



# Mad

The word *mad* is used in several different ways in American society. Three ways the word is commonly used are in reference to a person's excitement, anger, or mental instability.

Narrative texts often focus on the emotional development of the characters within a story. Students may encounter characters that are experiencing being *mad* in different ways. For example, the Mad Hatter in the classic novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is portrayed as being mentally unstable. This is different than a young girl who is *mad* about butterflies. This does not mean she is mentally unstable because of butterflies or that she is angry at butterflies. Rather, it means that she is excited about butterflies and wants to know everything about them.

## Follow-Up

- How is feeling mad about something you don't like different than feeling mad about something you do like?
- How could you distinguish between a person who was angry, excited, or mentally unstable?
- Have you ever felt a connection to a character in a story you have read that was mad about something?

## The Spanish Connection

The word mad comes from the Old English word *gemæded*, the past participle of *gemædan*, meaning to render insane. The word *mad* is also related to the Old High German word *gimeit*, meaning silly or crazy and the Old Norse word *meitha*, meaning to hurt or damage. *Mad* does not have a Spanish cognate, but many of its synonyms do.

## Word Changes

Interestingly, the Mad Hatter in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is inspired by the idiom "mad as a hatter." In the 18th and 19th century, Englishmen used a poisonous metal called mercury in the process of making hats. Hat makers would slowly lose their memory and appear to become crazy as the toxins built up in their bodies.



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## Mad as in to be in a mentally unstable state or mood (noun)

- crazy
- loony
- insane
- psychotic
- deranged
- demented
- disturbed
- frenzied
- manic
- agitated
- hysterical

## Mad as in to be excited about something (adj)

- crazy
- excited
- infatuated
- enthusiastic
- eager
- frantic

## Mad as in to be angry (adj)

- angry
- livid
- infuriated
- exasperated
- enraged
- irate
- cross
- annoyed
- furious
- irritated
- agitated



**Mad**

## COMMON PHRASES

- Method in one's madness
- Mad about you
- Madly in love
- To go mad (about, for, over)
- Mad scientist

## IDIOMS

- Mad as a hatter
- Like mad
- As mad as a hornet

## SPANISH CONNECTIONS

- enthusiastic / entusiasmado(a)
- demented / demente
- agitated / agitado(a)
- hysterical / histérico(a)
- livid / lívido(a)
- exasperated / exasperado
- furious / furioso(a)
- agitated / agitado(a)



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about something (adj)**

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or mood (noun)**

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(adj)**



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**COMMON PHRASES**

**IDIOMS**

**SPANISH CONNECTIONS**





