

# Webster's New Explorer LARGE PRINT Dictionary

**THIRD EDITION**

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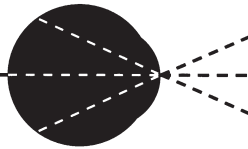
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# Contents

Preface	vii
New Words and the Dictionary	ix
A Selection of New Words	xiii
Using this Dictionary	xxiii
Pronunciation Symbols	xxviii
<b>Dictionary</b>	<b>1</b>
Abbreviations	747

# New Words and the Dictionary

Most people don't think too often about their dictionary. They probably assume that it has all the words they will ever need, and trust it to serve as a kind of policeman of language, pointing to correct spelling and settling arguments about meaning. A dictionary, according to this idea, should keep the citizens of a language (that is, the words themselves) in order and protect them from sabotage and outsiders (that is, make sure that words don't shift in spelling or meaning and keep out unwanted new or foreign words).

But there's a big problem with this model. While we know that languages follow rules, they don't follow orders. Language changes constantly, sometimes in ways that delight us and sometimes in ways that dismay us. Especially today, with ever-faster means of communication changing the way we learn and work, language change is a fact of life. English absolutely needs a word like *blog*, for example; and if that word seems trendy, consider this: the word *hello* only entered the language around 1877.

So how does a dictionary keep up with change? By being in a near-constant state of change itself.

The question most frequently asked of a lexicographer—a person who writes dictionaries—is this one: How does a word get into the dictionary? The answer begins with the simple act of reading. We read to find evidence of words as they are really used, and this becomes the data and the raw material of our research. We read to find words that are new to English (like *ciabatta* and *crowdsourcing*) as well as new meanings of words that are already part of the language (like *spam* or *slider*). Dictionary editors read a little bit at the office every day from publications such as newspapers and from magazines about parenting, sailing, or wine. We read novels, textbooks, law reviews, and math journals. We even read restaurant menus and soup-can labels. Online sources are naturally examined as well. We look for a clear example of a word used in a particular way, along with all necessary context—anything from the surround-

ing words to several sentences to whole paragraphs of text—and all this is added to our ever-growing language database. Each individual word that we make note of, along with its context and its source, is called a citation. Citations may then be printed out on index cards, so that they can later be studied either electronically or on paper.

There are other ways of finding new words, of course. Sometimes an ordinary dictionary user will write to alert us to a new word. More often, analysis of vocabulary using electronic means can turn up words that are new to the language, perhaps by searching the various online databases now available for language research. You might think of this process as taking a census of the English language.

Once a citation for a given word is created, that word has taken its first step toward becoming an entry in the dictionary. It is by no means certain that it will become an entry, however. We need to see many citations from many publications showing the same word used the same way over a few years in order to indicate that the word is a permanent addition to English. We don't want to add a trendy word that will quickly drop from use, and we aren't interested in a pet word used by just one writer or found repeatedly in only one publication. Not that there's anything wrong with odd new words or this year's college slang—they just don't belong in the dictionary until they achieve a more enduring and general acceptance. The next step, therefore, is the collection of more citations, in order to measure the word's currency (evidence that it is used in current published writing) as well as its frequency (how often it is used).

When it's time to look at the newly collected citations for a revision of one of our dictionaries, the accumulated evidence of each word is assembled and an editor goes about the task of deciding whether the word has shown up often enough to deserve a new entry or, if the word is already in the dictionary, whether it has acquired a new meaning.

The definer begins work with a basic question: Is this word used by many people in many places? If the answer is "yes," then a second question presents itself: How is the word used?

# A Selection of New Words

## Modern Culture

**abaya** \ə-<sup>1</sup>bī-ə\ *n* : a loose-fitting full-length robe worn by some Muslim women

**BFF** *abbr* best friends forever

**boomerang child** *n* : a young adult who returns to live at his or her family home esp. for financial reasons

**bromance** \<sup>1</sup>brō-,<sub>1</sub>man(t)s\ *n* : a close nonsexual friendship between men — **bromantic** \brō-<sup>1</sup>man-tik\ *adj*

**haram** \hä-<sup>1</sup>räm\ *adj* : forbidden by Islamic law

**hijab** \hē-<sup>1</sup>jäb, -<sup>1</sup>jab\ *n* : the traditional covering for the hair and neck that is worn by Muslim women

**honor killing** *n* : the traditional practice in some countries of killing a family member who is believed to have brought shame on the family

**LGBT** *abbr* lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender

**man cave** *n* : a room or space (as in a basement) designed according to the taste of the man of the house to be used as

his personal area for hobbies and leisure activities

**speed dating** *n* : an event at which each participant converses individually with all the prospective partners for a few minutes in order to select those with whom dates are desired

## Eating and Drinking

**acai** *also açai* \,ä-,sä-<sup>1</sup>ē, -sī-<sup>1</sup>ē\ *n* : a small dark purple fleshy berrylike fruit of a tall slender palm of tropical Central and South America that is often used in beverages

**agnolotti** \,än-yə-<sup>1</sup>lä-tē, -<sup>1</sup>lō-\ *n, pl agnolotti* : pasta in the form of semicircular cases containing a filling (as of meat, cheese, or vegetables)

