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## promote, *v.*

**Pronunciation:** <sup>2</sup> Brit. /prə'məʊt/, U.S. /prə'moʊt/

**Forms:** late Middle English **promoot**, late Middle English **promote** ...

**Frequency (in current use):**

**Origin:** A borrowing from Latin. **Etymons:** Latin *prōmōt-*, *prōmovēre*.

**Etymology:** < classical Latin *prōmōt-*, past participial stem of *prōmovēre*...

**I.** To advance the interests of, move to a stronger or more prominent position.

**1.**

**a. transitive.** To advance (a person) *to* a position of honour, dignity, or emolument (†also *into* the holder of such a position). Also without prepositional phrase: to raise to a higher rank, grade, or office; to prefer.

- 1402 *Reply Friar Daw Topias* in T. Wright *Polit. Poems & Songs* (1861) II. 94 Preestes..to fatte benefices wolde be promotid.
- c1410 tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1879) VII. 145 Þe emperour..promoted [L. *promovit*] hym sone into a bisshop.
- ?a1475 (▶ ?a1425) tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (Harl. 2261) (1872) IV. 385 (*MED*) A man..schewede to hym by augury..that he scholde be promotede ageyne.
- c1530 *Crt. of Love* 1261 For where a lover thinketh him promote, Envy will grucch, repyning at his wele.
- 1583 P. STUBBES *Anat. Abuses* sig. K.iiij Two things moue men to affect mony so so much as they do: y<sup>e</sup> one, for feare least they shold fal into pouertie & beggery..y<sup>e</sup> other, to be aduanced, & promoted to high dignities & honors vpon earth.
- 1633 *Acts Parl. Scotl.* V. 73/2 With..libertie to the persones promotit and graduatit in the samyne [subjects] to read teach doe and exerce all things quhatsumever the persones promoted to the same degries within the vniversitie of Paris [etc.]..may doe or exerce.
- 1685 E. STILLINGFLEET *Origines Britannicæ* iv. 167 Leontius his way was, to promote onely those in the Church, he was beforehand sure of.
- 1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* III. VII. xi. 87 He..had..so well ingratiated himself with his Officers, that he had promoted himself to a Halberd.
- 1771 E. LEDWICH *Antiquitates Sarisburienses* v. 165 Until the Restoration, when his sufferings and merits were considered, and he promoted to Winchester.
- 1822 LD. BYRON *Werner* I. i. 676 I'll promote you to the ranks In the prince's body-guard.
- 1874 J. R. GREEN *Short Hist. Eng. People* iii. §5. 140 Boniface..was promoted to..the Archbishopric of Canterbury.
- 1939 W. FORTESCUE *There's Rosemary* vi. 41 One proud day I was promoted to study the part of Rosalind in 'As You Like It'.
- 1966 *Farmer wants Wife* (Farmers Weekly Farm Women's Club) 45 It wasn't much good being able to drive without a little knowledge of what went on under the bonnet and I got promoted to 'go-fer'.
- 1985 K. SARO-WIWA *Sozaboy* i. 2 Inspector Okonkwo na him be the worst when he was sarzent before

they promoted him.

2002 C. HIAASEN *Basket Case* xxiv. 230 She was hired at the *Union-Register* as a copy editor and swiftly promoted to assistant city editor.

**b. transitive. Chess.** To exchange (a pawn) for a more powerful piece of the same colour, typically a queen, when it reaches the opponent's end of the board. Cf. [QUEEN](#) *v.* 2, [PROMOTION](#) *n.* 1b.

1799 P. PRATT *Theory of Chess* iv. 57 His standing before the commoners on this side is of no consequence, as their only use will be to obstruct the white ones: those on the other side are what this player must expect to promote.

1821 J. H. SARRATT *New Treat. on Game of Chess* 51 Some few persons have pretended, that, when a Pawn has reached its eighth square, you can promote it only to the rank of the Piece or Pieces which you may have lost.

