

## **hoard** (hôrd)

*noun*

A hidden fund or supply stored for future use; a cache.

*verb*

**1.** To gather or accumulate a hoard. **2.** To keep hidden or private.

[Middle English *hord*, from Old English.]

❖ The words *hoard* and *horde* sound alike and can be confused. The word *hoard* is both a noun and a verb. A *hoard* is a cache, a hidden fund or supply stored for future use; to *hoard* something is to gather or accumulate a hoard of it, often obsessively. The word sometimes is used in the plural to mean “a great deal,” as in *a financier with hoards of money*. *Hoard* is an old Germanic word derived from an Indo-European root.

The noun *horde*, which looks like a close cousin, is actually of Turkic origin and originally referred to a collection of families forming a tribe or group. In English, it is used to refer to any large group, especially a crowd or swarm. There is no verb *horde*.

*Hoard* is used primarily of inanimate objects and abstractions, while *horde* applies to people and other living things, such as insects. Only a horde of reporters should follow a movie star around, never a hoard. When large numbers of people are turning up in different places, the plural *hordes* is common: *hordes of students returning to campus, hordes of volunteers helping to get out the vote*.

He was a legend in Mississippi politics, the fixer, the inveterate meddler in local races, . . . the bank who could finance any race and funnel **hoards** of cash, the wise old man who led his party, and the thug who destroyed the others.

—John Grisham, *The Appeal*

She's more solicitous towards him than she's been in months—makes his favorite, milk jelly, for Sunday breakfast—though she knows that somehow this care is calculated, a **hoard** of love she's storing up in the hope she might draw on it later, if he finds out about the baby.

—Peter Ho Davies, *The Welsh Girl*

Under the blanket she **hoarded** the remains of the store bread.

—John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Sanity is a valuable possession; I hoard it the way people once **hoarded** money. I save it, so I will have enough, when the time comes.

—Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*