

Second College Edition

The
American
Heritage
Dictionary



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of chancery; equity. 2. A court of public record; an office of archives. 3. One of the five divisions of the High Court of Justice of Great Britain, presided over by the Lord High Chancellor. 4. A chancellor. —*idiom*. In chancery. 1. Law. In litigation or pending in a court of chancery. 2. With the head locked firmly in a wrestling opponent's arm and held against his chest. 3. Informal. In an embarrassing or hopeless predicament. [ME *chauncerie* < OFr. *chancelerie*, *chancellery* < *chancelier*, *chancellor*.]

chancre (shāng'kər) *n.* 1. A dull-red, hard, insensitive lesion that is the first manifestation of syphilis. 2. An ulcer located at the initial point of entry of a pathogen. [Fr. < Lat. *cancer*, ulcer.]

chan-croid (shāng'kroid') *n.* A soft, nonsyphilitic, usually venereal lesion of the genital region. [Fr. *chancre*: *chancre*, *chancre* + *-oide*, *-oid*.] —**chan'crous** (-kras) *adj.* —**chan'croid'al** (-kroid'l) *adj.*

chanc-y (chān'se, chān'-) *adj.* -*est*, -*iest*. 1. Uncertain, as to outcome; risky; hazardous. 2. Scot. Lucky; propitious.

chan-de-li-er (shān'də-lir') *n.* A branched fixture that holds a number of light bulbs or candles and is usually suspended from a ceiling. [Fr. < OFr., prob. < VLat. **candelarum* < Lat. *candelabrum*, *candelabrum*. —see *CANDELABRUM*.]

chan-delle (shān-dél') *n.* A sudden, steep climbing turn of an aircraft, executed to alter flight direction and gain altitude simultaneously. [Fr. < *chandelle*, candle < OFr. —see *CHANDLER*.]

chan-dler (chānd'lər) *n.* 1. A person who makes or sells candles. 2. A dealer in specified goods or equipment: a ship chandler. [ME *chaundeler* < OFr. *chandelier* < *chandelle*, candle < Lat. *candela*. —see *CANDLE*.]

Chan-dler Wobble (chānd'lər) or **Chan-dler's Wobble** (chānd'lər) *n.* An oscillation in the rotational axis of the earth having a period of approximately 14 months. [After Seth C. Chandler (1846–1913).]

chan-dler-y (chānd'lə-rē) *n.*, *pl.* -ies. 1. The stock or business of a chandler. 2. A place where candles are stored.

change (chānj) *v.* **changed**, **chang-ing**, **chan-ges**. —*tr.* 1. *a.* To cause to be different; alter: *changed the spelling of a word*. *b.* To give a completely different form or appearance to; transform: *irrigation that changed the desert to fertile land*. 2. To give and receive reciprocally; interchange: *Will you change places with me?* 3. To exchange for or replace by another, usually of the same kind or category: *change one's name*. 4. To lay aside, abandon, or leave for another; switch: *change methods*; *change planes*. 5. To give or receive the equivalent of (money) in lower denominations or in foreign currency. 6. To put fresh clothes or coverings on: *change a bed*. —*intr.* 1. To become different or altered: *changed as he matured*. 2. To go from one phase to another, as the moon. 3. To make an exchange. 4. To transfer from one vehicle to another: *changed in Chicago on his way to the coast*. 5. To put on other clothing: *changed for dinner*. 6. To become deeper in tone. Used of the voice. —*phrasal verb*.

change off. 1. To alternate with another person in performing a task. 2. To perform two tasks at once by alternating or a single task by alternate means. —*n.* 1. *a.* The act, process or result of changing; alteration or modification: *a face that had undergone change with age*. *b.* The replacing of one thing for another; substitution: *went to Arizona for a change of atmosphere*. 2. A transition from one state, condition, or phase to another: *the change of seasons*. 3. Something different; variety: *ate early for a change*. 4. A different or fresh set of clothing. 5. Money of smaller denomination given or received in exchange for money of higher denomination. *b.* The balance of money returned when an amount given is more than what is due. *c.* Coins: *change jingling in his pocket*. 6. *Mus.* A pattern or order in which bells are rung. 7. A market or exchange where business is transacted. —*idioms*. **change hands**. To pass from one owner to another. **change (one's) mind**. To reverse an opinion or a decision. [ME *chaungen* < Norman Fr. *chaunger* < OFr. *changier* < LLat. *cambiare*, prob. of Celtic orig.] —**chang'er** *n.* —**change'less** *adj.*

