

American Library Spelling Bee 2017

Bee Word List (for students taught primarily in a language other than English)

Definitions are provided as a courtesy.

accelerator	a pedal in a vehicle that makes the vehicle go faster : a machine that causes charged particles (such as electrons and protons) to move at high speeds
accordion	a musical instrument that is shaped like a box and that is held in your hands and played by pulling its sides apart and then pushing them together while pressing buttons and keys
accost	to approach and speak to (someone) often in an angry, aggressive, or unwanted way
aghost	struck with terror, amazement, or horror
alert	able to think clearly and to notice things
allegation	a statement saying that someone has done something wrong or illegal
antler	the horn of a deer or similar animal
apprentice	a person who is learning a trade or art by experience under a skilled worker
aptitude	a natural ability to do something or to learn something
avast	a nautical command to stop or cease
balsam	an oily substance with a pleasant smell that comes from different kinds of plants
bangle	a large stiff ring that is worn as jewelry around the arm, wrist, or ankle
barber	a person whose job is to cut men's hair
barter	to exchange things (such as products or services) for other things instead of for money
bayou	an area of water in the southern U.S. in which the water moves very slowly and is filled with many plants
beacon	a strong light that can be seen from far away and that is used to help guide ships, airplanes, etc.
belly	a person's stomach or the part of the body that contains the stomach
biweekly	happening every two weeks : happening twice a week
blatant	completely obvious, especially in a disagreeable way
bleach	to make something whiter or lighter in color, especially through sunlight or by using chemicals
blister	a raised area on the skin that contains clear liquid and that is caused by injury to the skin
bouquet	a group of flowers that are picked and often tied together
buckle	a fastening for two loose ends that is attached to one and holds the other by a catch
burst	to break open or into pieces in a sudden and violent way
cancel	to stop doing or planning to do (something)
cannibal	a person who eats the flesh of human beings or an animal that eats its own kind
canola	a rape plant of an improved variety having seeds that are low in erucic acid and are the source of canola oil
canopy	a piece of cloth that hangs over a bed, throne, etc., as a decoration or shelter
cartridge	a case or container that you put into a machine to make it work
catalyst	a substance that causes a chemical reaction; also a person or event that quickly causes change or action
cathartic	the act or process of releasing a strong emotion (such as pity or fear)
cereal	a breakfast food made from grain
cerebral	related to the mind rather than to feelings; intellectual and not emotional
chase	the hunting of wild animals — used with the; also the act of chasing
cherub	a type of angel that is usually shown in art as a beautiful young child with small wings and a round face and body
chow	food
clarify	to make (something) easier to understand
coerce	to make someone do something by using force or threats
cogitate	to think carefully and seriously about something
complement	a thing that completes or brings to perfection
concentric	having the same center
conical	shaped like a cone
constable	<i>British:</i> a police officer
contaminate	to make impure or unfit for use by adding something harmful or unpleasant
conundrum	an intricate and difficult problem
coyote	a small wild animal that is related to dogs and wolves and that lives in North America
crater	a large round hole in the ground made by the explosion of a bomb or by something falling from the sky
crayon	a stick of colored wax that is used for drawing

