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char·ac·ter·is·tic [kär-ik-tuh-ris-tik] ? [Show IPA](#)

–adjective

- Also, **char·ac·ter·is·ti·cal**. pertaining to, constituting, or indicating the character or peculiar quality of a person or thing; typical; distinctive: *Red and gold are the characteristic colors of autumn.*

–noun

- a distinguishing feature or quality: *Generosity is his chief characteristic.*
- Mathematics.*
 - the integral part of a common logarithm. Compare [MANTISSA](#).
 - the exponent of 10 in a number expressed in scientific notation.
 - the smallest positive integer n such that each element of a given ring added to itself n times results in 0.

Origin:

1655–65; < Gk *charaktēristikós*. See [CHARACTER](#), [-ISTIC](#)

Related forms:

char·ac·ter·is·ti·cal·ly, *adverb*

Synonyms:

1. special, peculiar. 2. attribute, property, trait. See [FEATURE](#).

Dictionary.com Unabridged

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char·ac·ter·is·tic (kär'äk-tə-ris'tik) ?

adj. Being a feature that helps to distinguish a person or thing; distinctive: *heard my friend's characteristic laugh; the stripes that are characteristic of the zebra.*

n.

- A feature that helps to identify, tell apart, or describe recognizably; a distinguishing mark or trait.
- Mathematics* The integral part of a logarithm as distinguished from the mantissa: *The characteristic of the logarithm 6.3214*

is 6.

3. *Mathematics* The least number of times the multiplicative identity in a ring needs to be added to itself to reach the additive identity, or, if the additive identity is never reached, zero. The integers have a characteristic of zero; the integers modulus 12 have a characteristic of 12.

char'ac-ter-is'ti-cal-ly *adv.*

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Characteristic

Char`ac*ter*is'tic\, a. [Gr. ?; cf. F. caract[*e*]ristique.] Pertaining to, or serving to constitute, the character; showing the character, or distinctive qualities or traits, of a person or thing; peculiar; distinctive.

Characteristic clearness of temper. --Macaulay.

Characteristic

Char`ac*ter*is'tic\, n. 1. A distinguishing trait, quality, or property; an element of character; that which characterized. --Pope.

The characteristics of a true critic. --Johnson.

2. (Math.) The integral part (whether positive or negative) of a logarithm.

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Language Translation for : characteristic

Spanish: **característico**, German: **bezeichnend**,

Japanese: **特有な**

[More Translations »](#)

Main Entry: **¹char-ac-ter-is-tic**

Pronunciation: "kar-ik-t&-'ris-tik

Function: *adjective*

: serving to reveal and distinguish the individual character

—**char-ac-ter-is-ti-cal-ly** /-ti-k(&-)IE/ *adverb*

Main Entry: **²characteristic**

Function: *noun*

: a distinguishing trait, quality, or property

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characteristic char-ac-ter-is-tic (kār'ək-tə-rīs'tik)

n.

See [character](#).

char'ac-ter-is'tic *adj.*

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characteristic (kār'ək-tə-rīs'tik) [Pronunciation Key](#)

The part of a logarithm to the base 10 that is to the left of the decimal point. For example, if 2.749 is a logarithm, 2 is the characteristic. Compare [mantissa](#).

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