

The  
AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®  
College  
*dictionary*



FOURTH EDITION

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 Forbes Inc. Their use is pursuant to a license agreement with Forbes Inc.

Copyright © 2007, 2004, 2002 Houghton Mifflin 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 Company unless such copying is expressly permitted by federal copyright law. Address inquiries to Reference Permissions, Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

ISBN-13: 978-0-618-83595-9  
ISBN-10: 0-618-83595-4

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

The American Heritage college dictionary.-- 4th ed.  
p.cm.

Based on the fourth ed. of the American Heritage dictionary.

ISBN 0-618-09848-8 (thumb edge) --

ISBN 0-618-19604-8 (deluxe binding)

1. English language--Dictionaries. 2. Americanisms. I  
Houghton Mifflin Company. II. American Heritage  
dictionary.

PE1628 .A6227 2002  
423--dc21

2001039826

Manufactured in the United States of America

nd some 15 lakes; associated with the 19th-cent. Lake  
Wordsworth and Coleridge.

**ig** *n.* A dwelling, esp. a prehistoric dwelling, that  
allow lake.

The effect of warm, usu. lacustrine water on the  
ditions of cooler, adjacent areas.

**g** *n.* A food fish, esp. the trout *Coregonus artedii* of  
lakes region, related to the cisco and whitefishes.

**errier** (lak/land) *n.* Any of a breed of small straight-  
and, a region of northwest England.]

**r** *n.* 1. A fish, such as the lake trout, that lives in a  
ip used on lakes.

(lak/shör', -shör') *n.* Land by a lake.

**ak/sid'** *n.* See **lakeshore**.

**n.** A freshwater food and game fish (*Salvelinus*  
of the Great Lakes.

(lak/wood') 1. A city of S CA, a suburb of Los  
79,300. 2. A city of N-central CO, a suburb of Den  
4,000.

-köt/to) *n.* pl. **Lakota** or **-tas** 1. See **Teton**. 2. The di-  
spoken by the Teton.

**veep** (lak-shäw'wep', lük'sha-dwep') A region of  
mprising the Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi is-

l/la) *n.* 1. A place renowned for its frivolous activity  
mind characterized by unrealistic expectations or a  
ness. [After L(Os) A(NGELES).]

lek', lä-), René Jules 1860-1945. French designer of  
jewelry and glassware.

also **Lal-lans** (-anz) 1. The Lowlands of  
Scots as spoken in southern and eastern Scotland.

of LOWLAND.] —**Lal/lan** *adj.*

lä/le-gäg') *v.* Variant of **lollygag**.

**lammed**, **lam-ming**, **lams Slang** —*tr.* To  
ating; to thrash. —*intr.* To strike; wallop. [Prob.  
akin to ON *lemja*, to cripple by beating, flog.]

**lang** *intr.* **lammed**, **lam-ming**, **lams** To escape, as  
ible Lamentations

o) *n.* A Buddhist monk of Tibet or Mongolia. [Fr.  
the upper one, lama < bla, superior.]

(lä'ma-'iz'am) *n.* Tibetan Buddhism. —**Lä'ma-'ist** *n.*  
'tic *adj.*

(lä män'chä) A plateau region of S-central Spain;  
ervantes's *Don Quixote*.

-märk', lä-), Chevalier de Jean-Baptiste Pierre An-  
met 1744-1829. French naturalist whose ideas about  
fluenced Darwin's theory. —**Lä'marck'i-an** *adj.* &

**im** (lä-mär'kiz'am) also **Lä'marck'i-an-ism** (lä-  
A theory of biological evolution holding that ac-  
can be inherited. [After LAMARCK.]

(lä-mär-tän'), Alphonse Marie Louis de Prat de  
French romantic poet who served briefly as minister  
fairs (1848).

(lä'mä-sër'è) *n.* pl. -ies A monastery of lamas. [Fr.  
ama, lama (< Tibetan *bla-ma*; see LAMA) + -sër-  
ob. < Pers. *sarây*, inn, palace; see **terä** in App.]

