

Merriam  
Webster's  
Collegiate  
Dictionary

TENTH EDITION



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

TENTH EDITION

Merriam-Webster, Incorporated  
Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

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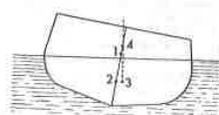
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Faint, illegible text from the reverse page of the dictionary, including a section header "Abbreviations" and a list of entries.

**Messrs.** \ˈme-sərz\ *pl* of MR (~ Jones, Brown, and Robinson)  
**mes-stuage** \ˈmes-wij\ *n* [ME, fr. AF, prob. alter. of OF *mesnage* — more at *MÉNAGE*] (14c): PREMISE 3b  
**messy** \ˈmes-i\ *adj* **mess-i-er**; **-est** (1843) 1: marked by confusion, disorder, or dirt; UNTIDY (a ~ room) 2: lacking neatness or precision: CARELESS, SLOVENLY (~ thinking) 3: extremely unpleasant or trying (~ lawsuits) — **mess-i-ly** \ˈme-sə-lē\ *adv* — **mess-i-ness** \ˈme-sə-nəs\ *n*  
**mes-ti-za** \ˈme-stē-zə\ *n* [Sp, fem. of *mestizo*] (ca. 1582): a woman who is a mestizo  
**mes-ti-zo** \-(ˌ)zō\ *n, pl -zos* [Sp, fr. *mestizo*, *adj.*, mixed, fr. LL *mix-ticius*, fr. L *mixtus*, pp. of *miscere* to mix — more at MIX] (1582): a person of mixed blood; *specif*: a person of mixed European and American Indian ancestry  
**mes-tra-nol** \ˈmes-trə-nōl, -nōl\ *n* [meth- + estrogen + pregnane (C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>30</sub>) + -ol] (1962): a synthetic estrogen C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>26</sub>O<sub>2</sub> used in oral contraceptives  
**met past and past part of MEET**  
**meta- or met-** prefix [NL & ML, fr. L or Gk; L, fr. Gk, among, with, after, fr. *meta* among, with, after; akin to OE *mid*, *mith* with, OHG *mit*] 1 a: occurring later than or in succession to: after (*metastasis*) b: situated behind or beyond (*metencephalon*) (*metaxylem*) c: later or more highly organized or specialized form of (*metaxylem*) 2: change; transformation 3 [*metaphysics*]: more comprehensive; transcending (*metapsychology*) — used with the name of a discipline to designate a new but related discipline designed to deal critically with the original one (*metamathematics*) 4 a: involving substitution at or characterized by two positions in the benzene ring that are separated by one carbon atom (*meta-xylene*) b: derived from by loss of water (*metaphosphoric acid*)  
**meta-bol-ic** \ˈme-tə-ˈbō-līk\ *adj* (1845): of, relating to, or based on metabolism — **met-a-bol-i-cal-ly** \-lī-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*  
**me-tab-o-lism** \ˈme-tə-bō-lī-zəm\ *n* [ISV, fr. Gk *metabolē* change, fr. *metaballein* to change, fr. *meta-* 4. *ballain* to throw — more at *DEVIL*] (1872) 1 a: the sum of the processes in the buildup and destruction of protoplasm; *specif*: the chemical changes in living cells by which energy is provided for vital processes and activities and new material is assimilated b: the sum of the processes by which a particular substance is handled in the living body c: the sum of the metabolic activities taking place in a particular environment (the ~ of a lake) 2: METAMORPHOSIS 2 — *usu.