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About the type

This dictionary is typeset in CollinsFedra, a special version of the Fedra family of types designed by Peter Bil'ak. CollinsFedra has been customized especially for Collins dictionaries; it includes both sans serif (for headwords) and serif (entries) versions, in several different weights. Its large x-height, its open 'eye', and its basis in the tradition of humanist letterforms make CollinsFedra both familiar and easy to read at small sizes. It has been designed to use the minimum space without sacrificing legibility, as well as including a number of characters and signs that are specific to dictionary typography. Its companion phonetic type is the first of its kind to be drawn according to the same principles as the regular typeface, rather than assembled from rotated and reflected characters from other types. Peter Bil'ak (born 1973, Slovakia) is a graphic and type designer living in the Netherlands. He is the author of two books, *Illegibility* and *Transparency*. As well as the Fedra family, he has designed several other typefaces including *Eureka*. His typotheque.com website has become a focal point for research and debate around contemporary type design.

masker or **masquer** (ˈmɑːskə) *n* a person who wears a mask or takes part in a masque
masking (ˈmɑːskɪŋ) *n* 1 the act or practice of masking 2 *psychol* the process by which a stimulus (usually visual or auditory) is obscured by the presence of another almost simultaneous stimulus
masking tape *n* an adhesive tape used to mask and protect surfaces surrounding an area to be painted
masochism (ˈmæʃəˌkɪzəm) *n* 1 *psychiatry* an abnormal condition in which pleasure, esp sexual pleasure, is derived from pain or from humiliation, domination, etc., by another person 2 *psychoanal* the directing towards oneself of any destructive tendencies 3 a tendency to take pleasure from one's own suffering. Compare sadism > masochist *n*, *adj* > masochistic *adj* > masochistically *adv*
ETymology c19: named after Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1836–95), Austrian novelist, who described it
mason (ˈmeɪsən) *n* 1 a person skilled in building with stone 2 a person who dresses stone > *vb* 3 (*tr*) to construct or strengthen with masonry
ETymology c13: from Old French *masson*, of Frankish origin; perhaps related to Old English *macian* to make
Mason (ˈmeɪsən) *n* short for Freemason
mason bee *n* any bee of the family Megachilidae that builds a hard domelike nest of sand, clay, etc., held together with saliva
Mason-Dixon Line or **Mason and Dixon Line** (ˈmeɪsən ˈdɪkən) *n* the state boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania: surveyed between 1763 and 1767 by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon; popularly regarded as the dividing line between North and South, esp between the free and the slave states before the American Civil War
masonic (ˈmæʃənɪk) *adj* 1 (often *capital*) of, characteristic of, or relating to Freemasons or Freemasonry 2 of or relating to masons or masonry > masonically *adv*
Masonite (ˈmeɪsənaɪt) *n* *Austral* and *NZ* trademark a kind of dark brown hardboard used for partitions, lining, etc.
mason jar *n* *US* an airtight glass jar for preserving food
ETymology c20: named after its US inventor, John L. Mason (1832–1902)
masonry (ˈmeɪsənri) *n*, *pl* -ries 1 the craft of a mason work that is built by a mason; stonework or brickwork 3 (often *capital*) short for Freemasonry
mason wasp *n* a solitary wasp of the genus *Odynerus* that excavates its nest in sand or the mortar of old walls
Masora, **Masorah**, **Massora**, or **Mossorah** (ˈmɑːsɔːrə) *n* 1 the text of the Hebrew Bible as officially revised by the Masoretes from the 6th to the 10th centuries AD, with critical notes and commentary 2 the collection of these notes, commentaries, etc.
ETymology c17: from Hebrew: tradition
Masorete, **Massorete** (ˈmæʃəˈreɪt), or **Masorite** (ˈmæʃəˈraɪt) *n* 1 a member of the school of rabbis that produced the Masora 2 a Hebrew scholar who is expert in the Masora
ETymology c16: from Hebrew *masoreth* MASORA
Masoretic, **Massoretic** (ˈmæʃəˈretɪk), or **Masoretical**, **Massoretical** *adj* of or relating to the Masora, the Masoretes, or the system of textual criticism and explanation evolved by them
Masqat (ˈmɑːskət, -kæt) *n* a transliteration of the Arabic name for Muscat
masque or **mask** (ˈmɑːsk) *n* 1 a dramatic entertainment of the 16th to 17th centuries in England, consisting of pantomime, dancing, dialogue, and song, often performed at court 2 the words and music written for a masque 3 short for masquerade
ETymology c16: variant of MASK
masquer (ˈmɑːskə) *n* a variant spelling of masker
masquerade (ˈmæskəˈreɪd) *n* 1 a party or other gathering to which the guests wear masks and costumes 2 the disguise worn at such a function 3 a pretence or disguise > *vb* (*intr*) 4 to participate in a

