Supernova  
   
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A supernova (pl.: supernovae) is a powerful and luminous explosion of a star. A supernova occurs  
during the last evolutionary stages of a massive star, or when a white dwarf is triggered into runaway  
nuclear fusion. The original object, called the progenitor, either collapses to a neutron star or black  
hole, or is completely destroyed to form a diffuse nebula. The peak optical luminosity of a supernova  
can be comparable to that of an entire galaxy before fading over several