



Meaning of **retain** in English



retain

verb [T]

UK /rɪ'teɪn/ US /rɪ'teɪn/

Add to word list

C2 formal

to keep or continue to have something:

- *She has lost her battle to retain **control** of the company.*
- *He managed to retain his dignity throughout the performance.*
- *She succeeded in retaining her lead in the second half of the race.*
- *I have a good memory and am able to retain (= remember) facts easily.*

— **Thesaurus: synonyms, antonyms, and examples**

to keep something

keep *I've kept all my grandmother's jewellery.*

save I have some really good chocolates that I've been saving for a special occasion.

hang onto You should hang onto that picture - it might be worth something.

See more results »



formal

If a substance retains something, such as heat or water, it continues to hold or contain it:

- *The sea retains the sun's warmth longer than the land.*

See also

retention formal



LAW • specialized

to get the services of a lawyer by paying them before you need them

+ More examples

+ SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases

(Definition of **retain** from the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus © Cambridge University Press)

retain | AMERICAN DICTIONARY

retain

verb [T]

US /rɪˈteɪn/





- *Francis retained control of the company.*
- *His capacity to retain (= remember) facts was as keen as ever, but he had trouble remembering people's names.*

(Definition of **retain** from the [Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary](#) © Cambridge University Press)

retain | BUSINESS ENGLISH

retain

verb [T]

UK /rɪ'teɪn/ US

Add to word list

to keep or continue to have something, especially a position or money, or control of something:

- *Salespeople have developed novel ways to use the Web to reach or **retain customers**.*
- *You **retain the right** to take legal action if you do not accept his decision.*
- **retain control/ownership/possession** *The group will retain control of the business.*
- **retain a stake/an interest** *The family retains a minority stake in the company.*
- **retain your job/post** *Atkinson retained his post in the enlarged banking group.*

+

HR

to continue to employ people in a company or organization:

- **retain staff/talent/employees** *We will retain all of the employees currently employed at the plant.*
- *Companies will achieve a competitive advantage by **attracting and retaining** the best talent.*





MANAGEMENT, HR

to employ a lawyer, consultant (= someone paid to give expert advice or training), etc. by paying them before you need them:

- *The contractor had failed to disclose that he had retained an outside lobbyist.*
- *Smith had **retained a lawyer** and filed a complaint with the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.*
- **retain sb as sth** *Van Hellemond resigned, though the NHL has retained him as a consultant.*



to keep a record, document, etc. that might be needed in the future:

- *The office must retain all e-mails pertaining to audits for at least 11 years.*
- *He said he protected himself by retaining all the records on the project.*



EXAMPLES of **retain**

retain

Authors should *retain* a copy of the original manuscript.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



In doing so, the agent should *retain* more preferred beliefs in favor of less preferred ones wherever coherence permits.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



In this early period, the government did not intervene in such activities as long as they retained a purely philanthropic goal.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



Even today, in the context of increasing poverty, the village retains its reputation as a place of ultimate security.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



Only those utterances produced during shared attention episodes were retained in each protocol.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



We retained these items, however, because we wanted to compare the relative influence of family violence on an array of social dimensions including network size.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



Whatever its precise nature, however, protolanguage and the other languages that eventually evolved would, forever after, *retain* some of that melody.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)





From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



In all three populations roughly four-fifths retained the same structure between registers.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



However, the existence of a stress pattern to be retained during reading creates a potential conflict between the reading (primary) and memory (secondary) tasks.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



At what rate do learners learn and *retain* new vocabulary from reading a graded reader?

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



These findings indicate that beginning readers retained some visual orthographic features of words in memory even after a 3-day delay.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



As once essentially residential communities matured, politicians sought to raise their tax revenues whilst retaining small-scale, almost village life, within an increasingly urbanized milieu.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



How were scholars to live in the world while retaining an otherworldly image?

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



The samples from a1 to f1 *retain* a midline orientation that features tongue retraction.

From the [Cambridge English Corpus](#)



These examples are from corpora and from sources on the web. Any opinions in the examples do not represent the opinion of the Cambridge Dictionary editors or of Cambridge University Press or its licensors.





Translations of retain

in Chinese (Traditional)
保持, 保留, 保有...

See more

in Chinese (Simplified)
保持, 保留, 保有...

See more

in Spanish
mantener, retener...

See more

in Portuguese
reter, manter, lembrar(-se)...

See more

in more languages

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Translator tool

Browse





retailer cooperative

retailing

retain

retained

retained earnings

retained profit

retainer

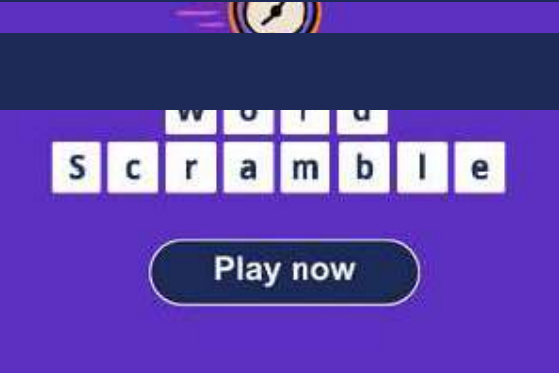






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Word Scramble

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WORD OF THE DAY

camouflage





the use of leaves, branches, paints, and clothes for hiding soldiers or military equipment so that they cannot be seen against the area around them

About this



BLOG

Getting hitched and biting your tongue (Newspaper idioms)

January 29, 2025







NEW WORDS





February 03, 2025

More new words









































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