

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD™

COLLEGE DICTIONARY

FOURTH EDITION

The Official Dictionary of the ASSOCIATED PRESS

Updated Every Year

Includes CD-ROM Dictionary and Thesaurus

WE DEFINE YOUR WORLD®

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despoil / detain

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despoil (dē spōil', di-) vt. [ME despoilen < OFr despoiller < L despoliare < de-, intens. + spoliare, to strip, rob: see SPOIL] to deprive of something of value by or as by force; rob; plunder — SYN. RAVAGE —despoil'er n. —despoil'ment n.

de-spo-li-ation (di spō-lē ā'shən) n. [LL despoliatio: see prec.] a despoiling or being despoiled; pillage

de-spond (di spānd'v) vi. [L despondere, to lose courage, yield < de-, from + spondere, to promise: see SPONSOR] to lose courage or hope; become disheartened; be depressed —n. despondency: now chiefly in slough of despond (see SLOUGH², n. 2)

de-spond-en-ty (di spānd'əntē) n. [see fol.] loss of courage or hope; dejection: also de-spond'ence (-dāns)

de-spond-ent (di spānd'ənt) adj. [L despondens, prp. of despondere: see DESPOND] filled with despondency; dejected —SYN. HOPELESS —de-spond'en-ty adv.

des-pot (des'pōt) n. [Ofr despote < Gr despotēs, a master, lord < IE *dems-potis; lit., house master < *dem-, house (> TIMBER, L domus) + *potis, master, husband (> L potis, POTENT, Goth -faths, husband)] 1 [Archaic] a title meaning "master," applied to certain classes of rulers, as Byzantine emperors or bishops of the Greek church 2 an absolute ruler; king with unlimited powers; autocrat 3 anyone in charge who acts like a tyrant

des-potic (des pōt'ik) adj. [Fr despotique < Gr despotikos] of or like a despot; autocratic; tyrannical: also des-pot'i-cal —des-pot'i-cally adv.

des-pot-ism (des'pō tiz'əm) n. [Fr despotisme] 1 rule or domination by a despot; autocracy 2 the methods or acts of a despot; tyranny 3 a political system, state, etc. dominated by a despot

de-spu-mate (di spyō'māt, des'pyōō māt) vt. —mat'ed, —mat'ing [

des-qua-mate (des'kwā māt, di skwā'-) vi. —mat'ed, —mat'ing [

DES-sau (des'ou) city in EC Germany, in the state of Saxony-Anhalt: pop. 95,000

des-sert (di zərt'v) n. [ME < OFr < desservir, to clear the table < de- (L de), from + servir (L servire), SERVE] *1 a usually sweet course, as of pie, cake, or ice cream, served at the end of a meal 2 [Brit.] uncooked fruit served after, or in place of, the sweet course

dessert-spoon (-spōon'v) n. a spoon between a teaspoon and tablespoon in size, used in eating dessert

des-sia-tine (des'yō tēn') n. [Russ dyesyatina, lit., tithe < dyesyat', ten < IE *dehmt- < base *dehm > TEN] a Russian unit of land measure equal to about 2.7 acres

de-sta-bi-lize (dē stā'bā liz') vt. —lized', —liz'-ing to upset the stability or equilibrium of; unbalance

de Staël, Madame see STAËL

de-stain (dē stān'v) vt. to remove stain from (a specimen or part of a specimen) to facilitate microscopic study

de-Stalinization (dē stāl'i nā zā'shən) n. the progressive elimination, as by the former Soviet government, of political methods or influences derived from Stalin

de-ster-i-lize (dē ster'ə liz') vt. —lized', —liz'-ing to bring back from a sterile state; specif., to release (gold) from a neutralized position into an active position in the monetary system where it can support credit and monetary issues

de Stijl (dō stil', -stā'l') [Du, lit., the Style, name of a journal founded in 1917 in Holland by Mondrian and Theodore van Doesburg] an abstract art movement marked by the use of rectangular forms and by emphasis on primary colors or grays and blacks

des-ti-na-tion (des'tē nā'shən) n. [ME destinacioun < L destinatio, settlement, appointment < destinare: see fol.] 1 [Rare] a destining or being destined 2 the end for which something or someone is destined 3 the place toward which someone or something is going or sent

des-tine (des'tin) vt. —tined, —tin-ing [ME destinen < OFr destiner < L destinare, to fasten down, secure < de-, intens. + *stanare < base of stare, STAND] 1 to predetermine, as by fate; usually in the passive 2 to set apart for a certain purpose; intend —destined for 1 headed for; bound for 2 intended for [destined for leadership]

