

# **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*)

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**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 Kaution

**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 Kautionseinbusse

**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 Geschworenen; 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 Schöffnenbank

**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



