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

Eleventh Edition

For Reference

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The Words You Need Today

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

ELEVENTH  
EDITION



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**Nd** *symbol* neodymium

**ND** *abbr* 1 doctor of naturopathy 2 North Dakota

**nd** *symbol* — used after the figure 2 to indicate the ordinal number *second* <2nd> <2nd>

**N** *abbr* North Dakota

**NDE** *abbr* near-death experience

**NDP** *abbr* New Democratic Party (Canada)

**Ne** *symbol* neon

**NE** *abbr* 1 Nebraska 2 New England 3 no effects 4 northeast

**né** \nā\ *adj* [F, lit., born — more at **NÉE**] (1905) 1 — used to indicate the original, former, or legal name of a man (Robert Roe, ~ John Doe) 2 : originally or formerly called

**ne-** or **neo-** *comb form* [Gk, fr. *neos* new — more at **NEW**] 1 **a** : new : recent (<Neogene>) **b** : new and different period or form of (<Neoplatonism>) : in a new and different form or manner (<Neoplatonic>) **c** : New World (<Neotropical>) **d** : new and abnormal (<neoplasm>) 2 : new chemical compound isomeric with or otherwise related to (such a compound <neostigmine>)

**NEA** *abbr* 1 National Education Association 2 National Endowment for the Arts

**Ne-an-der-thal** \nē-ˈan-dər-tōl, -tōl; nā-ˈan-dər-tāl\ *n* [*Neanderthal*, valley in western Germany] (1863) 1 or **Ne-an-der-tal** \-tōl, -tāl\ : a hominid (*Homo neanderthalensis* syn *H. sapiens neanderthalensis*) known from skeletal remains in Europe, northern Africa, and western Asia that lived from about 30,000 to 200,000 years ago — called also *Neanderthal man* 2 : one who suggests a caveman in appearance, mentality, or behavior — **Neanderthal** or **Neandertal** *adj* — **Ne-an-der-thal-oid** \-tōl-oid, -tōl-, -tā-*adj* or *n*

**neap** \nēp\ *adj* [ME *neep*, fr. OE *nēp* being at the stage of neap tide] (bef. 12c) : of, relating to, or constituting a neap tide

**neap** *n* (15c) : NEAP TIDE

**Ne-a-pol-i-tan** \nē-ə-pā-lā-tən\ *n* [ME, fr. L *neapolitanus* of Naples, fr. Gk *neapolitēs* citizen of Naples, fr. *Neapolis* Naples] (15c) : a native or inhabitant of Naples, Italy — **Neapolitan** *adj*

**Neapolitan ice cream** *n* (1895) : a brick of from two to four layers of ice cream of different flavors

**neap tide** *n* (ca. 1548) : a tide of minimum range occurring at the first and the third quarters of the moon

**near** \nir\ *adv* [ME *ner*, partly fr. *ner* nearer, fr. OE *nēar*, comparative of *nēah* nigh; partly fr. ON *nær* nearer, compar. of *nā* nigh — more at **NIGH**] (13c) 1 : at, within, or to a short distance or time (sunset was drawing ~) 2 : ALMOST, NEARLY (<was ~ dead>) 3 : in a close or intimate manner : CLOSELY (<~ related>) 4 *archaic* : in a frugal manner

**near prep** (13c) : close to (<beaches ~ the city>) (<seemed to be ~ death>)

**near adj** (14c) 1 **a** : not far distant in time, place, or degree (<in the ~ future>) **b** : almost happening : narrowly missed or avoided (<a ~ win in the primary>) (<a ~ midair collision>) **c** : nearly not happening (<a ~ escape>) 2 : closely related or intimately associated (<her ~est and dearest friend>) 3 **a** : being the closer of two (<the ~ side>) **b** : being the left-hand one of a pair (<the ~ wheel of a cart>) 4 : DIRECT, SHORT (<the ~est road>) 5 : STINGY, CLOSEFISTED 6 **a** : closely resembling the standard or typical (<a ~ desert>) **b** : approximating the genuine (<~ silk>) — **near-ness** *n*