des-tiny (des'tō nē) n., pl. —nies [ME destine < OFr destinee, fem. pp. of destiner: see prec.] 1 the seemingly inevitable or necessary succession of events 2 what will necessarily happen to any person or thing; (one's) fate 3 that which determines events: said of either a supernatural agency or necessity —SYN. FATE

des-ti-tute (des'tō tūt, -tyōōt') adj. [ME < L destitutus, pp. of destituere, to forsake, abandon < de-, down, away + statuerē, to set, place: see STATUTE] 1 not having; being without; lacking (with of) [destitute of trees] 2 lacking the necessities of life; living in complete poverty 3 [Obs.] abandoned; forsaken —SYN. POOR

des-ti-tu-tion (des'tō tūt'shən, -tyōō'-) n. [ME destitucioun < L destitutio] the state of being destitute; esp., abject poverty —SYN. POVERTY

des-trier (des'trē ər, des trir'v) n. [ME destrer < OFr destrier < ML dextrarius < VL *dextrare, to lead (by the right hand) < dextra, right hand: see DEXTER] [Archaic] a war horse; charger

de-stry (di strōn'v) [ME destrōien < OFr destruire < L destruere < de-, down + struere, to build: see STRUCTURE] 1 to tear down;

neutralize the effect of 7 to make useless —vi. to bring about destruction

de-stry (di strōi'ər) n. 1 a person or thing that destroys 2 [orig. torpedo-boat destroyer] a small, fast, highly maneuverable warship armed with 3-inch or 5-inch guns, depth charges, torpedoes, etc. *destroyer escort a warship smaller and slower than a destroyer, used mainly to escort merchant ships

destroying angel either of two species (Amanita verna or A. virosa) of large, deadly, white amanita mushrooms found during warm weather in moist forests

*de-struct (di strukt', dē'strukt') n. [back-form. < DESTRUCTION] the deliberate destruction of a malfunctioning missile, rocket, etc. after its launch —vi. to be automatically destroyed —vt. to destroy (a rocket, etc.) deliberately by remote control

de-struct-ible (di strukt'ə bəl) adj. [LL destructibilis] that can be destroyed; subject to destruction —de-struct'ibil'-ity n.

de-struction (di strukt'shən) n. [ME destructioun < OFr destructio < L destructio < destructus, pp. of destruere: see DESTROY] 1 the act or process of destroying; demolition or slaughter 2 the fact or state of being destroyed 3 the cause or means of destroying —SYN. RUIN

de-struction-ist (-ist) n. a person who believes in or favors destruction, as of an existing social order

de-struct-ive (di strukt'iv) adj. [Ofr destructif < LL destructivus] 1 tending or likely to cause destruction 2 causing or producing destruction; destroying 3 merely negative; not helpful [destructive criticism] —de-struct'ively adv. —de-struct'ive-ness n. or de-struct'iv-ity (dē'strukt'iv'ə tē, di-)

destructive distillation the decomposition of a material, as coal, wood, etc., by heat in the absence of air, followed by the recovery of volatile products of the decomposition by condensation or other means: a type of calcination: see PYROLYSIS

de-struct-or (di strukt'ər) n. [LL < destructus: see DESTRUCTION] 1 [Brit.] an incinerator for rubbish *2 an explosive device for bringing about a destruct

desue-tude (des'wi tūd, -tyōōd') n. [ME < L desuetudo < desuetus, pp. of desuescere, to disuse < de-, from + suescere, to be accustomed: see CUSTOM] the condition of not being used or practiced any more; disuse [laws fallen into desuetude]

de-sul-fur-ize (dē sul'fər iz') vt. —ized', —iz'-ing to remove sulfur from: also de-sul'fur —de-sul'furi-za'tion n. —de-sul'furi-zer n.

des-ul-tory (des'ul tōrē; also dez'-) adj. [L desultorius < desultor, vaulter < desultus, pp. of desilire, to leap down < de-, down, from + salire, to leap: see SALIENT] 1 passing from one thing to another in an aimless way; disconnected; not methodical [a desultory conversation] 2 lacking direct relevance; random; incidental [a desultory observation] —SYN. RANDOM —des'ul-to-rily adv. —des'ul-to-ri-ness n.

det abbrev. 1 detachment 2 detail

de-tach (dē tach', di-) vt. [Fr détacher < OFr detachier, destachier < de-, DE + estachier, to ATTACH] 1 to unfasten or separate and remove; disconnect; disengage 2 to send (troops, ships, etc.) on a special mission —de-tach'abil'-ity n. —de-tach'able adj.

