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negotiate, *v.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /nɪ'gəʊʃɪeɪt/, /nɪ'gəʊsɪeɪt/,

U.S. /nə'gəʊʃi,eɪt/, /nə'gəʊsi,eɪt/

Forms: 15–16 **negotiat**, 15– **negociate**, 16–17 **negociat**, 16– **negotiate**.

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: A borrowing from Latin. **Etymons:** Latin *negōtiāt-*, *negōtiārī*.

Etymology: < classical Latin *negōtiāt-*, past participial stem (compare -ATE *suffix*³) of *negōtiārī* to do business, trade, deal < *negōtium* business, work, difficulty, trouble < *neg-* (see NEGATE *v.*) + *ōtium* OTIUM *n.* With the sense development compare Middle French, French *négociier* (1484 in sense 'to operate, proceed', 1556 in sense 'to do business', 1559 in sense 'to discuss in order to reach an agreement'), Italian *negoziare* (1348 in sense 'to do business', 1533 in sense 'to discuss in order to reach an agreement'). Compare also Spanish *negociar* (late 13th cent.), Portuguese *negociar* (1527).

1. *intr.*

a. To communicate or confer (*with* another or others) for the purpose of arranging some matter by mutual agreement; to discuss a matter with a view to some compromise or settlement.

- 1598 J. FLORIO *Worlde of Wordes* *Negotiare*, to exercise, to negociate, to deale, to occupie, to emploie, to be busied, to exercise merchandize, to occupie a woman.
- 1600 SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado about Nothing* II. i. 168 Let euery eie negotiate for it selfe, And trust no Agent.
- 1671 A. WOODHEAD tr. *Life St. Teresa* I. xv. 93 Let the will then..know, that she is not to negotiate with God by strength of Arme.
- 1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* II. VI. ii. 237 You would make a fine Plenipo to negotiate with the French. They would soon persuade you.
- 1783 J. O. JUSTAMOND tr. G. T. F. Raynal *Philos. Hist. Europeans in Indies* (new ed.) VI. 215 The ministry negotiated, bribed and threatened.
- 1840 C. THIRLWALL *Hist. Greece* VII. 289 She was now reduced to utter despair, and sent to negotiate with the conqueror.
- 1861 H. T. BUCKLE *Hist. Civilisation Eng.* (1873) III. ii. 80 Both parties were now willing to negotiate with the view of gaining time.
- 1910 'M. TWAIN' *Speeches* 268 I negotiated for a box of them and took them away with me.
- 1955 *Times* 10 May 14/5 Negotiate, conciliate, arbitrate, try as hard as you can for agreement rather than stoppages.
- 2000 *New Yorker* 16 Oct. 215/1 Clinton seemed..a figure from the past—a politician made to press the flesh, to give speeches in large halls and negotiate with his opponents in small rooms.

†**b.** To do business or trade; to engage in commerce. *Obs.*

1601 P. HOLLAND tr. Pliny *Hist. World* I. 117 Our Romanes were forced to provide..interpreters, when they would negotiate and traffick with the people.

a1684 J. EVELYN *Diary* anno 1645 (1955) II. 449 Jewes, Turks, Armenians,..negotiating in this famous Emporium.

1759 JOHNSON *Prince of Abissinia* II. xxxvi. 72 It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust.

2.

a. trans. To conduct a negotiation or negotiations about (a matter, affair, etc.).

1619 M. DRAYTON *Barons Warres* iii. xxxi, in *Poems* (rev. ed.) 37 That weightie Bus'nesse to negotiate, They must find One of speciall worth and trust.

1639 T. FULLER *Hist. Holy Warre* I. viii. 11 Our Saviour himself appointed him his Legate, with a commission to negotiate the Christian cause.

a1701 H. MAUNDRELL *Journey Aleppo to Jerusalem* (1703) 9 To negotiate this affair we sent a Turk.