**near vb** (1513) : APPROACH

**near beer** *n* (1909) : any of various malt liquors considered nonalcoholic because they contain less than a specified percentage of alcohol

**near-by** \nir-ˈbi, -nir-*adv* or *adj* (14c) : close at hand

**Ne-arctic** \nē-ˈark-tik, -ˈar-tik\ *adj* (1858) : of, relating to, or being the biogeographic subregion that includes Greenland and No. America north of tropical Mexico

**near gale** *n* (ca. 1975) : MODERATE GALE — see **BEAUFORT SCALE** table

**near-in-fra-red** \nir-in-frā-ˈred, -(j)frā-*adj* (1950) : of or relating to the shorter wavelengths of radiation in the infrared spectrum and esp. to those between 0.7 and 2.5 micrometers

**near-ly** \nir-lē\ *adv* (1561) 1 : in a close manner or relationship (<~ related>) 2 **a** : almost but not quite (<~ identical>) (<~ a year later>) **b** : to the least extent (<not ~ as good as we expected>)

**near miss** *n* (1940) 1 **a** : a miss (as with a bomb) close enough to cause damage **b** : something that falls just short of success 2 **a** : a near collision (as between aircraft) **b** : CLOSE CALL

**near money** *n* (1942) : assets (as savings accounts or government bonds) quickly and easily converted to cash

**near point** *n* (1876) : the point nearest the eye at which an object is accurately focused on the retina at full accommodation

**near-shore** \nir-ˈshōr, -nir-*adj* (1896) : extending outward an indefinite but usu. short distance from shore (<~ sediments>)

**near-side** \-sīd\ *adj* (1825) *Brit* : LEFT-HAND 1 — **nearside** *n*

**near-sight-ed** \-si-təd\ *adj* (1686) : able to see near things more clearly than distant ones : MYOPIC — **near-sight-ed-ly** *adv*

**near-sight-ed-ness** \nir-si-təd-nəs\ *n* (1811) : MYOPIA

**near-ul-tra-vi-o-let** \nir-əl-trā-vi-(ə)-lēt\ *adj* (1951) : of, relating to, or being the longest wavelengths of radiation in the ultraviolet spectrum esp. between 300 and 400 nanometers

**neat** \nēt\ *n*, *pl* **neat** or **neats** [ME *neet*, fr. OE *nēat*; akin to OHG *nōz* head of cattle, OE *nēotan* to make use of, Lith *nauda* use] (bef. 12c) : the common domestic bovine (*Bos taurus*)

**neat adj** [ME *net*, fr. L *nitidus* bright, neat, fr. *nitēre* to shine; prob. akin to Mlr *niam* luster] (1542) 1 : free from dirt and disorder : habitually clean and orderly 2 **a** : free from admixture or dilution : STRAIGHT (<~ brandy>) (<~ cement>) **b** : free from irregularity : SMOOTH (<~ silk>) 3 : marked by tasteful simplicity (<a ~ outfit>) 4 **a** : PRECISE, SYSTEMATIC **b** : marked by skill or ingenuity : ADROIT 5 : NET (<~ profit>) 6 : FINE, ADMIRABLE — **neat-ly** *adv* — **neat-ness** *n*

**neat adv** (1649) 1 : in a neat manner (<his hair combed back> — J. M. Cain) 2 : without admixture or dilution : STRAIGHT

**neat-en** \nē-ˈtēn\ *vt* **neat-ened**; **neat-en-ing** \nēt-nīŋ, -nē-ˈtēn-ŋ\ (1898) 1 : to set in order : make neat 2 : to finish (as a piece of sewing) carefully

**neath** \nēth\ *prep* (1600) *dial* : BENEATH

**neat-herd** \nēt-ˈhərd\ *n* (14c) : HERDSMAN

**neat-nik** \nēt-nīk\ *n* (1959) : a person who is compulsively neat

**neb** \nēb\ *n* [ME, fr. OE; akin to ON *nef* beak] (bef. 12c) 1 **a** : the beak of a bird or tortoise : BILL **b** *chiefly dial* : a person's mouth **c** : NOSE 1, SNOUT 2 : NTB, TIP

