

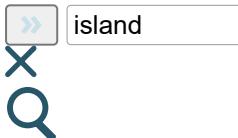
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island

[noun](#), often attributive

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is·land | \ 'i-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*](#)

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Synonyms for *island*

Synonyms: Noun

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

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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.
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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

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Time Traveler for *island*



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

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Statistics for *island*

Last Updated

10 Jul 2021

Look-up Popularity

Top 3% of words

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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 | \ 'i-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

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

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

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mud pit	stable

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6 Words Whose Abstract Meanings Came FirstFrom conceptual to concrete

•

Word Well Used: 'Usurpations'From the Declaration of Independence

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'Everyday' vs. 'Every Day'A simple trick to keep them separate

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What Is 'Semantic Bleaching'?

How 'literally' can mean "figuratively"

•

Literally

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

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Is Singular 'They' a Better Choice?

The awkward case of 'his or her'

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