

# Merriam- Webster's Collegiate<sup>®</sup> Dictionary

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**dark** *\därk\* *adj* [ME *derk*, fr. OE *deorc*; akin to OHG *tarchamen* to hide] (bef. 12c) **1 a**: devoid or partially devoid of light: not receiving, reflecting, transmitting, or radiating light (a ~ room) **b**: transmitting only a portion of light (w ~ glasses) **2 a**: wholly or partially black (w ~ clothing) **b** of a color: of low or very low lightness **c**: being less light in color than other substances of the same kind (w ~ rum) **3 a**: arising from or showing evil traits or desires: EVIL (the ~ powers that lead to war) **b**: DISMAL, GLOOMY (had a ~ view of the future) **c**: lacking knowledge or culture: UNENLIGHTENED (a ~ period in history) **d**: relating to grim or depressing circumstances (w ~ humor) **4 a**: not clear to the understanding **b**: not known or explored because of remoteness (the ~ est reaches of the continent) **5**: not fair in complexion: SWARTHY **6**: SECRET (kept his plans ~) **7**: possessing depth and richness (a ~ voice) **8**: closed to the public (the theater is ~ in the summer) *syn* see ONSCURE — **dark-ish** *\där-kish\* *adj* — **dark-ly** *adv* — **dark-ness** *n*

**dark n** (13c) **1 a**: a place or time of little or no light: NIGHT, NIGHTFALL **b**: absence of light: DARKNESS **2**: a dark or deep color — **in the dark** **1**: in secrecy (most of his dealings were done in the dark) **2**: in ignorance (kept the public in the dark about the agreement)

**dark vi** (14c) *obs*: to grow dark ~ *vi*: to make dark

**dark adaptation n** (1900): the process including dilation of the pupil, increase in sensitivity of the retinal rods, and regeneration of rhodopsin by which the eye adapts to conditions of reduced illumination — **dark-adapt-ed** *\därk-ə-dap-təd\* *adj*

**dark age n** (1640) **1**: a time during which a civilization undergoes a decline; as *a pl. cap D&A*: the European historical period from about A.D. 476 to about 1000; *broadly*: MIDDLE AGES **b** *often pl. often cap D&A*: the Greek historical period of three to four centuries from about 1100 B.C. **2** *a* *often pl. often cap D&A*: the primitive period in the development of something (in the dark ages of medicine) **b** *often pl. often cap D&A*: a state of stagnation or decline

**dark continent n** (1829) **1** *often cap D&C*: the continent of Africa **2**: something unknown or unexplored

**dark-en** *\där-kən\* *vb* **dark-ened**; **dark-en-ing** *\där-kə-niŋ\* *vi* (14c) **1**: to grow dark: become obscured (the skies were ~ing) **2**: to become gloomy (his mood ~ed) ~ *vt* **1**: to make dark **2**: to make less clear: OBCURE (the financial crisis ~ed the future of the company) **3**: TAINT, TARNISH (his reputation) **4**: to cast a gloom over **5**: to make of darker color — **dark-en-er** *\kə-nər\* *n*

**dark energy n** (1998): a hypothetical form of energy that produces a force that opposes gravity and is thought to be the cause of the accelerating expansion of the universe

**dark-eyed junco n** (1974): a common No. American junco (*Junco hyemalis*)

**dark field n** (1865): the dark area that serves as the background for objects viewed in an ultramicroscope

**dark-field microscope n** (1926): ULTRAMICROSCOPE

**dark horse n** (1831) **1 a**: a usu. little known contender (as a racehorse) that makes an unexpectedly good showing **b**: an entrant in a contest that is judged unlikely to succeed **2**: a political candidate unexpectedly nominated for use as a compromise between factions

**dark lantern n** (1640): a lantern that can be closed to conceal the light

**dark-le** *\där-kə\* *vi* **dar-kied**; **dar-king** *\k(ə)-liŋ\* [back-formation fr. *darkling*] (1800) **1 a**: to become clouded or gloomy **b**: to grow dark **2**: to become concealed in the dark

**dark-ling** *\där-kiŋ\* *adv* [ME *derkeling*, fr. *derk* dark + *-lyng* -ling] (15c): in the dark

**dark-ling adj** (1718) **1**: DARK **2**: done or taking place in the dark

**dark-ling beetle n** (1816): any of a family (Tenebrionidae) of firms-bodied mostly dark-colored vegetable-feeding nocturnal beetles which often have vestigial and functionless wings and whose larvae are usu. hard cylindrical worms (as a mealworm) — called also *tenebrionid*

**dark matter n** (1982): nonluminous matter not yet directly detected by astronomers that is hypothesized to exist to account for various observed gravitational effects