1900 *Westm. Gaz.* 12 May 3/3 Compelled to promote a Pawn to a piece.

1904 H. J. R. MURRAY in *Brit. Chess Mag.* Dec. 466 [In Malay chess] a pawn may be promoted to the rank of any superior piece, but promotion takes place, not when the Pawn reaches the eighth line, but only after a further diagonal move.

1946 R. BENEDICT *Chrysanthemum & Sword* (1947) iv. 95 A narikin is a term taken from Japanese chess and means a pawn promoted to queen.

1990 *Sci. Amer.* Oct. 22/2 A passed-pawn evaluation considers pawns that are unopposed by enemy pawns and can therefore be advanced to the eighth rank and promoted to queens.

**c. transitive. Cards (esp. Bridge).** To enable (a relatively low card) to win a trick; to secure (a trick) by this means. Cf. [PROMOTION](#) *n.* 1d.

1899 W. M. BUTLER *Whist Ref. Bk.* 203 High cards are led..to force out higher cards and promote the rank of those held by the leader.

1911 *Washington Post* 8 Jan. (Miscellany section) 1/6 His best plan seems to be to knock the diamonds together and promote the clubs to be trumps.

1945 'S. J. SIMON' *Why you lose at Bridge* 26 If the loser you are playing from one hand is promoting a winner in it, you can discard two losers from the other hand.

1962 *Listener* 12 Apr. 662/2 The defence would take two rounds of clubs and play a third club, promoting a trick for West's nine of hearts.

1982 *Times* 23 Oct. 6/6 If Eustace had played a club, the defence could have promoted the ♠10 for the setting trick.

2004 *Bridge Mag.* Mar. 16/1 When he exited with a second round of hearts the Abbot won with the king. His enforced club exit promoted declarer's bare jack of trumps and the game had been made.

**d. transitive. Sport (chiefly Association Football).** To transfer (a team) to a higher division of a league. Cf. [PROMOTION](#) *n.* 1e.

1924 *Times* 5 May 6/6 Bristol City,..promoted a year ago, return to a lower division.

1936 *Daily Gleaner* (Kingston, Jamaica) 7 Sept. 17/2 In addition to the two Second Division sides promoted to the first division, the Council proposes to retain certain other sides that would have

been relegated.

- 1949 *Times* 25 Apr. 6/2 (*heading*) Swansea Town promoted.
- 1988 *Hamilton (Ont.) Spectator* 19 Apr. E8/4 The top two in First Division will be promoted to Premier Division.
- 1993 *Non-League Football Today* Mar. 6/2 Many supporters will wonder why, if their team run away with the League championship they should not be promoted regardless of their facilities and solvency.
- 2000 A. SAYLE *Barcelona Plates* 203 Liverpool Football Club were hoping to get promoted from the second division but Mary's dad said it would never happen.

**e. transitive. Physics and Chemistry.** To transfer (an electron) from one orbital to another of higher energy within the same atom or molecule.

- [1928 R. S. MULLIKEN in *Physical Rev.* **32** 194 An electron whose  $n$  has been increased in this way will be called a 'promoted' electron.]
- 1928 R. S. MULLIKEN in *Physical Rev.* **32** 197 In the CN molecule, two of the electrons remain as  $1s^2$  electrons, while two must technically be promoted, probably becoming  $2s^p$  or  $2s^s$  electrons.
- 1950 *Proc. Royal Soc. 1949-50 A.* **200** 412 The sulphur atom..will more readily promote its  $3p$  electrons into its  $3d$  levels than lose them altogether.
- 1965 J. R. DYER *Appl. Absorption Spectroscopy Org. Compounds* i. 1 Absorbed energy causes electrons in a ground state to be promoted to a state of higher energy.
- 2000 M. CLUGSTON & R. FLEMMING *Adv. Chem.* xxxii. 558 Stable, unexcited molecules generally have electrons in bonding and non-bonding orbitals. Absorption of energy can promote these electrons to antibonding orbitals.