* used in combination (*holometabolism*)  
**me-tab-o-lite** \-līt\ *n* (1884) 1: a product of metabolism 2: a substance essential to the metabolism of a particular organism or to a particular metabolic process  
**me-tab-o-lize** \-līz\ *vb -lizes*; **-lize-ing** *vi* (1887): to subject to metabolism ~ *vi*; to perform metabolism — **me-tab-o-liz-able** \-bəl-ə-bəl\ *adj*  
**meta-car-pal** \ˈme-tə-ˈkār-pəl\ *adj* (1739): of, relating to, or being the metacarpal or a metacarpal  
**metacarpal** *n* (1854): a bone of the part of the hand or forefoot between the carpus and the phalanges that typically contains five more or less elongated bones when all the digits are present  
**meta-car-pus** \ˈme-tə-ˈkār-pəs\ *n* [NL] (1676): the part of the hand or forefoot that contains the metacarpals  
**meta-cent-er** \ˈme-tə-ˈsen-tər\ *n* [*meta-* 4. *centre*, fr. *meta-* 4. *centre* (center) (1794): the point of intersection of the vertical through the center of buoyancy of a floating body with the vertical through the new center of buoyancy when the body is displaced  
**meta-cent-ric** \ˈme-tə-ˈsen-trīk\ *adj* (1798) 1: of or relating to a metacenter 2: having the centromere medially situated so that the two chromosomal arms are of roughly equal length — **metacentric** *n*  
**meta-cer-car-i-a** \ˈme-tə-(ˌ)kər-ˈkār-ē-ə, -kər-\ *n* [NL] (1928): a tailless encysted late larva of a digenetic trematode that is used, the form which is infective for the definitive host — **meta-cer-car-i-al** \-ē-əl\ *adj*  
**meta-chro-mat-ic** \-krō-ˈma-tīk\ *adj* (1876) 1: staining or characterized by staining in a bacterium 2: having the capacity to stain different elements of a cell or tissue in different colors or shades (~ stains)  
**meta-eth-ics** \ˈme-tə-ˈthīks\ *n pl but usu sing in constr* (1949): the study of the meanings of ethical terms, the nature of ethical judgments, and the types of ethical arguments — **meta-eth-i-cal** \-thī-kəl\ *adj*  
**meta-fic-tion** \-fīk-shən\ *n* (1978): fiction which refers to or takes as its subject fictional writing and its conventions — **meta-fic-tion-al** \-shən-l, -shə-nəl\ *adj* — **meta-fic-tion-ist** \-sh(ə)-nīst\ *n*  
**meta-gal-axy** \ˈme-tə-ˈgəl-ək-sē\ *n* [ISV] (1930): the entire system of galaxies: UNIVERSE — **meta-gal-act-ic** \-gə-ˈlakt-īk\ *adj*  
**meta-gen-e-sis** \ˈje-nə-sēs\ *n* [NL] (ca. 1864): alternation of generations in animals; *esp*: regular alteration of a sexual and an asexual generation — **meta-ge-net-ic** \-jə-ˈne-tīk\ *adj*  
**met-al** \ˈme-tl\ *n, often attrib* [ME, fr. OF, fr. L *metallum* mine, metal, fr. Gk *metallon*] (14c) 1: any of various opaque, fusible, ductile, and typically lustrous substances that are good conductors of electricity and heat, form cations by loss of electrons, and yield basic oxides and hydroxides; *esp*: one that is a chemical element as distinguished from an alloy 2 a: METTLE 1a b: the material or substance out of which a person or thing is made 3: glass in its molten state 4 a: printing type metal b: matter set in metal type 5: ROAD METAL 6: HEAVY METAL  
**metal** *vi -aled or -alled; -al-ling or -al-ling* (1610): to cover or furnish with metal  
**meta-lan-guage** \ˈme-tə-ˈlɑŋ-ɡwɪj\ *n* (1936): a language used to talk about language  
**meta-ling-uis-tic** \ˈme-tə-līŋ-ɡwɪs-tīk\ *adj* (1944): of or relating to a metalanguage or to metalinguistics  
**meta-ling-uis-tics** \-tīks\ *n pl but sing in constr* (1949): a branch of linguistics that deals with the relation between language and other cultural factors in a society