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creativity	the ability to make new things or think of new ideas
crimson	a deep purplish-red color
crouch	to lower your body to the ground by bending your legs
crumple	to press, bend, or crush out of shape
cubicle	a work space in a large office with a desk that is usually surrounded by low walls
cyclical	happening again and again in the same order
default	a selection made usually automatically or without active consideration due to lack of a viable alternative
deftly	characterized by facility and skill
dessert	sweet food eaten after the main part of a meal
dew	drops of water that form outside at night on grass, trees, etc.
dexterity	readiness and grace in physical activity, especially skill and ease in using the hands
digit	a finger or toe : a written symbol for any of the numbers 0 to 9
diminutive	very small
draconian	very severe or cruel
drawer	a box that slides into and out of a piece of furniture (such as a desk) and that is used to store things
droplet	a very small drop of liquid
drought	a shortage of water resulting from a prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall
drowsy	ready to fall asleep
dungeon	a dark underground prison in a castle
eclectic	including things taken from many different sources
effigy	an image or representation, especially of a person
elaborate	made or done with great care or with much detail
elated	marked by high spirits; overjoyed
elbow	the joint where your arm bends
elegance	dignified gracefulness or restrained beauty of style; polish
elixir	a magical or medicinal potion
empress	a woman who rules an empire; also the wife or widow of an emperor
emulate	to strive to equal or excel
etiquette	the rules indicating the proper and polite way to behave
eulogy	a commendatory oration or writing especially in honor of one deceased
evidence	something which shows that something exists or is true
exemplary	extremely good and deserving to be admired and copied
exterior	located on the outside of something
extraterrestrial	originating, existing, or occurring outside the earth or its atmosphere
facile	too simple; not showing enough thought or effort
feckless	having or resulting from a weak character or nature
filament	a thin thread or hair, esp. a thin wire in a light bulb that glows when electricity passes through it
flea	a very small insect that lives on animals and that has strong legs used for jumping
flour	powder made from a grain (especially wheat) that is used in cooking for making bread, cakes, etc.
foldable	bendable, collapsible
forlorn	pitifully sad and abandoned or lonely
frivolous	lacking in seriousness; trivial, silly, shallow
gamut	a range or series of related things
gorge	a narrow passage through land; also a narrow steep-walled canyon or part of a canyon
greedy	having or showing a selfish desire to have more of something (such as money or food)
gregarious	enjoying the company of other people
grotesque	departing markedly from the natural, the expected, or the typical
gull	to fool or trick (someone)
heist	armed robbery
horde	a large group of people
hysteria	exaggerated or uncontrollable emotion or excitement, esp. among a group of people
impromptu	not prepared ahead of time; extemporaneous
incessant	going on and on; not stopping or letting up

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infamy	an evil reputation
infinity	the quality of having no limits or end; the quality of being infinite
ingenious	marked by originality, resourcefulness, and cleverness in conception or execution
insipid	bland, tasteless, dull
intrepid	characterized by resolute fearlessness, fortitude, and endurance
involve	to have or include (someone or something) as a part of something
jocular	characterized by jesting; playful
karate	a form of fighting that was developed in Japan in which your feet and hands are used to kick and hit
kennel	a shelter for a dog or cat
laconic	using or involving the use of a minimum of words; also concise to the point of seeming rude or mysterious
lasting	existing or continuing for a long time
leopard	a large brownish-yellow cat with black spots that lives in Asia and Africa
lever	a strong bar that is used to lift and move something heavy
madrigal	a type of song for several singers without instruments that was popular in the 16th and 17th centuries
magnolia	any of a member of the family of American and Asian shrubs and trees with evergreen leaves and white, yellow, rose, or purple flowers usually appearing in early spring
malevolent	wishing to harm people; malicious, hostile
meander	to wander without a goal or purpose
messenger	one who brings a message or does an errand
misogyny	a hatred of women
monitor	one that warns or instructs : a cathode-ray tube used for display (as of television pictures or computer information)
nauseous	feeling like you are about to vomit
nippers	a device or tool that is used for cutting something
notch	a small cut that is shaped like a V and that is made on an edge or a surface
noteworthy	deserving or attracting attention, especially because of some special excellence
obelisk	a tall, four-sided stone column that becomes narrower toward the top and that ends in a point
oodles	a large amount of something
palate	the sense of taste
palpable	obvious and noticeable
paramount	very important; of highest rank or importance
parquet	a surface (such as a floor) made of small pieces of wood that fit together to form a pattern
patience	the capacity and habit of putting up with pains or hardships calmly or without complaint
peninsula	a piece of land that is almost entirely surrounded by water and is attached to a larger land area
perimeter	the continuous line forming the boundary of a closed geometric figure
pickle	a brine or vinegar solution in which foods are preserved
plaintive	expressive of suffering or sadness
platypus	a small carnivorous aquatic mammal of eastern Australia and Tasmania that has a fleshy bill resembling that of a duck, dense fur, webbed feet, and a broad flattened tail
plutocracy	a country that is ruled by the richest people
poodle	a type of dog that has thick, curly hair
prior	earlier in time or order
puddle	a small amount of water, mud, etc., on the ground
puny	small and weak
radiant	having or showing an attractive quality of happiness, love, health, etc.
relevant	relating to a subject in an appropriate way
reprieve	to delay the punishment of (someone, such as a prisoner who is sentenced to death)
resurrect	to bring (a dead person) back to life
rewind	to make (a recording) go backwards
ridge	a long area of land that is on top of a mountain or hill
rivet	a special kind of metal bolt or pin that is used to hold pieces of metal together
salmon	a large fish of the North Atlantic noted as a game and food fish
satisfy	to cause (someone) to be pleased : to provide, do, or have what is required