**dark reaction n** (1927): any of a series of chemical reactions in photosynthesis not requiring the presence of light and involving the reduction of carbon dioxide to form carbohydrate; *esp*: CALVIN CYCLE

**dark-room** *\därk-ru:m, -rüm, -rüm\* *n* (1841): a room with no light or with a safelight for developing light-sensitive photographic materials

**dark-some** *\därk-səm\* *adj* (ca. 1530): gloomily somber: DARK

**darky** or **dark-ie** *\där-kē\* *n, pl* **darkies** (1775) *usu* *offensive*: a black person

**dar-ling** *\där-liŋ\* *n* [ME *derling*, fr. OE *dæorling*, fr. *dæore* dear] (bef. 12c) **1**: a dearly loved person **2**: FAVORITE (a director who is the ~ of the critics)

**darling adj** (15c) **1**: dearly loved: FAVORITE **2**: very pleasing: CHARMING — **dar-ling-ly** *\liŋ-lē\* *adv* — **dar-ling-ness** *n*

**darm-stadt-i-um** *\därm-ˈsta-tē-əm\* *n* [NL, fr. *Darmstadt*, Germany] (2003): a short-lived radioactive element produced artificially — see ELEMENT table

**darn** *\därn\* *vb* [perh. fr. F dial. *darnier*] *vt* (ca. 1600) **1**: to mend with interlacing stitches **2**: to embroider by filling in with long running or interlacing stitches ~ *vi*: to do darning — **darn-er** *n*

**darn n** (1720): a place that has been darned (a sweater full of ~s)

**darn** *\därm\* *also* **durn** *\dörn\* *adj* or *adv* [euphemism] (1781): DAMNED

**darn also durn vb** (1781): DAMN — **darned** *\därn(d)\* *also* **durned** *\dörn(d)\* *adj* or *adv*

**darn also durn n** (1840): DAMN

**dar-nei** *\där-nē\* *n* [ME] (14c): any of several usu. weedy ryegrasses (genus *Lolium*)

**darning needle n** (1742) **1**: a long needle with a large eye for use in darning **2**: DRAGONFLY, DAMSELFLY

**DARPA** *abbr* Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

**dart** *\därt\* *n* [ME, fr. AF, of Gmc origin; akin to OHG *tart* dart, OE *daroth*] (14c) **1 a *archaic*: a light spear **b** (1): a small missile usu. with a pointed shaft at one end and feathers at the other (2) *pl* *but sing in constr*: a game in which darts are thrown at a target **2 a**: something projected with sudden speed; *esp*: a sharp glance **b**: something causing sudden pain or distress (w ~s of sarcasm) **3**: something with a slender pointed shaft or outline; *specif*: a stitched tapering fold in a garment **4**: a quick movement (made a ~ for the door)**

**dart vt** (1573) **1**: to throw with a sudden movement **2**: to thrust or move with sudden speed **3**: to shoot with a dart containing a usu. tranquilizing drug ~ *vi*: to move suddenly or rapidly (w ~ed across the street)

**dart-board** *\därt-bórd\* *n* (1901): a usu. circular board (as of compressed bristles) used as a target in the game of darts

**dar-er** *\där-tər\* *n* (1796) **1**: ANHINGA **2**: any of numerous small No. American freshwater bony fishes (esp. genera *Ammocrypta*, *Etheostoma*, and *Percina* of the family Percidae)

**Dar-win-i-an** *\där-wi-nē-ən\* *adj* (1860) **1**: of or relating to Charles Darwin, his theories esp. of evolution, or his followers **2**: of, relating to, or being a competitive environment or situation in which only the fittest persons or organizations prosper — **Darwinian** *n*

**Dar-win-ism** *\där-wa-ni-zəm\* *n* (1864) **1**: a theory of the origin and perpetuation of new species of animals and plants that offspring of a given organism vary, that natural selection favors the survival of some of these variations over others, that new species have arisen and may continue to arise by these processes, and that widely divergent groups of plants and animals have arisen from the same ancestors — compare EVOLUTION **2**: a theory that inherent dynamic forces allow only the fittest persons or organizations to prosper in a competitive environment or situation (economic ~) — compare SOCIAL DARWINISM — **Dar-win-ist** *\wa-nist\* *n* or *adj*

**Dar-win's finches** *\där-wənz-\* *n pl* [Charles Darwin] (1947): finches of a subfamily (Geospizinae) having great variation in bill shape and confined mostly to the Galapagos Islands