Synonyms: *change*, *alter*, *vary*, *modify*, *transform*, *convert*, *transmute*. These verbs mean to make or become different. *Change* implies a fundamental difference or a substitution of one thing for another: *change his mind*; *change trains*. *Alter* usually means to make less of a difference or adjustment. *Vary* implies shifting circumstances or conditions that cause differences with some regularity. *Modify* can mean to restrict, limit, or qualify, and sometimes to make less extreme. *Transform* refers to complete change in outer form or appearance and often also in character and function. *Convert* can refer to moderate change designed to adapt something to new use or different conditions, to chemical change, to change in belief or doctrine, or to the exchange of something for equivalent value, either in the same form (*convert dollars into pounds*) or a different form (*convert real estate into cash*). *Transmute* suggests almost magical basic change that elevates something in value.

change-a-ble (chān'jə-bəl) *adj.* 1. Liable to change; capricious: *changeable moods*. 2. Capable of being altered: *changeable behavior*. 3. Changing color or appearance when seen from different angles: *changeable taffeta*. —**change'a-bil'i-ty**, **change'a-ble-ness** *n.* —**change'a-ble-ly** *adv.*

change-ful (chānj'fəl) *adj.* Having the tendency or ability to change; variable. —**change'ful-ty** *adv.* —**change'ful-ness** *n.* **change-ling** (chānj'ling) *n.* 1. A child secretly exchanged for another. 2. Archaic. A changeable, fickle person. 3. Archaic. A simple-minded person; idiot.

change of life *n.* The menopause.

change-o-ver (chānj'ō'vər) *n.* A conversion to a different purpose or from one system to another, esp. in equipment or production techniques.

change ringing *n.* The ringing of a set of chimes or bells with every possible unrepeatable variation.

chan-nel (chān'əl) *n.* 1. The bed of a stream or river. 2. The deeper part of a river or harbor, esp. a deep navigable passage. 3. A broad strait: *the English Channel*. 4. A tubular passage for liquids. 5. A course or passage through which something may be moved or directed: *a channel of thought*. 6. **channels**. Official routes of communication. 7. **Electronics**. A specified frequency band for the transmission and reception of electromagnetic signals, as for television signals. 8. A trench, furrow, or groove. 9. A rolled metal bar with a bracket-shaped section. —*tr. v.* -**nel-ed**, -**nel-ing**, -**nels** also -**nelled**, -**nel-ling**, -**nels**. 1. To make or cut channels in. 2. To form a channel or flute in. 3. To direct or guide along some desired course: *channels her curiosity into research*. [ME *chanel* < OFr. < Lat. *canalis*.]

chan-nel² (chān'əl) *n.* **Naut.** A wood or steel ledge projecting from a sailing ship's sides to spread the shrouds and keep them clear of the gunwales. [Alteration of obs. *chainwale*: *CHAIN* + *WALE*.]

channel bass *n.* The red drum.

channel black *n.* A finely divided carbon black, formed on iron plate by direct exposure to a natural gas flame and used in inks, paints, typewriter ribbons, crayons, and polishes. [< *CHANNEL*.]

chan-nel-lag deposit (chān'əl-lāg) *n.* The residue that is deposited in a channel as a stream runs its natural course.

chan-son (shān-sōn') *n.*, *pl.* -**sons** (-sōn', -sōnz'). A song, esp. a French cabaret song. [Fr. < OFr. < Lat. *cantio* < *cantare*, to sing. —see *CHANTAGE*.]

chan-son de geste (shān-sōn' də žest') *n.*, *pl.* -**chan-sons de geste** (-sōn', -sōnz'). A genre of Old French epic poem falling into cycles of poems celebrating the deeds of heroic or historical figures. [Fr.: *chanson*, song + *de*, of + *geste*, heroic exploit.]

chant (chānt) *n.* 1. *a.* A short, simple melody in which a number of syllables or words are sung on the same note. *b.* A psalm or canticle sung in this manner. 2. A song or melody. 3. A monotonous rhythmic call or shout: *the chant of the crowd at the rally*. —*v.* **chant-ed**, **chant-ing**, **chants**. —*tr.* 1. To sing or intone to a chant. 2. To celebrate in song. 3. To say in the manner of a chant. —*intr.* 1. To sing, esp. in the manner of a chant. 2. To speak monotonously. [Prob. < Fr., song < OFr. < Lat. *cantus* < *canere*, to sing.] —**chant-ing-ly** *adv.*

chant-age (shān-tāzh') *n.* Blackmail. [Fr. < *chanter*, to sing < OFr. < Lat. *cantare*, freq. of *canere*.]