**f. transitive. Curling.** To move (a stone) forward by striking it with another. Cf. PROMOTION *n.* 1c.

- 1937 T. HENDERSON *Lockerbie* 58 He left the stone alone..deeming it safer play to promote the Minister's stone.
- 1969 R. WELSH *Beginner's Guide Curling* iv. 33 *Promote*, to strike another stone forward.
- 2001 B. WEEKS *Curling for Dummies* x. 145 If a stone is being promoted from the side of the sheet to the centre, it is referred to as an angle raise.

## 2.

**a. transitive.** To further the growth, development, progress, or establishment of (a thing); to advance or actively support (a process, cause, result, etc.); to encourage. Formerly also with *on*.

- c1433 *Petition Franciscans to Trinity Coll.* in R. Willis & J. W. Clark *Archit. Hist. Univ. Cambr.* (1886) II. 429 (MED) Thei shul..be holden..to promote hem.
- a1450 ( ▶ c1412) T. HOCLEVE *De Regimine Principum* (Harl. 4866) (1897) l. 4388 (MED) Vnto your grace lyke it to promote Mi poore estat.
- ?1521 A. BARCLAY *Bk. Codrus & Mynalcas* sig. Cijj Such rascolde drames, promoted by Thays..Or by suche other newe forged muses nyne.

- 1526 W. BONDE *Pilgrimage of Perfection* I. sig. Dv This gyfte expelleth al vice and promoteth all vertu.
- 1577 M. HANMER tr. Socrates Scholasticus I. xiv, in *Aunc. Eccl. Hist.* 238 The emperour..went about to promote christian religion.
- 1644 K. DIGBY *Two Treat.* II. iv. 390 All the causes and helps that promote on its impotent desires.
- 1698–9 *Minute Bk. S.P.C.K.* 8 Mar. The Journal of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.
- 1703 J. TIPPER in H. Ellis *Orig. Lett. Eminent Literary Men* (1843) (Camden) 305 You will promote the Sale of it as much as possibly you can.
- 1762 A. DICKSON *Treat. Agric.* I. vii. 73 Vegetation is promoted..by communicating to the earth the food of plants, and enlarging their pasture.
- 1849 T. B. MACAULAY *Hist. Eng.* I. ii. 191 It could in no way promote the national interest.
- 1864 A. BAIN *Senses & Intellect* (ed. 2) I. i. 94 The elimination of waste matter from the skin is promoted.
- 1891 *Times* 7 Oct. 10/4 It was not an admitted 'plank' in the Liberal platform, and..Mr. Gladstone has never promoted it or even said one word in its favour.
- 1939 *Sci. Monthly* 49 302 Science has..promoted health, long life and general welfare.
- 1974 *Islander* (Victoria, Brit. Columbia) 8 Dec. 15/4 Press reports..have promoted public interest in the sport and science of speleology.
- 2003 L. LOKKO *Sundowners* (2004) lxxxi. 554 UNIFEM, the women's fund at the UN..provided financial support and technical assistance to programmes around the world that had promoted women's rights since 1979.

**b. transitive.** To lend active support to the passing of (a law or measure); *spec.* to take the necessary steps to ensure the passing of (a local or private bill).

- [1647 *Mirroure of Allegiance* 3 If he answer to any bill promoted to him, *Le Roy s'avisera*, or the King will advise upon it, it stands at present for a negation of the bill, and thereby it is made incapable that Session to be an Act.]
- 1721 in *Colonial Rec. Pennsylvania* (1852) III. 138 The parties concerned in promoting this Bill.
- 1798 T. SOMERVILLE *Hist. Great Brit.* xii. 274 Their [*sc.* the agents']..most vigorous exertions were employed for promoting the act of security in Scotland.
- 1863 H. COX *Inst. Eng. Govt.* 170 Many bills promoted as private bills, largely affect public as well as private interests.
- 1892 *Standard* 15 June 2/1 The Bill promoted by the London County Council for carrying a line of tramways over Westminster Bridge.
- 1948 O. C. WILLIAMS *Hist. Devel. Private Bill Procedure* I. vi. 166 Its object was *not* simply to prevent directors of companies from promoting bills without the knowledge and sanction of shareholders.
- 1962 *Daily Tel.* 31 May 19/4 A Parliamentary Bill would have to be promoted if the Norfolk Broads were to be saved from further..development.
- 2004 *Business* (Nexis) 21 Mar. 16 'The litigation we see against the food industry is not going to make a single person any skinnier,' said Republican Representative Ric Keller, who promoted the bill.

