## The Merriam-Webster Dictionary



Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, Publishers Springfield, Massachusetts

## A GENUINE MERRIAM-WEBSTER

The name Webster alone is no guarantee of excellence. It is used by a number of publishers and may serve mainly to mislead an unwary buyer.

Merriam-Webster ${ }^{\text {Tw }}$ is the name you should look for when you consider the purchase of dictionaries or other fine reference books. It carries the reputation of a company that has been publishing since 1831 and is your assurance of quality and authority.

Copyright © 1998 by Merriam-Webster, Incorporated
Philippines Copyright 1998 by Merriam-Webster, Incorporated

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Main entry under title:
The Merriam-Webster dictionary.

| p. | cm . |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| ISBN $0-8779-606-8$ | (alk. paper) |  |
| 1. English language - Dictionaries. I. Merriam-Webster Inc. |  |  |
| PE1628.M353 | 1998 |  |

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, principal copyright 1995

All rights reserved. No part of this book covered by the copyrights hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any meansgraphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, taping, or information storage and retrieval systems-without written permission of the publisher.

Made in the United States of America
wset $\backslash-$＇set $\backslash v b 1$ ：trouble，harass 2 ：assail；also SURROUND
＊setoting adj ：persistently present
side \bi－l sid $\backslash$ prep 1 ：by the side of（sit $\sim$ me） 2 besides 3 ：not relevant to
side adv，archaic ：BESIDES
sides \bi－1sidz prep 1 ：other than 2 ：together with sides $a d v 1$ ：as well ：also 2 ：MOREOVER
ssiege $\backslash b i-{ }^{-}$sēj $\backslash v b$ ：to lay siege to；also ：to press with requests－besiegaer $n$
ssmear －ismir $^{\text {s }} v b$ ：SMEAR
smirch（－＇smorch $v b$ ：SMIRCH，SOIL
wsom \bbē－zam\ $n$ ：BROOM
sot $\backslash$ bi－l sät $\backslash v b$ besototed；besototing 1 ：INFATUATE $i:$ to make dull esp．by drinking
espatoter l－＇spa－tor v $b$ ：SPATTER
sspeak \bi－＂spēk\ $v b$－spoke $\mid-$＇spōk\；－spooken －${ }^{\text {spo}}$ spo－kən\；－speak－ing 1 ：PREARRANGE 2 ：ADDRESS 3 ：REQUEST 4 ：INDICATE，SIGNIFY 5 ：FORETELL espringle $\$－＇sprip－kjl $v b$ ：SPRINKLE st \tbest\adj，superlative of GOOD 1 ：excelling all thers 2 ：most productive（as of good or satisfaction） 3 ：LARGEST，MOST
ist adv，superlative of WELL 1 ：in the best way 2 MOST
est $n$ ：something that is best
st $v b$ ：to get the better of ：OUTDO
zstial \bes－chol\adj 1 ：of or relating to beasts 2 ：re－ embling a beast esp．in brutality or lack of intelli－ zence
esotioaloity \ibes－chē－＇a－lo－tē，ıbēs－\ $n, p l$－ties 1 ：the zondition or status of a lower animal 2 ：display or gratification of bestial traits or impulses
estioary \bes－chē－ser－ê\n，pl－aroies ：a medieval al－ egorical or moralizing work on the appearance and habits of animals
estir \bi－＇stor\ $\backslash b:$ to rouse to action
est $\operatorname{man} n$ ：the principal groomsman at a wedding estow $\backslash b i-{ }^{-}$stō $\backslash v b 1$ ：PUT，PLACE，STOW 2 ：to present as a gift－berstowoal $n$
eastride \bi－＇strīd $v b$－strode $\$－＇strōd\；－stridden －$^{-1}$ strid－${ }^{-} n \backslash$ ；－stridoing ：to ride，sit，or stand astride et \bet\} \boldsymbol { n } 1 ：something that is wagered，risked，or pledged usu．between two parties on the outcome of a contest；also ：the making of such a bet 2 ：OPTION （the back road is your best～）
the back road is your besting $1:$ to stake on the out－ et $v b$ bet also betoted；betoting 1 ：to stake on the out－
come of an issue or a contest $\langle$ bet $\$ 2$ on the race） 2 ：to make a bet with 3 ：to lay a bet et $a b b r$ between
etta \＇bā－tə\ $n$ ：the 2 d letter of the Greek alphabet－ $B$ or $\beta$
eta blockeer $\$－ıblä－kər $\backslash n$ ：any of a group of drugs that tend to decrease heart action and increase cor－ onary blood flow
etta－carootene $l^{-}$kar－ə－ıtēn $n$ ：an isomer of caro－ tene found in dark green and dark yellow vegetables and fruits