metacenter: 1 center of gravity, 2 center of buoyancy, 3 new center of buoyancy when floating body is displaced, 4 point of intersection

**metall-** or **metallo-** comb form [NL, fr. L *metallum*]; metal (*metallo-* phone)  
**ˈme-tal-ic** \ˈme-tə-līk\ *adj* (15c) 1 a: of, relating to, or being a metal b: made of or containing a metal c: having properties of a metal and reflective properties (~ blond hair) b: having an acidic quality like that of metal (the tea has a ~ taste) 4 a: having an acidic quality (a ~ voice) b: having an impersonal or harsh chemical quality (a ~ smile) — **ˈme-tal-i-cal-ly** \-lī-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*  
**ˈmet-al-lie** (1952): a fiber or yarn made of or coated with metal; also: a fabric made with this  
**ˈmet-al-lif-er-ous** \ˈme-tl-ī-f(ə)-rəs\ *adj* [L *metallifer*, fr. *metallum* + *-fer-* ferrous] (ca. 1656): yielding or containing metal  
**ˈmet-al-lize** *also met-al-ize* \ˈme-tl-ī-zī\ *vi* **ˈmet-al-lized** *also met-al-ized*; **ˈmet-al-liz-ing** *also met-al-iz-ing* (1594): to coat, treat, or combine with a metal — **ˈme-tl-ī-z(ə)-grā-f(ə)n** \-grā-f(ə)-n\ *n* [ISV] (ca. 1864): a study of the structure of metals *esp.* with the microscope — **ˈmet-al-log-ra-phy** \ˈme-tl-ə-ˈgrā-f(ə)-shən\ *n* [ISV] (ca. 1864): a study of the structure of metals *esp.* with the microscope — **ˈmet-al-log-ra-pher** \-f(ə)-ˈgrā-f(ə)-shən-l\ *n* [ISV] (ca. 1864): a study of the structure of metals *esp.* with the microscope — **ˈmet-al-lo-graph-ic-ally** \-grā-f(ə)-ˈgrā-f(ə)-l(ə)-lē\ *adv*  
**ˈmet-al-lo-id** \ˈme-tl-ō-īd\ *n* (1832) 1: a nonmetal that can combine with a metal to form an alloy 2: an element intermediate in properties between the typical metals and nonmetals  
**ˈmet-al-lo-ide** *also met-al-loi-dal* \ˈme-tl-ō-ī-d(ə)-l\ *adj* (ca. 1850) 1: resembling a metal 2: of, relating to, or being a metalloid  
**ˈmet-al-lo-phon** \ˈme-tə-lə-ˈfōn\ *n* (ca. 1883): a percussion musical instrument consisting of a series of metal bars of varying pitch struck with hammers  
**ˈmet-al-lur-gy** \ˈme-tl-ər-jī\ *esp Brit* *mə-tə-lər-ə* \-l\ *n* [NL *metallurgia*, fr. *metall-* + *-urgia* -urgy] (ca. 1704): the science and technology of metal — **ˈmet-al-lur-gi-cal** \ˈme-tl-ər-jī-kəl\ *adj* — **ˈmet-al-lur-gi-cal-ly** \-k(ə)-lē\ *adv* — **ˈmet-al-lur-gist** \ˈme-tl-ər-jɪ-st\ *n* [NL] (ca. 1800): a metallurgist  
**ˈmet-al-mar-k** \ˈme-tl-ˈmɑrk\ *n* (ca. 1909): any of a family (Ri-c) of small or medium-sized usu. brightly colored chiefly tropical butterflies that often have metallic coloration on the wings  
**ˈmet-al-smith** \-smɪθ\ *n* (14c): a person skilled in metalworking  
**ˈmet-al-ware** \-wər, -wɛr\ *n* (14c): ware made of metal; *esp*: metal utensils for household use  
**ˈmet-al-work** \-wɜrk\ *n* (ca. 1850): the product of metalworking; *esp*: a metal object of artistic merit — **ˈmet-al-work-er** \-wɜrk-ər\ *n* [ISV] (ca. 1850): a person who works in metalworking  
**ˈmet-al-work-ing** \-wɜrk-ɪŋ\ *n* (1882): the act or process of shaping things out of metal  
**ˈmeta-math-e-mat-ics** \ˈme-tə-math-ˈma-tiks, -ma-thə-\ *n pl but usu sing in constr* (ca. 1890): a field of study concerned with the formal structure and properties (as the consistency and completeness of axioms) of mathematical systems — **ˈmeta-math-e-mat-i-cal** \-i-kəl\ *adj*  
**ˈmeta-mir** \ˈme-tə-ˈmɪr\ *n* [ISV] (1877): any of a linear series of primitively similar segments into which the body of a higher invertebrate or vertebrate is divisible — **ˈmeta-mer-ic** \ˈme-tə-ˈmer-ik, -ˈmɪr-ə\ *adj* — **ˈmeta-mer-i-cal-ly** \-i-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*  
**ˈmeta-mer-i-sm** \ˈme-tə-ˈmɛr-ɪ-zəm\ *n* (1877): the condition of having or the stage of evolutionary development characterized by a body made up of metameres  
**ˈmeta-mor-phic** \ˈme-tə-ˈmɔr-fīk\ *adj* (1816) 1: of or relating to metamorphosis 2 of a rock: of, relating to, or produced by metamorphism — **ˈmeta-mor-ph-i-cal-ly** \-i-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*  
**ˈmeta-mor-phism** \ˈmɔr-fɪ-zəm\ *n* (1882): a change in the constitution of rock; *specif*: a pronounced change effected by pressure, heat, and water that results in a more compact and more highly crystalline condition  
**ˈmeta-mor-phot-ic** \-fōz, -fōs\ *vb -phot-ed; -phot-ing* [Prob. fr. MF *metamorphoser*, fr. *metamorphose* metamorphosis, fr. L *metamorphosis*] (1774) 1 a: to change into a different physical form *esp.