masquerade; disguise oneself 5 to dissemble > masquerader *n*
ETymology c16: from Spanish *mascarada*, from *mascara* MASK
mass (mæs) *n* 1 a large coherent body of matter without a definite shape 2 a collection of the component parts of something 3 a large amount or number, such as a great body of people 4 the main part or majority: the mass of the people voted against the government's policy 5 in the mass in the main; collectively 6 the size of a body; bulk 7 *physics* a physical quantity expressing the amount of matter in a body. It is a measure of a body's resistance to changes in velocity (inertial mass) and also of the force experienced in a gravitational field (gravitational mass): according to the theory of relativity, inertial and gravitational masses are equal. See also inertial mass, gravitational mass 8 (in painting, drawing, etc.) an area of unified colour, shade, or intensity, usually denoting a solid form or plane 9 *pharmacol* a pastellike composition of drugs from which pills are made 10 *mining* an irregular deposit of ore not occurring in veins > modifier 11 done or occurring on a large scale: mass hysteria; mass radiography 12 consisting of a mass or large number, esp of people: a mass meeting > *vb* 13 (*tr*) to form (people or things) or (of people or things) to join together into a mass: the crowd massed outside the embassy > See also masses, mass in > massed *adj* > massedly (ˈmæsdli, ˈmæstli) *adv*
ETymology c14: from Old French *masse*, from Latin *massa* that which forms a lump, from Greek *maza* barley cake; perhaps related to Greek *massein* to knead
Mass (mæs, maɪs) *n* 1 (in the Roman Catholic Church and certain Protestant Churches) the celebration of the Eucharist. See also High Mass, Low Mass 2 a musical setting of those parts of the Eucharistic service sung by choir or congregation
ETymology Old English *mæsse*, from Church Latin *missa*, ultimately from Latin *mittere* to send away; perhaps derived from the concluding dismissal in the Roman Mass, *Ite, missa est*, Go, it is the dismissal
Mass, abbreviation Massachusetts
Massa (Italian ˈmassa) *n* a town in W Italy, in NW Tuscany. Pop: 66769 (2001)
Massachusetts (ˈmæʃəˈtʃʊtsɪt) or **Massachusetts** *n* 1 (*pl* -sets, -set or -setts) a member of a North American Indian people formerly living around Massachusetts Bay 2 the language of this people, belonging to the Algonquian family
ETymology probably from Algonquian, literally: at the big hill
Massachusetts (ˈmæʃəˈtʃʊtsɪts) *n* a state of the northeastern US, on the Atlantic: a centre of resistance to English colonial policy during the War of American Independence; consists of a coastal plain rising to mountains in the west. Capital: Boston. Pop: 6433422 (2003 est). Area: 20269 sq km (7826 sq miles). Abbreviations: Mass. (with zip code) MA
Massachusetts Bay *n* an inlet of the Atlantic on the E coast of Massachusetts
massacre (ˈmæʃəkə) *n* 1 the wanton or savage killing of large numbers of people, as in battle 2 *informal* an overwhelming defeat, as in a game > *vb* (*tr*) 3 to kill indiscriminately or in large numbers 4 *informal* to defeat overwhelmingly > massacrer (ˈmæʃəkə) *n*
ETymology c16: from Old French, of unknown origin
Massacre of the Innocents *n* the slaughter of all the young male children of Bethlehem at Herod's command in an attempt to destroy Jesus (Matthew 2:16–18)
mass affluent *pl* *n* the large number of individuals with liquid assets of around £250,000
massage (ˈmæʃəʒ, -sɑːʒ) *n* 1 the act of kneading, rubbing, etc., parts of the body to promote circulation, suppleness, or relaxation > *vb* (*tr*) 2 to give a massage to 3 to treat (stiffness, aches, etc.) by a massage 4 to manipulate (statistics, data, etc.) so that they appear to support a particular interpretation or to be better than they are; doctor

