



Sealaska Heritage Institute

One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 301 • Juneau • Alaska • 99801-1249 • (907) 463-4844
www.sealaskaheritage.org • www.alaskanativeartists.com • Fax (907) 586-9293

Alaskan Haida Words for Cultural & Ethnographic Objects

As an organization representing the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people, and an organization that also cares for cultural and ethnographic objects, Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) occasionally receives inquiries about the linguistic terms for cultural and ethnographic objects. These inquiries come from practicing artists, educators, museums, and other interested researchers. As a result, Sealaska Heritage Institute compiled a list of Haida language terms for cultural objects and material types from *Dictionary of Alaskan Haida*, which was compiled by Dr. Jordan Lachler and published by SHI in 2010. While this list is not exhaustive, it does provide Haida words for the most common cultural objects and material types. For those interested in examples of how the Haida language has been used in art publications, for Alaskan Haida see; *Living Our Cultures, Sharing Our Heritage: The First Peoples of Alaska* (2010), and for British Columbia Haida see; *The Spirit Within: Northwest Coast Native Art from the John H. Hauberg Collection* (1995).

MATERIAL:

Abalone

abalone: gúlaa, gálgahl'yaan.

Argillite

argillite: kwaa s'aláa.

Baleen

baleen: kún ts'áng.

Birch

birch (tree or wood): ad daayii.

Cedar

medium-sized red cedar tree; cambium or inner bark of; typically used for weaving: giid.

red cedar (wood or tree): ts'úu.

yellow cedar (wood or tree): sGahláan.

Cedar Bark

cambium or inner bark of a yellow cedar tree: sGahláan giidáay.

rough outer bark of a young cedar tree: sk'áluj.

shredded red cedar cambium: hltánhik'aa.

half that was next to the tree after cedar bark is split: chíihluu.

Ermine

(brown) weasel, ermine: daayáats'.

Feather

its small feather, its down (of a bird): hltánuu.

Hide (n)

tanned skin or hide, leather: sgat'áal.

Horn

(animal) horn, antler: k'im.

carved dish made from mountain sheep horn: skuj kiíhlaa.

small black spoon made from mountain goat horn.: sdláagwaal xasáa.

Operculum

operculum of the red turban: guhlgadáang.

Puffin Beak

puffin beak: kwaanáa kún.

Sea Lion Whisker

a sea lion's whisker: sk'iwii.

Sea Otter Pelt

sea otter pelt: náak'.

Skin

tanned skin or hide, leather: sgat'áal.

Spruce Root

long, fine spruce or evergreen root: 'hling.

CULTURAL OBJECTS:**Apron**

apron, breechcloth, dance apron: kán gigáa.

dancing apron: k'ánj hlgagáa, k'itl'agáa.

Argillite Art

argillite plate: kwaa kiíhlaa.

argillite pole: kwaa gyáa'angaa.

Arrow

arrow: jat'aláng, k'ungaal.

arrowhead: ts'at'aláng kún.

Basketry

a type of large basket: ts'alaad.

(a type of) spruce root basket: kigw.

clam basket, seaweed basket: káadii.

fish basket: k'áadu.

flat, open berry-winnowing basket or plaque: k'agdáahl.

large basket for carrying dry items (usually made of spruce root): ts'áan tl'at'áas.

basket lid: kigw Gáal.

Bow

bow (weapon): hlgíid.

bowstring: hlgíid dáagal.

Box or Chest

bentwood box, storage box: táwtʰ.

blanket chest made of eucalyptus wood: Gud sgúnulaas.

Bracelet

silver bracelet: dáalaa stlagáa.

copper bracelet: xáal stlagáa.

gold bracelet: gúul stlagáa.

Chilkat Robe

Chilkat robe: náaxiin.

Club

club, sword: saj.

warclub with an antler head: skuj hlGa tlʰúu.

whalebone club: kún sajáay.

Comb

comb: hlkʰítlʰaangw.

Copper Shield

copper shield: tʰáaw.

Crest

crest: kuniisii.

crest, object with a representation of a crest on it: gyáagaa.