etake \bi－＇tāk\ $v b$－took $\backslash-{ }^{-}$tük\；－taken $\backslash-$＇tā－kən\； －takoing：to cause（oneself）to go
eta particle $n$ ：a high－speed electron；esp ：one emit－ ted by a radioactive nucleus
eta ray $n 1$ ：beTA PARTICLE 2 ：a stream of beta par－ ticles
ettel \} \backslash bett－ \backslash \backslash n ：a climbing pepper whose leaves are chewed together with lime and betel nut as a stimu－ lant esp．by southern Asians
retel nut $n$ ：the astringent seed of an Asian palm that is chewed with betel leaves
ête noire \abet－＇nwär，bbāt－\ $n$ ，pl bêtes noires \same or－＇nwärz\［F，lit．，black beast］：a person or thing strongly disliked or avoided
rethel \De－thel\ $n$［Heb bēth＇ēl house of God］：a place of worship esp．for seamen rethink \bi－＇think\ $\nu b$－thought －＇thot $^{-1}$ ；－thinkoing ：REMEMBER；also ：PONDER
betide $\backslash \mathrm{bi}-{ }^{-1} \mathrm{tid} \backslash v b$ ：to happen to
betimes \bi－${ }^{\text {t }} \mathrm{timz}$ ad $a$ ：in good time ：EARLY sym soon，seasonably，timely
bettoken \bi－ltō－kən\ $\nu b 1$ ：PRESAGE 2 ：to give evi dence of syn indicate，attest，bespeak，testify
betray $\backslash \mathrm{bi}-{ }^{1}$ trā $\backslash \nu b 1$ ：to lead astray；esp ：sEduce 2 ：to deliver to an enemy 3 ：ABANDON 4 ：to prove un－ faithful to 5 ：to reveal unintentionally；also ：sHOw indicate syn mislead，delude，deceive，beguile－ betrayoal $n$－betrayoer $n$
betroth \bi－＇trōth，－＇tròth $v b$ ：to promise to marry －betrothoal $n$
betrothed $n$ ：the person to whom one is betrothed ${ }^{1}$ betoter \＇be－tor\adj，comparative of GOOD 1 ：greater than half 2 ：improved in health 3 ：more attractive， favorable，or commendable 4 ：more advantageous or effective 5 ：improved in accuracy or performance
${ }^{2}$ better $\nu b 1$ ：to make or become better 2 ：SURPASS， EXCEL
${ }^{3}$ better adv，comparative of WELL 1 ：in a superior man－
ner 2 ：to a higher or greater degree；also ：MORE
${ }^{4}$ better $\boldsymbol{n} 1$ ：something better；also ：a superior esp．in merit or rank 2 ：ADVANTAGE
${ }^{5}$ better verbal auxiliary ：had better（you $\sim$ hurry）
betoteroment <br>be－tor－mont $\backslash n$ ：IMPROVEMENT
betotor or betoter \be－tor $\backslash n$ ：one that bets
1between \bi－＇twēn $\backslash$ prep 1 ：by the common action of （earned $\$ 10,000 \sim$ the two of them） 2 ：in the interval separating 〈an alley $\sim$ two buildings）；also ：in inter－ mediate relation to 3 ：in point of comparison of〈choose $\sim$ two cars）
${ }^{2}$ between adv ：in an intervening space or interval betwixt \bi－${ }^{-}$twikst $\backslash$ adv or prep ：BETWEEN
bevel \} be－val n 1 ：a device for adjusting the slant of the surfaces of a piece of work 2 ：the angle or slant that one surface or line makes with another when not at right angles
${ }^{2}$ bevel $v b$－eled or－elled；－eloing or eelling 1 ：to cut or shape to a bevel 2 ：INCLINE，SLANT
beveroage \bev－rij $n$ ：a drinkable liquid
bevy \be－vè $n, p l$ bevies 1 ：a large group or collec－ tion 2 ：a group of animals and esp．quail together bewail \bi－${ }^{\text {}}$ wāl $v b$ ：LAMENT syn deplore，bemoan， grieve，moan，weep
beware $l^{-}$war $\backslash \nu b$ ：to be on one＇s guard ：be wary of bewilder \bi－＇wil－dər\ $v b$ ：PERPLEX，CONFUSE syn mystify，distract，puzzle－beowiloderoment $n$
bewitch $\mid-{ }^{-}$wich $v b 1$ ：to affect by witchcraft 2
：CHARM，FASCINATE Sym enchant，attract，captivate －bewitchoment $n$
bey \} { } ^ { bā } \backslash \boldsymbol { n } 1 ：a former Turkish provincial governor 2 ：the former native ruler of Tunis or Tunisia
${ }^{1}$ beyond $\backslash$ bē－länd \adv $1:$ FARTHER $2:$ BESIDES
${ }^{2}$ beyond prep 1 ：on or to the farther side of 2 ：out of the reach or sphere of 3 ：BESIDES
bezel \＇bē－zol，＂be－\n 1 ：a rim that holds a transparent covering（as on a watch） 2 ：the faceted part of a cut gem that rises above the setting
bf $a b b r$ boldface
BG or B Gen abbr brigadier general
bhang \bap\ $n$［Hindi bhang］：a mildly intoxicating preparation of the leaves and flowering tops of uncul－ tivated hemp

