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Eleventh Edition



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bean \bēn/ *n* [ME *bene*, fr. OE *bēan*; akin to OHG *bōna* bean] (bef. 12c) 1 a : BROAD BEAN b : the seed of any of various erect or climbing plants (as of the genera *Phaseolus* and *Vigna*) of the legume family other than the broad bean c : a plant bearing beans d : an immature bean pod used as a vegetable 2 a : a valueless item b *pl* : the least amount <didn't know ~s about it> 3 : any of various seeds or fruits that resemble beans or bean pods (coffee ~s); *also* : a plant producing these 4 a *pl* : EXUBERANCE — used in the phrase *full of beans* b *pl* : NONSENSE, BUNKUM — used in the phrase *full of beans* 5 : HEAD, BRAIN 6 : a protuberance on the upper mandible of waterfowl — see **DUCK** illustration

bean vt (1910) : to strike (a person) on the head with an object

bean-bag \bēn-bag/ *n* (1871) 1 : a cloth bag partially filled typically with dried beans and used as a toy 2 : any of various pellet-filled bags used as furniture (as a chair) or household articles (as an ashtray base)

bean-ball \-bɔl/ *n* (ca. 1905) : a pitch thrown at a batter's head

bean counter *n* (1975) : a person involved in corporate or government financial decisions and esp. one reluctant to spend money

bean curd *n* (ca. 1885) : TOFU

bean-ery \bēn-rē, bē-nə-/ *n, pl -er-ies* (1887) : RESTAURANT

bean-ie \bē-nē/ *n* [prob. fr. *bēan* (head) + *-ie*] (1904) : a small round tight-fitting skullcap

beano \bē-(j)nō/ *n, pl beanos* [alter. of *beanfeast* festive occasion] (1891) *Brit* : a noisy festive celebration

beano n, pl beanos [by alter.] (1935) : BINGO

bean-pole \bēn-pōl/ *n* (1798) 1 : a pole up which bean vines may climb 2 : a tall thin person

bean sprouts n pl (1921) : the sprouts of bean seeds esp. of the mung bean used as a vegetable

bean thread n (1977) : CELLOPHANE NOODLE

bear \ber/ *n, pl bears* *often attrib* [ME *bere*, fr. OE *bera*; akin to OE *brūn* brown — more at **BROWN**] (bef. 12c) 1 or *pl bear* : any of a fam-

ily to string together like beads ~ vt : to form into a bead ~ **bead-er** *n* (1845) 1 : a beaded molding 2 : material or a part or a piece consisting of a bead 3 : an openwork trimming 4 : BEADWORK

bead-er \bē-dər/ *n* [ME *bedel* messenger, fr. OE *bydel*; akin to OHG *butil* bailiff, OE *beodan* to command — more at BID] (1581) : a minor parish official whose duties include ushering and preserving order at services and sometimes civil functions

bead-roll \bēd-rol/ *n* [fr. the reading in church of a list of names of persons for whom prayers are to be said] (1529) 1 : a list of names : CATALOG 2 : ROSARY

beads-man \bēdz-mən/ *n* (13c) *archaic* : one who prays for another

bead-work \bēd-wɜrk/ *n* (1751) 1 : ornamental work in beads 2 : joinery beading

beady \bē-dē/ *adj* **bead-ier**; **-est** (1826) 1 a : resembling beads b : small, round, and shiny with interest or greed (~ eyes) 2 : marked by bubbles or beads (a ~ liquor) — **bead-ily** \bē-dē-lē/ *adv*

bea-gle \bē-gəl/ *n* [ME *begle*] (15c) : any of a breed of small short-legged smooth-coated often black, white, and tan hounds

beak \bēk/ *n* [ME *bec*, fr. AF, fr. L *beccus*, of Gaulish origin] (13c) 1 a : the bill of a bird; *esp.* : a strong short broad bill b (1) : the elongated sucking mouth of some insects (as the true bugs) (2) : any of various rigid projecting mouth structures (as of a turtle) c : the human nose 2 : a pointed structure or formation: a : a metal-pointed beam projecting from the bow esp. of an ancient galley for piercing an enemy ship b : the spout of a vessel c : a continuous slight architectural projection ending in an arris — see **MOLDING** illustration d : a process suggesting the beak of a bird 3 *chiefly Brit* a : MAGISTRATE b : HEADMASTER — **beaked** \bēkt/ *adj* — **beaky** \bē-kē/ *adj*

beaked whale *n* (1755) : any of a widely distributed family (Ziphiidae) of medium-sized toothed whales that have an elongated snout and a small dorsal fin

bea-ker \bē-kər/ *n* [ME *biker*, fr. ON *bikarr*, prob. fr. OS *bikeri*, fr. ML *bicarium*] (14c) 1 : a large drinking cup that has a wide mouth and is sometimes supported on a standard 2 : a deep widemouthed thin-walled vessel usu. with a lip for pouring that is used esp. in science laboratories

be-all and end-all \bē-ɔl-ən(d)-end-ɔl/ *n* (1605) 1 : prime cause : essential element 2 : TOTALITY 1

beam \bēm/ *n* [ME *beem*, fr. OE *bēam* tree, beam; akin to OHG *boum* tree] (bef. 12c) 1 a : a long piece of heavy often squared timber suitable for use in construction b : a wood or metal cylinder in a loom on which the warp is wound c : the part of a plow to which handles, standard, and coulter are attached d : the bar of a balance from which scales hang e : one of the principal horizontal supporting members (as of a building or ship) a steel ~ supporting a floor; *also* : BOOM, SPAR (the ~ of a crane) f : the extreme width of a ship at the widest part g : an oscillating lever on a central axis receiving motion at one end from an engine connecting rod and transmitting it at the other 2 a : a ray or shaft of light b : a collection of nearly parallel rays (as X rays) or a stream of particles (as electrons) c : a constant directional radio signal transmitted for the guidance of pilots; *also* : the course indicated by a radio beam 3 : the main stem of a deer's antler 4 : the width of the buttocks — **on the beam** 1 : following a guiding beam 2 : proceeding or operating correctly

beam vt (15c) 1 : to emit in beams or as a beam 2 : to support with beams 3 a : to transmit esp. by satellite : BROADCAST b : to transmit (data) electronically c : to direct to a particular audience ~ vi 1 : to send out beams of light 2 : to smile with joy

beam-ends \bēm-ɛnd(d)z/ *n pl* (1750) : the ends of a ship's beams — **on her beam-ends** : inclined so much on one side that the beams approach a vertical position

beam-ish \bē-mish/ *adj* (1870) : beaming and bright with optimism, promise, or achievement (a ~ boy) — **beam-ish-ly** *adv*

beam sea *n* (1861) : a sea whose surface motion is approximately at a right angle to the course of a vessel

beam splitter *n* (1935) : a mirror or prism or a combination of the two that is used to divide a beam of radiation into two or more parts

beamy \bē-mē/ *adj* (14c) 1 :