

American Library Spelling Bee 2017

E-Bee Word List (for students taught primarily in English)

Definitions are provided as a courtesy.

aardvark	a large burrowing nocturnal mammal of sub-Saharan Africa that has a long snout and feeds especially on termites and ants
abstain	to choose not to do or have something
accustomed	familiar with something so that it seems normal or usual
acquaintance	someone who is known but who is not a close friend
adhere	to give support or maintain loyalty
adolescent	a young person who is developing into an adult
agape	having the mouth open because of wonder, surprise, or shock
allotted	to give someone (an amount of something) to use or have
alphabet	the letters of a language arranged in their usual order
ample	having or providing enough or more than enough of what is needed
antenna	a usually metallic device (as a rod or wire) for radiating or receiving radio waves
antonym	a word with a meaning that is opposite to the meaning of another word
aplomb	complete and confident composure or self-assurance
arable	suitable for farming; able to produce crops
armadillo	any of a family of burrowing edentate mammals found in North America and having the body and head encased in an armor of small bony plates
ashen	deathly pale
avalanche	a sudden great rush or accumulation of snow, ice, earth, rock in swift motion down a mountainside
awning	a roof like cover extending over or in front of a place (as over the deck or in front of a door or window) as a shelter
baffling	impossible to understand; perplexing
bagatelle	a trifle, something insignificant
barmy	<i>British:</i> mad, crazy
baste	to sew with long loose stitches in order to hold something in place temporarily : to moisten (as meat) at intervals with melted butter, fat, or pan drippings during cooking
bedbug	a wingless bloodsucking bug sometimes infesting houses and especially beds and feeding on human blood
bestow	to present a gift
billion	the number 1,000,000,000; one thousand million
blacksmith	a person who makes or repairs things made of iron (such as horseshoes)
blossom	a flower especially of a fruit tree
boisterous	being rough and noisy
bracelet	a piece of jewelry worn on the wrist
broach	to raise a sensitive or difficult subject for discussion
bubble	a small body of gas within a liquid
bully	one habitually cruel to others who are weaker
buoyant	capable of floating : cheerful
campaign	a series of activities designed to produce a particular result
canary	a small usually yellow or green tropical bird that is often kept in a cage
cannery	a factory where food is put into cans
cathedral	the main church of an area that is headed by a bishop
cautionary	serving as a warning
celery	a vegetable that is grown for its long light green stems
centaur	any of a race of creatures fabled to be half human and half horse
certainty	a fact about which there is no doubt
chestnut	a type of tree that produces large, sweet nuts that can be eaten; also the nut or wood of a chestnut tree
chipmunk	a small North American animal that is related to the squirrel
chronicle	a description of events in the order that they happened
circumspect	cautious, discreet, prudent
citizen	a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country
civilian	a person who is not a member of the military or of a police or firefighting force
cleats	pieces of rubber, wood, or metal that are fastened to the bottom of a shoe or boot to prevent slipping
competitor	someone who is trying to win or do better than all others especially in business or sports
conifer	<i>biology:</i> a bush or tree (such as a pine) that produces cones and that usually has leaves that are green all year

