

Merriam-Webster

SINCE 1828



[GAMES & QUIZZES](#) [THESAURUS](#) [WORD OF THE DAY](#) [FEATURES](#) [SHOP](#)

- [LOG IN](#)
- [REGISTER](#)
- [settings](#)
- [SAVEDSAVED WORDS](#)



dictionary
thesaurus

[view recents](#)

[Login](#) or [Register](#)

Hello,

[GAMES & QUIZZES](#) [THESAURUS](#) [WORD OF THE DAY](#) [FEATURES](#) [SHOP](#) [SETTINGS](#)

- 
[SAVED](#) [SAVED WORDS](#) [view recents](#)


island

[noun](#), often attributive

 [Save Word](#)

To save this word, you'll need to log in.

[Log In](#)

is·land | \ 'ī-lənd  \

Definition of *island*

(Entry 1 of 2)

1 : a tract of land surrounded by water and smaller than a continent

2 : something resembling an island especially in its isolated or surrounded position: such as

a : a usually raised area within a thoroughfare, parking lot, or driveway used especially to separate or direct traffic

b : a superstructure on the deck of a ship (such as an aircraft carrier)

c : a kitchen counter that is approachable from all sides

3 : an isolated group or area especially : an isolated ethnological group

island

[verb](#)

islanded; islanding; islands

Definition of *island* (Entry 2 of 2)

[transitive verb](#)

1a : to make into or as if into an island

b : to dot with or as if with [islands](#)

2 : [isolate](#)

[↓ Synonyms](#)
[↓ Did you know?](#)
[↓ Example Sentences](#)
[↓ Learn More About *island*](#)

Keep scrolling for more

Synonyms for *island*

Synonyms: Noun

- [isle](#),
- [islet](#)

[Visit the Thesaurus for More](#) 

Did you know?

The words *island* and *isle* are etymologically distinct. *Island* can be traced back to Old English *īgland*, composed of two elements *īg* and *land*. *Land*, as we might expect means “land,” but *īg* means “island” in Old English. In a sense, then, *īgland* is “island-land.” The English *isle*, on the other hand, is derived through medieval French from the Latin *insula*. In the 16th century, under the influence of *isle*, the letter *s* was added to *iland*, the earlier form of *island*. The verb *island* did not appear until the 17th century.

Examples of *island* in a Sentence

Noun He lives on an *island* in the Caribbean. the *island* of Hawaii is the largest in the Hawaiian archipelago
 Recent Examples on the Web: Noun Earlier Tuesday, Elsa swept past the Florida Keys but spared the low-lying *island* chain a direct hit. — *BostonGlobe.com*, 8 July 2021 Less than half will ever leave the *island* to play in the minor leagues, and roughly 5% — about two dozen overall — will reach the majors. — Connor Letourneau, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 July 2021

These example sentences are selected automatically from various online news sources to reflect current usage of the word 'island.' Views expressed in the examples do not represent the opinion of Merriam-Webster or its editors.
[Send us feedback.](#)

See More  

First Known Use of *island*

Noun

before the 12th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

Verb

1661, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a](#)

History and Etymology for *island*

Noun

alteration (influenced by Anglo-French *isle*) of earlier *iland*, from Middle English, from Old English *īgland* (akin to Old Norse *eyland*), from *īg* island (akin to Old English *ēa* river, Latin *aqua* water) + *land* land

Keep scrolling for more

Learn More About *island*

Share *island*

[Post the Definition of island to Facebook](#)



[Share the Definition of island on Twitter](#)



Time Traveler for *island*



The first known use of *island* was before the 12th century

[See more words from the same century](#)

From the Editors at Merriam-Webster

[Every Letter Is Silent, Sometimes](#)

[Every Letter Is Silent, Sometimes](#)

[When each letter can be seen but not heard](#)

[8 Poets Share Their Favorite Words](#)

[8 Poets Share Their Favorite Words](#)

[Pinsky, Rankine, Harjo, and others discuss the words they love](#)

Dictionary Entries Near *island*

[Islamitic](#)

[Islamize](#)

[Islamophobia](#)

[island](#)

[island arc](#)

[Island Carib](#)

[island chain](#)

[See More Nearby Entries](#)

Phrases Related to *island*

[desert island](#)

Statistics for *island*

Last Updated

10 Jul 2021

Look-up Popularity

Top 3% of words

Cite this Entry

“Island.” *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/island>. Accessed 12 Jul. 2021.