-mäz') *adj.* Relating to or being a method of child-  
ch a woman is prepared psychologically and physi-  
birth without the use of drugs. [After Fernand La-  
1957], French physician.]

1. A young sheep, esp. one that is not yet weaned  
of a young sheep used as meat. c. Lambskin. 2. A  
mannered person; a dear. 3. One who can be duped  
sp. in financial matters. 4. **Lamb** Christianity Jesus  
nbnd, **lambing**, **lams** To give birth to a young  
< OE.]

as Known as "Eliä." 1775-1834. British critic and  
with his sister **Mary Ann** (1764-1847) wrote the  
*Tales from Shakespeare* (1807).

im, 2nd Viscount Melbourne. 1779-1848. British  
o served as prime minister (1834 and 1835-41).

(läm-bä'dä, läm-bä'dä) *n.* 1. A Brazilian ballroom  
ch the partners press against each other tightly and  
ally. 2. Music for this dance. [Port., beating, lasting  
*lambiar*, to beat, var. of *lombar*, prob. < *lombo*, sub-  
orse) < Lat. *lumbus*, loin.]

(läm-bäst') *tr.* **-bast-ed**, **-bast-ing**, **-bastes** *Infro-*  
ve a thrashing to; beat. 2. To scold sharply; berate.  
F BASTE.]

n'da) *n.* 1. The 11th letter of the Greek alphabet.  
aryon. [Gk. < Phoenician \*lamid, ox-goad (sense  
1th letter of the Phoenician alphabet.)

**yon** *n.* An unstable, electrically neutral baryon-  
**aryon** (läm'dä-be') *n.* An electrically neutral ba-  
mass 11,000 times that of the electron.

**aryon** (läm'dä-sët') *n.* A positively charged baryon  
s 4,471 times that of the electron.

**lamb-doid** (läm'doid') *adj.* 1. Having the shape of the Greek let-  
ter lambda. 2. *Anatomy* Relating to the deeply serrated suture in  
the skull between the parietal bones and the occipital bone.

**lambent** (läm'bent) *adj.* 1. Flickering lightly over or on a sur-  
face. 2. Effortlessly light or brilliant: *lambent*  
moonlight. 3. Having a gentle glow; luminous. See **Syns** at **bright**. [Lat.  
*lambentis*, *lambent-*, pr. part. of *lambere*, to lick.] —**läm/ben-ty**  
*adv.*

**lambert** (läm'bort) *n.* A unit of brightness equivalent to the  
brightness of a perfectly diffusing surface that emits or reflects  
one lumen per square centimeter. [After Johann Heinrich Lam-  
bert (1728-77), German physicist and astronomer.]

**lamb-kill** (läm'kil') *n.* See **sheep laurel**.

**lamb of God** *n.* Christianity Jesus.

**lamb-quin** (läm'bör-kin, -brä-kin) *n.* 1. A short ornamental  
drapery for the top of a window or door or the edge of a shelf. 2.  
*lamb-quin*, dim. of MDu. *lamper*, veil.]

**lamb-skin** (läm'skin') *n.* 1. The hide of a lamb, esp. when  
dressed without removing the fleece, as for a garment. 2. Leather  
made from the dressed hide of a lamb. 3. Parchment made from  
such hide.

**lamb's lettuce** (lämz't) *n.* See **corn salad**.

**lamb's quarters** *pl. n.* (used with a *sing.* or *pl. verb*) A common  
weed (*Chenopodium album*) having lance-shaped leaves with a  
mealy surface and small green flowers.

**lame** (läm) *adj.* **läm-er**, **läm-est** 1. Disabled so that movement,  
walking, is difficult or impossible. 2. Marked by pain or rig-  
idness: *a lame back*. 3. Weak and ineffectual; unsatisfactory: *a*  
*lame apology*. —*tr.* **läm-ed**, **läm-ing**, **lämes** To cause to become  
lame or cripple. [ME < OE *lamma*.] —**läm-ly** *adv.* —**läm-ness** *n.*

**läm-ness** (läm) *n.* A thin metal plate, esp. one of the overlapping  
steel plates in medieval armor. [Fr. < OFr. < Lat. *lamina*, thin  
plate.]