5 *massage* someone's ego to boost someone's sense of self-esteem by flattery > massager or massagist *n*
ETymology c19: from French, from *masser* to rub; see MASS
massage parlour *n* 1 a business providing massage services 2 *euphemistic* a brothel
massasauga (ˈmæʃəˈsɔːɡə) *n* a North American venomous snake, *Sistrurus catenatus*, that has a horny rattle at the end of the tail: family Crotalidae (pit vipers)
ETymology c19: named after the Mississauga River, Ontario, Canada, where it was first found
Massawa or **Massaua** (ˈmæʃəˈwɑː) *n* a port in E central Eritrea, on the Red Sea: capital of Eritrea during Italian occupation, from 1885 until 1900. Pop: 36700 (2004 est)
mass defect *n* *physics* the amount by which the mass of a particular nucleus is less than the total mass of its constituent particles. See also binding energy
massé or **massé shot** (ˈmæsi) *n* *billiards* a stroke made by hitting the cue ball off centre with the cue held nearly vertically, esp so as to make the ball move in a curve around another ball before hitting the object ball
ETymology c19: from French, from *masser* to hit from above with a hammer, from *masse*
sledgehammer, from Old French *masse* MACE
massed practice *n* *psychol* learning with no intervals or short intervals between successive bouts of learning. Compare distributed practice
mass-energy *n* mass and energy considered as equivalent and interconvertible, according to the theory of relativity
masses (ˈmæsiʒ) *pl* *n* 1 the masses the body of common people 2 (often foll by *of*) *informal* chiefly Brit great numbers or quantities: masses of food
masseter (ˈmæˈsiːtə) *n* *anatomy* a muscle of the cheek used in moving the jaw, esp in chewing > masseteric (ˈmæsiːtərɪk) *adj*
ETymology c17: from New Latin from Greek *masēter* one who chews, from *masāinai* to chew
masseur (ˈmæˈsiː) *n* a man who gives massages, esp as a profession
ETymology c19: from French *masser* to MASSAGE
masseuse (ˈmæˈsiːz) *n* a woman who gives massages, esp as a profession
Massey (ˈmæsi) *n* 1 Vincent, 1887–1967, Canadian statesman: first Canadian-born governor general of Canada (1952–59) 2 William Ferguson, 1856–1925, New Zealand statesman, born in Ireland: prime minister of New Zealand (1912–25)
massicot (ˈmæsiːkɒt) *n* a yellow earthy secondary mineral consisting of lead oxide. Formula: PbO
ETymology c15: via French from Italian *marzacotto* ointment, perhaps from Arabic *shabb qubli* Egyptian alum
massif (ˈmæsiːf, French *masif*) *n* 1 a geologically distinct mass of rock or a series of connected masses forming the peaks of a mountain range 2 a topographically high part of the earth's crust that is bounded by faults and may be shifted by tectonic movements
ETymology c19: from French, noun use of *massif*
MASSIVE
Massif Central (French *masif sɛ̃tral*) *n* a mountainous plateau region of S central France, occupying about one sixth of the country: contains several extinct volcanic cones, notably Puy de Dôme, 1465 m (4806 ft). Highest point: Puy de Sancy, 1886 m (6188 ft). Area: about 85000 sq km (33000 sq miles)
massification (ˈmæsiːfɪˈkeɪʃən) *n* the practice of making luxury products available to the mass market
mass in *vb* (*adverb*) to fill or block in (the areas of unified colour, shade, etc.) in a painting or drawing
massive (ˈmæsiʒ) *adj* 1 (of objects) large in mass; bulky, heavy, and usually solid 2 impressive or imposing in quality, degree, or scope: massive grief 3 relatively intensive or large; considerable: a massive dose 4 *pathol* affecting a large area of the body: a massive cancer 5 *geology* a (of igneous rocks) having no stratification, cleavage, etc; homogeneous *b* (of