chan-ter (chān'tər) *n.* 1. A person who chants, as a chorister. 2. A priest who sings in a chantry. 3. The pipe of a bagpipe on which the melody is played.

chan-te-relle (shān'tə-rēl', shān'-) *n.* An edible yellow mushroom, *Cantharellus cibarius*, having a pleasant fruity odor. [Fr. < NLat. *cantharellus*, dim. of Lat. *cantharus*, cup (from the mushroom's shape) < Gk. *kantarhos*.]

chan-teuse (shān-tēz') *n.* A woman singer, esp. a nightclub singer. [Fr., fem. of *chanteur*, singer < *chanter*, to sing. —see *CHANTAGE*.]

chan-tey also **chan-ty** (shān'tē, chān'-) *n.*, *pl.* -**teys** also -**ties**. A song sung by sailors to the rhythm of their movements while working. [Prob. < Fr. *chantez*, imper. of *chanter*, to sing. —see *CHANTAGE*.]

chan-ti-clar (chān'ti-klār', shān'-) *n.* A rooster. [ME *chauntecler* < OFr. *chauntecler*: *chanter*, to sing + *cler*, clear < Lat. *clarus*.]

chan-try (chān'trē) *n.*, *pl.* -**tries**. **Eccles.** 1. An endowment to cover expenses for the saying of masses and prayers, usually for the soul of the founder of the endowment. 2. An altar or chapel endowed for the saying of masses and prayers. [ME *chaunterie* < OFr. < *chanter*, to sing. —see *CHANTAGE*.]

chan-ty (shān'tē, chān'-) *n.* Variant of *chan-tey*.

Cha-nu-kah (KHĀ'nə-kə, hā'-) *n.* An eight-day Jewish festival beginning on the 25th day of the month of Kislev and commemorating the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians in 165 B.C. and the rededication of the Temple at Jerusalem. [Heb. *hanukkah*, consecration.]

chao (dou) *n.*, *pl.* **chao**. See table at *currency*.

cha-os (kā'ōs') *n.* 1. A condition or place of total disorder or confusion: *emotions in complete chaos*. 2. Often **Chaos**. The disordered state of unformed matter and infinite space supposed by some religious cosmological views to have existed prior to the ordered universe. 3. Obs. A vast abyss or chasm. [Lat., formless matter < Gk. *khaos*.] —**cha-ot'ic** (-ōt'ik) *adj.* —**cha-ot'i-ca-ly** *adv.*

chap (chāp) *v.* **chapped**, **chap-ping**, **chaps**. —*tr.* To cause (the skin) to split or roughen, esp. as a result of cold or exposure: *The north wind chapped her lips*. —*intr.* To split or become rough and sore: *He has skin that chaps easily*. —*n.* A



chandelier

hound's-tooth check (houndz'tōōth') *n.* A small checkered textile design.

hour (our) *n.* 1. One of the 24 parts of a day. 2. **a.** One of the points on a timepiece marking off 12 or 24 successive intervals of 60 minutes, from midnight to noon and noon to midnight or from midnight to midnight. **b.** The time of day indicated by a 12-hour clock. **c. hours.** The time of day determined on a 24-hour basis: 1700 hours. 3. **a.** A customary time: the dinner hour. **b. hours.** A specified period of time: banking hours. **c.** A particular time: my hours of travail. 4. **a.** The work that can be accomplished in an hour. **b.** The distance that can be traveled in an hour. 5. A session in a class. 6. **a.** A time set aside for daily liturgical devotion. **b. hours.** The canonical hours. [ME < OFr. *houre* < Lat. *hora* < Gk. *hōra*.]

hour angle *n.* The angle measured westward along the celestial equator from the celestial meridian of the observer to the hour circle passing through a celestial body.

hour circle *n.* A great circle passing through the poles of the celestial sphere and intersecting the celestial equator at right angles.

hour-glass (our'glās') *n.* An instrument for measuring time consisting of two glass chambers with a narrow connecting channel and containing sand or mercury requiring exactly one hour to trickle from one chamber to the other.

