

THE *American Heritage*®

# DESK DICTIONARY

---

# AND THESAURUS



**Houghton Mifflin Harcourt**

Boston • New York

Words are included in this Dictionary on the basis of their usage. Words that are known to have current trademark registrations are shown with an initial capital and are also identified as trademarks. No investigation has been made of common-law trademark rights in any word, because such investigation is impracticable. The inclusion of any word in this Dictionary is not, however, an expression of the Publisher's opinion as to whether or not it is subject to proprietary rights. Indeed, no definition in this Dictionary is to be regarded as affecting the validity of any trademark.

American Heritage and the eagle logo are registered trademarks of American Heritage Inc. Their use is pursuant to a license agreement with American Heritage Inc.

Copyright © 2005 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt unless such copying is expressly permitted by federal copyright law. Address inquiries to Reference Permissions, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

Visit our website: [www.hmhbooks.com](http://www.hmhbooks.com)

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

The American Heritage desk dictionary and thesaurus.

p. cm.

ISBN-13: 978-0-618-59261-6

ISBN-10: 0-618-59261-X

1. English language--United States--Dictionaries. 2. English language--United States--Synonyms and antonyms. 3. English language--Dictionaries. 4. English language--Synonyms and antonyms. I.

Title: Desk dictionary and thesaurus. II. Houghton Mifflin Company.

PE2835.A47 2005

423--dc22

2005012406

Manufactured in the United States of America

6 7 8 9 10 - EB - 16 15 14 13 12

that marks the indirect object. ▶ *n.* The dative case.  
**da-tum** (dā'təm, dāt'əm, dā'təm) ▶ *n.* 1. *pl. -ta* (-tə). A fact or proposition used to draw a conclusion or make a decision. 2. *pl. -tums*. A point, line, or surface used as a reference, as in surveying.

**daub** (dób) ▶ *v.* 1. To cover or smear with a soft sticky substance. 2. To paint crudely. —**daub** *n.* —**daub'er** *n.*

**daugh-ter** (dô'tər) ▶ *n.* 1. One's female child. 2. A female descendant. 3. A woman who is considered as if in a relationship of child to parent: *a daughter of the nation.* —**daugh'ter-ly** *adj.*

**daugh-ter-in-law** (dô'tər-în-lô') ▶ *n., pl. daugh-ters-in-law* (-tərz-). The wife of one's son.

**daunt** (dónt, dánt) ▶ *v.* To intimidate or discourage.

**daunt-less** (dónt'lis, dánt'-) ▶ *adj.* Fearless. —**daunt'less-ly** *adv.*

**dau-phin** (dô'fín) ▶ *n.* The eldest son of the king of France from 1349 to 1830.

**dau-phine** (dô-fēn') ▶ *n.* The wife of a dauphin.

**dav-en-port** (dáv'ən-pórt') ▶ *n.* A large sofa.

**Da-vid** (dā'víd) (d. c. 962 B.C.) ▶ The 2nd king of Judah and Israel.

**Da-vis** (dā'vís), **Jefferson** (1808–89) ▶ Amer. soldier and president of the Confederacy (1861–65).

**dav-it** (dáv'ít, dā'vít) ▶ *n.* A small crane that projects over the side of a ship, used to hoist boats, anchors, and cargo.

**daw-dle** (dôd'l) ▶ *v. -dled, -dling.* 1. To take more time than necessary. 2. To waste time; idle. —**daw'dler** *n.*

**dawn** (dôn) ▶ *n.* 1. The time each morning at which daylight begins. 2. A first appearance. ▶ *v.* 1. To begin to become light in the morning. 2. To begin to exist. 3. To become apparent: *The truth dawned on us.*

**day** (dā) ▶ *n.* 1. The period of light between dawn and nightfall. 2a. The 24-hour period during which the earth completes one rotation on its axis. b. The analogous period of a celestial body. 3. One of the numbered 24-hour periods into which a week, month, or year is divided. 4. The portion of a day that is devoted to work or school: *an eight-hour day.* 5. A period of activity or prominence: *a writer who has had her day.* 6. often **days** A period of time: *in the days of the Roman Empire.* —**idiom: day in, day out** All the time; continuously.

**day bed** ▶ *n.* A couch convertible into a bed.

**day-book** (dā'böök') ▶ *n.* 1. A book in which daily entries are recorded. 2. A diary.

**day-break** (dā'bräk') ▶ *n.* Dawn.

**day-care** or **day care** (dā'kār') ▶ *n.* Provision of daytime supervision, training, and recreation, esp. for preschool children.

**day-dream** (dā'drēm') ▶ *n.* A dreamlike musing or fantasy while awake. ▶ *v.* To have daydreams. —**day'dream'er** *n.*

**Day-Glo** (dā'glô') ▶ A trademark for fluorescent coloring agents and materials.

**day labor** ▶ *n.* Labor hired and paid by the day. —**day-laborer** *n.*

**day-light** (dā'lit') ▶ *n.* 1. The light of day. 2a. Dawn. b. Daytime. 3. Exposure to public notice. 4. An approaching end, as of a complicated task. 5. **daylights** *Slang* One's wits: *scared the daylights out of me.*

**day-light-sav-ing time** (dā'lit-sā'vīng) ▶ *n.* Time during which clocks are set one hour or more ahead of standard time to provide more daylight at the end of the working day.