1765 J. WILKES *Corr.* (1805) II. 215 I leave you..to negociate all these matters.

1807 R. SOUTHEY *Lett. from Eng.* III. 313 They negotiate with the utmost anxiety the amours of their cows and sheep.

1848 A. BRONTË *Tenant of Wildfell Hall* I. ix. 157 Just then, there arose a slight commotion on the other side of me, occasioned by Miss Wilson's coming to negotiate an exchange of seats with Rose.

1969 I. OPIE & P. OPIE *Children's Games* vi. 207 The fun of 'Puss in the Corner' is that the players themselves negotiate when they are going to run; its disadvantage is that it is normally for five players, no more and no less.

1994 *Wall St. Jrnl.* 17 May A8/3 Under the plans now being negotiated, Sprint would run the sprawling EDS-GM communications net.

†**b. intr.** Of a proposed agreement, treaty, etc.: to be in negotiation. Only in continuous tenses. *Obs.*

1720 D. DEFOE *Mem. Cavalier* 204 That Treaty was actually negotiating seven Years, and yet the War went on with all the Vigour and Rancour imaginable.

1748 S. RICHARDSON *Clarissa* VI. lxxxviii. 317 The reconciliation, which I hope will take place, is negotiating by means of the correspondence so newly opened between you and your sister.

1761 F. SHERIDAN *Mem. Miss Sidney Bidulph* II. 345 His marriage was then actually negotiating.

1782 F. BURNEY *Cecilia* III. VI. iv. 259 It is negotiating at this very moment, I believe, among the higher powers.

c. trans. To arrange for, achieve, obtain, or bring about (something) by

negotiation.

- 1754 *World* 12 Dec. 614 Our country squires made treaties about their game and ladies negotiated the meeting of their lap-dogs.
- 1794 S. WILLIAMS *Nat. & Civil Hist. Vermont* 264 Send a flag into Canada, to negotiate their release or exchange.
- 1838 W. H. PRESCOTT *Hist. Reign Ferdinand & Isabella* II. I. xvii. 141 It was impossible..to negotiate a sale of their effects.
- 1854 J. H. NEWMAN *Lect. Hist. Turks* I. ii. 29 He..sent ambassadors to negotiate an equal alliance with the Chinese Empire.
- 1865 TROLLOPE *Can you forgive Her?* II. i. 6 After what a fashion would he be compelled to negotiate that loan!
- 1910 *Encycl. Brit.* I. 178/2 He negotiated..a treaty..with Prussia.
- 1987 *Sunday Times* 4 Oct. 76/5 The best move for both sets of shareholders would be for the two men to negotiate a deal.
- 2001 *N.Y. Rev. Bks.* 1 Nov. 20/2 More important in advancing his new political career..was the alliance that he negotiated between his own Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the more conservative Christian Social Union (CSU) of Bavaria.

†**d. trans.** To set right by negotiation. *Obs. rare*⁻¹.

- 1776 T. PAINE *Common Sense* iii. 53 A republican government by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

3. trans.

a. Law. To transfer or assign (a cheque, bill, or other document) to the legal ownership of another; to convert into cash or notes; to obtain or give value for (a bill, cheque, etc.) in money.

In quot. 1711 used *intr.* with passive meaning.

- 1671 *On Tryal between Letten & Moresco* 16 The Objecter would introduce a new Principle, and takes it for granted, That Bills of Exchange are Negotiated by persons of no Credit or Estates.
- 1682 J. SCARLETT *Stile of Exchanges* 54 None can negotiate or redraw a Bill of Exchange, except it be made payable to his order who must negotiate it.
- 1711 *London Gaz.* No. 4823/3 We cannot..perceive that any such Bills are Negotiating.
- 1748 G. G. BEEKMAN *Let.* 7 Jan. in *Beekman Mercantile Papers* (1956) I. 39 Inclosed you have Also a Bill of Exchange for forty Pounds Starling on Mr. John Beckwish Living In Knaresborough YorkShire Which I Beg you Will Negotiate And Make no Doubt but it will be Puntually Paid.
- 1777 W. COWPER *Let.* 11 Dec. (1979) I. 274 I am obliged to you..for the 30 £, which I hope I shall be able to negotiate here.
- 1833 H. MARTINEAU *Messrs. Vanderput & Snoek* iii. 49 Every bill drawn upon Amsterdam, or negotiated here.
- 1856 C. J. LEVER *Martins of Cro' Martin* 355 When I paid it by these securities, you pledged yourself

not to negotiate them.