**Dar-win tulip** *\där-wan-\* *n* (1889): a tall late-flowering tulip with the flowers single and of one color

**dash** *\dash\* *vb* [ME *dassen*, prob. fr. MF *dachier* to impel forward] *vt* (14c) **1**: to break by striking or knocking **2**: to knock, hurt, or thrust violently **3**: SPLASH, SPATTER **4 a**: RUIN, DESTROY (the news ~ed his hopes) **b**: DEPRESS, SADDEN **c**: to make ashamed **5**: to affect by mixing in something different (his delight was ~ed with bitterness) **6**: to complete, execute, or finish off hastily — used with *down* or *off* (w ~ed down a drink) (w ~ed off a letter) **7** [euphemism]: DAMN **4** ~ *vi* **1**: to move with sudden speed **2**: SMASH

**dash n** (14c) **1 a** *archaic*: BLOW **b** (1): a sudden burst or splash (2): the sound produced by such a burst **2 a**: a stroke of a pen **b**: a punctuation mark — that is used esp. to indicate a break in the thought or structure of a sentence **3**: a small usu. distinctive addition (a ~ of salt) (a ~ of humor) **4**: flashy display **5**: animation in style and action **6 a**: a sudden onset, rush, or attempt **b**: a short fast race **7**: a long click or buzz forming a letter or part of a letter (as in Morse code) **8**: DASHBOARD **2**

**dash-board** *\dash-bórd\* *n* (1842) **1**: a screen on the front of a usu. horse-drawn vehicle to intercept water, mud, or snow **2**: a panel extending across the interior of a vehicle (as an automobile) below the windshield and usu. containing instruments and controls

**dashed** *\dash\* *adj* (ca. 1889): made up of a series of dashes

**da-shen** *\da-shēn, də-\* *n* [origin unknown] (ca. 1899): TARO

**dash-er** *\da-shər\* *n* (1790) **1**: a dashing person **2**: one that dashes **3**: a device having blades for agitating a liquid or semisolid

**dashi** *\dā-(shē)\* *n* [Jp, broth] (1955): a fish broth made from dried bonito

**da-shi-ki** *\dā-shē-kē, də-, da-\* *also* **dai-shi-ki** *\dā-\* *n* [modif. of Yoruba *dāšiki*] (ca. 1968): a usu. brightly colored loose-fitting pullover garment

**dash-ing** *adj* (ca. 1697) **1**: marked by vigorous action: SPIRITED (a ~ young horse) **2**: marked by smartness esp. in dress and manners — **dash-ing-ly** *\iŋ-lē\* *adv*

**dash-pot** *\dash-pət\* *n* (1861): a device for cushioning or damping a movement (as of a mechanical part) to avoid shock

**das-sie** *\da-sē\* *n* [Afrik] (1814): HYRAX

**das-tard** *\das-tərd\* *n* [ME] (15c) **1**: COWARD **2**: a person who acts treacherously or underhandedly

**das-tard-ly** *\lē\* *adj* (1542) **1**: COWARDLY **2**: characterized by underhandedness or treachery (a ~ attack) (a ~ villain) *syn* see COWARDLY — **das-tard-li-ness** *n*

**dat** *abbr* dative

**DAT** *abbr* **1** differential aptitude test **2** digital audiotape

**da-ta** *\dā-tə, ˈdā-also ˈdā-\* *n pl* *but sing or pl in constr, often attrib* [L, pl. of *datum*] (1646) **1**: factual information (as measurements or statistics) used as a basis for reasoning, discussion, or calculation (the ~ is plentiful and easily available — H. A. Gleason, Jr.) (comprehensive ~ on economic growth have been published — N. H. Jacoby) **2**: information output by a sensing device or organ that includes both useful and irrelevant or redundant information and must be processed to be meaningful **3**: information in numerical form that can be digitally transmitted or processed

**usage** *Data* leads a life of its own quite independent of *datum*, of which it was originally the plural. It occurs in two constructions: as a plural noun (like *earnings*), taking a plural verb and plural modifiers (as *these, many, a few*) but not cardinal numbers, and serving as a referent for plural pronouns; and as an abstract mass noun (like *information*), taking a singular verb and singular modifiers (as *this, much, little*), and being referred to by a singular pronoun. Both constructions are standard. The plural construction is more common in print, perhaps because the house style of some publishers mandates it.

**data bank n** (1966): DATABASE

**da-ta-base** *\dā-tə-bās, ˈdā-also ˈdā-\* *n* (ca. 1962): a usu. large collection of data organized esp. for rapid search and retrieval (as by a computer) — **database** *vt*

**data mining n** (1988): the practice of searching through large amounts of computerized data to find useful patterns or trends

**data processing n** (1954): the converting of raw data to machine-readable form and its subsequent processing (as storing, updating, rearranging, or printing out) by a computer — **data processor n**

**data structure n** (1963): any of various methods or formats (as an array, file, or record) for organizing data in a computer



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