## Bi symbol bismuth

BIA abbr Bureau of Indian Affairs
biean•nural <br>（a）bi－＇an－yo－wal\ adj：occurring twice a year－biannuualoly adv
${ }^{1}$ bieas \’bī－2s $\backslash \boldsymbol{n} 1:$ a line diagonal to the grain of a fabric 2 ：PREJUDICE，BENT
${ }^{2}$ bias adv ：on the bias ：DIAGONALLY
${ }^{3}$ bias $v b$ bieased or bieassed；bieasoing or bioasssing ：PREJUDICE
bieathlon \bī－＇ath－lan，－rlän\ $n$ ：a composite athletic contest consisting of cross－country skiing and target shooting with a rifle
bib \bib $n$ ：a cloth or plastic shield tied under the chin to protect the clothes while eating
${ }^{2}$ bib abbr Bible；biblical
bidbelot \bē－bo－lō\ $n$ ，pl bibelots \same or－alōz\ ：a small household ornament or decorative object
bible \bī－bol $\backslash n$［ME，fr．OF，fr．ML biblia，fr．Gk，pl． of biblion book，fr．byblos papyrus，book，fr．Byblos， ancient Phoenician city from which papyrus was ex－ ported］ 1 cap ：the sacred scriptures of Christians comprising the Old and New Testaments 2 cap ：the sacred scriptures of Judaism；also ：those of some other religion 3 ：a publication that is considered au－ thoritative for its subject－biboliccal \bi－bli－kəl $\backslash$ adj 03 For table，see next page．
biboliogora•phy \abi－blē－ä－gro－fè $n, p l$－phies 1 ：the history or description of writings or publications 2 ：a list of writings（as on a subject or of an author）－ biboliogoraopher $\backslash$－for $\backslash n$－bibolioographoic l－ə－＂gra－ fik\also biblieographoical $\backslash$－fi－kol $\backslash$ adj
bibliophile \bi－blē－o－ıfil\ $n$ ：a lover of books
biboulous \bi－byo－los $\backslash$ adj 1 ：highly absorbent 2 fond of alcoholic beverages
biccamerval <br>bī－＇ka－mə－ral $\backslash$ adj ：having or consisting of two legislative branches
bicarb <br>（o）bī－＇kärb，＂bī－s $n$ ：sodium bicarbonate
biccarobon ${ }^{\text {ate }} \backslash(ı)$ bi－＇kär－bə－ınāt，－nət $\backslash n$ ：an acid car－ bonate
bicarbonate of soda ：sodium bicarbonate
biccenotenaory labī－sen－＇te－nə－rē，bī－－＇sent－²n－ıer－ē $n$ ：BICENTENNIAL－bicentenary adj
biccentenonioal \bbī－sen－${ }^{\text {tr }}$－nē－al $\backslash n$ ：a 200th anniver－ sary or its celebration－bicentennial adj
bicceps \Dibi－rseps $\backslash n$ ，pl biceps also bicepses（NL，fr L，two－headed，fr．bi－two＋caput head］：a muscle （as in the front of the upper arm）having two points of origin
${ }^{1}$ bicker \＇bi－kor $\backslash n$ ：altercation
${ }^{2}$ bicker $v b$ ：to engage in a petty quarrel
biccoastal $\operatorname{bii}-{ }^{-}$kōst－ $\mathrm{-} \backslash$ adj ：living or working on both the East and West coasts of the U．S．
birconıcave \ıbī－（ı）kän－「kāv，（ı）bī－＇kän－ıkāv\ adj ：concave on both sides
biccon•vex \ıbī－（ı）kän－＇veks，（ı）bī－＇kän－ıveks\adj ：convex on both sides
biocuspid \bī－lkas－pad $\ n$ ：Premolar
${ }^{1}$ bicyocle \＇bii－ısi－kal $\backslash n$ ：a light 2 －wheeled vehicle with a steering handle，saddle，and pedals
