

< acquire



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acquire verb

ac·quire

ə-ˈkwī(-ə)r ◀▶▶

acquired; acquiring

[Synonyms of *acquire* >](#)

transitive verb

1 : to get as one's own:**a** : to come into possession or control of often by unspecified means*acquire* propertyThe team *acquired* three new players this year.**b** : to come to have as a new or added characteristic, trait, or ability (as by sustained effort or natural selection)*acquire* fluency in Frenchbacteria that *acquire* tolerance to antibiotics**2** : to locate and hold (a desired object) in a detector*acquire* a target by radar[cultivate](#)[develop](#)



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The two ships were *acquired* by the navy after the war.

The team *acquired* three new players this year.

The old word has *acquired* a new meaning.

This apparently minor event has *acquired* increasing significance in recent weeks.

He is studying the way that language is *acquired* by children.

Recent Examples on the Web

It is spread by mosquitos and, while people of all ages are at risk, those older than 50 and younger than 15 are at the greatest risk of *acquiring* the virus, according to health officials.

— Leada Gore | Lgore@al.com, *al*, 24 Aug. 2023

Since *acquiring* Betts, the Dodgers are 338-172, have won a World Series, and are likely heading for their third consecutive 100-win, first-place season.

— Globe Staff, *BostonGlobe.com*, 24 Aug. 2023

That appears to leave Lance – the third overall pick of the 2021 draft, a selection that cost Shanahan and GM John Lynch three first-rounders to *acquire* – as the odd man out, even if the organization continues to have a certain belief and affinity for the 23-year-old North Dakota State product.

— Nate Davis, *USA TODAY*, 24 Aug. 2023



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Merriam-Webster or its editors. [Send us feedback](#) about these examples.

Etymology

borrowed from Latin *acquīrere*, from *ad-* [AD-](#) + *quaerere* "to seek, gain, obtain, enquire"; replacing earlier *aquere*, going back to Middle English *aqweren*, borrowed from Anglo-French *acquerre*, going back to Vulgar Latin **acquaerere*, restructuring (by restoring the vocalism of *quaerere*) of *acquīrere* — more at [QUEST entry 1](#)

First Known Use

15th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

Time Traveler

The first known use of *acquire* was in the 15th century

[See more words from the same century](#)

[acquire a reputation](#)



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Style

MLA

"Acquire." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/acquire>. Accessed 30 Aug. 2023.

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acquire verb

ac·quire

ə-ˈkwī(ə)r

acquired; acquiring

: to come to have often by one's own efforts : **GAIN**



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acquire transitive verb

ac·quire ə-ˈkwī(ə)r 

acquired; acquiring

: to come to have as a new or additional characteristic, trait, or ability (as by sustained effort, by mutation, or through environmental forces)

a cognitive system ... that is *acquired* in early childhood

— Noam Chomsky

bacteria that *acquire* tolerance to antibiotics

insects that *acquire* resistance to insecticides



acquire transitive verb

ac·quire ə-ˈkwīr 

acquired; acquiring

: to come into possession, ownership, or control of : obtain as one's own

the target's directors don't want the company to be *acquired*

— R. C. Clark

the court *acquired* jurisdiction



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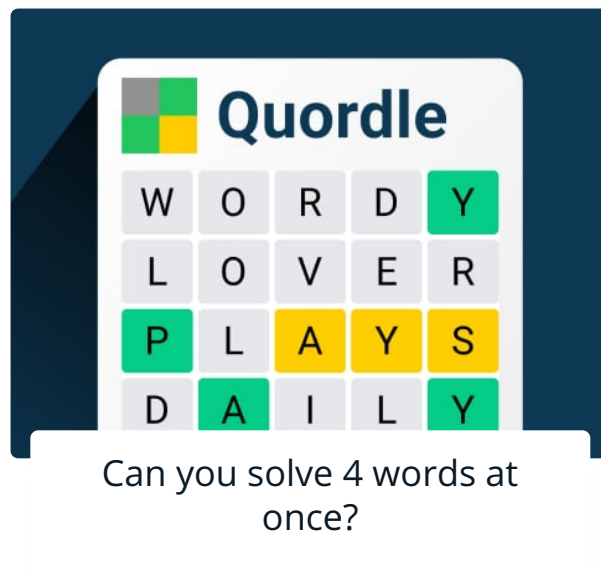
English: [Translation of *acquire* for Spanish Speakers](#)Britannica English: [Translation of *acquire* for Arabic Speakers](#)

Last Updated: 27 Aug 2023 - Updated example sentences

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