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Dictionary


Eleventh Edition

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ELEVENTH EDITION



Merriam-Webster, Incorporated
Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A.



A GENUINE MERRIAM-WEBSTER

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the policy ~) — **for a loop**: into a state of amazement, confusion, or distress (the news threw us **for a loop**)

loop *v* (1832) **1**: to make or form a loop **2**: to execute a loop in an airplane **3**: to move in loops or in an arc ~ *vt* **1 a**: to make a loop in, on, or about **b**: to fasten with a loop **2**: to join (two courses of) in knitting **3**: to connect (electric conductors) so as to complete a loop **4**: to cause to move in an arc

looped *adj* (1513) **1**: having, formed in, or characterized by loops (~ fabrics) **2**: DRUNK **1a**

loop-er *n* (1731) **1**: any of the usu. rather small hairless caterpillars that are mostly larvae of moths (families Geometridae and Noctuidae) and move with a looping motion in which the hind prolegs draw the posterior body toward the front followed by forward extension by the anterior legs — called also *inchworm* **2**: one that loops

loop-hole *n* (1591) **1 a**: a small opening through which small arms may be fired **b**: a similar opening to admit light and air or to permit observation **2**: a means of escape; esp.: an ambiguity or omission in the text through which the intent of a statute, contract, or obligation may be evaded

loop-hole *v* (1664) **1**: to make loopholes in

loop of Henle *n* (1885) [F. G. J. Henle + 1885 Ger. pathologist] (1890) **1**: a U-shaped part of the nephron of birds and mammals that lies between and is continuous with the proximal and distal convoluted tubules and that functions in water resorption

loopy *adj* (1856) **1**: having or characterized by loops **2**: CRAZY, BIZARRE — **loopy-ly** *adv* — **loopy-ness** *n*

loose *adj* **1**: loose-er; **loose-est** [ME *lous*, fr. ON *laus*; akin to OHG *lōs* loose — more at -LESS] (13c) **1 a**: not rigidly fastened or securely attached **b** (1): having worked partly free from attachments (a ~ tooth) (2): having relative freedom of movement **c**: produced freely and accompanied by raising of mucus (a ~ cough) **d**: not tightly fitting **2 a**: free from a state of confinement, restraint, or obligation (a lion ~ in the streets) (b) ~ funds wisely **b**: not brought together in a bundle, container, or binding **c** *archaic*: DISCONNECTED, DETACHED **3 a**: not dense, close, or compact in structure or arrangement **b**: not solid **c** *WATERY* (~ stools) **4 a**: lacking in restraint or power of restraint (~ tongue) **b**: lacking moral restraint: UNCHASTE **c**: OVERACTIVE; *specific*: marked by frequent voiding esp. of watery stools (~ bowels) **5 a**: not tightly drawn or stretched **b**: SLACK **b**: being flexible or relaxed (stay ~) **6 a**: lacking in precision, exactness, or care (~ brushwork) (~ usage) **b**: permitting freedom of interpretation **7**: not in the possession of either of two competing teams (a ~ ball) (a ~ puck) — **loose-ly** *adv* — **loose-ness** *n*

loose *vb* **loosed**; **loos-ing** *vt* (13c) **1 a**: to let loose: RELEASE **b**: to free from restraint **2**: to make loose: UNTIE (~ a knot) **3**: to cast loose: DETACH **4**: to let fly: DISCHARGE **5**: to make less rigid, tight, or strict: RELAX ~ *vi* **1**: to let fly a missile (as an arrow): FIRE

loose *adv* (15c) **1**: in a loose manner: LOOSELY

loose box *n* (1849) *Brit*: BOX STALL

loose cannon *n* (1973) **1**: a dangerously uncontrollable person or thing **2**: end *n* (1546) **1**: something left hanging loose **2**: a fragment of unfinished business — usu. used in pl. (tying up loose ends)

loose-joint-ed *adj* (1859) **1**: having joints apparently not closely articulated **2**: characterized by unusually free movements — **loose-joint-ed-ness** *n*

loose-leaf *adj* (1902) **1**: having leaves secured in book form in a cover whose spine may be opened for adding, arranging, or removing leaves (~ notebook) **2**: of, relating to, or used with a loose-leaf binding (~ paper)

