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Grammarsaurus



Santa Claus

"Saint Nicholas"

Have you ever wondered where the name **Santa Claus** comes from?

Hundreds of years ago, people in the Netherlands celebrated **Saint Nicholas**, a Christian bishop remembered for his generosity and kindness.

In Dutch, his name became **Sinterklaas**, a shortened form of **Sint Nikolaas**, meaning "**Saint Nicholas**".

Around 400 years ago, when Dutch settlers brought their traditions to America, English speakers gradually changed the name **Sinterklaas** into **Santa Claus**!

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The word **Santa** is related to words meaning "**saint**"!

In fact, English has several related word forms that share this meaning, including **saint** and **sanct**.

These all have histories connected to the Latin word **sanctus**, meaning "**holy or sacred**".

Let's spot these different forms in other English words.

saint	**sanctuary**
saintly	**sanctify**
sainthood	**sanctified**
	sanctity

Discuss what these words mean.
You could look them up in a dictionary.
How do they bring a sense of "**holy or sacred**"?