

A Christmas Carol — Key Vocabulary

by Charles Dickens

48 key English words, graded A2–C2 — each with a simple definition and an example. Learn them before you read, or review them after.

A2 words (10)

abroad /ə'brɔ:d/

A2

in a foreign country

"markets abroad"

accompany /ə'kæmpəni/

A2

be present or associated with an event or entity

"French fries come with the hamburger"

active /'æktɪv/

A2

chemical agent capable of activity

"The boy threw the ball' uses the active voice"

admit /əd'mɪt/

A2

declare to be true or admit the existence or reality or truth of

"He admitted his errors"

affair /ə'feɪ/

A2

a vaguely specified concern

"several matters to attend to"

afford /ə'fɔ:d/

A2

be able to spare or give up

"I can't afford to spend two hours with this person"

afraid /ə'freɪd/

A2

filled with fear or apprehension

"afraid even to turn his head"

alive /ə'laɪv/

A2

possessing life

"the happiest person alive"

amazed /ə'meɪzd/

A2

affect with wonder

"Your ability to speak six languages amazes me!"

ancient /'eɪntʃənt/

A2

a very old person

"ancient history"

B1 words (10)

accommodate /ə'kʌmədeɪt/

B1

be agreeable or acceptable to

"This suits my needs"

adapt /ə'dæpt/

B1

make fit for, or change to suit a new purpose

"Adapt our native cuisine to the available food resources of the new country"

adjust /ə'dʒʌst/

B1

alter or regulate so as to achieve accuracy or conform to a standard

"Adjust the clock, please"

adjustment /ə'dʒʌstmənt/

B1

making or becoming suitable

"an allowance for profit"

adventure /əd'ventʃər/

B1

a wild and exciting undertaking (not necessarily lawful)

"When you buy these stocks you are gambling"

alarm /ə'lɑːm/

B1

fear resulting from the awareness of danger

"I was horrified at the thought of being late for my interview"

alike /ə'laɪk/

B1

having the same or similar characteristics

"all politicians are alike"

alter /'ɔːltər/

B1

cause to change

"The advent of the automobile may have altered the growth pattern of the city"

altogether /ˌɔltoʊ'geðər/

informal terms for nakedness

"in the raw"

B1

announcement /ə'naʊnsmənt/

a formal public statement

"the government made an announcement about changes in the drug war"

B1

B2 words (10)

abject /'æbdʒekt/

of the most contemptible kind

"abject cowardice"

B2

abode /ə'boʊd/

any address at which you dwell more than temporarily

"a person can have several residences"

B2

accuracy /'ækjərəsi/

the quality of being near to the true value

"he was beginning to doubt the accuracy of his compass"

B2

ache /eɪk/

a dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain

"Were you hurting after the accident?"

B2

acquaintance /ək'weɪntəns/

personal knowledge or information about someone or something

"I have trouble remembering the names of all my acquaintances"

B2

adamant /'ædəmənt/

very hard native crystalline carbon valued as a gem

"he is adamant in his refusal to change his mind"

B2

administer /əd'mɪnɪstər/

work in an administrative capacity

"administer a program"

B2

admiration /,ædmə'reɪʃən/

a feeling of delighted approval and liking

"a small token in admiration of your works"

B2

affection /ə'fekʃən/

B2

a positive feeling of liking

"he had trouble expressing the affection he felt"

affectionate /ə'fekʃənət/

B2

having or displaying warmth or affection

"affectionate children"

C1 words (9)

accustom /ə'kəstəm/

C1

make psychologically or physically used (to something)

"She became habituated to the background music"

acquaint /ək'weɪnt/

C1

cause to come to know personally

"permit me to acquaint you with my son"

affront /ə'frənt/

C1

a deliberately offensive act or something producing the effect of deliberate disrespect

"turning his back on me was a deliberate insult"

agitate /'ædʒə'teɪt/

C1

try to stir up public opinion

"The speaker charged up the crowd with his inflammatory remarks"

aldermen /'ɔldərmɪn/

C1

a member of a municipal legislative body (as a city council)

"aldermen usually represent city wards"

apoplectic /,æpə'plektɪk/

C1

pertaining to or characteristic of apoplexy

"apoplectic seizure"

apparition /,æpə'rɪʃən/

C1

a ghostly appearing figure

"we were unprepared for the apparition that confronted us"

appraise /ə'preɪz/

C1

evaluate or estimate the nature, quality, ability, extent, or significance of

"I will have the family jewels appraised by a professional"

archway /'ɑːtʃ,weɪ/

C1

a passageway under a curved masonry construction

"they built a triumphal arch to memorialize their victory"

C2 words (9)

adjoin /ə'dʒɔɪn/

C2

lie adjacent to another or share a boundary

"Canada adjoins the U.S."

appal

C2

strike with disgust or revulsion

"The scandalous behavior of this married woman shocked her friends"

bareness

C2

a bleak and desolate atmosphere

"the nakedness of the landscape"

barer

C2

completely unclothed

"bare bodies"

bedight

C2

decorate

"deck the halls with holly"

behindhand

C2

behind schedule

"was behindhand with the rent"

besought

C2

ask for or request earnestly

"The prophet bid all people to become good persons"

bewilder /bi'wɪldə/

C2

be a mystery or bewildering to

"This beats me!"

bitterer

C2

marked by strong resentment or cynicism

"an acrimonious dispute"

Read it along with audio — tap any word to hear it and see it highlighted in the sentence:

<https://readingcorner.uk/books/a-christmas-carol/vocabulary>