Haida crest: giuhaang, Xaadas gyáagaa.

one's clan crest: Gasíi.

the call of one's crest creature: kʰiihlgáangw.

Dagger

dagger: kʰaawhl.

Dancing Bib

beaded dancing bib: kán tlʰagáa.

Drum

drum: gáwjaaw.

Haida drum: Xaadas gáwjaawaa.

skin drum: kʰíis gáwjaaw.

Front of Headdress

carved front of a ceremonial headdress: xáng.

Halibut Hook

traditional wooden halibut hook: xagw táawaay, táaw.

wooden halibut hook: xagw tʰáawal.

Hammer

rock hammer: kwaa tlʰahláa.

Hat

a Haida style hat (spruce root or cedar bark): Xaadas dajāangaa.

cedar bark hat: giid dajāangaa.

dance hat; hat: Xaadas sadáa.

spruce root hat with one or more potlatch rings: dajāng sgíilaa, sgíl dajāng.

Headdress

ceremonial headdress: jahlk', sakiid.

Horn Spoon

small black spoon made from mountain goat horn: sɫáagwaal xasáa.

carved dish made from mountain sheep horn: skuj kíihlaa.

Hudson's Bay Blanket

blue Hudson's Bay blanket: Guhl gijáaw.

Hudson's Bay blanket: Gáahldaaw.

Hudson's Bay blanket with multi-colored stripes: gínt'as sk'agáas.

light brown Hudson's Bay trade blanket: sgánsngwaan.

red Hudson's Bay blanket: sGid gijáaw.

white Hudson's Bay blanket or potlatch blanket: Ga hlk'ujáaw.

Knife

long-handled knife used in canoe making: tlúu sk'at'íis kist'áawaay.

any kind of sharp knife: k'it'uhl 'la'áaw.

curved knife used for carving: k'uhláalw.

drawknife: sínggals yaats'áay.

knife: ya'áats'

Labret

labret: stíidgaa.

Ladle

ladle: Gatl'áaw, ta dagáalw.

Legging

legging: k'ihlgáa.

Mask

Haida mask: Xaadas níjaangwaa.

mask: níjaangw.

Mat

finely woven waterproof mat worn around the waist while in a canoe: Gid gihlálw.

mat: lagúus.

mat cover for a canoe: tɫask'udáaw.

mat used to cover a pit for steaming food: hltálg.

tarp, large waterproof mat used to cover cargo or persons aboard a canoe: t'éeł Ganuu.

Necklace

necklace: gin kán xugangáa, kán xudáangw, xíihl t'agáng, xíihl sGagáangaa, xíihl t'agáa.

shaman's bone-charm necklace: kan jagáa.

shaman's bone necklace: skuj xíihl jagáay.

Nose Ring

copper nose ring: xáal kún sdagáa.

nose ring: kún sdagáa, kún sdajáaw.

Paddle

Haida paddle: Xaadas áalaa.

oar, paddle: áal.

steering paddle: sgindaaw.

Rattle

(generic) rattle: sasáa.
rattle (for dancing or as used by traditional doctors): giídaaw.
rattle in the image of a mallard: x̄aag níjangaay sasáa.
raven rattle: sasáa.

Robe

ceremonial robe: xyáahl gin-gáay.
Chilkat robe: náaxiin.

Totem or Housefront Pole

totem pole, housefront pole: gyáa'aang.
housefront pole with a doorway through it: k'yúu.
memorial column, memorial pole: k'áal.

War Apparel

fighting cloths, war apparel: Gaayhldáa gya'ánsk'waay.
war clothes: Kíidaaw gin-gáay.
legging, greave (shin armor): x̄aat'ask'w.
hide armor shirt: k'a k'áy.
hide body armor: chat'iisk'w.
gorget (throat armor): k'u Gagáa.
helmet (armor): skahl dajáng.
war helmet: sGats' dajangáay.
wooden helmet (armor): Gaayhldáa dajangáay.
breastplate, cuirass (armor): kít'iid.