**c. transitive. Finance.** To create or establish (a joint-stock company).  
Cf. PROMOTION *n.* 2b. Now chiefly *historical*.

- 1853 *Times* 30 June 6/6 The India Directors were exceedingly desirous..to promote a company for the

construction of a railway at Madras.

- 1900 *Living Age* 6 Jan. 14/2 If..capital were..abolished tomorrow, people would still be found digging the earth and milking cows, though they might not be promoting companies and jobbing shares.
- 1966 *Jrnl. Asian Stud.* **26** 40 Carr, Tagore and Company promoted and managed six joint stock companies.
- 2004 A. ANANDARAJAN et al. *Business Intelligence Techniques* i. 9 In London in 1551, London merchants promoted a company to finance the Chancellor-Willoughby expedition.

**d. transitive.** To publicize or advertise (a product, organization, venture, etc.) so as to increase sales or public awareness. Also *reflexive*. Occasionally *intransitive*.

- 1902 *Post Standard* (Syracuse, N.Y.) 26 Oct. 2/7 The laws of the different States are making it harder and harder to promote good boxing exhibitions without danger that, after a lot of expense has been incurred, someone will step in and get out an injunction.
- 1930 *Publishers' Weekly* 31 May 2732/2 The books all to be individualized in appearance and fully promoted.
- 1942 *Mansfield (Ohio) News Jrnl.* 21 Feb. 10/4 Instead of promoting products in our advertising, we will provide helpful ideas on care and use of electrical appliances.
- 1955 O. LATTIMORE & U. ONON tr. Sh. Nachukdorji *Life Sukebatur* vii, in O. Lattimore *Nationalism & Revol. Mongolia* II. 145 Baron Ungern..arrogantly promoted himself as a man of glory and soon seized all power in Mongolia.
- 1965 *Melody Maker* 3 Apr. 7/3 With the group over here to promote their latest recording,..they could well make the chart.
- 1971 D. POTTER *Brit. Elizabethan Stamps* x. 117 These packs are heavily promoted, with full-page colour advertisements in the national press.
- 1976 *National Observer* (U.S.) 30 Oct. 9/3 I love chocolate-chip cookies, and I love to promote.
- 1990 *Independent* (Nexis) 10 Feb. 20 The product was promoted to 1.6 million of the 3.2 million Trustcard holders during the last two weeks of January and the bank received 60,000 applications.
- 1993 *Sydney Morning Herald* (Nexis) 13 Nov. 34 She has always been and remains a mediocre whose only gift is to promote herself with the connivance of a complaisant media eager for a ready-made 'story'.
- 2005 *Sci. Amer.* (U.K. ed.) Apr. 72/2 Last year Pfizer agreed to pay \$430 million in criminal and civil penalties because its Warner-Lambert division had illegally promoted an epilepsy drug, Neurontin, for neuropathic pain and other unapproved uses.

**e. transitive. Chemistry.** To make (a catalyst) more active or effective by adding another substance; to act as a promoter of (a catalyst) or in (a catalytic reaction). Also (passing into sense **2a**): to catalyse or initiate (a reaction). Cf. **PROMOTER** *n.* **4a**.

- [1920 *Jrnl. Physical Chem.* **24** 243 When more than one of the components are themselves catalysts a difficulty presents itself in choosing between 'promoter' and 'promoted'.]
- 1930 N. K. ADAM *Physics & Chem. of Surfaces* viii. 280 Many reactions go on at the surface of charcoal. It is a good catalyst for promoting halogenations.

