compensation for a wrong)- *n.* die Entschädigung; der Rechtsbehelf

report (to state, to inform)- *v.* berichten; Bericht erstatten; (a formal account of facts or information)- *n.* der Bericht

respondent (defendant in a civil case)- *n.* der/die Beklagte

restitution (reimbursement; giving back of something for something else that has been lost or taken)- *n.* die [Rück]erstattung (**to make restitution-** Ersatz leisten)

restraining order (legal document requiring someone to stay away from another person or place)- *n.* der Zurückhaltungsbeschluss

revoke (to rescind, withdraw, cancel, turn down)- *v.* aufheben

right, constitutional (right which is guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution)- *n.* das Verfassungsanrecht

robbery (theft)- *n.* der Raub

rule (to decide, to judge)- *n.* entscheiden

search and seizure (investigating a place and removing something from the premises for evidence)- *n.* die Suche und Gefangennahme

self defense (protecting oneself from harm)- *n.* die Selbstverteidigung

self-incrimination (saying something which helps prove one's own guilt)- *n.* die Selbstbelastung

sentence (punishment assigned by the court)- *n.* das [Straf]urteil; die Strafe; die Haftstrafe; (to assign a punishment)- *v.* verurteilen

sentence, concurrent (two or more punishments of prison time to be served at the same time)- *n.* die gleichzeitige Strafe

sentence, consecutive (back to back sentences; one punishment immediately after another)- *n.* die aufeinanderfolgende Strafe

sentence, suspended (punishment which is held back, not put into effect)- *n.* die Haftverschonung; die Strafe mit Bewährung

sentencing (assignment of a punishment to a convict)- *n.* die Verurteilung

separation (separation of a married couple, but not yet divorce)- *n.* die [gerichtliche] Trennung

serve a sentence (to complete one's punishment)- die Haftstrafe verbüßen

serve a summons to somebody (give an official order to respondent to appear in court)- jmdn. vorladen

settlement (negotiated solution to a lawsuit)- *n.* die Zuwendung; (in will) das Legat

sexual molestation (making improper and unwanted sexual advances or attacks)- *n.* unsittliche Belästigung

sheriff (chief law enforcement officer of a county)- *n.* der/die Sheriff

shoplifting (stealing articles, not money, from a shop during shop hours)- *n.* der Ladendiebstahl

slander (giving a false statement that damages another's reputation)- *n.* die [mündliche] Verleumdung

sodomy (any sexual intercourse considered abnormal; usually in reference to anal sexual intercourse)- *n.* die Sodomie; der Analverkehr

statement, closing (final argument summarizing the case, made by the attorney)- *n.* das Schlussplädoyer; die Schlusssaussage; die abschliessende Aussage

statement, opening (initial argument summarizing the case, made by the attorney)- *n.* der Eröffnungsplädoyer; die erste Aussage

statute (an established law or rule)- *n.* das Gesetz

statute of limitations (a law limiting the time within which legal action may be taken)- *n.* die gesetzliche Verjährung

statutory rape (sexual intercourse, even if consensual, with a minor)- *n.* die Vergewaltigung einer Minderjährigen

stay (a delay or cessation)- *n.* die Aussetzung

stipulate (to specify as an essential condition of an agreement)- *v.* fordern; verlangen

stipulation (an essential condition of an agreement)- *n.* die Bedingung; die Forderung

submit (to present, e.g. to present evidence to the court)- *v.* einreichen; vorbringen

subpoena (written legal order directing a person to appear in court to testify, etc.)- *n.* die Vorladung

sue (to prosecute in civil court in seeking to redress wrongs)- *v.* verklagen (**for** auf + akk.)

suit (action to secure justice in a court of law)- *n.* der Prozess; das [Gerichts]verfahren

sustain (to maintain, agree to, e.g. to agree to and enforce an objection made by an attorney)- *v.* einem Einwand stattgeben

swear (to declare under oath)- *v.* schwören

testify (to give evidence under oath in a court of law)- *v.* aussagen (**testify against someone/ before something-** gegen jmdn./vor etw. [dat.] aussagen)

testimony (the evidence given under oath in a court of law)- *n.* die [Zeugen]aussage

theft (stealing, robbery)- *n.* der Diebstahl

theft, grand (major robbery)- *n.* Grosser Diebstahl

theft, petty (minor robbery)- *n.* der Bagatelldiebstahl

time served (the amount of time already spent in incarceration)- *n.* die verbüsste Strafzeit

tort (wrongful act or damage [not involving a breach of contract] for which a civil action can be brought)- *n.* das zivilrechtliche Delikt; die unerlaubte Handlung; das Unrecht