de-tached (dē tach't, di-) adj. 1 not connected; separate 2 not involved by emotion, interests, etc.; aloof; impartial —SYN. INDIFFERENT —de-tach'ed-ly adv. —de-tach'ed-ness n.

de-tach-ment (dē tach'mənt, di-) n. [Fr détachement] 1 a detachment; separation 2 a) the sending of troops or ships on special service b) a unit of troops separated from a larger unit for special duty c) a small permanent unit organized for special service 3 the state of being disinterested, impartial, or aloof

de-tail (di tāil', dē'tāil') n. [Fr détail < the v.] 1 the act of dealing with things item by item [the detail of business] 2 a minute account [to go into detail] 3 any of the small parts that go to make up something; item; particular [the details of a plan] 4 a) any small secondary or accessory part or parts of a picture, statue, building, etc. b) a small segment as of a painting, reproduced separately for detailed study 5 a) one or more soldiers, sailors, etc. chosen for a particular task b) the task itself —vt. [Fr détailler, to cut up, tell in particulars < de- (L de), from + tailer, to cut: see TAILOR] 1 to give the particulars of; tell, item by item 2 to choose for a particular task [detail a man for sentry duty] *3 to clean (an automotive vehicle) inside and outside, with meticulous attention to details, usually for a fee —SYN. ITEM —in detail item by item; with particulars

detail drawing a separate drawing of a small part or section, as of a machine, showing the details

de-tailed (dē'tāld, di tāld') adj. marked by careful attention to detail [a detailed plan]

*detail man a salesman for a pharmaceutical firm who visits doctors, dentists, etc. in a certain district to promote new drugs

de-tain (dē tān', di-) vt. [ME detēin < OFr detenir < L detinere, to hold down or off, keep back detain < de-, off from + tenere, to hold;

de-tain-ee (dē tān'ē) n. a p

cal reasons

de-tainer (dē tān'ər, di-) i [Anglo-Fr detener, inf. use a) the unlawful withhold; owner b) the detention of a writ for continuing to ho

de-tas-sel (dē tas'səl) vt. -s remove tassels from (corn) production of hybrid corn

de-tect (dē tekt', di-) vt. [IV to uncover < de-, from + teg discover, as in a misdeed (something hidden or not argument] 3 Radio a) REC to uncover; reveal —de-tec

de-tec-ta-phon (dē tek'tə fōn) a device for listening secr

de-tec-tion (dē tek'shən, d) a finding out or being four notice 2 DEMODULATION

de-tec-tive (dē tek'tiv, di-tives and their work —n. son on a police force, who solve crimes 2 [short for] vately to investigate crime

detective story a myste discovery of who commit which a detective, often a J a murder, by means of ca also detective novel

de-tec-tor (dē tek'tər, di- person or thing that detect the presence of some

de-tent (dē'tent; also di-t unbend < de- (L dis-) from part that stops or releases the striking of a clock

dé-tente or de-tente (dā lessening of tension or hos treaties, trade agreements

de-ten-tion (dē ten'shən, c) L detentio < detentus, pp. being detained; specif., a) enforced delay 2 a form required to stay after sch

detention home a place are held in custody, esp. t cases by the juvenile court

de-ter (dē tur', di-) vt. -ter rerrere, to frighten: see TE group, or nation) from doi

doubt, etc. —de-ter'ment

de-terge (dē tur', di-) vt. -off < de-, off, from + terge "ter-: see THROW] to clean

de-ter-gency (dē tur'jən; also de-ter'gence (jəns))

de-ter-gent (dē tur'jənt; see DETERGE] cleansing —face-active chemical prepa

nate, that is capable of en

de-terio-rate (dē tir'ə rā-tē-ri-orate, pp. of deterio inferior < *deter, below < i or become worse; lower in ra'tion n.

de-terio-ra-tion (-rāt'iv) z

de-ter-mi-nable (dē tur' dēterminabilis] 1 that ca terminable —de-ter-mi-na

de-ter-mi-nate (dē tur'm being determined 2 the o caused or in having predi

de-ter-mi-nant (dē tur'm determinare] determining 2 Math. the sum of the p accordance with certain le

de-ter-mi-nate (dē tur'm of determinare: see DETTE distinct; fixed 2 SETTLE flower at the end of the p cymose —de-ter-mi-nately

determinate cleavage e egg resulting in daughter complete embryo by them

*determinate growth 1 nated early by the form; growth, resulting in a pla

de-ter-mi-na-tion (dē tur determining or being det decision arrived at by the firm intention 4 the quali