**läm-ness** (lä-mät') *n.* A brocaded fabric woven with metallic threads,  
often of gold or silver. [Fr., spangled, laminated, *lämé* < OFr.  
*läme*, thin metal plate. See **LAME**.]

**läm-ness** (läm-brän') *n.* Informal A stupid person; a dolt.  
—**läm-brained** (-bränd') *adj.*

**läm-ness** (lä'mid, -méd') *n.* The 12th letter of the Hebrew alpha-  
bet. [Heb. *lämed* < Phoenician \*lamd, ox-goad (sense uncertain),  
11th letter of the Phoenician alphabet.]

**läm-ness** *n.* 1. An elected officeholder continuing in office dur-  
ing the period before the inauguration of a successor. 2. An inef-  
fective person; a weakling. —**läm-duck**' (läm'dük') *adj.*

**läm-ness** (lä-mél'ä) *n.* pl. -mä-läe (-mél'è) or -mä-lä A thin  
scale, plate, or layer of bone or tissue. [Lat. *lämella*, dim. of *lä-  
mina*, thin plate.] —**lä-mel-lar** *adj.*

**läm-ness** (lä-mél'ät, läm'ä-lät') *adj.* 1. Having, composed of,  
or arranged in lamellae. 2. Resembling a lamella. —**läm-el-  
lä-ted** *adj.* —**läm-el-lä-tion** *n.*

**läm-ness** or **läm-ness** -*pref.* Lamella: *lämelliform*. [< LAMELLA.]

**läm-ness** (lä-mél'ä-bränk') *n.* Any of the bivalve mol-  
lusks belonging to the class Pleurocyoda and the subclass Lamelli-  
branchia. [Lat. *Lamellibranchia*, class name: LAMELLI- + Lat.  
*branchia*, gill; see BRANCHIA.] —**lä-mel-li-branch'** *adj.*

**läm-ness** (lä-mél'l-körn') *adj.* Of or belonging to the su-  
perfamily Lamellicornia, which includes the scarabs and other  
beetles that have club-shaped lamellate antennae. [Lat. *lämelli-  
cornia*, superfamily name: LAMELLI- + Lat. *cornü*, horn; see  
**körn** in App.] —**lä-mel-li-cörn** *n.*

**läm-ness** (lä-mél'l-förm') *adj.* Having the form of a thin  
plate or lamella.

**läm-ness** (lä-mënt') *v.* -ment-ed, -ment-ing, -ments —*tr.* 1. To  
express grief for or about; mourn: *lament a death*. 2. To regret  
deeply; deplore. —*intr.* 1. To grieve audibly; wail. 2. To express  
sorrow or regret. See **Syns** at **grieve**. —*n.* 1. A feeling or expres-  
sion of grief. 2. A song or poem expressing deep grief or mourn-  
ing. [ME *lamenten* < OFr. *lamenten* < Lat. *lämentari* < *lämentum*,  
*lament*.] —**lä-ment'er** *n.*

**läm-ness** (lä-mën'tä-bäl, läm'än-) *adj.* Inspiring or de-  
serving of lament or regret; deplorable or pitiable. —**läm'en-tä-  
bly** *adv.*

**läm-ness** (läm'än-tä'shän) *n.* 1. The act of lamenting. 2.  
A lament. 3. Lamentations (used with a *sing. verb*) See **table** at  
**Bible**.

**läm-ness** (lä-mën'tid) *adj.* Mourned for: *our late lamented*  
*president*. —**lä-ment-ed-ly** *adv.*

**läm-ness** (lä'mar) *n.* Slang A person regarded as inept or ineffec-  
tual.

**läm-ness** (lä'mä-ä) *n.* pl. -mä-as or -mä-ä (-mè-è') 1. Also **Lamia**  
Greek *Mythology* A monster, represented as a serpent with the  
head and breasts of a woman, that ate children and sucked the  
blood from men. 2. A female vampire. [ME < Lat. < Gk.]

