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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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crys·tal  (krĭs təl)

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n.

1.

a. A homogenous solid formed by a repeating, three-dimensional pattern of atoms, ions, or molecules and having fixed distances between constituent parts.

b. The unit cell of such a pattern.

2. A mineral, especially a transparent form of quartz, having a crystalline structure, often characterized by external planar faces.

3.

a. A natural or synthetic crystalline material having piezoelectric or semiconducting properties.

b. An electrical or electronic device that makes use of such a material, thereby allowing it to receive radio transmissions.

4.

a. A high-quality, clear, colorless glass.

b. An object, especially a vessel or ornament, made of such glass.

c. Such objects considered as a group.

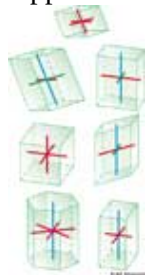
5. A clear glass or plastic protective cover for the face of a watch or clock.

6. *Slang* A stimulant drug, usually methamphetamine, in its powdered form.

adj.

Clear or transparent: *a crystal lake; the crystal clarity of their reasoning.* See Synonyms at [clear](#).

[Middle English *cristal*, from Old French, from Latin *crystallum*, from Greek *krustallos*, ice, crystal; see **kreus-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]



(click for a larger image)

crystal

Axes of symmetry in the seven main crystal systems are depicted using different colors. Within each crystal, axes having the same color are of equal length.

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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:

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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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