**day lily** ▶ *n.* A perennial garden plant with yellow, orange, or purplish lilylike flowers.

**Day of Atonement** ▶ *n.* See **Yom Kippur**.

**day school** ▶ *n.* A private school for pupils living at home.

**day-time** (dā'tīm') ▶ *n.* The time between sunrise and sunset. —**day'time'** *adj.*

**day-to-day** (dā'tā-dā') ▶ *adj.* 1. Occurring on a daily basis. 2. Subsisting one day at a time.

**day-trip-per** (dā'tríp'ər) ▶ *n.* One who takes a one-day trip without staying overnight.

**daze** (dāz) ▶ *v. dazed, daz-ing.* 1. To stun, as with a blow or shock. 2. To dazzle. ▶ *n.* A stunned or bewildered condition.

**daz-zle** (dāz'əl) ▶ *v. -zled, -zling.* 1. To dim the vision of, esp. to blind with intense light. 2. To amaze or bewilder with spectacular display. —**daz'zle** *n.* —**daz'zling-ly** *adv.*

**dB** ▶ *abbr.* decibel

**Db** ▶ The symbol for the element dubnium.

**DC** ▶ *abbr.* 1. direct current 2. District of Columbia

**D-day** (dē'dā') ▶ *n.* The unnamed day on which an operation or offensive is to be launched.

**DDT** (dē'dē-tē') ▶ *n.* An insecticide banned since 1972 from US agricultural use for its persistent toxicity in the environment.

**DE** ▶ *abbr.* Delaware

**de-** ▶ *pref.* 1. Reverse: *deactivate.* 2. Remove: *defog.* 3. Out of: *deplane.* 4. Reduce: *degrade.*

**dea-con** (dē'kən) ▶ *n.* 1. A cleric ranking just below a priest in the Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches. 2. A lay assistant to a Protestant minister. —**dea'con-ry** *n.*

**dea-con-ess** (dē'kə-nīs) ▶ *n.* A laywoman serving as assistant to a Protestant minister.

**de-ac-ti-vate** (dē-āk'tā-vāt') ▶ *v.* 1. To render inactive or ineffective. 2. To remove from active military status. —**de-ac'ti-va'tion** *n.*

**dead** (dēd) ▶ *adj. -er, -est.* 1. No longer alive. 2. Lacking feeling; unresponsive. 3. Weary and worn-out. 4a. Inanimate. b. Lifeless; barren: *dead soil.* 5a. No longer in existence or use. b. No longer relevant. c. Dormant: *a dead volcano.* 6. Not circulating; stagnant: *dead air.* 7. Dull;

**THESAURUS**

**daub** *v.* —See **SMEAR**.  
**daub** *n.* —See **SMEAR**.  
**daunt** *v.* —See **DISCOURAGE**, **DISMAY**.  
**dauntless** *adj.* —See **BRAVE**.  
**dauntlessness** *n.* —See **COURAGE**.  
**dawdle** *v.* —See **DELAY** (2), **IDLE** (2), **PUTTER**.  
**dawdler** *n.* —See **LAGGARD**.  
**dawdling** *n.* —See **HESITATION**.  
**dawn** *n.* The first appearance of daylight in the morning ▶ **aurora**, **cock-crow**, **dawning**, **daybreak**, **first light**, **morn**, **morning**, **sunrise**, **sunup**. **Idioms:** *break of day*, *crack of dawn.* —See also **BIRTH** (2).  
**dawn** *v.* —See **BEGIN**.  
**dawn on or upon** *v.* To come as a realization ▶ **register**, **sink in**, **soak in**.

**daydream** *n.* —See **DREAM** (1).  
**daydream** *v.* —See **DREAM**.  
**daydreamer** *n.* —See **DREAMER** (1).  
**daydreaming** *n.* —See **TRANCE**.  
**daydreaming** *adj.* —See **DREAMY**.  
**daze** *v.* 1. To dull the senses, as with a heavy blow, a shock, or fatigue ▶ **be-daze**, **bemuse**, **benumb**, **bewilder**, **stagger**, **stun**, **stupefy**. **Chiefly Regional:** **maze**. **Slang:** **zonk**. [**Compare CONFUSE**.] 2. To confuse with bright light ▶ **bedazzle**, **blind**, **dazzle**. —See also **DRUG** (2).  
**daze** *n.* A stunned or bewildered condition ▶ **baffle**, **befuddle**, **bewilder**, **bewilderedness**, **bewilderment**, **confusion**, **discombobulation**, **disorientation**, **distraction**, **fog**, **haze**, **muddle**, **mystification**, **perplexity**, **puzzle**.

**dazzle** *n.* An intense blinding light ▶ **blaze**, **flare**, **glare**. [**Compare BRILLIANCE**, **GLITTER**.]  
**dazzling** *adj.* —See **BRILLIANT**, **GLORIOUS**.  
**deacon** *n.* —See **CLERIC**.  
**deactivate** *v.* —See **DISCHARGE**.  
**dead** *adj.* 1. No longer alive ▶ **asleep**, **deceased**, **defunct**, **departed**, **expired**, **extinct**, **gone**, **late**, **lifeless**, **perished**. **Idioms:** *at rest*, *dead and buried*, *dead as a doornail*, *pushing up daisies*, *six feet under*. 2. Lacking physical feeling or sensitivity ▶ **asleep**, **benumbed**, **deadened**, **dull**, **inert**, **insensible**, **insensitive**, **lifeless**, **numb**, **stuporous**, **torpid**, **unfeeling**, **unresponsive**. [**Compare UNCONSCIOUS**.] 3. Completely lacking sensation or consciousness ▶ **inanimate**,