**läm-ness** (läm'vä-nä) *n.* pl. -näe (-nè') or -nä-s 1. A thin plate,  
sheet, or layer. 2. *Botany* The expanded area of a leaf or petal; a  
blade. 3. A thin layer of bone, membrane, or other tissue. 4. *Zool-*  
ogy A thin scalelike or platelike structure. 5. *Geology* A narrow bed  
of rock. [Lat. *lämina*.] —**läm'i-nar**, **läm'i-näl** *adj.*

**läm-ness** *n.* Nonturbulent flow of a viscous fluid in layers  
near a boundary, as that of lubricating oil in bearings.

**läm-i-nate** (läm'ä-nät') *v.* -nat-ed, -nat-ing, -nates —*tr.* 1. To  
beat or compress into a thin plate or sheet. 2. To divide into thin  
layers. 3. To make by uniting several layers. 4. To cover with thin  
sheets. —*intr.* To split into thin layers or sheets. —*n.* **läm-i-**  
(-nät') Consisting of, arranged in, or covered with laminae. —*n.*  
(-nät', -nit) A laminated product, such as plywood. —**läm'i-**  
**na'tor** *n.*

**läm-i-nat-ed** (läm'ä-nä'tid) *adj.* 1. Composed of layers bonded  
together. 2. Arranged in laminae; laminate.

**läm-i-nä-tion** (läm'ä-nä'shän) *n.* 1a. The act or process of lam-  
inating. b. The state of being laminated. 2. Something laminated.  
3. A lamina.

**läm-i-nec-to-my** (läm'ä-näk'tä-mè) *n.* pl. -mies Surgical re-  
moval of the posterior arch of a vertebra.

**läm-i-ni-tis** (läm'ä-ni'tis) *n.* Inflammation of the sensitive vas-  
cular tissue laminae of the hoof, esp. in horses.

**Lä-mas** (läm'äs) *n.* A feast formerly celebrated on August 1 in  
England, during which bread from the season's first wheat was  
consecrated at Mass. [ME *Lammasse* < OE *hläffmæsse*: *hläf*, loaf  
& *mæsse*, Mass; see MASS.]

**läm-mer-gei-er** also **läm-mer-gey-er** (läm'tär-gi'ör) *n.* A large  
predatory bird (*Gypaetus barbatus*) of the vulture family, ranging  
from southern Europe to China and having a wide wingspan and  
black plumage. [Ger. *Lämmergeier*: *Lämmer*, genitive pl. of  
*Lamm*, lamb (< MHGer. *lamb* < OHGer. *lamb*) + *Geier*, vulture  
(< MHGer. *gir* < OHGer.).]

**lämp** (lämp) *n.* 1a. A device that generates light, heat, or therapeu-  
tic radiation. b. A vessel containing oil or alcohol burned  
through a wick for illumination. 2. A celestial body that gives off  
or reflects light. 3. Something that illumines the mind or soul.  
[ME *lämp* < OFr. < Lat. *lampas* < Gk. < *lämpein*, to shine.]

**lämp-black** (lämp'bläk') *n.* Fine soot collected from incom-  
pletely burned carbonaceous materials, used as a pigment and in  
matches, explosives, lubricants, and fertilizers.

**lämp-er eel** (lämp'ör) *n.* See **lamprey**. [Alteration of LAMPREY.]

**lämp-i-on** (läm'pé-an) *n.* An oil-burning lamp, often of colored  
glass, for outdoor use. [Fr. < Ital. *lampione*, augmentative of  
*lampa*, lamp < OFr. *lämp*. See LAMP.]

