

# aristocracy

[ˌæɪˈstɒkrəsi] *n*

- 1) аристократия высший слой дворянства, родовитая знать
- 2) высший слой (общества); избранные; элита  
aristocracy of talent - творческая элита
2. *uctm.* аристократия государственное устройство, основанное на власти знати

## aristocracy

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 8th Ed.

**ar-is-toc-racy** [aristocracy aristocracies] *BrE* [ˌæɪˈstɒkrəsi] <sup>m</sup> *NAmE*

[ˌæɪˈstɒkrəsi] <sup>m</sup> **noun countable + singular or plural verb** (pl. **ar-is-toc-racies**)

(in some countries) people born in the highest social class, who have special titles

**Syn:** ↑nobility

- members of the aristocracy
- the shift of power from the aristocracy to the bourgeoisie

### Word Origin:

late 15th cent.: from Old French **aristocratie**, from Greek **aristokratia**, from **aristos** 'best' + **-kratia** 'power'. The term originally denoted the government of a state by its best citizens, later by the rich and well born, hence the sense 'nobility', regardless of the form of government (mid 17th cent.).

### Culture:

#### the aristocracy

British society still has quite a strong class system which is based on birth and social position. The upper class consists mainly of members of the aristocracy. The most senior are the ↑royal family and members of the ↑peerage. Next below them are ↑baronets. Baronets have **hereditary titles** (= ranks passed on in the family from one generation to the next) but, unlike some peers, are not allowed to sit in the ↑House of Lords. Below this there are various **orders of knighthood**.

**Knights** are appointed by the king or queen. In ↑medieval times soldiers were made knights in recognition of military service for their local lord. Today, knighthoods and other ↑honours are announced at ↑New Year or on the king's or queen's birthday and are given in **recognition** of distinguished public service or achievement. New knights receive their title at a special ceremony, during which they kneel before the king or queen, who taps them once on each shoulder with a **sword**. Knights may put **Sir** (for men) or **Dame** (for women) before their first name, and are allowed to have their own **coat of arms** (= a family symbol, usually a design on a shield).

The oldest order of knighthood in England, which is also the oldest **order of chivalry** in Europe, is the ↑Order of the Garter. There are 25 Knights of the Garter, in addition to the king or queen and the ↑Prince of Wales. Other senior orders of knighthood include the ↑Order of the Thistle, the ↑Order of the Bath, the ↑Order of the British Empire and the Royal Victorian Order. Letters after a person's name indicate which order he or she belongs to. Other knights are known as **knights bachelor**.

People who have an upper-class family background may be considered as part of the local aristocracy even if they do not have a title. They often have an upper-class accent and **Conservative** social and political views and are referred to as **the county set**. Members of the aristocracy are sometimes described as 'blue-blooded', because in former times their veins showed blue through their skin which was pale from not having to work in the fields. They are also referred to informally as 'the upper crust', or more rudely as 'toffs'. Formerly, members of the aristocracy could command respect because of their noble birth. Nowadays, people are much more critical of those who inherit honours but who from their behaviour do not appear to deserve them.

The US has no formal aristocracy in that there are no families who have been given titles by the head of state. In fact, the **Constitution** forbids an aristocracy, saying 'No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States.' Perhaps because of this, Americans are very interested in Britain's royal family and nobility. There is, however, respect for US families who, though they do not have titles, have wealth and a social position similar to the British aristocracy. Class in the US is, to a large extent, based on money, but some people have more respect for **old money** (= money, land, etc. that has belonged to a family for many years) than **new money** (= money that a person has earned by working). The ↑Boston Brahmins are the old, traditional families of ↑Boston and they, together with groups of old families from other parts of the US, make up a type of American aristocracy.

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Longman DOCE 5th Ed. (En-En)

**ar-is-toc-ra-cy** /ˌæɪˈstɒkrəsi, ˌæɪˈstɒkrəsi \$ -'stɑː-/ *BrE* <sup>m</sup> *AmE* <sup>m</sup> **noun** (plural

**aristocracies**)

[**Date:** 1400-1500; **Language:** French; **Origin:** aristocratie, from Late Latin, from Greek aristokratia, from aristos 'best' + -kratia '-cracy']

[**countable usually singular**] the people in the highest social class, who traditionally have a lot of land, money, and power:

dukes, earls, and other members of the aristocracy

the landed aristocracy (=who own a lot of land) ⇔ ↑upper class

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RANGE: **9k** ARISTOCRACY <sup>865</sup>

aristocracy <sup>851</sup>

aristocracies <sup>14</sup>

COCA 500k Unlemmatized

<sup>555</sup> **23454**<sup>843</sup> *nn1*

<sup>8</sup> **293775**<sup>8</sup> *nnu*