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protect, v.

Pronunciation: Brit. /prə'tekt/, U.S. /prə'tɛk(t)/

Forms: LME *protecte*, LME *protecte* (past participle), 15 *proteckt*, 15 *protect* ...

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: A borrowing from Latin. **Etymons:** Latin *prōtect-*, *prōtegere*.

Etymology: < classical Latin *prōtect-*, past participial stem of *prōtegere*...

1.

a. transitive. To defend or guard from danger or injury; to support or assist against hostile or inimical action; to preserve from attack, persecution, harassment, etc.; to keep safe, take care of; to extend patronage to; to shield from attack or damage. Frequently with *against*, *from*. Also *intransitive*.

- ?1435 in C. L. Kingsford *Chron. London* (1905) 77 (MED) Rich. Wodeville..refused hym his desire..my seyde lorde off Wynchestre..afterward, in comprovyng off the seyde Refuse, protected the seyde Wodeville..ayenst the State.
- ▶ c1456 R. PECOCK *Bk. Faith* (Trin. Cambr.) (1909) 118 (MED) Nevertheles, God is myȝti ynouȝ forto protecte and defende this, and so do he for his charite and his goodnes.
- ?a1475 (▶ ?a1425) tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (Harl. 2261) (1865) I. 111 Like as a doȝhter is protecte of [a1387 J. Trevisa tr. is meynteined and defended by; L. *protegitur a*] the moder, and subiecte to her.
- 1526 W. BONDE *Pylgrimage of Perfection* I. sig. Dv^v Whome god almighty..protected, defended, saued, & gouerned.
- 1528–30 tr. T. Littleton *Tenures* (new ed.) f. xvi^v The kynges wryttes ben the thynges by whiche a man is protecte and holpen.
- 1584 T. LODGE *Alarum against Vsurers* To Sir Philip Sidney sig. Aii Whom I most humbly intreate, not onely in so iust a cause to protect me, but also in these Primordia of my studies.
- a1616 W. SHAKESPEARE *Henry VI, Pt. 2* (1623) I. iii. 4 The Lord protect him..Iesu blesse him.
- 1651 T. HOBBS *Leviathan* II. xviii. 91 To every man remaineth..the right of protecting himselfe.
- 1684 G. DELLA CASA *New Youth's Behaviour* A5 You leave a Son, who can protect his Family.
- 1751 T. GRAY *Elegy* xx. 9 These bones from insult to protect.
- 1793 E. BURKE *Corr.* (1844) IV. 183 I trust that Providence protects you and your illustrious brother for some great purpose.
- 1857 H. T. BUCKLE *Hist. Civilisation Eng.* I. xi. 646 Whenever a government undertakes to protect intellectual pursuits, it will almost always protect them in the wrong place and reward the wrong men.
- 1894 E. FAWCETT *New Nero* ii. 26 Music..was always an expression of..that soulless and mysterious will-to-live, which for ever creates, protects, and perpetuates.
- 1908 E. M. FORSTER *Room with View* xvii. 264 When we were only acquaintances, you let me be myself, but now you're always protecting me... I won't be protected... To shield me is an insult.
- 1950 *Times* 9 Mar. 5/3 The..official who he has alleged..intervened to protect an employee who was regarded as a bad security risk.

- 1979 N. MAILER *Executioner's Song* II. II. ix. 637 Stephanie was her dad's delight, and dad had done his best to protect her.
- 2004 *N.Y. Times* 4 Apr. IV. 13/6 If we can't take a cold, hard look at reality, how can we protect ourselves from terrorism?

b. transitive. Of a thing: to afford or constitute protection (*from* or *against* something); to act as a shield or safeguard. Also *intransitive*.