* by supernatural means b: to change strikingly the appearance or character of a master — *Shak.* 2: to cause (rock) to undergo metamorphism ~ *vi* 1: to undergo metamorphism 2: to become transformed *syn see* TRANSFORM  
**ˈmeta-mor-pho-sis** \ˈme-tə-ˈmɔr-fə-səs\ *n, pl -pho-ses* \-sēz\ [L, fr. Gk *metamorphosis*, fr. *metamorphoun* to transform, fr. *meta-* + *morphē* form] (1533) 1 a: change of physical form, structure, or substance *esp.* by supernatural means b: a striking alteration in appearance, character, or circumstances 2: a marked and more or less abrupt developmental change in the form or structure of an animal (as a butterfly or a frog) occurring subsequent to birth or hatching  
**ˈmeta-nal-ys-is** \ˈme-tə-ˈnāl-əs-əs\ *n* (1914): a reanalysis of the division between sounds or words resulting in different constituents (as in the development of an *apron* from a *napron*)  
**ˈmeta-neph-ros** \ˈme-trəns, -frās\ *n, pl -roi* \-rōi\ [NL, fr. *meta-* + Gk *nephros* kidney — more at NEPHRITIS] (1884): either member of the final and most caudal pair of the three successive pairs of vertebrate renal organs that functions as a permanent adult kidney in reptiles, birds, and mammals but is not present at all in lower forms — compare MESONEPHROS, PRONEPHROS — **ˈmeta-neph-ric** \-frīk\ *adj*  
**ˈmeta-phase** \ˈme-tə-ˈfāz\ *n* [ISV] (1887): the stage of mitosis and meiosis in which the chromosomes become arranged in the equatorial plane of the spindle  
**ˈmeta-phase plate** *n* (1939): a section in the equatorial plane of the metaphase spindle having the chromosomes oriented upon it  
**ˈmet-a-phor** \ˈme-tə-ˈfɔr\ *n* [MF or L; MF *metaphora*, fr. L *metaphora*, fr. Gk; fr. *metapherein* to transfer, fr. *meta-* + *pherein* to bear — more at BEAR] (1533) 1: a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy — compare SIMILE 2: an object, activity, or idea treated as a metaphor — compare SIMILE 2: an object, activity, or idea treated as a metaphor — compare SIMILE 2: an object, activity, or idea treated as a metaphor — **ˈmet-a-phor-i-cal-ly** \-i-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*  
**ˈmeta-phos-phate** \ˈme-tə-ˈfās-ˈfāt\ *n* [ISV] (1833): a salt or ester of a metaphosphoric acid  
**ˈmeta-phos-pho-ric acid** \-fās-ˈfōr-ik-, -fār-, -fās-(ə)-frīk-\ *n* (1833): a glassy solid acid HPO<sub>3</sub> or (HPO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>n</sub> formed by heating orthophosphoric acid  
**ˈmeta-phrase** \ˈme-tə-ˈfrāz\ *n* (1640): a literal translation

**meta-phys-ic** \ˈme-tə-ˈfɪz-ɪk\ *n* 1 a: METAPHYSICS 1 b: the system of principles of metaphysics 3b — *usu.* used in combination  
**ˈmeta-phys-i-cal** \-fɪz-ɪ-kəl\ *adj* 1: of or relating to metaphysics 2: not perceptible to the senses; abstract  
**ˈmeta-phys-ics** \-fɪz-ɪk-s\ *n* (1590) 1: the study of the nature of being and existence as distinguished from the study of the natural world 2: the study of the nature of being and existence as distinguished from the study of the natural world 3: the study of the nature of being and existence as distinguished from the study of the natural world  
**ˈmeta-phys-i-cian** \-fɪz-ɪ-kən\ *n* (1590) 1: a philosopher who studies the nature of being and existence as distinguished from the study of the natural world 2: a philosopher who studies the nature of being and existence as distinguished from the study of the natural world 3: a philosopher who studies the nature of being and existence as distinguished from the study of the natural world  
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