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# dispense

verb | dis-pense | ˈdi-spen(t)s

: to give or provide (something)

: to prepare and give (medicine)

48 words to make in SCRABBLE® with Q and no U »

dis-pensed dis-pens-ing

Full Definition of DISPENSE

transitive verb

- 1 **a** : to deal out in portions
- b** : ADMINISTER <dispense justice>
- 2 : to give dispensation to : EXEMPT
- 3 : to prepare and distribute (medication)

intransitive verb

archaic : to grant dispensation

— dispense with

- 1 : to set aside : DISCARD <dispensing with the usual introduction>
- 2 : to do without <could dispense with such a large staff>

See dispense defined for English-language learners

See dispense defined for kids

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NEVER eat these fruits and veggies (if you want a flat belly)

Examples of DISPENSE

The ATM only dispenses \$20 bills.

a newspaper columnist who dispenses advice to millions of readers each week

Pharmacists are certified to dispense medication.

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## pachyderm

an elephant

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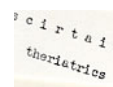
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## Origin of DISPENSE

Middle English, from Medieval Latin & Latin; Medieval Latin *dispensare* to exempt, from Latin, to distribute, from *dis-* + *pensare* to weigh, frequentative of *pendere* to weigh, pay out — more at SPIN

First Known Use: 14th century

## Related to DISPENSE

## Synonyms

allocate, apportion, deal (out), administer, distribute, dole out, hand out, mete (out), parcel (out), portion, prorate

## Antonyms

misallocate

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## Synonym Discussion of DISPENSE

**DISTRIBUTE**, **DISPENSE**, **DIVIDE**, **DEAL**, **DOLE OUT** mean to give out, usually in shares, to each member of a group. **DISTRIBUTE** implies an apportioning by separation of something into parts, units, or amounts <*distributed* food to the needy>. **DISPENSE** suggests the giving of a carefully weighed or measured portion to each of a group according to due or need <*dispensed* wisdom to the students>. **DIVIDE** stresses the separation of a whole into parts and implies that the parts are equal <three charitable groups *divided* the proceeds>. **DEAL** emphasizes the allotment of something piece by piece <*deal* out equipment and supplies>. **DOLE OUT** implies a carefully measured portion of something that is often in short supply <*dole*d out what little food there was>.

## Rhymes with DISPENSE

defense, expense, horse sense, incense, nonsense, past tense, sequence, sixth sense

## DISPENSE Defined for Kids

## dispense

verb | dis-pense | \di-'spens\

dis-pensed dis-pens-ing

## Definition of DISPENSE for Kids

- 1 : to give out in small amounts <The machine *dispenses* candy.>
- 2 : to give out as deserved <The judge *dispensed* justice.>
- 3 : to put up or prepare medicine in a form ready for use
  - *dispense with*
  - : to do or get along without <Let's *dispense with* introductions.>

## True or False?



## Spell It



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## Medical Dictionary

## dispense

transitive verb | dis·pense | \dis-'pen(t)s\

**dis·pensed**   **dis·pens·ing**

## Medical Definition of DISPENSE

**1** : to put up (a prescription or medicine)

**2** : to prepare and distribute (medication)

## Learn More About DISPENSE

**Thesaurus:** All synonyms and antonyms for "dispense"

**Spanish Central:** Spanish translation of "dispense"

**SCRABBLE®:** Playable words you can make from "dispense"

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