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saturated	completely wet; also completely filled with something
savage	not tamed
screech	a loud and very high cry that usually expresses extreme pain, anger, or fear
sequester	isolate or hide away (someone or something)
serpent	a large snake
severity	the fact or condition of being very bad, serious, or unpleasant
sheriff	an elected official who is in charge of enforcing the law in a county or town of the U.S.
sickle	a tool with a curved metal blade attached to a short handle that is used for cutting grass, grain, etc.
sinister	giving the impression that something harmful or evil is happening or will happen
sitar	a musical instrument from India that is like a guitar and that has a long neck and a round body
sleuth	someone who looks for information to solve crimes
slush	partly melted snow
solitude	a state or situation in which you are alone usually because you want to be
soothe	to cause (someone) to be calmer, less angry; also to cause (pain) to go away or become less severe
speck	a very small piece or spot
splinter	a thin, sharp piece of something (such as wood, glass, etc.) that has broken off a larger piece
stimulate	to make (something) more active; also to cause or encourage (something) to happen or develop
strenuous	vigorously active, energetic, arduous
studious	very serious about studying, reading, learning, etc.
sundry	made up of different things
tattle	idle talk; chatter
telepathy	a way of communicating thoughts directly from one person's mind to another person's mind without using words or signals
tenant	someone who rents or leases a house, apartment, etc., from a landlord
terrific	extremely good
thumbtack	a short pin that has a large, flat head and that is used to attach papers, pictures, etc., to a wall or bulletin board
tile	a usually flat piece of hard clay, stone, or other material that is used for covering walls, floors, etc.
transcend	to rise above or go beyond the limits of; also to be greatly superior to
tread	to walk on or along (something)
trench	a long cut in the ground, a ditch
unaware	without warning
unruly	not readily ruled, disciplined, or managed
vacate	to leave (a job or position or a seat, hotel room, etc.)
vagrant	a person who has no place to live and no job and who asks people for money
varnish	a liquid that is spread on a surface and that dries to form a hard, shiny coating
vegan	a person who does not eat any food that comes from animals and who often also does not use animal products (such as leather)
vegetation	plants in general; plants that cover a particular area
versatile	able to adapt or be adapted to many different functions or activities
vexation	the state of being annoyed, frustrated, or worried
vile	evil or immoral
vortex	a mass of spinning air, liquid, etc., that pulls things into its center
waistline	the distance around the narrowest part of your waist
wisp	a thin streak of smoke, mist, etc.; also a thin thread or strand of something (such as hair)
woeful	very sad
wrench	to twist and pull with a sudden violent motion
wrinkle	a small line or fold that appears on your skin as you grow older
yank	to suddenly pull (something) in a quick, forceful way
yolk	the yellow part inside an egg
zenith	the highest point
zigzag	a line that has a series of short, sharp turns or angles