**lämp-light** (lämp'lit') *n.* The light shed by a lamp.

**lämp-light-er** (lämp'lit'ör) *n.* One that lights lamps, esp. gaslit  
lamps.

**lämp oil** *n.* See **kerosene**.

**lämp-oon** (läm-pöön') *n.* 1. A written attack ridiculing a person,  
group, or institution. 2. A light good-humored satire. —*tr.* **lämp-**  
**-pooned**, **-poön-ing**, **-poons** To ridicule or satirize in or as if in  
a lampoon. [Fr. *lämpoon*, perh. < *lämpoons*, let us drink (< drinking  
songs), first pers. pl. imper. of *lämpere*, to gulp down, of Gmc.  
orig.] —**lämp-oon'er**, **lämp-oon'ist** *n.* —**lämp-oon'er-ry** *n.*

**lämp-post** (lämp'pöst') *n.* A post supporting a street lamp.

**lämp-prey** (lämp'pre) *n.* pl. -preys Any of various primitive elon-  
gated freshwater or anadromous fishes of the family Petromel-  
zontidae, with a sucking mouth and rasping teeth. [ME *lämprei*  
< OFr. *lämpreie* < Med.Lat. *lämpredä*.]

**lämp-shade** (lämp'shad') *n.* Any of various protective or orna-  
mental coverings used to screen a light bulb.

**lämp-shell** (lämp'shël') *n.* See **brachiopod**.

**lämp-work-ing** (lämp'wür'king) *n.* The process of sculpting  
glass by twirling thin rods of glass over a gas-oxygen burner.

**LAN** (län) *n.* A system that links together electronic office equip-  
ment, such as computers, and forms a network within an office  
or building. [I(LOCAL) A(REA) N(ETWORK).]

**lä-nai** (lä-ni') *n.* pl. -nais A veranda or roofed patio. [Hawaiian  
*länai*.]

**Lanai** An island of central HI W of Maui; developed as a pineap-  
ple-growing area after 1922.

**lä-nate** (lä'nät') *adj.* Having or consisting of woolly hairs. [Lat.  
*länätus* < *läna*, wool.]

**Län-ca-shire** (läng'kä-shür', -shör) A historical region of NW  
England on the Irish Sea; part of the kingdom of Northumbria in  
Anglo-Saxon times.

**Län-cas'ter** (läng'kä-stär, län'-) English royal house that from  
1399 to 1461 produced three kings of England—Henry IV, Henry  
V, and Henry VI. During the Wars of the Roses its symbol was a  
red rose. —**Län-cas'tri-an** (läng-käs'tri-än) *adj.* & *n.*

**Län-cas'ter** (läng'kä-stär, -käs'tär, län'-) A municipal borough  
of NW England N of Liverpool; chartered 1193. Pop. 133,610.

**länce** (läns) *n.* 1a. A thrusting weapon with a long wooden shaft  
and a sharp metal head. b. A similar implement for spearing fish.  
2. A cavalry lancer. 3. *Medicine* See **lancet** 1. —*tr.* **länce-d**,  
**länce-ies** 1. To pierce with a lance. 2. *Medicine* To make  
a surgical incision in; cut into. [ME < OFr. < Lat. *lancea*, prob. of  
Celt. orig.]

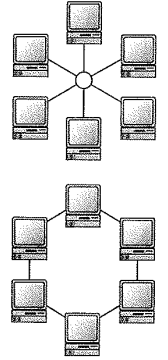
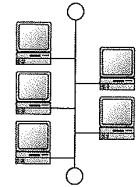
**länce corporal** *n.* A noncommissioned officer in the US Marine  
Corps, ranking above private first class and below corporal.  
[< *lancepedes* < obsolete Fr. *lancepedade* < Ital. *lancia spezzata*,  
superior soldier: *lancia*, lance (< Lat. *lanca*; see LANCE) + *spez-  
zata*, fem. p. part. of *spezzare*, to break to pieces.]

**länce-let** (läns'lit) *n.* Any of various small flattened marine or-  
ganisms of the subphylum Cephalochordata.

**Län-ce-lot** (läns'lä-lät, -löt', län'-) *n.* In Arthurian legend, a  
Knight of the Round Table whose love affair with Queen Guine-

lambdoid

Lancelot



LAN

top to bottom: bus, star, and ring network configurations

ä pat	oi boy
ä pay	ou out
är care	öo took
ä father	öo boot
é pet	ü cut
é be	ür urge
í pit	th thin
í pie	th this
fr pier	hw which
ö pot	zh vision
ö toe	ä about,
ö paw	item

Stress marks:  
' (primary);  
' (secondary), as in  
**lexicon** (lèk'si-kón')