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var·i·a·ble (vâr'ē-ə-bəl, vîr'-)

adj.

1.
 - a. Likely to change or vary; subject to variation; changeable.
 - b. Inconstant; fickle.
2. *Biology* Tending to deviate, as from a normal or recognized type; aberrant.
3. *Mathematics* Having no fixed quantitative value.

n.

1. Something that varies or is prone to variation.
2. *Astronomy* A variable star.
3. *Mathematics*
 - a. A quantity capable of assuming any of a set of values.
 - b. A symbol representing such a quantity. For example, in the expression $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$, *a*, *b*, and *c* are variables.

var'ī-a·ble·ness *n.*

var'ī-a·bly *adv.*

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variable ('vɛərɪəbəl)

adj

1. liable to or capable of change: *variable weather*.
2. (of behaviour, opinions, emotions, etc) lacking constancy; fickle
3. (Mathematics) *maths* having a range of possible values
4. (Biology) (of a species, characteristic, etc) liable to deviate from the established type
5. (Physical Geography) (of a wind) varying its direction and intensity
6. (Electrical Engineering) (of an electrical component or device) designed so that a characteristic property, such as resistance, can be varied: *variable capacitor*.

n

7. something that is subject to variation
8. (Mathematics) *maths*
 - a. an expression that can be assigned any of a set of values
 - b. a symbol, esp *x*, *y*, or *z*, representing an unspecified member of a class of objects, numbers, etc. See also dependent variable, independent variable
9. (Logic) *logic* a symbol, esp *x*, *y*, *z*, representing any member of a class of entities
10. (Computer Science) *computing* a named unit of storage that can be changed to any of a set of specified values during execution of a program
11. (Celestial Objects) *astronomy* See variable star
12. (Physical Geography) a variable wind
13. (Physical Geography) (*plural*) a region where variable winds occur

[C14: from Latin *variābilis* changeable, from *variāre* to diversify]

·varia·bility **'variableness** *n* **'variably** *adv*

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