Style: MLA

MLA  Chicago  APA  Merriam-Webster 

Keep scrolling for more

More Definitions for *island*

island

noun



English Language Learners Definition of *island*

: an area of land that is surrounded by water


: a raised area within a road, parking lot, or driveway that is used to separate or direct traffic

chiefly US : a separate raised area with a flat surface on which food is prepared in a kitchen

[See the full definition for *island* in the English Language Learners Dictionary](#)

island

noun

is·land | \ 'ī-lənd  \


Kids Definition of *island*

1 : an area of land surrounded by water and smaller than a continent

2 : something like an island in its isolation We have a counter *island* in our kitchen.

island

noun

is·land | \ 'ī-lənd 

Medical Definition of *island*

: an isolated anatomical structure, tissue, or group of cells

More from Merriam-Webster on *island*

English: [Translation of *island* for Spanish Speakers](#)

Britannica English: [Translation of *island* for Arabic Speakers](#)

Britannica.com: [Encyclopedia article about *island*](#)



WORD OF THE DAY

emprise 

[See Definitions and Examples »](#)

Get Word of the Day daily email!

Your email address

SUBSCRIBE



[Test Your Vocabulary](#)

Farm Idioms Quiz

- What does 'poke' refer to in the expression 'pig in a poke'?

state of difficulty

bag

mud pit

stable

Test your knowledge - and maybe learn something along the way.

[TAKE THE QUIZ](#)

A daily challenge for crossword fanatics.

[TAKE THE QUIZ](#)



Last Viewed by First Circuit Library on 07/12/2021



Last Viewed by First Circuit Library on 07/12/2021

Love words? Need even more definitions?

Subscribe to America's largest dictionary and get thousands more definitions and advanced search—ad free!

MERRIAM-WEBSTER UNABRIDGED

WORDS AT PLAY

•

The Words of the Week -

7/9/2021

Words from the week of 7/9/2021

•

6 Words Whose Abstract Meanings Came First

From conceptual to concrete

•

Word Well Used: 'Usurpations'

From the Declaration of Independence

•

The Words of the Week -

7/2/2021

Words from the week of 7/2/2021

ASK THE EDITORS

•

'Everyday' vs. 'Every Day'

A simple trick to keep them separate

Last Viewed by First Circuit Library on 07/12/2021

- **What Is 'Semantic Bleaching'?**

How 'literally' can mean "figuratively"

- **Literally**

How to use a word that (literally) drives some pe...

- **Is Singular 'They' a Better Choice?**

The awkward case of 'his or her'

WORD GAMES

- **Spelling Challenge Quiz**

13 tricky words to spell.

TAKE THE QUIZ

- **Difficult Vocab Quiz**

Another round of challenging words!

TAKE THE QUIZ

•

True or False?

Test your knowledge - and maybe learn something a...

TAKE THE QUIZ

•

Word Winder's CrossWinder

A game of winding words.

PLAY THE GAME

Learn a new word every day. Delivered to your inbox!

Your email address

OTHER MERRIAM-WEBSTER DICTIONARIES

•

LEARNER'S ESL DICTIONARY

•

VISUAL DICTIONARY

•

SCRABBLE® WORD FINDER

•

MERRIAM-WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY

•

BRITANNICA ENGLISH - ARABIC TRANSLATION

•

ENGLISH - SPANISH-ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Last Viewed by First Circuit Library on 07/12/2021

FOLLOW US



[Browse the Dictionary:](#) [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#)
[V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#) [0-9](#)

[Home](#) | [Help](#) | [Apps](#) | [About Us](#) | [Shop](#) | [Advertising Info](#) | [Dictionary API](#) |
[Contact Us](#) | [Join MWU](#) | [Videos](#) | [Word of the Year](#) | [Puku](#) |
[Vocabulary Resources](#) | [Law Dictionary](#) | [Medical Dictionary](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) |
[Terms of Use](#) | [Do Not Sell My Info](#)

[Browse the Thesaurus](#) | [Browse the Medical Dictionary](#) | [Browse the Legal Dictionary](#)

© 2021 Merriam-Webster, Incorporated

Last Viewed by First Circuit Library on 07/12/2021