sedimentary rocks) arranged in thick poorly defined strata **6** *mineralogy* without obvious crystalline structure **7** *slang* a group of friends or associates; gang; the Staines massive **8** *adv* **>** 'massively *adv* **>** 'massiveness *n*

● **ETymology** C15: from French *massif*, from *masse* **MASS**
mass leave *n* (in India) leave taken by a large number of employees at the same time, as a form of protest

mass-market *adj* *of, for, or appealing to a large number of people; popular: mass-market paperbacks*

mass media *pl n* the means of communication that reach large numbers of people in a short time, such as television, newspapers, magazines, and radio

mass noun *n* a noun that refers to an extended substance rather than to each of a set of isolable objects, as, for example, water as opposed to *lake*. In English when used indefinitely they are characteristically preceded by *some* rather than *a* or *an*; they do not have normal plural forms. Compare *count noun*

mass number *n* the total number of neutrons and protons in the nucleus of a particular atom. Symbol: **A**. Also called: nucleon number

mass observation *n chiefly Brit (sometimes capitals)* the study of the social habits of people through observation, interviews, etc

Massorete ('mæsə,ri:t) *n* a variant spelling of **Masorete**

massorete ('mæsə,ri:t) *n* a variant spelling of **Masorete**

massotherapy (mæsəʊ'terəpi) *n* medical treatment by massage **>** *massotherapeutic* (mæsəʊ'terəpiju:tik) *adj* **>** *massotherapist* *n*

● **ETymology** C20: from **MASS**(AGE) + **THERAPY**

mass-produce *vb* (tr) to manufacture (goods) to a standardized pattern on a large scale by means of extensive mechanization and division of labour **>** *mass-produced* *adj* **>** *mass-producer* *n* **>** *mass production* *n*

mass ratio *n* the ratio of the mass of a fully-fuelled rocket at liftoff to the mass of the rocket without fuel

mass spectrograph *n* a mass spectrometer that produces a photographic record of the mass spectrum

mass spectrometer or **mass spectroscopy** *n* an analytical instrument in which ions, produced from a sample, are separated by electric or magnetic fields according to their ratios of charge to mass. A record is produced (mass spectrum) of the types of ion present and their relative amounts

masstige (mæ'sti:ʒ) *n* 1 the impression of exclusivity in goods that are affordable for many people **>** *adj* 2 (of goods) produced by a luxury brand but intended for the mass market

● **ETymology** C21: from **MASS**(MARKET) + (PRES)TIGE
massy ('mæsi) *adj* massier, massiest *a* literary word for massive **>** 'massiness *n*

mast¹ ('mæst) *n* 1 *nautical* any vertical spar for supporting sails, rigging, flags, etc, above the deck of a vessel or any components of such a composite spar 2 *any sturdy upright pole used as a support* 3 Also called: captain's mast *nautical* a hearing conducted by the captain of a vessel into minor offences of the crew 4 *before the mast* *nautical* as an apprentice seaman **>** *vb* 5 (tr) *nautical* to equip with a mast or masts **>** 'mastless *adj* **>** 'mastlike *adj*

● **ETymology** Old English *mæst*; related to Middle Dutch *mast* and Latin *mālus* pole

mast² ('mæst) *n* the fruit of forest trees, such as beech, oak, etc, used as food for pigs

