

Negro



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Negro is a term referring to people of Black ancestry. Prior to the shift in the lexicon of American and worldwide classification of race and ethnicity in the late 1960s, the appellation was accepted as a normal neutral formal term both by those of Black African descent as well as non-African blacks. Now it is often considered an ethnic slur^{[1][2][3]} although the term is considered archaic and is not common as a racist slur. The term is still used in some contexts for historical reasons such as in the name of the United Negro College Fund.^{[4][5]} "Negro" means "black" in Spanish, Portuguese, and ancient Italian^[6]; all of these derive from the Latin *niger* (i.e. "black").

Modern synonyms in common use include the following:

- Black
- Black African
- African American (in U.S.A.)

"Negro" superseded "colored" as the most polite terminology, at a time when "black" was still generally regarded as negative.^[7]

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In English

Around 1442, the Portuguese first arrived in sub-Saharan Africa while trying to find a sea route to India. The term *negro*, literally meaning "black", was used by the Spanish and Portuguese to refer to people. From the 18th century to the mid-20th century, "negro" (later capitalized) was considered the proper English term for all people of sub-Saharan African origin.

It fell out of favor by the 1970s in the United States after the Civil Rights movement. However, older African Americans from the period when "Negro" was considered acceptable, initially found the term "Black" more offensive than "Negro". Evidence for this is in historical African-American organizations and institutions' use of the term--such as the United Negro College Fund. In current English language usage, "Negro" is generally considered acceptable in a historical context, such as baseball's Negro Leagues of the early and mid-20th century, or in the name of older organizations, as in Negro spirituals, the United Negro College Fund or the Journal of Negro Education. The U.S. Census now uses the grouping "Black or African American."

A specifically female form of the word—*negress* (sometimes capitalized)—was sometimes used; but, like another gender-specific word "Jewess", it has all but completely fallen from use. (An exception is its extremely unusual use in the titles of paintings, drawings^[1] and sculptures,^[2] largely as an allusion to

the formerly common occurrence of the word in such titles, but such usage has dropped off dramatically.) Both are considered racist and sexist, although as with other racial, ethnic, and sexual words that are seen as pejoratives, some individuals have tried "reclaiming" the word. An example of this is artist Kara Walker. [3]

The related word *Negroid* was used by 19th and 20th century racial anthropologists. The suffix -oid means "similar to" and is meant to designate a wider or more generalized category than the original word.

In other languages

In Portuguese, *negro* is an adjective meaning the color black, as in 'black' person. However, *preto* is the most common antonym of *branco* (white), while *negro* can be condescending, since it is a word generally associated with higher registers. In Brazil the word is considered respectful and the appropriate manner to refer to the black race, though it is often considered impolite to take note of an individual's skin color in any context (which causes the word to be used only in reported speech or in third-person). Interestingly, while in Brazil *negro* is the most respectful way to address the African ethnicity, with *preto* being considered a racial slur, the reverse is true in Portugal. Although in European Portuguese *negro* is not considered offensive by most, *preto* is the more common term.

In Spain, *negro* (note that ethnonyms are generally not capitalized in Romance languages) means "black person" in colloquial situations, but it can be considered derogatory in other situations (for example, by French influence, *negro* is also the word for a ghost writer^[8]). However, in Spanish-speaking countries, such as Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, *negro* (*negra* for females) is commonly used to refer to partners, close friends^[8] or people in general independent of skin color.

It is similar to the use of the word "nigga" in urban communities in the U.S. For example, one may say to a friend, "*Negro ¿Como andas?* (Literally, "Hey, black one, how are you doing?") In this case the diminutive *negrito* is used, as a term of endearment meaning "pal", or "buddy" or "friend." *Negrito* has come to be used to refer to a person of any ethnicity or color, and also can have a sentimental or romantic connotation similar to "sweetheart," or "dear" in English. (In the Philippines, *Negrito* was used for a local dark-skinned short person, living in the Negros islands among other places)

In other Spanish-speaking South American countries, the word *negro* can also be employed in a roughly equivalent form, though it is not usually considered to be as widespread as in Argentina or Uruguay (except perhaps in a limited regional and/or social context).

The popular Argentinian singer Mercedes Sosa is nicknamed "La Negra" by her fans, which in this case refers to the colour of her hair rather than of her skin.

Moreno^[9] can be used as a euphemism but it also means just "tanned" or *brunette*.

In Haitian Creole the word *nèg*, derived from the French "nègre", refers to a dark-skinned man; it can also be used for any man, regardless of skin color, roughly like "guy" or "dude" in American English.

The Dutch "neger" is generally (but not universally) considered as neutral, or at least less negative than "zwarte" (black one).

