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dictionary

of the  
English  
Language

  


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**yard**<sup>1</sup> (yărd)

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*n.*

**1. Abbr. yd.** A fundamental unit of length in both the US Customary System and the British Imperial System, equal to 3 feet, or 36 inches (0.9144 meter). See Table at [measurement](#).

**2. Nautical** A long tapering spar slung to a mast to support and spread the head of a square sail, lugsail, or lateen.

**3. Informal**

**a.** A square yard: *bought 4 yards of fabric.*

**b.** A cubic yard: *dug up 100 yards of soil.*

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[Middle English *yerde*, stick, unit of measure, from Old English *gerd*.]



(click for a larger image)

**yard1**

on the Mexican naval training vessel Cuauhtemoc

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**yard**<sup>2</sup> (yărd)

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*n.*

**1.** A tract of ground next to, surrounding, or surrounded by a building or buildings.

**2.**

**a.** A tract of ground, often enclosed, used for a specific business or activity.

**b.** A baseball park.

**3.** An area where railroad trains are made up and cars are switched, stored, and serviced on tracks and sidings.

**4.**

**a.** A somewhat sheltered area where deer or other browsing animals congregate during the winter.

**b.** An enclosed tract of ground in which animals, such as chickens or pigs, are kept.

**v. yarded, yard-ing, yards**

*v.tr.*

To enclose, collect, or put into a yard.

*v.intr.*

To gather together into a yard: *The deer are yarding up in their winter grounds.*

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[Middle English, from Old English *geard*; see **gher-**<sup>1</sup> in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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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](#)

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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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