traffic citation (ticket issued by law enforcement officer for a driving violation)- *n.* der Strafzettel

transcript (written record)- *n.* das Protokoll; die Abschrift

trespassing (unlawful entry onto someone's property)- *n.* das unbefugte Betreten

trial (formal examination to decide a case by a court of law)- *n.* das [Gerichts]verfahren

trial, court/bench (trial in which outcome is decided by a judge)- *n.* das Richter[gerichts]verfahren

trial, jury (trial in which outcome is decided by a jury)- *n.* das Geschworenen[gerichts]verfahren; das Schöffen[gerichts]verfahren

trial, speedy (trial which begins shortly after arrest and does not last an unacceptably long time)- *n.* das [gerichtliche] Schnellverfahren

unconstitutional (illegal, goes against the rights guaranteed by the Constitution)- *adj.* verfassungswidrig

undercover (acting in secret, e.g. an undercover police officer)- *adj.* getarnt (**undercover agent-** Untergrund-/Geheimagent)

unemployment (being without a job)- *n.* die Arbeitslosigkeit

unlawful detainer (illegally holding a person in custody)- *n.* der gesetzwidrige Haftverlängerungsbefehl

upper (stimulant narcotic)- *n.* das Aufputzmittel; das Speed

vacate (to cancel)- *v.* stornieren; aufgeben; räumen

vagrancy (begging; wandering from place to place without working)- *n.* die Landstreicherei; (in cities) die Stadtstreicherei

vandalism (to maliciously destroy or damage property)- *n.* der Wandalismus; der Vandalismus; die [mutwillige] Zerstörung

venue (place in which something occurs)- *n.* der [Veranstaltungs]ort; der Treffpunkt

verdict (final judgment)- *n.* das Urteil; der [Urteils]spruch

victim (one who suffers loss, is killed or injured, etc.)- *n.* das Opfer

violation (infringement, breaking, e.g. of a law)- *n.* der Bruch; die Verletzung; der Verstoß

visitation (an official visit, e.g. to a convict in prison, or to inspect something)- *n.* die Visitation; die Heimsuchung

voir dire (oath of competency)- *n.* der Zuständigkeitseid

waive rights (to choose to give up one's constitutional rights)- auf Anrechte verzichten

waive time (to cut time off a prison sentence)- die Zeit nicht vollstrecken

waiver of rights (official giving up of one's constitutional rights)- *n.* der Verzicht auf Anrechte

warrant (order, permit, writ)- *n.* die Vollmacht; der Befehl

warrant, arrest (order issued by the court for law enforcement officials to arrest a suspect)- *n.* der Haftbefehl

warrant, bench (a writ authorized by judge for a search, seizure, arrest, etc.)- *n.* der Gerichtsbefehl

warrant, search (permission given to law enforcement by the court to search a suspect's house, etc. for evidence)- *n.* der Durchsuchungsbefehl

weapon (item used to attack another)- *n.* die Waffe

weapon, concealed (weapon hidden somewhere on the suspect)- *n.* die verdeckte Waffe

weapon, deadly (weapon which has the potential to take a life)- *n.* die lebensgefährliche Waffe

weight of evidence (how thoroughly the evidence convinces)- *n.* die Beweislast

will (last will and testament: one's written decree of what will happen to all of his or her possessions upon death)- *n.* das Testament

witness (someone who sees a crime occur, or is otherwise an expert in some aspect of the case and asked to testify in court)- *n.* der Zeuge/die Zeugin

witness, defense (a witness who appears to support the defense's argument)- *n.* der Zeuge der Verteidigung/die Zeugin der Verteidigung

witness, expert (a knowledgeable witness who argues technical or other points)- *n.* der sachverständige Zeuge/die sachverständige Zeugin

witness, hostile (a witness for the opposing side)- *n.* der feindselige Zeuge/die feindselige Zeugin

witness, material (an important or essential witness in a case)- *n.* der wesentliche Zeuge/die wesentliche Zeugin

witness, prosecution (a witness who appears to support the prosecution's argument)- *n.* der Zeuge der Anklage/die Zeugin der Anklage

witness stand (the place in the court room for the witness to sit when being questioned)- *n.* der Zeugenstand

work furlough (leave of absence from one's job, esp. for military reasons or jury duty)- *n.* der Arbeitsurlaub

work release (convict's release from prison during the day to work at a job outside the prison)- *n.* die Freistellung vom Arbeitsplatz

writ (a formal legal document prohibiting or ordering some action)- *n.* die Verfügung; der [behördliche] Erlass; der [gerichtliche] Befehl