- c1582 in *Archaeologia* (1794) 11 227 No shelues of beache haue euer growne or remayned longer then they have byn shrowded and protected by the peer.
- 1600 E. FAIRFAX tr. T. Tasso *Godfrey of Bulloigne* XVIII. lxxiv. 330 That strong penticle protected well The knights, from all that flew and all that fell.
- 1646 SIR T. BROWNE *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* IV. v. 191 The most vigorous part protecting it selfe, and protruding the matter upon the weaker and lesse resistive side.
- 1697 J. DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Aeneis* II, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 243 They lie protected there, By her large Buckler, and protended Spear.
- 1726 G. LEONI tr. L. B. Alberti *Archit.* I. 48 These..Stones..make a kind of pavement at top to shadow and protect the Substructure.
- 1794 R. KIRWAN *Elements Mineral.* (ed. 2) I. 128 The selenite deposited soon protects the greater part of the phospholite from the action of this acid.
- 1875 E. H. KNIGHT *Pract. Dict. Mech.* *Mask*,..a face protection to be worn in glass-works or foundries, to protect against radiant heat.
- 1879 G. C. HARLAN *Eyesight* vii. 96 The simplest forms of spectacles are those used merely to protect the eyes from mechanical injury or excessive light.
- 1922 *Gas Manuf., Distribution & Use* (Brit. Comm. Gas Assoc.) II. 71/1 (*caption*) The cowl..serves to protect the outlet against the winds.
- 1952 B. CONRAD *Matador* x. 124 The bull lunged forward and socked against the mattress shield that protected the horse.
- 1964 *Life* 2 Oct. 122/1 The walls of the Apollo capsule itself, ingeniously multilayered to protect against extremes of heat and cold as well as the possible impact of micrometeorites.
- 2004 *Nat. Health* Nov. 49/1 I think it's much gentler and more beneficial to protect your skin from harmful UVA rays in order to preserve it as opposed to undertaking skin peels.

†c. transitive. To act as official or legal protector (PROTECTOR *n.* 1) or guardian of. *Obsolete*.

- c1595 *First Pt. Reign Richard II* (1929) I. 7 They guide the nonage king; tis they protect hime.
- 1597 W. SHAKESPEARE *Richard III* II. iii. 21 Then the King Had vertuous Vnckles to protect his Grace.
- a1616 W. SHAKESPEARE *Henry VI, Pt. 2* (1623) II. iii. 29 I see no reason, why a King of yeeres Should be to be protected like a Child.

2. transitive. To assist or guard (a domestic industry) against foreign competition, esp. by imposing duties or quotas on foreign goods.

- 1778 *Parl. Reg. 1775–80* IX. 181 They hope and trust the House will protect the manufactures of this country.
- 1789 *Deb. Congr. U.S.* 9 Apr. (1834) 106 [Measures] calculated to encourage the productions of our country, and protect our infant manufactures.

- 1825 J. S. MILL in *Westm. Rev.* 3 415 The various classes of manufactures are protected from foreign competition.
- 1827–39 T. P. THOMPSON *Catech. Corn Laws* (1839) §160 If no trade can be ‘protected’ but at the expense of some other trade first, and of the consumers a second time besides, it will be very difficult to make out a case for ‘protection’.
- 1868 J. E. T. ROGERS *Man. Polit. Econ.* xvii. 229 If every producer of every kind were protected, foreign trade might cease... It would be certainly futile, to protect everybody.
- 1911 I. M. TARBELL *Tariff in Our Times* 43 On all sides there was strenuous opposition to protecting one industry and not another, and yet the bill went through.
- 1958 *Times* 22 May 9 The Industrial Products Act which now protects indigenous industries.
- 2006 *Guardian* (Nexis) 5 Mar. 4 Another World Bank report..compared the fortunes of open economies..with countries that have protected their home industries from foreign competition.

3.

a. transitive. To provide with a protective layer or covering.

- 1839 A. URE *Dict. Arts* 615 When the gilder has protected the burnished points, he dries the piece.
- 1872 *Times* 7 Sept. 5/6 This combination will protect the timber with a coating of silicate of alumina that would..very considerably retard the progress of flame.
- 1954 C. K. KECK *How to take Care of your Pictures* (1965) iv. 24 Unless paintings finished mat are kept behind glass or in dirt controlled atmospheres, it is wise to..protect the surface with a thin, quickly drying dull varnish.
- 1995 K. McCLOUD *Techniques of Decorating* (1998) 52/2 In areas of high traffic, such as a hallway, you may wish to protect the paint with a coat of matt oil-based varnish.

b. transitive. To provide (an electrical device, machine, etc.) with safeguards against too high a current or voltage.