loose-en *vb* **loosed**; **loos-en-ing** *vt* (15c) **1**: to release from restraint **2**: to make looser (~ed his tie) (~ a screw) **3**: to relieve (the bowels) of constipation **4**: to cause or permit to become less strict — often used with *up* (~ed the rules) ~ *vi*: to become loose or looser

loosen *up* *vi* (1922) **1**: to become less tense: RELAX

loose sentence *n* (ca. 1890) **1**: a sentence in which the principal clause comes first and subordinate modifiers or trailing elements follow

loose smut *n* (1890) **1**: a smut disease of grains in which the entire head is transformed into a dusty mass of spores

loose-strife *n* (1548) **1**: any of a genus (*Lysimachia*) of plants of the primrose family with leafy stems and usu. yellow or white flowers **2**: any of a genus (*Lythrum*, family Lythraceae, the loosestrife family) of herbs having entire leaves and including some with showy spikes of purple flowers; esp.: PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

loose-ey *adj* (1548) **1**: notably loose or relaxed **2**: not tense (a ~ attitude)

loot *v* (1548) **1**: to plunder or sack in war **b**: to rob esp. on a large scale and usu. by violence or corruption **2**: to seize and carry away by force esp. in war ~ *vi* **1**: to engage in robbing or plundering esp. in war — **loot-er** *n*

loot *n* (1548) **1**: goods of considerable value taken in war: SPOILS **2**: something held to resemble goods of value seized in war: as **a**: something appropriated illegally often by force or violence **b**: illicit gains by public officials **c**: MONEY **3**: the action of looting *syn* see SPOIL

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lop-eared *adj* (1687) **1**: having ears that droop

loph-o-phore *n* (1850) [Gk *lophos* crest + *E-phore*] (1850) **1**: a circular or horseshoe-shaped organ about the mouth esp. of a brachiopod or bryozoan that bears tentacles and functions esp. in food-getting

lopper *n* (1953) **1**: pruning shears with long handles — usu. used in pl.

lop-sided *adj* (1711) **1**: leaning to one side **2**: lacking in balance, symmetry, or proportion; disproportionately heavy on one side (a ~ vote of 99-1) — **lop-sided-ly** *adv* — **lop-sided-ness** *n*

loquacious *adj* (1633) **1**: full of excessive talk; WORDY **2**: given to fluent or excessive talk: GARRULOUS *syn* see TALKATIVE — **loquacious-ly** *adv* — **loquacious-ness** *n*

loquacious-ly *adv* (13c) **1**: the quality or state of being very talkative

loquat *n* (1820) [Chin (Guangdong) *lauh-gwā*] (1820) **1**: an Asian evergreen tree (*Eriobotrya japonica*) of the rose family often cultivated for its fruit; also: its small yellow edible fruit used esp. for preserves

lo-ran *n* (1932) **1**: a system of long-range navigation in which pulsed signals sent out by two pairs of radio stations are used to determine the location of a ship or airplane

lor-az-e-pam *n* (1969) [prob. fr. *chlor-azepam* (as in *diazepam*)] (1969) **1**: benzodiazepine $C_{15}H_{10}Cl_2N_2O_2$ used esp. to relieve anxiety

lord *n* (ME *loved*, *lord*, fr. OE *hlāford*, fr. *hlāf* loaf + *weard* keeper — more at LOAF, WARD) (bef. 12c) **1**: one having power and authority over others: **a**: a ruler by hereditary right or preeminence to whom service and obedience are due **b**: one of whom a fee or estate is held in feudal tenure **c**: an owner of land or other real property **d** *obs*: the male head of a household **e**: HUSBAND **f**: one that has achieved mastery or that exercises leadership or great power in some area (a drug ~) **2** *cap* **a**: GOD **1 b**: JESUS **3**: a man of rank or high position: as **a**: a feudal tenant whose right or title comes directly from the king **b**: a British nobleman: as (1): BARON **2a** (2): a hereditary peer of the rank of marquis, earl, or viscount (3): the son of a duke or a marquess or the eldest son of an earl (4): a bishop of the Church of England **c** *pl*, *cap*: HOUSE OF LORDS **4** — used as a British title: as **a** — used as part of an official title (*Lord Advocate*) (*Lord Mayor*) **b** — used informally in place of the full title for a marquess, earl, or viscount **c** — used for a baron **d** — used by courtesy before the name and surname of a younger son of a duke or a marquess **5**: a person chosen to preside over a festival

lord *vt* (14c) **1**: to act like a lord; esp.: to put on airs — usu. used with *it* (~s it over his friends)

lord chancellor *n*, *pl* **lords chancellor** (15c) **1**: a British officer of state who presides over the House of Lords in both its legislative and judicial capacities, serves as the head of the British judiciary, and is usu. a leading member of the cabinet

lord-ing *n* (13c) **1** *archaic*: LORD **2** *obs*: LORDLING

lord-ly *adj* (13c) **1**: a little or insignificant lord

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loquat

\ə' abut \ə' kitten, F table \ə' further \ə' ash \ā' ace \ā' mop, mar \ə' out \ch' chin \e' bet \ē' easy \g' go \i' hit \i' ice \j' job \j' sing \ō' go \ō' law \ō' boy \th' thin \th' the \ū' lot \ū' foot \y' yet \zh' vision, beige \k, ɱ, e, u, ʏ see Guide to Pronunciation

- tenor** *adj* (1522): relating to or having the range or part of a tenor
ten-or-ist *n* (1865): a person who sings tenor or plays a tenor instrument
te-no-syn-o-vi-tis *n* (1865): *te-no-si-na-vi-tas*, *te-n* [NL, fr. Gk *tenōn* tendon (akin to Gk *teinein* to stretch) + NL *synovitis* — more at **thin**] (ca. 1860): inflammation of a tendon sheath
ten-our *n* (1865): chiefly Brit var of **TENOR**
ten-pen-ny *n* (1592): *ten-pe-ne*, Brit *pa-ne* *adj* (1592): amounting to, worth, or costing 10 pennies
tenpenny nail *n* [fr. its original price per hundred] (15c): a nail three inches (7.6 centimeters) long
ten-pin *n* (1807): 1: a bottle-shaped bowling pin 15 inches high 2: *pl* *sing* in constr: a bowling game using 10 tenpins and a large ball 27 inches in circumference and allowing each player to bowl 2 balls in each of 10 frames
ten-pound-er *n* (1699): LADYFISH 2
ten-rec *n* [F, fr. Malagasy *tandraka*] (ca. 1785): any of numerous small often spiny mammalian insectivores (family Tenrecidae) chiefly of Madagascar
TENS *n* (1980) 1 [transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation]: electrical stimulation of the skin to relieve pain by interfering with the neural transmission of signals from underlying pain receptors 2 [transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulator]: a device used for TENS
tense *n* (15c) [ME *tens* time, tense, fr. AF, fr. L *tempus*] (14c) 1: a distinction of form in a verb to express distinctions of time or duration of the action or state it denotes 2: a set of inflectional forms of a verb that express distinctions of time 3: an inflectional form of a verb expressing a specific time distinction
tense *adj* **tens-er**; **tens-est** [L *tensus*, fr. pp. of *tendere* to stretch — more at **thin**] (1668) 1: stretched tight; made taut; RIGID (< muscles) 2: a: feeling or showing nervous tension (< a ~ smile) b: marked by strain or suspense (< a ~ thriller) 3: produced with the muscles involved in a relatively tense state (< the vowels *e* and *i* in contrast with the vowels *a* and *u* are ~) — **tense-ly** *adv* — **tense-ness** *n*
tense *vb* **tensed**; **tens-ing** *v* (1676): to make tense ~ *vi*: to become tense (<ensed up and missed the putt)
ten-sile *n* (1668) *adj* [NL *tensilis*, fr. L *tensus*, pp.] (1626) 1: capable of tension 2: of, relating to, or involving tension (< stress) — **ten-sil-i-ty** *n* (*ten-si-la-tē*)
tensile strength *n* (1862): the greatest longitudinal stress a substance can bear without tearing apart
ten-si-om-e-ter *n* (*ten-si-om-e-tēr*) [NL *tension*] (1912) 1: a device for measuring tension (as of structural material) 2: an instrument for determining the moisture content of soil 3: an instrument for measuring the surface tension of liquids — **ten-si-om-e-try** *n* (*ten-si-om-e-tri*)
ten-sion *n* (1533) *adj* [L *tension*, fr. *tensio*, fr. *tendere*] (1533) 1: the act or action of stretching or the condition or degree of being stretched to stiffness; TAUTNESS 2: STRESS 3: a: either of two balancing forces causing or tending to cause extension b: the stress resulting from the elongation of an elastic body 3: a: inner striving, unrest, or imbalance often with physiological indication of emotion b: a state of latent hostility or opposition between individuals or groups c: a balance maintained in an artistic work between opposing forces or elements 4: a device to produce a desired tension (as in a loom) — **ten-sion-al** *adj* (*ten-sh(a)-nāl*) *adj* — **ten-sion-less** *adj* (*ten-sh(a)-nāl*)
tension *v* **ten-sioned**; **ten-sion-ing** *v* (*ten-sh(a)-nīn*) (1891): to subject to tension; esp: to tighten to a desired or appropriate degree — **ten-sion-er** *n* (*ten-sh(a)-nēr*)
tension headache *n* (1953): bilateral headache marked by mild to moderate pain of variable duration that typically is accompanied by contraction of the neck and scalp muscles
ten-si-ty *n* (*ten-si-tē*) *n*, *pl* **-ties** (ca. 1658): the quality or state of being tense; TENSENESS
ten-sive *n* (1702) *adj* [L *tensivus*, fr. *tendere*] (1702) 1: of, relating to, or causing tension 2: a generalized vector with more than three components each of which is a function of the coordinates of an arbitrary point in space of an appropriate number of dimensions
ten-speed *n* (1971): a bicycle with 10 gear combinations
tens place *n* (1937): the place two to the left of the decimal point in a number expressed in the Arabic system of writing numbers
ten-strike *n* (1840) 1: a strike in tenpins 2: a highly successful stroke or achievement
tent *n* (15c) [ME *tente*, fr. AF, fr. L *tenta*, fem. of *tentus*, pp. of *tendere* to stretch — more at **thin**] (14c) 1: a collapsible shelter of fabric (as nylon or canvas) stretched and sustained by poles and used for camping outdoors or as a temporary building 2: DWELLING 3: a: something that resembles a tent or that serves as a shelter; esp: a canopy or enclosure placed over the head and shoulders to retain vapors or oxygen being medically administered b: the web of a tent caterpillar — **tent-less** *adj* (*ten-tlēs*) *adj* — **tent-like** *adj* (*ten-tlīk*)
tent *vi* (ca. 1608) 1: to reside for the time being; LODGE 2: to live in a tent ~ *v*: to cover with or as if with a tent 2: to lodge in tents to attend] (14c) chiefly Scot: to attend to
ten-tacle *n* (1672) [NL *tentaculum*, fr. L *tentare* to feel, touch — more at **tempt**] (ca. 1762) 1: any of various elongate flexible usu. tactile or prehensile processes borne by animals and esp. invertebrates chiefly on the head or about the mouth 2: a: something that resembles a tentacle esp. in or as if in grasping or feeling out (< corruption spreading its ~s) b: a sensitive hair or emergence on a plant (as the sundew) — **ten-tacled** *adj* (*ten-takl*)
ten-tac-u-lar *n* (*ten-ta-kyu-lār*) *adj* [NL *tentaculum*] (1828) 1: of, relating to, or resembling tentacles 2: equipped with tentacles
tent-age *n* (1603): a collection of tents; tent equipment
ten-ta-tive *n* (*ten-ta-tiv*) *adj* [ML *tentativus*, fr. L *tentatus*, pp. of *tentare*, temptare to feel, try] (1626) 1: not fully worked out or developed (~ plans) 2: HESITANT, UNCERTAIN (< a ~ smile) — **tentative** *n* — **ten-ta-tive-ly** *adv* — **ten-ta-tive-ness** *n*
tent caterpillar *n* (1854): any of several social caterpillars (genus *Malacosoma* and esp. *M. americanum* of the family Lasiocampidae) that

- form large silken webs on trees and may cause serious defoliation
tent-ed *n* (*ten-təd*) *adj* (1598) 1: covered with a tent or tents (< camps) 2: shaped like a tent
ten-ter *n* (1846): one who lives in or occupies a tent
ten-ter-hook *n* (*ten-tər-hūk*) (15c): a sharp hooked nail used esp. for fastening cloth on a tenter — **on tenterhooks**: in a state of uneasiness, strain, or suspense (< the waiting kept us on tenterhooks)
tenth *n* (15c) [ME *teyntur*, prob. fr. ML *tentura*, fr. *tenta* tent frame, tent] (14c) 1: a frame or endless track with hooks or clips along two sides that is used for drying and stretching cloth 2: archaic
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