



lateral

verb 3 ▼

Did you know?



Synonyms

Example Sentences

Word History

Phras

# lateral

1 of 3

adjective

lat·er·al 'la-tə-rəl also 'la-trəl[Synonyms of lateral >](#)

- 1 : of or relating to the side  
a *lateral* view
- 2 : situated on, directed toward, or coming from the side  
the *lateral* branches of a tree
- 3 : extending from side to side  
the *lateral* axis of an airplane
- 4 **phonetics** : produced with passage of breath around the side of a constriction formed with the tongue  
\\ is *lateral*

adverb

# lateral

2 of 3

noun

- 1 : a branch from the main part (as in an irrigation or electrical system)
- 2 : a pass in football thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or in a direction away

verb **3**

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: to throw a lateral

Ad removed. [Details](#)

Lateral shows up in all kinds of contexts. A lateral job change is one that keeps you at about the same job level and salary. A coach might have special drills to improve his players' lateral speed and agility. The British speak of "lateral thinking", thinking that grabs ideas that may not seem to be relevant but turn out to work well—what we might call "thinking outside the box". But we know *lateral* best from football. A lateral pass is a pass of the ball between teammates that usually goes to the side and slightly backward from the direction in which they're advancing; unlike a forward pass, a lateral may be made from any position, and any number may be made in a single play.



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[See all Synonyms & Antonyms in Thesaurus >](#)

## Adjective

the **lateral** force of an earthquake

from the **lateral** view you can see how thick the wall really is

## Recent Examples on the Web

### Adjective

So offensive coordinator Mike Kafka seemingly was prevented from making a **lateral** move to Seattle only to lose play-calling duties.

— Pat Leonard, *New York Daily News*, 15 July 2024

That, as much as anything, would make the case for making **lateral** moves, late this summer, if the Heat discovers no realistic way to augment its roster.

— Barry Jackson, *Miami Herald*, 1 July 2024

### Noun

The **lateral** is now scheduled to reopen during the week of September 9, according to ODOT.

— Reba Hodges, *The Enquirer*, 20 July 2024



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before UAB put together a strong drive into Louisiana Tech territory that ended with Williamson grabbing his second pick of the game and **lateral** it to Khalil Ladler for an 80-yard touchdown return.

— Evan Dudley, *al*, 1 Nov. 2020

By all accounts, there were no orders from Bill Belichick or Matt Patricia to **lateral** the ball and try to create a scoring play.

— Ben Volin, *BostonGlobe.com*, 22 Dec. 2022

[See all Example Sentences for lateral >](#)

These examples are programmatically compiled from various online sources to illustrate current usage of the word 'lateral.' Any opinions expressed in the examples do not represent those of Merriam-Webster or its editors. [Send us feedback](#) about these examples.

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15th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)**Noun**1578, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)**Verb**1930, in the meaning defined [above](#)**Time Traveler****The first known use of *lateral* was in the 15th century**[See more words from the same century](#)[amyotrophic lateral sclerosis](#)[lateral bud](#)[lateral line](#)[lateral thinking](#)[laterad](#)**lateral**[lateral bud](#)



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Style

MLA

"Lateral." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lateral>. Accessed 12 Sep. 2024.

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# lateral

1 of 2

adjective

lat·er·al   ['lat-ə-rəl](#)   'la-trəl

- 1** : of or relating to the side : located on, directed toward, or coming from the side
- 2** : being a part of the boundary of a solid in geometry that is not a base or completely included in a base
  - a *lateral* edge of a prism
  - a *lateral* face

**-ē** adverb



verb 3 ▼

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# lateral adjective

lat·er·al ('lat-ə-rəl, 'la-trəl ▶▶)

: of or relating to the side

*especially, of a body part* : lying at or extending toward the right or left side : lying away from the median axis of the body

the lungs are *lateral* to the heart

the *lateral* branch of the axillary artery

verb **3** ✓

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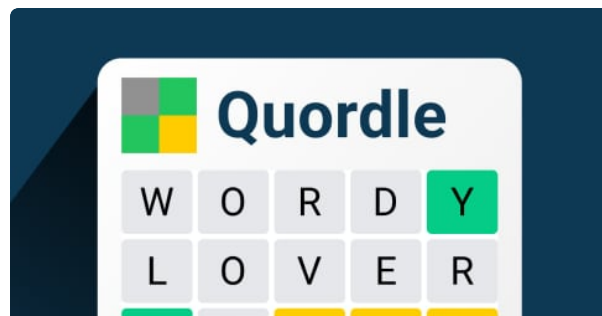
Phras

Last Updated: 5 Sep 2024 - Updated example sentences

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