hour-ri (hōōr'ē, hōō'rē) *n., pl. -ris.* 1. A voluptuous and beautiful woman. 2. One of the beautiful virgins of the Koranic paradise. [Fr. < Pers. *hūrī* < Ar. *haurā'*.]

hourly (our'lē) *adj.* 1. **a.** Every hour. **b.** Frequent; continual. 2. By the hour as a unit: hourly pay. —*adv.* 1. At or during every hour. 2. Frequently; continually.

house (hous) *n., pl. houses* (hou'ziz, -siz). 1. **a.** A building used as a dwelling by one or more families. **b.** A household. 2. Something that serves as a shelter or habitation for an animal. 3. **a.** A building used for a particular purpose, as for entertainment: a movie house. **b.** The audience or patrons of such an establishment: a full house. 4. A dwelling for a religious community or for students. 5. **House.** A family line, including ancestors and descendants, esp. a noble family: the House of Orange. 6. A commercial firm: a brokerage house. 7. **a.** A legislative or deliberative assembly. **b.** The hall in which such an assembly meets. **c.** A quorum of such an assembly. 8. **a.** One of the 12 parts into which the heavens are divided in astrology. **b.** The sign of the zodiac indicating the seat or station of a planet in the heavens. —*modifier:* house call, house pet. —*v.* (houz) **housed, housing, houses.** —*tr.* 1. To provide living quarters for; lodge: The cottage housed ten boys. 2. To shelter, keep, or store in or as if in a house. 3. To contain; harbor. —*intr.* To reside; dwell. —*idioms.* **clean house.** 1. To take care of and clean a house. 2. To eliminate or discard undesirable people, items, or situations. **on the house.** At the expense of the management or manager; free. [ME < OE *hūs*.]

house arrest *n.* Confinement to one's domicile rather than prison by administrative or judicial order.

house-boat (hous'bōt') *n.* A barge equipped for use as a home or cruiser.

house-bound (hous'bound') *adj.* Restricted or confined to the house: housebound invalids.

house-break-ing (hous'brā'king) *n.* The act of unlawfully breaking into another's house for the purpose of committing a felony. —*house-break'er n.*

house-bro-ken (hous'brō'kan) *adj.* 1. Trained in habits of excretion appropriate for a house pet. 2. Trained to be docile; compliant.

house-carl (hous'kārl') *n.* A member of the bodyguard or household troops of a Danish or early English king or noble. [OE *hūscarl* < ON *hūskarl*: *hūs*, house + *karl*, man.]

house-coat (hous'kōt') *n.* A woman's robe, usually with a long skirt, worn at home.

house-fly (hous'fli') *n.* A common, widely distributed fly, *Musca domestica*, that frequents human dwellings, breeds in moist or decaying organic matter, and is a transmitter of a wide variety of diseases.

house-hold (hous'hōld') *n.* A domestic establishment including the members of a family and others who live under the same roof. —*modifier:* household appliances. [ME: *house*, house + *hold*, possession.]

household arts *n.* Home economics.

house-hold-er (hous'hōl'dər) *n.* 1. One who occupies or owns a house. 2. The head of a household.

household word *n.* A commonly used word, phrase, or name.

house-hus-band (hous'hūz'bənd) *n.* A husband who manages the household while his wife earns the family income.

house-keep-er (hous'kē'pər) *n.* One hired to perform the domestic tasks in a household. —*house-keep'ing n.*

hou-sel (hou'zəl) *Archaic.* —*n.* The Eucharist. —*tr.v.* —*setled, -sel-ing, -sels.* To administer the Eucharist to. [ME < OE *hūsel*.]

house-leek (hous'lēk') *n.* Any of various plants of the genus *Sempervivum*, native to the Old World, esp. *S. tectorum*, having a basal rosette of fleshy leaves and a branching cluster of pinkish or purplish flowers.

house-lights (hous'lit's) *pl.n.* The lights that illuminate the audience section of a concert hall, theater, or auditorium.

house-maid (hous'mād') *n.* A woman employed to do housework.

housemaid's knee *n.* A chronic inflammatory swelling of the bursa in front of the kneecap.

house martin *n.* An Old World bird, *Delichon urbica*, having blue-black plumage with white markings and a forked tail.

house-mas-ter (hous'mās'tər) *n.* A teacher in charge of a residence hall of a boys' school.

house-mate (hous'māt') *n.* One that shares a house with another.

house-moth-er (hous'mūth'ər) *n.* A woman employed as supervisor or housekeeper of a residence hall or dormitory for young people.