**ciabatta** \chə-<sup>1</sup>bä-tə\ *n* : a flat oblong bread having a moist interior and a crispy crust

**edamame** \,e-də-<sup>1</sup>mä-mä\ *n* : immature green soybeans usu. in the pod

**flexitarian** \,flek-sə-<sup>1</sup>ter-ē-ən\ *n* : one whose normally meat-

- less diet occasionally includes meat or fish — **flexitarian** *adj*
- goji** \ˈgō-ˈljē\ *n* : the dark red mildly tart berry of a thorny chiefly Asian shrub that is typically dried and used in beverages
- kettle chip** *n* : a type of potato chip made so as to be thicker and crunchier than the typical potato chip
- locavore** \ˈlō-kə-ˌvɔr\ *n* : one who eats foods grown locally whenever possible
- mojito** \mō-ˈhē-tō\ *n, pl -tos* : a cocktail made of rum, sugar, mint, lime juice, and soda water
- panino** \pə-ˈnē-nō\ *n, pl panini* \pə-ˈnē-nē\ : a usu. grilled sandwich made with Italian bread
- pescatarian** *or pescetarian* \ˌpe-skə-ˈter-ē-ən\ *n* : one whose diet includes fish but no other meat
- rugelach** *also rugalach* \ˈrū-gə-lək\ *n, pl -lach* : a pastry made with cream-cheese dough that is rolled around a filling (as nuts, jam, or chocolate) and baked
- slid·er** \ˈslī-dər\ *n* : a very small meat sandwich (as a hamburger) typically served on a bun
- stevia** \ˈstē-vē-ə, -vyə\ *n* : a white powder derived from the leaves of a tropical stevia plant and used as noncaloric sweetener
- udon** \ˈü-ˌdän\ *or udon noodle* *n* : a thick Japanese noodle made from wheat flour and usu. served in a soup
- white tea** *n* : tea that is light in color and made from buds and immature leaves that undergo little to no oxidation before drying
- za** *or 'za* \ˈzä\ *n, slang* : pizza
- Ecology**
- biowaste** \ˈbī-ō-ˌwāst\ *n* : waste (as manure, sawdust, or food scraps) that is composed chiefly of organic matter
- carbon footprint** *n* : the amount of greenhouse gases and specif. carbon dioxide emitted by something (as a person's activities or a product's manufacture and transport) during a given period
- eco-friendly** \ˌē-kō-ˈfren(d)-lē, ˌe-kō-\ *adj* : not environmentally harmful

# A

- <sup>1</sup>a** \ 'ā\ *n*, *pl a's or as* \ 'āz\ : 1st letter of the alphabet
- <sup>2</sup>a** \ ə, 'ā\ *indefinite article* : one or some — used to indicate an unspecified or unidentified individual
- aard·vark** \ 'ärd, värk\ *n* : ant-eating African mammal
- aback** \ ə'bak\ *adv* : by surprise
- aba·cus** \ 'abəkəs\ *n*, *pl aba·ci* \ 'abə, sī, -kē\ *or aba·cus·es* : calculating instrument using rows of beads
- abaft** \ ə'baft\ *adv* : toward or at the stern
- ab·a·lo·ne** \ ,abə'lōnē\ *n* : large edible shellfish
- <sup>1</sup>aban·don** \ ə'bandən\ *vb* : give up without intent to reclaim — **aban·don·ment** *n*
- <sup>2</sup>abandon** *n* : thorough yielding to impulses
- aban·doned** \ ə'bandənd\ *adj* : morally unrestrained
- abase** \ ə'bās\ *vb* **abased**; **abas·ing** : lower in dignity — **abase·ment** *n*
- abash** \ ə'bash\ *vb* : embarrass — **abashment** *n*
- abate** \ ə'bāt\ *vb* **abat·ed**; **abat·ing** : decrease or lessen
- abate·ment** \ ə'bātmənt\ *n* : tax reduction
- ab·at·toir** \ 'abə, twär\ *n* : slaughterhouse
- ab·bess** \ 'abəs\ *n* : head of a convent
- ab·bey** \ 'abē\ *n*, *pl -beys* : monastery or convent
- ab·bot** \ 'abət\ *n* : head of a monastery
- ab·bre·vi·ate** \ ə'brēvē, āt\ *vb* **-at·ed**; **-at·ing** : shorten — **ab·bre·vi·a·tion** \ ə, brēvē'āshən\ *n*
- ab·di·cate** \ 'abdi, kāt\ *vb* **-cat·ed**; **-cat·ing** : renounce — **ab·di·ca·tion** \ ,abdi'kāshən\ *n*
- ab·do·men** \ 'abdəmən, ab'dōmən\ *n* **1** : body area between chest and pelvis **2** : hindmost part of an insect — **ab·dom·i·nal** \ ab'dämən<sup>ə</sup>\ *adj* — **ab·dom·i·nal·ly** *adv*
- ab·duct** \ ab'dəkt\ *vb* : kidnap — **ab·duc·tion** \ -'dəkshən\ *n* — **ab·duc·tor** \ -tər\ *n*
- abed** \ ə'bed\ *adv or adj* : in bed
- ab·er·ra·tion** \ ,abə'rāshən\ *n* : deviation or distortion — **ab·er·rant** \ ə'berənt\ *adj*
- abet** \ ə'bet\ *vb* **-tt-** : incite or encourage — **abet·tor**, **abet·ter** \ -ər\ *n*