${ }^{2}$ bicycle $v b$－cyocled；－cyocling t－ısi－k（o－）lin，－asī－। ：to ride a bicycle－bicyacler $\-k(\partial-) l a r \backslash n$－biccyoclist 1－k（o－）list $n$
${ }^{1}$ bid \＇bid $\backslash v b$ bade \＇bad，＇bād \or bid；bidden \＇bid－ ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{n} \backslash$ or bid also bade；bidoding 1 ：COMMAND，ORDER 2 ：INVITE 3 ：to give expression to 4 ：to make a bid ：OFFER－bidoder $n$
${ }^{2}$ bid $n 1$ ：the act of one who bids；also ：an offer for something 2 ：INVITATION 3 ：an announcement in a card game of what a player proposes to accomplish 4 ：an attempt to win or gain 〈a $\sim$ for mayor $\rangle$
bid dadble <br>bi－də－bal\adj 1 ：OBEDIENT，DOCILE 2 ：ca－ pable of being bid
bidedy \Vbi－dē\ $n$ ，pl biddies ：hEN；also ：a young chicken
bide \＇bīd $\downarrow b$ bode \} { } ^ { \prime } bōd \or bideed；bided；bidoing 1 ：to wait for 2 ：WAIT，TARRY 3 ：DWELL
birdet \bi－dā\ $n$ ：a bathroom fixture used esp．for bathing the external genitals and the posterior parts of the body
bi－direction $\stackrel{\text { al }}{\text { \abī－də－＇rek－sh（2－）nal } \backslash \text { adj ：involving，}}$ moving，or taking place in two usu．opposite direc－ tions－bidiorecotioneally adv
bieenenial $\backslash \mathrm{bi}-\mathrm{e} \mathrm{e}$－nē－al $\backslash$ adj 1 ：taking place once in two years 2 ：lasting two years 3 ：producing leaves the first year and fruiting and dying the second year－ biennial $n$－bienonivally adv
bieneni－um \bī－＇e－nē－əm\n，pl－niums or－nia \－ə\［L，
fr．bi－two＋annus year］：a period of two years
：done as if by a machine ：automatic syn instinc－ tive，impulsive，spontaneous－merchanoiccally l－k（ə－）lē\ $a d \nu$
mechanical drawing $n$ ：drawing done with the aid of instruments
merchanoics $\backslash$ mi－＂ka－niks $\backslash n$ sing or pl $1:$ a branch of physics that deals with energy and forces and their ef－ fect on bodies 2 ：the practical application of mechan－ ics（as to the operation of machines） 3 ：mechanical or functional details
mechraonism \＇me－kə－ıni－zom\n1：a piece of machin－ ery；also ：a process or technique for achieving a re－ sult 2 ：mechanical operation or action 3 ：the fundamental processes involved in or responsible for a natural phenomenon 〈the visual～〉
mechraonistic \sme－kə－＇nis－tik\adj 1 ：mechanically determined＜～universe） 2 ：mechanical－mech－ a•nisotically $\backslash-$ ti－k（o－）lḕ $a d v$
mechoaonize \＇me－kə－sniz\ $\nu b$－nized；－nizoing $1:$ to make mechanical 2 ：to equip with machinery esp．in order to replace human or animal labor 3 ：to equip with armed and armored motor vehicles－mech－ a•niozation lıme－kə－nə－＇zā－shən\n－mechoaoniz－ er $n$
med $a b b r 1$ medical；medicine 2 medieval 3 medium MEd abbr master of education
medeal \＇med－${ }^{1} \backslash n[$ MF medaille，fr．OIt medaglia coin worth half a denarius，medal，fr．（assumed）VL med－ alis half，alter．of LL medialis middle，fr．L medius］ 1 ：a small usu．metal object bearing a religious em－ blem or picture 2 ：a piece of metal issued to com－ memorate a person or event or to award excellence or achievement