- 1940 S. GLASSTONE *Text-bk. Physical Chem.* xiii. 1128 On an ordinary iron catalyst one atom only in 2,000 appears to be able to catalyze the reaction between nitrogen and hydrogen, but when suitably promoted the proportion of active points is increased ten-fold.
- 1946 *Chem. Abstr.* **40** 4876 The catalytic action is promoted by a smaller quantity of BF<sub>3</sub>.
- 1967 R. W. LENZ *Org. Chem. Synthetic High Polymers* x. 270 *N,N*-Dimethylaniline promotes the spontaneous decomposition of benzoyl peroxide, and this combination can be used to initiate polymerization reactions at low temperatures.
- 1975 P. H. EMMETT in Drauglis & Jaffee *Physical Basis for Heterogeneous Catalysis* 21 Why then is a K<sub>2</sub>O–Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> promoter better than Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> alone in promoting an iron synthetic ammonia catalyst?
- 2003 *Appl. Catalysis A.* **247** 138/2 A preliminary experiment was carried out..using a zinc chromite catalyst promoted with 3 wt.% Cs.

†**II.** To put forth, move forward.

**3. transitive.** To publish, promulgate; to assert, advance (a claim).

*Obsolete.*

- ?a1425 ( ▶ a1400) *Brut* (Corpus Cambr.) 293 (*MED*) Pe Kingez nedes were putt forþe and promoted.
- 1555 in J. Strype *Eccl. Memorials* (1721) III. App. xlvi. 139 The false surmised articles promoted by Hugh Raulins, priest.
- 1563 BONNER in J. Strype *Ann. Reformation* (1709) I. xxxiv. 342 That the oath shall be promoted in open place, where there shall be a convenient assembly of people to witness the same.
- 1662 T. STANLEY *Hist. Chaldaick Philos.* I. 21 An Intellectual incorruptible pattern, the print of whose form He promoted through the World.
- 1683 J. MOXON *Mech. Exercises* II. 2 Gutenberg..promoted His claim to the first Invention of this Art.

**4. transitive.** To incite, prompt, move (to something). *Obsolete. rare.*

- 1530 *Myroure Oure Ladye* (Fawkes) (1873) I. 27 The aungels of god..to helpe vs in time of prayer, & to promote our prayers towarde god.
- 1646 H. LAWRENCE *Of Communion & Warre with Angels* 80 The Angell keepers..promote to all good, oppose all evill.

**5. transitive.** To cause to move forward in space or time; to extend.

*Obsolete.*

- 1652 M. NEDHAM tr. J. Selden *Of Dominion of Sea* 274 None of them ever attempted to promote their Empire beyond the bounds thereof.
- 1660 R. BOYLE *New Exper. Physico-mechanicall* 30 Other eminent and later Astronomers, would promote the confines of the Atmosphere, to exceed six or seven times that number of miles.
- 1683 J. MOXON *Mech. Exercises* II. 5 William Caxton (..who first brought it to Oxford) promoted it to London also.
- 1701 J. RAY *Wisdom of God* (ed. 3) II. 206 Francis Pirard promotes the life of the Brasilians beyond the term we have set it.
- 1872 *Spectator* 7 Sept. 1137 'Sure it's I will promote her for your honour', where the word 'promote' was used..in its strict meaning of 'cause to move forward'.



**III. Law.** To prosecute, inform; to put forward (a case).

†**6. transitive.** To inform against (a person); to give information about (a crime, etc.); (also *intransitive*) to act as informer. Cf. **PROMOTER** *n.* 3.  
*Obsolete.*

- 1550 H. LATIMER *Moste Faithfull Serm.* sig. Giiii<sup>v</sup> There lacke menne to promote the kynges offycers when they do amysse, and to promote all offenders.
- 1566 T. DRANT tr. Horace *Medicinable Morall* sig. C<sup>v</sup> I am not one that doth promote, Why arte thou frayde of me?
- 1591 (▷ ?a1425) *Harrowing of Hell* (Huntington) in R. M. Lumiansky & D. Mill *Chester Myst. Cycle* (1974) I. 338 (MED) Taverners..shalbe promoted here [sc. in hell] with mee for breaking statutes.

