block

noun, often attributive  |  \'bläk\'

Definition of BLOCK

1: a compact usually solid piece of substantial material especially when worked or altered to serve a particular purpose • a block of ice • blocks of cheese: such as
   a: the piece of wood on which the neck of a person condemned to be beheaded is laid for execution • put her neck on the block
   b: a mold or form on which articles are shaped or displayed • a wooden hat block
   c: a hollow rectangular building unit usually of artificial material • a wall of concrete blocks
   d: a lightweight usually cubical and solid wooden or plastic building toy that is usually provided in sets • children playing with blocks
   e: the casting that contains the cylinders of an internal combustion engine • engine block
   f: sports: starting block • the first swimmer off the blocks • a slow start out of the blocks

2 a: OBSTACLE • putting a block on any future development
   b: sports: an obstruction of an opponent's play; especially, football: a halting or impeding of the progress or movement of an opponent by use of the body • a block by the right tackle
   c: medical
      (1): interruption of normal physiological function (as of a tissue or organ); especially: heart block • The patient presented with a block.
      (2): local anesthesia (as by injection) produced by interruption of the flow of impulses along a nerve
   d: psychology: interruption or cessation especially of train of thought by competing thoughts or psychological suppression • a mental block • an emotional block — compare writer's block

3: slang: head 1 • threatened to knock his block off

4: a wooden or metal case enclosing one or more pulleys and having a hook, eye, or strap by which it may be attached

5: a piece of material (such as wood or linoleum) having on its surface a hand-cut design from which impressions are to be printed • wooden blocks used for printing books

6 a (1): a usually rectangular space (as in a city) enclosed by streets and occupied by or intended for buildings • She lived on our block.
   (2): the distance along one of the sides of such a block • The store is two blocks down on the right.
   • lived a block away from the school
   b: (1): a large building divided into separate functional units • an apartment block (2): a line of row houses (3): a distinctive part of a building or integrated group of buildings • a block of classrooms

7: a platform from which property is sold at auction • went on the block and sold for nearly three million dollars

8: a: a quantity, number, or section of things dealt with as a unit • bought a large block of shares • a half-hour block of music • a block of text
   b: block 2 • popular among several voting blocks

—around the block

: through many experiences —used especially to say that someone is no longer young or has become knowledgeable, capable, or mature because of past experience
   • they seemed possible to fall for a woman who had been around the block a few times might
be to rob himself of much of the purely ornamental elements ... of first love. —Michael Chabon

—on the block
: for sale • The business is now on the block.

See block defined for English-language learners
See block defined for kids

Examples of block in a Sentence

a wall built out of concrete blocks
We took a walk around the block.
She lived on our block.
The store is three blocks down on the right.
Our hotel is a block from the ocean.