medoaloist or medealolist \／med－əl－ist $\backslash n 1$ ：a designer or maker of medals 2 ：a recipient of a medal as an award medalolion $\backslash m ə-{ }^{-1}$ dal－yən $\backslash \boldsymbol{n} 1:$ a large medal $2:$ a tab
let or panel bearing a portrait or an ornament
medodle \＇med－$\ \backslash v b$ medodled；med－dling ：to inter－ fere without right or propriety－meddeder \＇med－əl－ or $\backslash n$
med－dleosome \} { } ^ { \prime } med－əl－som\adj ：inclined to meddle meodia \＇mē－dē－a\ $n, p l$ medioas ：MEDIUM 4
meedieal \＇mē－dè－əl $\backslash$ adj ：occurring in or extending to－ ward the middle
1 merdivan \＇mē－dē－ən\n 1 ：a value in an ordered set of values below and above which there are an equal number of values 2 ：MEDIAN STRIP
${ }^{2}$ median adj 1 ：being in the middle or in an interme－ diate position 2 ：relating to or constituting a statis－ tical median
median strip $n$ ：a strip dividing a highway into lanes according to the direction of travel
merdioate \＇mē－dē－ıāt\} v b －ated；－atoing 1 : to act as an intermediary；esp ：to work with opposing sides in or－ der to resolve（as a dispute）or bring about（as a settlement） 2 ：to bring about，influence，or transmit （as a physical process or effect）by acting as an inter－ mediate or controlling agent or mechanism syn inter－ cede，intervene，interpose，interfere－mediaation \ımè－dē－̄ā－shən\n－mèdioàtor <br>mè－dê－ıâ－tər\n medric \＇me－dik\ $n$ ：one engaged in medical work；esp ：CORPSMAN
medricaable \＇me－di－kə－bal\ adj：CURABLE
medoicoaid \＇me－di－ıkād $\backslash n$ ，often $c a p$ ：a program of financial assistance for medical care designed for those unable to afford regular medical service and fi－ nanced jointly by the state and federal governments medirical \＇me－di－kol $\backslash$ adj：of or relating to the science or practice of medicine or the treatment of disease－ medoically $\backslash-\mathrm{k}(\nu-) \mid \overline{\mathrm{l}} \backslash$ adv
medical examiner $n$ ：a public officer who performs autopsies on bodies to find the cause of death
medirca•ment $\backslash m i-$＇di－kə－mənt，＇me－di－kə－\ $n$ ：a sub－ stance used in therapy
mediocare \＇me－di－ıker\ $n$ ，often cap ：a government
program of financial assistance for medical care esp． for the aged
medoiccate \＇me－də－skāt\ $v b$－catred；－catoing：to treat with medicine
medrication \ıme－də－＂kā－shon $\ n 1$ ：the act or pro－ cess of medicating 2 ：MEDICINE 1
medicoinal $\backslash m ə-{ }^{\text {Idis－}}{ }^{-} \mathrm{n}$－ol $\backslash$ adj ：tending or used to cure disease or relieve pain－medicionally adv medoiccine \} { } ^ { \prime } me－do－sən\ n \mathbf { 1 } ：a substance or prepara－ tion used in treating disease 2 ：a science and art deal－ ing with the prevention and cure of disease