● **ETymology** Old English *mæst*; related to Old High German *mast* food, and perhaps to **MEAT**

mast- *combining form* a variant of **masto-**
mastaba or **mastabah** ('mæstəbə) *n* a mudbrick superstructure above tombs in ancient Egypt from which the pyramid developed

● **ETymology** from Arabic: bench

mast cell *n* a type of granular basophil cell in connective tissue that releases heparin, histamine, and serotonin during inflammation and allergic reactions

● **ETymology** C19: from **MAST**¹, on the model of German *Mastzelle*

mastectomy (mæ'stektəmi) *n, pl -mies* the surgical removal of a breast

-masted *adj* (in combination) *nautical* having a mast or masts of a specified kind or number: *three-masted; tall-masted*

master ('mɑ:stə) *n* 1 the man in authority, such as the head of a household, the employer of servants, or the owner of slaves or animals. Related adjective: **magistral** 2 *a person with exceptional skill at a certain thing: a master of the violin* **b** (as modifier): *a master thief* 3 (often capital) a great artist, esp an anonymous but influential artist 4 *a person who has complete control of a situation* **b** an abstract thing regarded as having power or influence: *they regarded fate as the master of their lives* 5 *a workman or craftsman fully qualified to practise his trade and to train others in it* **b** (as modifier): *master carpenter* 6 *a an original copy, stencil, tape, etc, from which duplicates are made* **b** (as modifier): *master copy* 7 *a player of a game, esp chess or bridge, who has won a specified number of tournament games* 8 the principal of some colleges 9 a highly regarded teacher or leader whose religion or philosophy is accepted by followers 10 a graduate holding a master's degree 11 the chief executive officer aboard a merchant ship 12 a person presiding over a function, organization, or institution 13 *chiefly Brit* a male teacher 14 an officer of the Supreme Court of Judicature subordinate to a judge 15 the superior person or side in a contest 16 a machine or device that operates to control a similar one 17 (often capital) the heir apparent of a Scottish viscount or baron 18 (modifier) overall or controlling: *master plan* 19 (modifier) designating a device or mechanism that controls others: *master switch* 20 (modifier) main; principal: *master bedroom* 21 the master *South African informal* the man of the house **>** *vb* (tr) 22 to become thoroughly proficient in: *to master the art of diving* 23 to overcome; defeat: *to master your emotions* 24 to rule or control as master **>** 'masterdom *n*

● **ETymology** Old English *magister* teacher, from Latin; related to Latin *magis* more, to a greater extent
Master ('mɑ:stə) *n* 1 a title of address placed before the first name or surname of a boy 2 a respectful term of address, esp as used by disciples when addressing or referring to a religious teacher 3 an archaic equivalent of **Mr**

master aircrew *n* a warrant rank in the Royal Air Force, equal to but before a warrant officer

master-at-arms *n, pl masters-at-arms* the senior rating, of Chief Petty Officer rank, in a naval unit responsible for discipline, administration, and police duties

master builder *n* 1 a person skilled in the design and construction of buildings, esp before the foundation of the profession of architecture 2 a self-employed builder who employs labour

masterclass ('mɑ:stə,kla:s) *n* a session of tuition by an expert, esp a musician, for exceptional students, usually given in public or on television

master corporal *n* a noncommissioned officer in the Canadian forces senior to a corporal and junior to a sergeant

master cylinder *n* a large cylinder in a hydraulic system in which the working fluid is compressed by a piston enabling it to drive one or more slave cylinders. See also *slave cylinder*

masterful ('mɑ:stəfəl) *adj* 1 having or showing mastery 2 fond of playing the master; imperious 3 *mastery* **>** 'masterfully *adv* **>** 'masterfulness *n*