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conjecture	to guess
conscience	knowledge of right and wrong and a feeling one should do what is right
copper	a common reddish metallic element that is ductile and malleable and is one of the best conductors of heat and electricity
coquetry	a flirtatious act or attitude
corkscrew	a tool that is used to pull corks from bottles
corrode	to eat or be eaten away by degrees as if by gnawing
crane	a big machine with a long arm that is used by builders for lifting and moving heavy things : a type of tall bird that has a long neck and long legs and lives near water
crawdad	<i>North American:</i> a freshwater crayfish
crease	a line or mark made by folding, pressing, or crushing something (such as cloth or a piece of paper)
creature	an animal of any type
cutlet	a small, thin slice of meat
daily	happening, done, made, used, or existing every day
dandelion	a very common wild plant that has bright yellow flowers
debt	an amount of money that you owe to a person, bank, company, etc.
decisive	able to make choices quickly and confidently
deference	a way of behaving that shows respect for someone or something
defiant	refusing to obey something or someone
delirium	a mental state in which you are confused and not able to think or speak clearly usually because of fever or some other illness
destroy	to cause (something) to end or no longer exist
devotee	an ardent follower, supporter, or enthusiast (as of a religion, art form, or sport)
diagnosis	the art or act of identifying a disease from its signs and symptoms
disciple	someone who accepts and helps to spread the teachings of a famous person
discrimination	the treating of some people better than others without any fair or proper reason
dizzy	having a whirling sensation in the head with a tendency to fall
drain	to remove (liquid) from something by letting it flow away or out
dune	a hill of sand near an ocean or in a desert that is formed by the wind
elephant	a tall large-eared mammal that is native to tropical Africa or southeastern Asia and has a snout elongated into a muscular trunk
emblematic	symbolic, representative
enigma	someone or something that is difficult to understand or explain
evaluate	to determine the significance, worth, or condition of usually by careful appraisal and study
exhausting	draining (someone) of their physical or mental resources; tiring
fabulous	wonderful, marvelous
famine	a situation in which many people do not have enough food to eat
fertile	producing many plants or crops; able to support large amount of growth
feud	a mutual enmity or quarrel that is often prolonged
financial	relating to money
flabbergast	astonish, dumbfound
flexible	capable of bending or being bent
fortunately	in a manner full of good luck
frailty	the condition of being weak and delicate
frontier	a border between two countries : a distant area where few people live
frown	to contract the brow in displeasure or concentration
furniture	chairs, tables, beds, etc., that are used to make a room ready for use
generate	to bring into existence; to be the cause of a situation, action, or state of mind
gesture	a movement usually of the body or limbs that expresses or emphasizes an idea, sentiment, or attitude
ghoul	an evil creature in frightening stories that robs graves and eats dead bodies
giddy	feeling or showing great happiness and joy
governess	a woman who is paid to care for and teach a child in the child's house
gravity	the natural force that tends to cause physical things to move towards each other : a very serious quality or condition
guideline	a rule or instruction that shows or tells how something should be done
guzzle	to drink (something, such as beer or liquor) quickly or in large amounts

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hierarchy	a system in which people or things are placed in a series of levels with different importance or status
homesickness	the state of being sad because you are away from your family and home
identity	the distinguishing character or personality of an individual
idiom	an expression that cannot be understood from the meanings of its separate words but must be learned as a whole
idiosyncrasy	a mode of behavior or way of thought peculiar to an individual
illiterate	unable to read or write
impertinent	impolite, insolent, rude
impetus	a driving force, impulse, incentive or stimulus
impunity	freedom from punishment, harm, or loss
incorrigible	not able to be corrected or changed
individual	single, separate; also of or for a particular person
irrevocably	not capable of being changed
justify	to provide or be a good reason for (something)
lacquer	a liquid that is spread on wood or metal and that dries to form a hard and shiny surface
launch	to send or shoot (something, such as a rocket) into the air or water or into outer space
leotard	a close-fitting one-piece garment worn especially by dancers, acrobats, and aerialists
limp	to walk in a slow and awkward way because of an injury to a leg or foot
lose	to be unable to find (something or someone) : to fail to win (a game, contest, etc.)
ludicrous	very foolish; ridiculous
lurid	causing horror or revulsion; gruesome
maestro	a master usually in an art; especially an eminent composer, conductor, or teacher of music
mammoth	a type of large, hairy elephant that lived in ancient times and that had very long tusks that curved upward
merit	a good quality or feature that deserves to be praised
militia	a body of citizens with some military training who are called to active duty only in an emergency
musician	a person who writes, sings, or plays music
negotiate	to discuss something formally in order to make an agreement
nutritious	having substances that a person or animal needs to be healthy and grow properly; promoting good health and growth
ocular	of or relating to the eye
odyssey	a long journey full of adventures
okra	a tall plant whose pods are eaten as a vegetable and are used in soups and stews
ordeal	an experience that is very unpleasant or difficult
origin	the point or place where something begins or is created; the source or cause of something
pamphlet	a small, thin book with no cover or only a paper cover that has information about a particular subject
parched	very dry especially because of hot weather and no rain; also very thirsty
petal	one of the soft, colorful parts of a flower
pharaoh	a ruler of ancient Egypt
pharmacist	a person who is professionally qualified to prepare and dispense medicinal drugs
pilgrimage	a journey of a pilgrim, especially one to a shrine or a sacred place
pioneer	a person who helps create or develop new ideas, methods, etc.
placid	not easily upset or excited; calm and steady
pomegranate	a round, red fruit that has a thick skin and many large seeds
prayer	an address (as a petition) to God or a god in word or thought
predatory	inclined or intended to injure or exploit others for personal gain or profit
prism	a transparent glass or plastic object that usually has three sides and that separates the light that passes through it into different colors
proximity	the quality or state of being close
prudence	the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason and caution
pulley	a wheel or set of wheels that is used with a rope, chain, etc., to lift or lower heavy objects
putty	a soft, sticky substance that becomes hard when it dries and that is used for holding glass in window frames or for filling small holes in wood
raucous	disagreeably harsh or strident; boisterous and disorderly
receptionist	a person whose job is to deal with the people who call or enter an office, hotel, etc.
reclusive	avoiding the company of other people; solitary