House of Burgesses *n.* The lower house of the legislature of colonial Virginia.

House of Commons *n.* The lower house of Parliament in the United Kingdom and in Canada.

house of correction *n.* An institution for persons convicted of minor criminal offenses.

House of Delegates *n.* The lower house of the state legislature of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

House of Lords *n.* The upper house of Parliament in the United Kingdom, made up of members of the nobility and high-ranking clergy.

House of Representatives *n.* The lower branch of the U.S. Congress and of most state legislatures.

house organ *n.* A periodical published by a business organization for its employees or clients.

house party *n.* A party at which guests stay overnight or for several days in a private home or other residence.

house physician *n.* 1. A physician employed by and residing in a hospital. 2. A physician employed by a hotel or other establishment.

house-rai-sing (hous'rā'zing) *n.* The construction of a house or its framework by a group of neighbors.

house-room (hous'rōom', -rōom') *n.* Room for accommodation in or as if in a house: wouldn't give a pornographic novel house-room.

house-sit (hous'sīt') *intr.v.* —*sat* (-sāt'), —*sit-ting, -sits.* To act as a house sitter.

house sitter *n.* A person who lives in and cares for a house while the occupant is away.

house snake *n.* The milk snake.

house sparrow *n.* A small bird, *Passer domesticus*, native to the Old World but widely naturalized elsewhere, having brown and gray plumage and a black throat in the male.

house-top (hous'tōp') *n.* The roof of a house.

house-warm-ing (hous'wōr'ming) *n.* A party to celebrate the occupancy of a new home.

house-wife (hous'wif') *n.* 1. *pl.* —*wives* (-wivz'). A married woman who supervises the affairs of a household. 2. (hūz'-if) *pl.* **house-wives** (hūz'ifs) or **house-wives** (hūz'ivz). A small container for sewing equipment.

house-wife-ly (hous'wif'lē) *adj.* Of, pertaining to, or suited to a housewife; domestic. —*house-wife'li-ness n.*

house-wif-er-y (hous'wif'ə-rē, -wif'rē) *n.* The function or duties of a housewife; housekeeping.

house-work (hous'wŭrk') *n.* The tasks performed in housekeeping, as cleaning or cooking. —*house-work'er n.*

housing (hou'zing) *n.* 1. **a.** Residences or dwelling places for people. **b.** A place to live; dwelling. 2. **a.** Something that covers, protects, or supports. **b.** A frame, bracket, or box for holding or protecting a mechanical part: a wheel housing. **c.** An enclosing frame in which a shaft revolves. 3. A hole, groove, or slot in a piece of wood for the insertion of another piece. 4. A niche for a statue. 5. *Naut.* The part of a mast that is below deck or of a bowsprit that is inside the hull.

housing-2 (hou'zing) *n.* 1. An ornamental or protective covering for a saddle. 2. Often **housings.** Trappings. [ME *house* < OFr. *housse* < Med. Lat. *hucia*.]

housing development *n.* A group of similarly designed houses or apartment buildings, usually under a single management.

housing project *n.* A publicly funded and administered housing development, usually for low-income families.

hove (hōv) *v.* *Naut.* Past tense and past participle of **heave**.

hov-el (hūv'əl, hōv'-) *n.* 1. A small, miserable dwelling. 2. An open, low shed. [ME, hut.]

hov-er (hūv'ər, hōv'-) *intr.v.* —*ered, -er-ing, -ers.* 1. To remain floating or suspended in the air over a particular place: gulls hovering over the waves. 2. To remain or linger in or near a place: hovering around the speaker's podium. 3. To be in a state of uncertainty; waver: hover between skepticism and belief. —*n.* An act or instance of hovering. [ME *hoveren*, freq. of *hoven*, to hover.] —*hov'er-er n.* —*hov'er-ing-ly adv.*

Hov-er-craft (hūv'ər-kraft', hōv'-) *n.* A trademark for a vehicle used in low-level flight over land or water.

how (hou) *adv.* 1. In what manner or way; by what means: How does this machine work? 2. In what state or condition: How do I look in this jacket? 3. To what extent, amount, or degree: How do you like that? 4. For what reason or purpose; why: How did he happen to buy such an expensive car? 5. With what meaning: How should I interpret this? 6. By what name: How is he called? 7. What: How is that again?



hourglass