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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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blanch  (blānch) also **blench** (blēnch)

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v. blanch·ed, blanch·ing, blanch·es also **blench·ed** or **blench·ing** or **blench·es**

v.tr.

1. To take the color from; bleach.
2. To whiten (a growing plant or plant part) by covering to cut off direct light.
3. To whiten (a metal) by soaking in acid or by coating with tin.
4.
 - a. To scald (almonds, for example) in order to loosen the skin.
 - b. To scald (food) briefly, as before freezing or as a preliminary stage in preparing a dish.
5. To cause to turn white or become pale.

v.intr.

To turn white or become pale: *Their faces blanched in terror.*

[Middle English *blaunchen*, to make white, from Old French *blanchir*, from *blanche*, feminine of *blanc*, white, of Germanic origin; see **bhel-**¹ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

blanch *er n.*

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Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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