**Neb** or **Nebr** *abbr* Nebraska

**NEB** *abbr* New English Bible

**neb-bish** \nē-bish\ *n* [Yiddish *nebekh* poor, unfortunate, fr. Czech *nebohy*] (1951) : a timid, meek, or ineffectual person — **neb-bishy** \-bi-shē\ *adj*

**ne-ben-kern** \nā-bən-kərn, -kərn\ *n* [G, lit., subsidiary nucleus] (1895) : a 2-stranded helical structure of the proximal tail region of a spermatozoon that is derived from mitochondria

**neb-u-la** \nē-byə-lə\ *n*, *pl* -læ \-lē, -lī\ *also* -las [NL, fr. L, mist, cloud; akin to OHG *nebul* fog, Gk *nephelē*, *nephos* cloud] (ca. 1738) 1 : any of numerous clouds of gas or dust in interstellar space 2 : GALAXY 1b; *esp* : a galaxy other than the Milky Way galaxy — not used technically — **neb-u-lar** \-lər\ *adj*

**nebular hypothesis** *n* (1837) : a hypothesis in astronomy: the solar system has evolved from a hot gaseous nebula

**neb-u-lize** \nē-byə-līz\ *vt* -lized; -lizing [L *nebula*] (1872) : to reduce to a fine spray — **neb-u-li-za-tion** \nē-byə-lā-zā-shən\ *n* — **neb-u-lizer** \nē-byə-lī-zər\ *n*

**neb-u-los-i-ty** \nē-byə-lā-sə-tē\ *n*, *pl* -ties (1833) 1 : the quality or state of being nebulous 2 : nebulous matter; *also* : NEBULA 1

**neb-u-lous** \nē-byə-ləs\ *adj* [L *nebulous* misty, fr. *nebula*] (1784) 1 : of, relating to, or resembling a nebula : NEBULAR 2 : INDISTINCT, VAGUE — **neb-u-lous-ly** *adv* — **neb-u-lous-ness** *n*

**nec-es-sar-i-ly** \nē-sə-ˈser-ə-lē\ *adv* (15c) 1 : of necessity : UNAVOIDABLY 2 : as a logical result or consequence

**nec-es-sary** \nē-sə-ˈser-ē\ *adj* [ME *necessarie*, fr. L *necessarius*, fr. *necesse* necessary, prob. fr. *ne* not + *cedere* to withdraw — more at **NO**] (14c) 1 **a** : of an inevitable nature : INESCAPABLE **b** (1) : logically unavoidable (2) : that cannot be denied without contradiction **c** : determined or produced by the previous condition of things **d** : COMPULSORY 2 : absolutely needed : REQUIRED

**necessary** *n*, *pl* -sar-ies (14c) : an indispensable item : ESSENTIAL

**necessary condition** *n* (1696) 1 : a state of affairs that must prevail if another is to occur : PREREQUISITE 2 : a proposition whose falsity assures the falsity of another

**ne-ces-si-tar-i-an-ism** \ni-se-sə-ˈtēr-ē-ə-ni-zəm\ *n* (1854) : the theory that results follow by invariable sequence from causes — **ne-ces-si-tar-i-an** \-tēr-ē-ən\ *adj* or *n*

**ne-ces-si-tate** \ni-se-sə-ˈtāt\ *vt* -tated; -tating (1628) 1 : to make necessary : REQUIRE 2 : FORCE, COMPEL — **ne-ces-si-tation** \-se-sə-ˈtā-shən\ *n*

**ne-ces-si-tous** \ni-se-sə-ˈtəs\ *adj* (1611) 1 : NEEDY, IMPOVERISHED 2 : URGENT, PRESSING 3 : NECESSARY — **ne-ces-si-tous-ly** *adv* — **ne-ces-si-tous-ness** *n*