medicine ball $n$ ：a heavy stuffed leather ball used for conditioning exercises
medicine man $n:$ a priestly healer or sorcerer esp． among the American Indians：SHAMAN
medoico \＇me－di－ıkō\n，pl－cos：a medical practitioner or student
medirevval or me－diraerval \ımē－dē－＂ē－val，me－，mē－ ＇dê－val $\backslash$ adj 1 ：of，relating to，or characteristic of the Middle Ages 2：extremely outmoded or antiquated －medirevaloism \－vo－ali－zam\n－medirevalist －list $\backslash n$
me－di－ocre \ımē－dē－＇ō－kər\adj［ME，fr．MF，fr．L me－ diocris，fr．medius middle + ocris stony mountain］ ：of moderate or low quality ：ORDINARY－merdi－ ocrrioty \－•ä－krə－tē $n$
medrotate \＇me－do－ıtāt $\backslash v b$－tatred；－tatoing 1 ：to muse over ：CONTEMPLATE，PONDER 2 ：INTEND，PLAN－ medootation \ıme－da－＇tā－shən\ $n$ medpotative \＇me－də－ıtä－tiv $\backslash$ adj－medoi。tåtivelly $a d v$
Medoioterora•nean \ıme－də－tə－＇rä－nē－ən，－${ }^{-1}$ rä－nyon $\backslash$ adj ：of or relating to the Mediterranean Sea or to the lands or people around it
${ }^{1}$ mendioum \＇mē－dē－om\n，pl mediums or me－dia $\backslash$－dē－al ［L］1：something in a middle position；also ：a middle position or degree 2 ：a means of effecting or convey－ ing something 3 ：a surrounding or enveloping sub－ stance 4 ：a channel or system of communication， information，or entertainment 5 ：a mode of artistic expression 6 ：an individual held to be a channel of communication between the earthly world and a world of spirits 7 ：a condition or environment in which something may function or flourish
medium adj ：intermediate in amount，quality，posi－ tion，or degree
me•diumoisotic lomè－dē－ə－＇mis－tik $\backslash$ adj ：of，relating to， or being a spiritualistic medium
meddey \＇med－lē\ $n, p l$ medleys 1 ：HODGEPODGE 2 ：a musical composition made up esp．of a series of songs
 inner or deep anatomical part；also ：the posterior
 vertebrate brain that is continuous with the spinal cord
meed \} \backslash mēd \backslash n ：a fitting return
meek \＇mēk adj 1 ：characterized by patience and longs suffering 2 ：deficient in spirit and courage 3：MOD－ ERATE－meekly adv－meekoness $n$
meeroschaum \＇mir－shəm，－I shom \n［G，fr．Meer sea + Schaum foam］：a tobacco pipe made of a light white clayey mineral
${ }^{1}$ meet \＇mēt $\backslash v$ met \＇met\；meetoing 1 ：to come upon ：FIND 2 ：JOIN，INTERSECT 3 ：to appear to the per－ ception of 4 ：OPPOSE，FIGHT 5 ：to join in conversa－ tion or discussion；also ：ASSEMBLE 6 ：to conform to 7 ：to pay fully 8 ：to cope with 9 ：to provide for 10 ：to be introduced to
${ }^{2}$ meet $n$ ：an assembling esp．for a hunt or for compet－ itive sports
${ }^{3}$ meet adj ：SUITABLE，PROPER
meetoing <br>mē－tig $\backslash n 1:$ an act of coming together ：AS－ SEMBLY 2 ：JUNCTION，INTERSECTION
meetoingohouse $\backslash$－thaús $\backslash n$ ：a building for public assem－
bly and esp．for Protestant worship
mega－or meg－comb form 1 ：great ：large（mesahit）