**7. transitive. Ecclesiastical Law.** To set in motion (the office of the ordinary or judge) in a criminal suit in an ecclesiastical court; to institute (a suit *ex officio promotio*) by permission of the ordinary. Now *historical*.

- 1685 H. CONSETT *Pract. Spiritual Courts* i. ii. §3. 7 It is left to the election of the Plaintiff to elect in which Court he will institute or promote his Cause.
- 1789 W. SCOTT in J. Haggard *Rep. Cases Consistory Court London* (1822) I. 14 This is a case of Office promoted [= *ex officio promotio*] against Thomas Calcott, for..erecting tombs in the church-yard..without leave of the Ordinary.
- 1837 LUSHINGTON in Curteis *Rep. Eccl. Cas.* (1840) 601 Mr. Williams [sc. the Vicar of Hendon], who promotes the office of the judge, has brought a charge against a parishioner of chiding and brawling.
- 1850 C. DICKENS *David Copperfield* xxix. 303 The office of the Judge promoted by Tipkins against Bullock for his soul's correction.
- 1889 ABP. BENSON in *Read v. Bp. of Lincoln* 11 May (Roscoe) 37 The suit [*Lucy v. Bp. St. Davids*] was promoted *ex officio* before the archbishop.
- 1895 R. PHILLIMORE *Eccl. Law* (ed. 2) 956 The Criminal Suit is open to every one whom the ordinary allows to promote his office, and the Civil Suit to every one showing an interest.
- 1961 E. F. JACOB *Fifteenth Cent., 1399–1485* vi. 275 The great body of cases coming before the official in the fifteenth century was concerned with matrimony, probate and testamentary bequests, debt, tithe (one of the most frequent of all),..and moral offences where the bishop himself promoted the suit.
- 2000 D. A. SPAETH *Church in Age of Danger* iv. 93 The recruitment of witnesses was itself an important part of the tactics of a suit. Sir George Hungerford promoted the suit against John Tounson jointly with three other inhabitants.

**IV. To steal, exploit.**

**8. slang** (originally *U.S.*).

**a. transitive.** Originally and esp. *Military*. To obtain by illicit or dubious means; to steal; to scrounge.

- 1918 E. W. SHERWOOD *Diary* 19 Sept. in *Diary Rainbow Veteran* (1929) 135 Grim 'promoted' a sack of German flour today and the whole battery had pancakes for breakfast this morning.
- 1928 C. MACARTHUR *War Bugs* 44 With ten francs he promoted a bottle of cognac.

- 1941 *Argus* (Melbourne) *Week-end Mag.* 15 Nov. 1/4 In Army parlance to arrange something is always to 'tee up'; just as to borrow something is to 'promote' it.
- 1999 F. DONALDSON *Lure of Sky* xii. 128 They were still too keyed up to sleep, and Buzz had somehow promoted a bottle.

**b. transitive.** To exploit (a person) *for* material advantage; to swindle; to beg or wheedle from; (also) to proposition.

- 1931 *Collier's* 14 Nov. 7 Gigolo Georgie promotes Sam for several duckets to the..game.
- 1934 J. M. CAIN *Postman always rings Twice* ix. 92 If I hadn't been there, and begun promoting him for something to drink that afternoon, maybe he'd be here now.
- 1941 A. J. LIEBLING in *New Yorker* 26 Apr. 22 The term 'promoter' means a man who mulcts another man of a dollar... The verb 'to promote' always takes a personal object... 'He has promoted some very smart people.'
- 1948 I. SHULMAN *Cry Tough!* 148 When we're workin' we don't like to be promoted.
- 1975 F. POWLEDGE *Mud Show* 147 These guys would promote these broads and take them out back.