- 1875 *Telegr. Jrnal. & Electr. Rev.* 1 Mar. 60/2 Lightning protectors invented to protect telegraph lines.
- 1888 D. SALOMONS *Managem. Accumulators* (ed. 3) II. ii. 97 Put a safety fuse in every switch and wall plug... Every lamp is protected in this way..against accidental short-circuits.
- 1935 I. T. MONSETH & P. H. ROBINSON *Relay Syst.* xiii. 458 The first zone..is protected by an instantaneous balanced-beam impedance element.
- 1975 D. G. FINK *Electronics Engineers' Handbk.* VII. 27 Two types of fast-blow fuses are used to protect power-tubes.
- 1987 E. H. J. PALLETT *Aircraft Electr. Syst.* (ed. 3) vii. 111/1 A fuse is a thermal device designed primarily to protect the cables of a circuit against the flow of shortcircuit and overload currents.

c. transitive. Chemistry. To prevent the alteration or removal of (a particular group or part of a molecule) in a reaction, *spec.* (in synthetic chemistry) by first causing it to form an unreactive derivative from which the original structure can later be regenerated.

- 1879 *Jrnal. Amer. Chem. Soc.* 1 115 The entrance of a substituting group into xylene greatly affects its behavior towards chromic acid, one of the methyl group[s] being protected against oxidation, the other remaining at least comparatively unaffected.
- 1889 G. M'GOWAN tr. A. Bernthsen *Text-bk. Org. Chem.* 352 When it is wished to prepare the mono-nitro-compounds, the aniline must again be ‘protected’, either by using its acetyl compound or by nitrating in presence of excess of concentrated sulphuric acid.

- 1929 H. H. MITCHELL & T. S. HAMILTON *Biochem. Amino Acids* i. 90 The chloracetyl group, introduced to protect the amino group of the amino acid is, after it has performed its protective function, itself transformed into an amino acid group.
- 1971 D. R. WILLIAMS *Metals of Life* ix. 134 The amide bonds in simple peptides which are usually easily hydrolysed to give amino acids again are protected by transition metal ions, the best protectors being copper (II) and nickel (II).
- 2003 *Nature* 13 Feb. p. vii Bulky substituents can protect such double bonds.

d. transitive. Chemistry. To make (a hydrophobic sol) resistant to precipitation in the presence of an electrolyte.

- 1903 *Jrnl. Chem. Soc.* **84** i. 135 The capacity of colloidal solutions to protect a colloidal solution of gold against the precipitating action of an estimated quantity of sodium chloride is expressed as the gold number.
- 1909 J. ALEXANDER tr. Zsigmondy *Colloids & Ultramicroscope* iii. 77 Another colloid which protects the nascent colloidal gold was discovered by Faraday, and called by him 'jelly'.
- 1939 *Thorpe's Dict. Appl. Chem.* (ed. 4) III. 287/2 A quartz suspension protected by gelatine will possess the cataphoretic velocity and isoelectric point of gelatine.
- 1966 F. T. GUCKER & R. L. SEIFERT *Physical Chem.* xxii. 665 A lyophobic sol is often stabilized by addition of a lyophilic sol, which is then termed a protective colloid. An example is gelatin, which protects the silver bromide sol used in photographic emulsions.

4. transitive. Business. To provide funds to meet (a commercial draft or bill of exchange). Cf. COVER *v.*¹ 18. Now *rare*.

- 1884 *Law Times Rep.* **51** 16/1 Please protect the draft as advised above and oblige drawer.
- 1888 *Lima (Ohio) Daily Democratic Times* 13 Feb. At that time the Revenue Fund State collection did not amount to enough to protect the draft.
- 1908 *Nebraska State Jrnl.* 29 Oct. 1/3 I..told him he must protect the draft and once more wipe out his indebtedness.

5. transitive. To attempt to preserve (a threatened plant or animal species) through legislation controlling collecting, hunting, etc.; to place legal restrictions on access to or exploitation of (a habitat or locality). Cf. PROTECTED *adj.* 3.

- 1893 *Zoologist* **17** 390 If a particular species were declining, and were known to frequent a particular place, the County Council should..be called upon to protect that restricted area.
- 1929 *Times* 24 Aug. 9 Strict game laws protect animals of Swedish origin.
- 1969 F. N. HEPPEL in J. Fisher et al. *Red Bk.* 360/1 The need to protect plants for their own sake is becoming increasingly accepted by those in authority.
- 2002 *Hist. Today* Jan. 37/3 The Nilgiris Game and Fish Preservation Act of 1879..protected bison, sambar, ibex, jungle sheep, deer and hares, as well as a variety of birds and fish.