- 1868 J. E. T. ROGERS *Man. Polit. Econ.* xv. 204 The merchant..imports goods, and gives bills to such countries as receive and negotiate bills.
- 1882 *Bills of Exchange Act* §31(1) A bill is negotiated when it is transferred from one person to another in such a manner as to constitute the transferee the holder of the bill.
- 1969 J. B. SAUNDERS *Words & Phrases legally Defined* (ed. 2) III. 333/1 If a blank stamped paper after completion is 'negotiated' to a holder in due course, it shall be valid and effectual for all purposes in his hands.
- 1991 A. G. GUEST *Chalmers's Bills of Exchange* (ed. 14) 298 A bill payable to bearer is negotiated by mere delivery, and no indorsement is required.

b. To deal with, carry out, or arrange as a business or monetary transaction.

- 1809 R. LANGFORD *Introd. Trade* 55 The dividend warrants of the Stock negotiated by N. M. Rothschild.
- 1875 W. STUBBS *Constit. Hist.* II. xvii. 534 'Utter destruction' had been the common fate of those who..had negotiated the king's loans.
- 1910 *Encycl. Brit.* I. 427/2 The Spanish government gave him full powers to negotiate the loans.
- 1996 *Categories of Land Tax Grant in Texas* (Arch. & Rec. Div., Texas Gen. Land Office) 3 President Sam Houston was authorized to negotiate a loan for \$20,000 for the purpose of purchasing ammunition and munitions of war.

4. *trans.*

a. To find a way through, round, or over (an obstacle, a difficult path, etc.).

- 1862 G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE *Inside Bar* i The first fence I negotiated most successfully.
- 1882 *Bazaar, Exchange & Mart* 15 Feb. 174 No sweeping curve is required to negotiate a corner, as the machine may be swung round directly.
- 1909 J. LONDON in *Sat. Evening Post* 22 May 37/2 They, in the auto,..negotiating the sharp apex and going up Geary.
- 1924 P. G. WODEHOUSE *Bill the Conqueror* v. 94 He entered Marmont Mansions and Bill..could hear him wheezily negotiating the stairs.
- 1973 E. LEMARCHAND *Let or Hindrance* xiii. 157 Toye negotiated the narrow entry, and they arrived in a small enclosed space in which several cars were already parked.
- 1987 *Grimsby Evening Tel.* 10 Nov. 16/3 The popular Fibre Sand Small Open attracted no less than 50 starters with 16 negotiating the testing course to go clear.
- 2001 *Guardian* 17 Feb. (Travel section) 18/2 The other type of skier..will attempt to negotiate the bumps using short turns down the fall line.

b. To succeed in dealing with in the way desired; to manage or bring

about successfully.

- 1888 *Pall Mall Gaz.* 14 Nov. 5/2 The difficulty of simultaneously negotiating creatures whose divergent natures demand widely different tactics.
- 1927 *Amer. Mercury* Feb. 246/2 A character nonchalantly adjusts his cravat and starts to open his mouth to negotiate a *jeu d'esprit*.
- 1987 J. RULE *Memory Board* xi. 188 Diana used her cane for negotiating her balance.
- 1991 *20–20* Spring 60/3 The challenge on *Desperate Hours* was to negotiate the contrasting acting styles of Anthony Hopkins, a classically trained English theatre actor, and Mickey Rourke, an alumnus of Lee Strasberg's studio and a full-blooded method actor.
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