In German, *Neger* used to be considered a neutral term for black people, however gradually fell out of favour throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Nowadays it is largely considered a racist slur due to its phonetic

similarity to *nigger*, and only used without racist connotation by members of the pre-baby boomer generation. Otherwise, the term *Schwarzer* (black person) is preferred or *Farbiger* (colored person). There is a candy traditionally called Negerkuss (literally "negro kiss"). Due to its arguably offensive character, the name is used less.

In Russia the term "*негр*" (*negr*) was commonly used in the Soviet period without any negative connotation, and its use continues in this neutral sense. In modern Russian media, the word is used somewhat less frequently - "*африканцы*" ("Africans") or "*афро-американцы*" ("Afro-Americans") are used instead, depending on the situation), but is still common in oral speech. The word "black" (чёрный) as a noun used as a form of address is pejorative, although it is primarily used with respect to peoples of the Caucasus, natives of Central Asia, and not black people. The word "black" (чёрный) as an adjective is also used in a neutral sense and means the same as "*негр*" (*negr*), e.g. "*чёрные американцы*" (*black Americans*), "*чёрное население*" (*the black population*), etc. Other alternatives to "*негр*" are *темнокожий* (*temnokozhiy* - "dark-skinned"), *чернокожий* (*chernokozhiy* - "black-skinned"). These two are used as both nouns and adjectives.

In Italy *negro* was used as a neutral term until the end of the 60's. Nowadays the word is considered offensive in some contexts; if used with a clear negative intention it may be punished by law. Neutral words to define a black or dark skinned person without risking to result offensive are *nero* (arcaism of *negro*, literally "black") or *di colore* (coloured - or literally 'of colour').

In Swedish *neger* used to be considered a neutral term for black people, but the term has gradually fell out of favour through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Today the neutral term to define a black person is *svart* (literally "black"). There is a Swedish pastry traditionally called *negerboll* (literally "negro ball"). Due to its possible offensive character, the name has fallen out of favor in for example new cooking books. Though it's still used colloquially.

In Finnish it is unclear whether the word *neekeri* (*nigger*) was considered a neutral term for black people [10]. Very few — if literally any — black people lived in Finland before the 1960s. The term has gradually fallen out of favour ever since, and has been replaced with the neutral *musta* ("black"). In 2002 *neekeri's* definition was changed from *perceived as derogatory by some* to *generally derogatory* in line with *ryssä* (Ruskie) and *hurri* (Swede) in *Kielitoimiston sanakirja* [10]. Also, there was a popular Finnish pastry called *Neekerinsuukko* (lit. "negro's kiss"). The manufacturer changed the name to *Suukko* ("kiss") in 2001 [10]. Today, neutral terms to define a black person include *musta* ("black"), *tumma* (lit. "dark-shaded"), *tummaihoinen* ("dark-skinned") and *mustaihoinen* ("black-skinned").

In French, the positive concept of *negritude* was developed by the Senegalese politician Leopold Senghor.

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See also

- African American
- Black people
- Negroid

- Zanj
- Human skin color
- Race (classification of human beings)
- Free Negro
- Creole
- Quadroon
- Ethnic slur
 - Coloured, Colored
 - Mulatto
 - Nigger
- Euphemism treadmill

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William Ellison

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

William “April” Ellison was a freed black slave who later became South Carolina’s largest Negro owner and trader of slaves.^[1]

Born as April Ellison in the late 1790’s, young Ellison worked for owner William McCreight as a cotton gin apprentice in Winnsboro, South Carolina. By the time he married at age 21, Ellison had learned the trades of blacksmithing, machining, and carpentry.

Given his freedom at age 26, Ellison changed his name to William, after his former owner. Using the skills he had learned earlier in life, Ellison became a successful businessman and mechanic^[2]

The 1850 United States Federal Census – Slave Schedules of Sumter County South Carolina lists a black man named Wm Ellison as an owner of thirty-six slaves^[3]; twenty-six male slaves (three ages 50, one age 48, one age 42, one age 39, one age 38, one age 35, one age 33, two ages 29, one age 28, one age 21, one age 20, one age 15, one age 12, one age 9, one age 8, one age 7, one age 5, three ages 3, one 1 year old, one 2 month old, and one 1 month old) and ten female slaves (one age 48, one age 29, one age 26, one age 25, one age 24, one age 22, one age 20, two age 18, and age 5). By 1860, Ellison owned 63 slaves and 900 acres.^[4]

Ellison was a supporter of the Confederate cause. After his death in December 1861, his sons and daughters continued to hold their father’s views on the war. His eldest grandson, Buckner Ellison, fought in the 1st South Carolina Artillery in 1863 while William’s sons and daughters invested their late father’s estate into the Confederate cause, buying bonds, treasury notes, certificates, and Confederacy currency in support of the war. By the war’s end, these investments were worthless and the remnants of the Ellison Estate quickly dwindled during Reconstruction.

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