● **USAGE** The use of *masterful* to mean *mastery* as in *a masterful performance*, although common, is considered incorrect by many people

master key *n* a key that opens all the locks of a set, the individual keys of which are not interchangeable. Also called: *pass key*

masterly ('mɑ:stəli) *adj* of the skill befitting a master: *a masterly performance* **>** 'masterliness *n*

mastermind ('mɑ:stə,maɪnd) *vb* 1 (tr) to plan and direct (a complex undertaking): *he masterminded the robbery* **>** *n* 2 a person of great intelligence or executive talent, esp one who directs an undertaking

Master of Arts *n* a degree, usually postgraduate and in a nonscientific subject, or the holder of this degree. Abbreviation: **MA**

master of ceremonies *n* a person who presides over a public ceremony, formal dinner, or entertainment, introducing the events, performers, etc. Abbreviation: **MC**

master of foxhounds *n* a person responsible for the maintenance of a pack of foxhounds and the associated staff, equipment, hunting arrangements, etc. Abbreviation: **MFH**

Master of Science *n* a postgraduate degree, usually in science, or the holder of this degree. Abbreviation: **MSc**

Master of the Horse *n* (in England) the third official of the royal household

Master of the Queen's Music *n* (in Britain when the sovereign is female) a court post dating from the reign of Charles I. It is an honorary title and normally held by an established English composer. Also called (when the sovereign is male): *Master of the King's Music*

Master of the Rolls *n* (in England) a judge of the court of appeal: the senior civil judge in the country and the Keeper of the Records at the Public Record Office

masterpiece ('mɑ:stə,pi:s) or (less commonly)

masterwork ('mɑ:stə,wɜ:k) *n* 1 an outstanding work, achievement, or performance 2 the most outstanding piece of work of a creative artist, craftsman, etc

● **ETymology** C17: compare Dutch *meesterstuk*, German *Meisterstück*, a sample of work submitted to a guild by a craftsman in order to qualify for the rank of master

master plan *n* a comprehensive long-term strategy

master race *n* a race, nation, or group, such as the Germans or Nazis as viewed by Hitler, believed to be superior to other races. German name: *Herrenvolk*

master sergeant *n* a senior noncommissioned officer in the US Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps and certain other military forces, ranking immediately below the most senior noncommissioned rank

mastersinger ('mɑ:stə,sɪŋə) *n* an English spelling of **Meistersinger**

masterstroke ('mɑ:stə,stri:k) *n* an outstanding piece of strategy, skill, talent, etc: *your idea is a masterstroke*

master warrant officer *n* a noncommissioned officer in the Canadian forces junior to a chief warrant officer

mastery ('mɑ:stəri) *n, pl -teries* 1 full command or understanding of a subject 2 outstanding skill; expertise 3 the power of command; control

4 victory or superiority

masthead ('mɑ:st,hed) *n* 1 *nautical* a the head of a mast **b** (as modifier): *masthead sail* 2 Also called: flag the name of a newspaper or periodical, its proprietors, staff, etc, printed in large type at the top of the front page **>** *vb* (tr) 3 to send (a sailor) to the masthead as a punishment 4 to raise (a sail) to the masthead

mastic ('mæstɪk) *n* 1 an aromatic resin obtained from the mastic tree and used as an astringent and to make varnishes and lacquers 2 *mastic tree* a small Mediterranean anacardiaceous evergreen tree, *Pistacia lentiscus*, that yields the resin mastic **b** any of various similar trees, such as the pepper tree 3 any of several sticky putty-like substances used as a filler, adhesive, or seal in wood, plaster, or masonry 4 a liquor flavoured with mastic gum

● **ETymology** C14: via Old French from Late Latin *masticum*, from Latin, from Greek *mastikhē* resin used as chewing gum; from *mastikhān* to grind the teeth

masticate ('mæsti,keɪt) *vb* 1 to chew (food) 2 to reduce (materials such as rubber) to a pulp by crushing, grinding, or kneading **>** 'masticable *adj* **>** 'mastication *n* **>** 'masticator *n*

● **ETymology** C17: from Late Latin *masticāre*, from Greek *mastikhān* to grind the teeth