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reindeer	a large type of deer that lives in northern parts of the world
replacement	the act of replacing something
request	an act of politely or formally asking for something
rinse	to wash (something) with clean water and without soap
ritual	of or relating to rites; ceremonial
rough	having a surface that is not even; also crude in style or expression
rubric	a name or heading under which something is classified
rustic	of, relating to, or suitable for the country (as in plainness or sturdiness)
saxophonist	one who plays a saxophone, which is a member of a family of metal wind instruments with a single-reed mouthpiece, used esp. in jazz and dance music
scatter	to cause (things or people) to separate and go in different directions
scuttle	a shallow open basket for carrying something (as grain or garden produce)
shoo	used when repeatedly moving your hand away from you in a short motion with your fingers down to tell an animal or person to leave
shrivel	to become dry and wrinkled from heat, cold, or old age
sinkhole	a low area or hole in the ground that is formed especially when soil and rocks are removed by flowing water
slippery	difficult to stand on, move on, or hold because of being smooth, wet, icy, etc.
slugger	a batter in baseball who hits many home runs; also a boxer who punches hard
snout	the long nose of some animals (such as pigs)
solace	comfort in times of grief or worry
solstice	one of the two times during the year when the sun is farthest north or south of the equator
spate	a large number of things that appear or happen in a short period of time
stool	a seat that fits one person and that has no back or arms
sturdy	strongly made
summary	a brief statement that gives the most important information about something
supreme	highest in rank, authority, degree or quality
surrender	to agree to stop fighting, hiding, resisting, etc.
taut	very tight from being pulled or stretched; not loose or slack
thieves	persons who steal something especially secretly or without open force
thrice	three times
throughout	in or to every part
torrent	a large amount of water that moves very quickly in one direction
tortoise	any of a family of terrestrial turtles
trumpet	a brass musical instrument that you blow into with three buttons to play different notes
tuber	a short, thick, round stem that is a part of certain plants (such as the potato), that grows underground, and that can produce a new plant
tumultuous	loud, excited, and emotional
urgent	very important and needing immediate attention
valley	an area of low land between hills or mountains
valuable	worth a lot of money
vassal	a person in the Middle Ages who received protection and land from a lord in return for loyalty and service
vault	an arched structure of masonry usually forming a ceiling or roof : an underground passage or room; also a burial chamber
viper	a type of poisonous snake
volition	an act of making a choice or decision
vowel	a speech sound produced without obstruction or audible friction in the mouth; also a letter (as a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y) representing a vowel
warning	an action or a statement that tells someone about possible danger or trouble
wayward	tending to behave in ways that are not socially acceptable
wharf	a structure built along or at an angle from the shore of navigable waters so that ships may lie alongside to receive and discharge cargo and passengers
withdrawal	an act of moving something away or taking something away
wound	an injury that is caused when a knife, bullet, etc., cuts or breaks the skin
xenophobia	fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners