

site

NOUN

Etymology

Summary

Of multiple origins. Partly (i) a borrowing from French. Partly (ii) a borrowing from Latin.

Etymons: French *site*; Latin *situs*.

< (i) **Anglo-Norman** *sit*, *site*, *sist*, *scis* location, position (c1120),

and its etymon (ii) **classical Latin** *situs* position (of a thing) in relation to its surroundings, situation, particular position occupied by a thing, arrangement, layout, layout of a region, geographical area, region, structure, in **post-classical Latin** also (of the body) attitude, position, or posture (3rd cent.) < *sinere* to leave alone, to allow (see [sited adj.](#)) + *-tus*, suffix forming nouns.

Compare [situs n.](#)

Notes

Compare **Old French** *site* rank (c1307; < **Latin**). Compare also **Middle French**, **French** *site* layout (1530), picturesque view, sight (1576), probably < **Italian** *sito* position, location, layout (a1321; < **Latin**).

The (formerly common) spellings in *sc-* apparently arose by analogy with the spelling of other words.

Meaning & use

1.a. † A place or position; a location. *Obsolete* except in specific senses.

a1398–1745

(a1398) þe water addre..infected þe place þat he glydep inne and makeþ þe [sight](#) smoky [Latin *locum per quem labitur fumare facit*].

J. Trevisa, translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (British Library Add. MS. 27944) (1975) vol. II. xviii. ix. 1128
[Composed a1398]

?c1400 þan drawe a lyne..in anoper [site](#), þat es to say, place of þe table.
in J. O. Halliwell, *Rara Mathematica* (1839) 63

a1500 No man doute that he hathe one of the gretest and hyghest [siteis](#) among the mansyonnys of oure euer-lasting ffadir.

St. Jerome (Lambeth MS.) in *Anglia* (1880) vol. 3 334 (Middle English Dictionary)

1596 Peculiar and determinate obseruances, (as certaine houres, a certaine [scite](#) of stars).

T. Lodge, *Diuell Coniured* sig. Diii

1678 Supposing all things to arise from the different Compositions of Magnitudes, Figures, Sites, and Motions.

R. Cudworth, *True Intellectual System of Universe* i. iii. 165

a1745 Three colours,..So graceful in their proper place, Remove them to a different scite [1727: Light], They form a frightful hideous face.

J. Swift, *Progress of Beauty in Works* (1755) vol. III. ii. 164

1.b. † Without article or other determiner: place, position, esp. in relation something else. **a1398–1710**
Obsolete.

(a1398) For citee [read cite] and place [L. *situs*] of þe kynde of veynes is conuenient place of þe herte.

J. Trevisa, translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (British Library Add. MS. 27944) (1975) vol. I. v. xxxvi. 239

[Composed a1398]

a1475 In syte [emended in ed. to syce] ichon from oper shalle be þe lengthe of oper, þat men may se.

Boke of Curtasye (Sloane MS. 1986) l. 469 in *Babees Book* (2002) i. 314

1577 God is great with out quantitie, good without qualitie, president without site.

J. Bishop, *Beautifull Blossomes* i. f. 2^v

1599 How is site deuided of the Schoolemen? Into site naturall and casuall.

T. Blundeville, *Art of Logike* i. xvi. 39

1620 Site, or situation, as it is the passion of a thing placed, belongeth hither.

T. Granger, *Syntagma Logicum* 67

1642 Site doth confine This point; take site away it's straight a spark divine.

H. More, *Ψυχωδία Platonica* sig. H

1656 When words..are in site or placing disjoined.

J. Smith, *Mysterie of Rhetorique Unvail'd* 199

1697 Site is the order of the parts of the body amongst themselves.

translation of F. Burgersdijck, *Monitio Logica* i. ix. 29

1710 It has no Whereness, or Whenness, Scite, or Habit.

D. Defoe, *Essay Public Credit* 6

1.c. The place or position occupied by some specified thing; the fixed or proper location of a thing. Now only in *Anatomy*. **c1400–**

c1400 Fro [the] Equinoxial may the declinacion..of any body celestial be rikned, after the site
(1391) north or south.

G. Chaucer, *Treatise on Astrolabe* (Cambridge MS. Dd.3.53) (1872) ii. §17. 28
[Composed 1391]

- c1425** Þe clere sterris of lades so red Whiche han her **sigt** in þe Crabbis hed.
J. Lydgate, *Troyyes Book* (Augustus MS. A.iv) ii. l. 3322
- 1581** Marriners..learne to know..the **sight** and place of rockes and shelues.
G. Pettie, translation of S. Guazzo, *Ciuile Conuersation* i. 22^v
- 1605** The fourth difference [in distillation] is by the **site** and placing of the vessell.
T. Tymme, translation of J. Du Chesne, *Practise of Chymicall & Hermeticall Physicke* iii. 184
- 1627** The Rocks Tumbling downe from their **scytes**.
M. Drayton, *Moone-calfe* in *Battaile of Agincourt* 154
- 1675** A Body is..the result of all the Integral parts put together in their due **Scite** and proper Order.
V. Alsop, *Anti-Sozzo* 353
- 1691** The Chamæleon he imitates the Woodspite..in the **site** of his Toes.
J. Ray, *Wisdom of God* 106
- 1722** There was undoubtedly such a Tract of West Variation in the Southern Parts of the South-Sea, it being the necessary Consequence of the **Site** of the four Magnetical Poles.
Philosophical Transactions 1720–21 (Royal Society) vol. 31 176
- 1834** The most common and earlier symptoms of the disease are either,—firstly, some description of uneasy sensation referred to the **site** of the liver.
Medico-chirurg. Rev., & Journal Pract. Medicine vol. 20 367
- 1969** The **site** of the aorta and the **site** of the heart [are] about equidistant from the surface of the body.
D. E. Beischer in M. F. Barnothy, *Biol. Effects Magn. Fields* vol. II. 256
- 2005** In its membrane, the cochlear ear duct contains the organ of Corti, the **site** of the cochlear hair cells.
R. K. Clark, *Anat. & Physiology* xii. 221/1

anatomy

1.d. The location of a wound, tumour, disease, etc., in or on the body.

1662–

- 1662** Other differences are taken from magnitude, Symptomes, **Scite**, as outward and inward.
J. Cooke, *Art Chirurg.* i. ii. i, in *Mellificium Chirurg.* (new edition) ii. 62
- 1698** What Parts are wounded, are to be discovered by putting in the Probe, or else from the **site** of the Wound by Anatomical Deductions.
W. Salmon, *Ars Chirurgica* v. xix. 877/1
- 1722** The ill Habit of his Body and the **Site** of the Tumour bordering so near the Fundament..gave me Reason to suspect a *Sinuus Ulcer*.
D. Turner, *Art of Surgery* vol. II. vi. 82

- 1833** The pain is rarely confined to its primary and principal **site** in the cardiac region.
J. Forbes et al., *Cycl. Pract. Medicine* vol. I. 82/2
- 1883** In damp weather he feels very slight inconvenience in the **site** of the old fracture.
British Medical Journal 3 November 857/2
- 1968** Another **site** of significant disease was the kidneys, which exhibited multiple small yellowish-tan abscesses in both the cortical and the medullary areas.
New England Journal of Medicine 14 March 617/2
- 2002** Initial treatment is difficult because of the swelling, which is often a result of internal bleeding at the injury **site**.
Times 12 August (Football Supplement) 5/2

2.a. The geographical location of a building, city, country, etc., or its position in relation to its surroundings; = **situation** *n.* I.3. Also occasionally without article or other determiner. **?c1400-**

- ?c1400 (c1380)** Yif þou wolt flee þe perilous auenture..Haue mynde certeynly to ficchyn þi house of a myrie **site** in a lowe stoone.
G. Chaucer, translation of Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (British Library Add. MS. 10340) (1868) ii. met. iv. l. 1165
[Composed c1380]
- c1405 (c1395)** Noght fer fro thilke paleys honourable Wher as this Markys shoope his mariage Ther stood a Throope of **site** delitable.
G. Chaucer, *Clerk's Tale* (Hengwrt MS.) (1873) l. 199
[Composed c1395]
- 1567** The magnificall **scites** and scituations of greate mens houses.
G. Fenton, translation of M. Bandello, *Certaine Tragicall Discourses* i. sig. Ai
- 1579** Lo Collin, here the place, whose pleasaunt **syte** From other shades hath weand my wandering mynde.
E. Spenser, *Shepheardes Calender* June 1
- 1600** Anniball..rode to the gate Capena, for to view the **site** of the cittie.
P. Holland, translation of Livy, *Romane Historie* xxvi. 582
- 1664** Some force whole Regions, in despight O' Geography, to change their **site**.
S. Butler, *Hudibras: Second Part* ii. i. 3
- 1714** A House by **Scite** and Structure warm.
R. Steele, *Poetical Misc.* 292
- 1771** The castle is an instance of the sublime in **scite** and architecture.
T. Smollett, *Humphry Clinker* vol. III. 6
- 1807** In this valley, on the banks of the fertilizing Douro, would be the proper **scite** for the capital of Spain.
R. Cumberland, *Memoirs* vol. II. 150
- 1869** The loss of health caused by the pestilential **site** of a dwelling.

J. Martineau, *Essays Philosophical & Theological* 2nd Series 70

1923 The importance of **site** is gradually being recognized.

British Medical Journal 31 March 556/2

2012 The 1940s house didn't take advantage of its dramatic **site**: perched on sandstone cliffs, it has a sweeping outlook across the ocean.

Sydney Morning Herald (Nexis) 21 January (Domain section) 10

2.b. An area of land occupied by a building, town, etc., or which is set apart for some purpose. **a1443-**

building site, campsite, caravan site, landfill site, landing site, launch site, missile site, nesting site, picnic site, World Heritage Site, etc.: see the first element.

See also **on-site** *adj.*, **off-site** *adj.*

a1443 Isabell Stanley, prioresse..holdeth of youre said suppliauntes as in the right of heir priorie, a **site** of a water mylle.

in *Calendars of Proceedings in Chancery Queen Elizabeth* (1827) vol. I. p. xxxiii (Middle English Dictionary)

1461-2 Londes..such as been and make the **syte** or **sites** of any such abbey, priory [etc.].

Rolls of Parliament: Edward IV (Electronic edition) Parl. November 1461 §41. m. 19

1547 The **Sightes**..wheruppon the same ij churches Are nowe..buyldyd.

in *Vicary's Anatomie of Bodie of Man* (1888) App. iii. 131

1558 **Scyte**, precinkte, and Compasse of the late dissolved Hospitall.

in A. Feuillerat, *Documents Office of Revels Queen Elizabeth* (1908) 48

1564 He layed the **syte** of a small citey, in the hyl Pallatinus.

N. Haward, translation of Eutropius, *Briefe Chron.* i. sig. C

1649 The **sites** and precincts hereby intended are declared to be the bodie of the Abbie, one garden and orchard [etc.].

Articles of Peace with Irish Rebels 33

a1661 He conferred on him and his heirs the rich demesne and **scite** of Middleton.

T. Fuller, *History of Worthies of England* (1662) Cornw. 202

1718 The Descendants..are still in possession of the **Scite** of the Castle.

J. Ozell, translation of J. Pitton de Tournefort, *Voyage into Levant* vol. I. 167

1793 Upon this **scite** the Baths and Long Room have since been erected.

J. Smeaton, *Narrative Edystone Lighthouse* (ed. 2) §130 (note)

1813 The sale of **sites** for houses would yield a considerable sum to the town.

Caledonian Mercury 4 December

1835 The entrenchments..just enable us to trace the **scite** of the royal residence.

F. Palgrave, *History of Anglo-Saxons* iv. 89

1879 The costly nature of the work in making good the **site**, when the soil is not naturally suitable.

Cassell's Technical Educator (new edition) vol. I. 38

- 1963** Have consideration for other campers. Do not stroll into someone else's **site** just as they are in the middle of morning ablutions.
Camping ('Know the Game' Ser.) 46/2
- 1973** There will be a continuous traffic of radioactive substances..from the stations to waste-processing plants; and from there to disposal **sites**.
E. F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful* ii. iv. 129
- 1980** It was shoe-horned between the radar assembly sheds, a piece of open ground which had miraculously escaped the rash of building covering the rest of the **site**.
J. McNeil, *Spy Game* xix. 189
- 2017** Two drive-through take-aways could be built on a **site** near the centre of Stirling.
Stirling Observer (Nexis) 18 January 1

2.c. A place where something happens or has happened; the location of a specific event, occurrence, or activity.

a1657-

accident site, bomb-site, etc.: see the first element.

- a1657** Looke now vpon my Sister Germanie; The Seat of Warre, the **Scite** of Miserie.
G. Daniel, *Poems* (1878) vol. I. 184
- 1837** Mounds and ditches very conclusively show the **sites** of ancient labor.
North American Review July 34
- 1872** In the ninth century Lake Mälär was the **site** of so prosperous a trade.
J. Yeats, *Growth Commerce* 151
- 1896** A. R. Fulton visited the **site** in 1869 and found portions of skeletons mercilessly indented with tomahawk marks, and other relics of the battle.
Rolfe (Iowa) *Reveille* 20 February 1/2
- 1979** Only 30 were in good enough shape physically and financially to make this year's pilgrimage back to the battle **sites**.
Maclean's (Toronto) 8 October 6
- 2016** Ghost bikes—scrapped bicycles painted white and fixed at the **site** of a fatal collision—are the latest addition to the convention of honouring the dead.
Spacing Winter 22/1

3. † The way in which the parts of a person or thing are positioned; posture, bodily attitude. *Obsolete*.

1573–1728

- 1573** Kneeling is the fittest **site** or position of the body.
T. Cartwright, *Repye to Answer Whitgifte* 132
- 1626** Christ His **Site**; that, He stood, when He wished it: His Place; that, in the middst, He stood.
L. Andrewes, *XCVI Sermons* (1629) 415

- 1660** That uprightness and straitness, which is the most useful **site** of most plants.
R. Sharrock, *History of Propagation & Improvement of Vegetables* 148
- 1691** The conveniency of this **Site** of our Bodies.
J. Ray, *Wisdom of God* 153
- 1728** The Semblance of a Lover, fix'd In melancholy **Site**, with Head declin'd.
J. Thomson, *Spring* 49

- 4. Archaeology.** A place containing the remains of former human habitation; an excavation. **1843–**
habitation site, shadow-site, type site: see the first element.

- 1843** The most interesting of the inscriptions which he brought from these **sites** is a fragment of one of an early date.
K. Baillie in *Proceedings Royal Irish Acad.* 1840–4 (1846) vol. 2 407
- 1890** Intersecting trenches were run across the **site** from north to south and east to west.
American Journal Archaeology vol. 6 190
- 1911** The dig has proved a failure to the present (tho' there is still hope of one part of the **site**).
T. E. Lawrence, *Letter April* in T. E. Lawrence et al., *Home Letters* (1954) 149
- 1961** Unworked, heckled fibers have been discovered in archaeological **sites** on the coast.
M. A. Towle, *Ethnobotany Pre-Columbian Peru* 32
- 1977** More than four fifths of the villa's walls have been destroyed by ploughing and erosion, and Mr Sumpter feels that the **site** would not have survived another year's ploughing.
Times 13 August 14/4
- 2016** A pioneering space archaeologist who uses satellite imagery to discover ancient **sites**.
New York Times (National edition) 17 February c3/1

archaeology

- 5. The location within the body in which a physiological or pathological process occurs. In later use also Biochemistry and Molecular Biology: the location in or on a molecule, cell, etc., at which chemical activity or interaction occurs. Cf. **site-directed** *adj.* **1861–**
active site, binding site, restriction site: see the first element.**

- 1861** The nutritional fluid must..be regarded as the chief or collective **site** of the decomposition this process implies.
W. Brinton, *On Food & its Digestion* ii. 24
- 1916** Not only are the small intestines the principal **site** of digestion but they are also the principal **site** of absorption.
A. W. Hewlett, *Monographic Medicine* vol. I. ii. 175

- 1926** The problem of determining the mechanism of oxidation resolves itself into three separate problems: (1) determination of the **site** of activation of a substrate molecule [etc.].
Biochemical Journal vol. 20 167
- 1966** In the fetus..blood cells are formed in different **sites** at different ages.
C. R. Leeson & T. S. Leeson, *Histology* viii. 140/1
- 1982** Human proinsulin. After cleavage at the two **sites** indicated..the arginine residues..and the lysine residue..are removed to give insulin and C-peptide.
K. H. Muench in T. M. Devlin, *Textbook of Biochemistry* xix. 943 (caption)
- 2015** The ER is an important **site** for protein folding in eukaryotes.
B. H. Lee, *Fund. Food Biotechnol.* (ed. 2) i. 92

pathology

physiology

organic chemistry

6. † A framework of timber forming the foundation of a piece of scaffolding. *Obsolete. rare.*

1901

- 1901** At a suitable distance from the intended wall a 'site' is first planted... This consists of a baulk of squared timbers, frequently about 4 in. square.
J. Black, *Illustrated Carpenter & Builder Series: Scaffolding* 27

7. U.S. *slang*. A job on a fishing vessel.

1930–

- 1930** **Site**, a place as fisherman aboard a fishing vessel.
American Speech vol. 5 393
- 1957** Skipper Farrell won't offer a **site** to a cook who will only cook.
Maine Coast Fisherman July 21/1
- 1977** Joe, who generally keeps his own counsel, tells me that he is hoping to get a **site**—a job—on the Sniktaw.
New Yorker 15 August 46/3
- 2000** The Terminal docks teemed with healthy young guys seeking a **site**.
W. McCloskey, *Breakers* vi. 81

commercial fishing

nautical

U.S. English

colloquial and slang

8. *Computing*.

- 8.a. The location of a computer or computer system, esp. one that runs a web server.

1970–

- [1969]** As [read at] some sites a great deal of work has gone into making the computer highly responsive to a sophisticated console.
S. Crocker, *Request for Comments* (Network Working Group) (Electronic text) No. 1. 6]

- 1970

To RECEIVE is added a parameter specifying a **site** to which the RECEIVE is to be sent.
Request for Comments (Network Working Group) (Electronic text) No. 61. 8
- 1982

I would appreciate it if each **site** would take a moment to install the remainder of this message in their netnews source directory as file README.
net.general 3 January (Usenet newsgroup, accessed 10 Aug. 2006)
- 2004

If things went to hell and the prime and backup **sites** both shut down, BC Central would have to fall back on its 'cold' disaster recovery centre in New Westminster, BC.
Enterprise September 12/3

computing

8.b. The notional location on the World Wide Web at which a particular collection of related and linked web pages, typically produced by a single person, organization, etc., can be accessed; = **website** *n.* **1992–**
See also **Compounds C.2.**

- 1992

This file gives me an updated list of most anonymous ftp **sites** and a quick description of the type of files available at each **site**.
InfoWorld (Nexis) 1 June
- 1995

People who appear to be working at their screens could be..contributing to the Star Trek fan club or visiting Playboy magazine's **site**.
Computer Weekly 5 October 36/3
- 2000

The emphasis is on what is called dwell time—how long a visitor can be kept on the **site** to view those all-important advertisements.
Computer Weekly 20 April 50/1
- 2015

The ticker at the bottom of the **site**'s home page..tells you what the world is buying right now.
New York Magazine 10 August 57/1

computing

Phrases

plane of site: see **plane** *n.*³ **Phrases P.5**; Site of Special Scientific Interest: see **scientific** *adj.* **A.4b.**

Pronunciation



BRITISH ENGLISH

/saɪt/ 
sight

U.S. ENGLISH

/saɪt/ 
sight

Pronunciation keys

Forms

Variant forms

Middle English	citee (transmission error), sighte , siȝt , siȝte , siht , siyt , syȝte , syhte , syyt
Middle English–1500s	sight
Middle English–1600s	syte
Middle English–	site
1500s–1600s	scyte
1500s–1800s	scite
1600s	sitt (<i>Scottish</i>)
1700s	cite

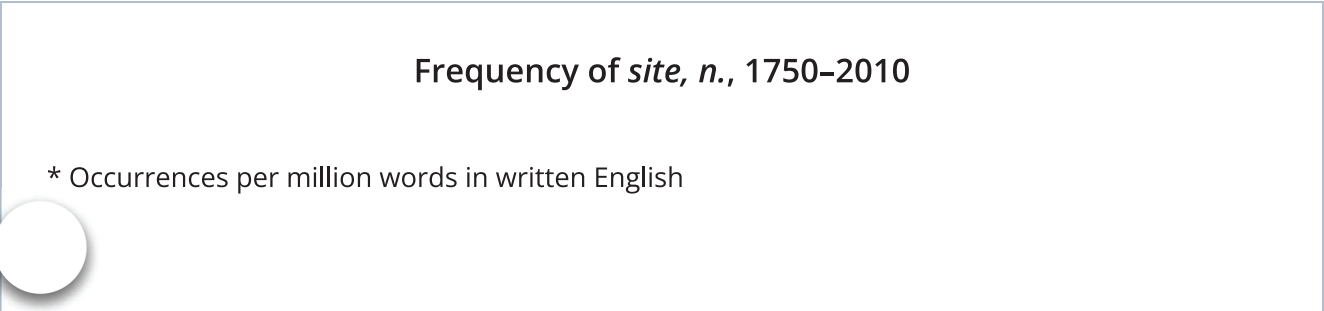
Frequency

site is one of the 500 most common words in modern written English. It is similar in frequency to words like *culture*, *house*, *money*, *together*, and *whose*.

It typically occurs about 200 times per million words in modern written English.

site is in frequency band 7, which contains words occurring between 100 and 1,000 times per million words in modern written English. [More about OED's frequency bands](#)

Frequency data is computed programmatically, and should be regarded as an estimate.



Historical frequency series are derived from Google Books Ngrams (version 2), a data set based on the Google Books corpus of several million books printed in English between 1500 and 2010.

The overall frequency for a given word is calculated by summing frequencies for the main form of the word, any plural or inflected forms, and any major spelling variations.

For sets of homographs (distinct entries that share the same word-form, e.g. *mole*, n.¹, *mole*, n.², *mole*, n.³, etc.), we have estimated the frequency of each homograph entry as a fraction of the total Ngrams frequency for the word-form. This may result in inaccuracies.

Frequency of *site*, n., 2017–2024

* Occurrences per million words in written English



Modern frequency series are derived from a corpus of 20 billion words, covering the period from 2017 to the present. The corpus is mainly compiled from online news sources, and covers all major varieties of World English.

Compounds & derived words

Sort by	Date (oldest first)
bairn-site, n.	a1400
Anxiety about children.	
site, v.	?c1425-
transitive. To put (something) in a certain place...	
building site, n.	1807-
An area of land where a structure is being or...	
town site, n.	1818-
The site of a town; spec. (in North America) a...	
mill site, n.	1825-
A site of or suitable for a mill (originally a...	
house site, n.	1834-
camping site, n.	1844-
A place used for camping; = campsite, n.	
campsite, n.	1850-
A place used for camping; (now esp.) a camping...	
homesite, n.	1857-
North American. = home lot, n.	
roosting site, n.	1863-
site value, n.	1865-
The value of a site of land.	
well site, n.	1865-
nest site, n.	1867-
nesting site, n.	1870-
dumpsite, n.	1873-
A place where refuse or waste is deposited; a...	
land site, n.	1874-

work site, n. 1892–

gunsite, n. 1899–

A defended or fortified platform or structure at...

housing site, n. 1899–

construction site, n. 1903–

A site at which something is constructed; spec...

island site, n. 1907–

= island plot, n.

picnic site, n. 1907–

site agent, n. 1910–

a. An agent authorized to inspect, survey, and...

caravan site, n. 1921–

An area of land where caravans may be parked...

accident site, n. 1923–

habitation site, n. 1925–

A site where there has been a settlement.

shadow-site, n. 1929–

An archaeological site revealed by shadowing on...

type site, n. 1935–

A site the features of which are used to define...

occupation site, n. 1938–

off-site, adj. & adv. 1939–

That is not on a site; situated or occurring away...

on-site, adj. & adv. 1939–

Situated or occurring on a particular site.

bomb site, n. 1941–

An area damaged or affected by bombing, esp. a...

site assembly, n. 1941–

Assembly of building components on site.

launching site, n. 1944–

active site, n. 1945–

Location on a surface, molecule, etc., which...

viewsite, n. 1945–

a. (In the language of estate agents) a site with...

site visit, n. 1948–

A visit made to a place by a person or group of...

missile site, n. 1949–**binding site, n.** 1950–

A location on a protein or other macromolecule...

site-specific, adj. 1951–

Specifically relating to, connected with, or...

grave-site, n. 1953–**microsite, n.** 1954–

Computing. A small auxiliary website designed to...

multi-site, adj. 1958–

Having or involving more than one site (in...

oversite, n. 1965–

A layer of concrete beneath the ground floor of a...

landing site, n. 1969–**launch site, n.** 1969–**scatter-site, adj.** 1972–

= scattered-site n. at scattered, adj. 2b.

restriction site, n. 1973–

A DNA sequence acted on by a restriction...

site-directed, adj. 1974–

Designating a method for creating a mutation in a...

civic amenity site, n. 1976–

A facility owned or controlled by a local...

mirror site, n. 1979–

a. Physics a site in a crystal structure which is...

World Heritage Site, n. 1980–

A natural or man-made site, area, structure...

ghost site, n. 1984–

computer system for which a location is...

website, n. 1993–
A collection of related and linked web pages...

chat site, n. 1994–
A chat room on a website; a website featuring...

dating site, n. 1995–

dating web site, n. 1996–

black site, n. 2005–
A secret site or facility at which covert...

topsite, n. 2005–
An FTP server used to distribute and store...

single-serving site, n. 2006–
A website consisting of a single page which is...

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