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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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To look up an entry in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, use the search window above. For best results, after typing in the word, click on the “Search” button instead of using the “enter” key.

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Dan¹ 🗣️ (dăn)

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In the Bible, a son of Jacob and the forebear of one of the tribes of Israel.

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n.

Archaic

Used formerly as a title of honor for respected men, such as clerics and poets.

[Middle English, from Old French, from Medieval Latin *Domnus*, from Latin *dominus*, master, lord; see **dem-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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abbr.

Bible Daniel

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dan also **Dan** 🗣️ (dăn, dăn)

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n.

1.

a. Any of the levels of proficiency at the grade of black belt in martial arts such as judo and karate.

b. One who has achieved such a level.

2. An expert or expert level in shogi and certain other games.

[Japanese *dan*, stair, grade, dan, from Early Middle Chinese *duan*^h, section; also the source of Mandarin *duàn*.]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

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:

Indo-European Roots

Semitic Roots

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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