**ne-ces-si-ty** \ni-se-sə-tē, -ses-tē\ *n*, *pl* -ties [ME *necessite*, fr. AF *necessité*, fr. L *necessitas*, *necessitas*, fr. *necesse*] (14c) 1 : the quality or state of being necessary 2 **a** : pressure of circumstance **b** : physical or moral compulsion **c** : impossibility of a contrary order or condition 3 : the quality or state of being in need; *esp* : POVERTY 4 **a** : something that is necessary : REQUIREMENT **b** : an urgent need or desire — **of necessity** : in such a way that it cannot be otherwise; *also* : as a necessary consequence (<further changes will occur of necessity>)

**neck** \nek\ *n* [ME *nekke*, fr. OE *hnecca*; akin to OHG *hnac* nape] (bef. 12c) 1 **a** (1) : the part of an animal that connects the head with the body (2) : the siphon of a bivalve mollusk (as a clam) **b** : the part of a garment that covers or is next to the neck 2 : a relatively narrow part suggestive of a neck; as **a** (1) : the constricted end of a bottle (2) : the slender proximal end of a fruit **b** : CERVIX 2 **c** : the part of a stringed musical instrument extending from the body and supporting the fingerboard and strings **d** : a narrow stretch of land **e** : STRAIT 1b **f** : the part of a tooth between the crown and the root — see **TOOTH** illustration **g** : a column of solidified magma of a volcanic pipe or laccolith **3** : a narrow margin (<won by a ~>) 4 : REGION, PART (<my ~ of the woods>)

**neck vb** (1842) 1 : to kiss and caress amorously 2 : to reduce in diameter ~ *vi* 1 : to engage in amorous kissing and caressing 2 : to become constricted : NARROW

**neck and neck** *adv* or *adj* (1799) : very close (as in a race)

**necked** \nek\ *adj* (14c) : having a neck esp. of a specified kind — often used in combination (<long-necked>)

**neck-er-chief** \nē-kər-ˈchēf, -(j)chif, -ˈchēf\ *n*, *pl* -chiefs *also* -chieves [see **HANDKERCHIEF** *n*] [ME *nekkerchief*, fr. *nekke* + *kerchief* kerchief] (14c) : a kerchief for the neck

**neck-ing** \nē-kiŋ\ *n* (1804) 1 : a narrow molding near the top of a column or pilaster 2 : the act or practice of kissing and caressing amorously

**neck-lace** \nē-kləs\ *n* (ca. 1590) 1 : an ornament worn around the neck 2 : something likened to a necklace esp. in forming a linked series or a circular pattern (<a ~ of islands>)

**neck-line** \nēk-ˈlīn\ *n* (1904) : the line of the neck opening of a garment

**neck-rein** \-rān\ *vi* (1940) of a saddle horse : to respond to the pressure of a rein on one side of the neck by turning in the opposite direction ~ *vt* : to direct (a horse) by pressures of the rein on the neck

**neck-tie** \-tī\ *n* (1838) : a narrow length of material worn about the neck and tied in front; *esp* : FOUR-IN-HAND

**neck-wear** \-wēr\ *n* (ca. 1879) : articles of clothing (as ties and scarves) worn about the neck

**necr-** or **necro-** *comb form* [LL, fr. Gk *nekros*, *nekro-*, fr. *nekros* dead body — more at **NOXIOUS**] 1 : those that are dead (<necrophilia>) 2 : one that is dead (<necropsy>)

**nec-ro-l-o-gy** \nə-ˈkrā-lə-jē, -nē-\ *n*, *pl* -gies [NL *necrologium*, fr. *necr-* + *-logium* (as in ML *eulogium* eulogy)] (1799) 1 : OBITUARY 2 : a list of the recently dead — **nec-ro-log-i-cal** \nē-kra-ˈlā-jī-kəl\ *adj* — **nec-ro-l-o-gist** \nə-ˈkrā-lə-jist, -nē-\ *n*

**nec-ro-man-cy** \nē-kra-ˈman(t)-sē\ *n* [alter. of ME *nigromancie*, fr. AF, fr. ML *nigromantia*, by folk etymology fr. LL *necromantia*, fr. LGK *nēkromantēia*, fr. Gk *nekro-* + *mantēia* -mancy] (1522) 1 : conjuration of the spirits of the dead for purposes of magically revealing the future