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The AMERICAN HERITAGE® dictionary of the English Language

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**prox·i·mate** (prōk'sə-mīt) Share: [Tweet](#)

*adj.*

1. Direct or immediate: "The stock market crash in October, 1929 ... is often regarded as ... the major proximate cause of the Great Depression" (Milton Friedman). "The proximate cause of America's deficits is that Washington has dramatically cut the taxes of America's rich" (Eamonn Fingleton).
2. Very near or next, as in space, time, or order. See Synonyms at **close**.

[Latin *proximātus*, past participle of *proximāre*, to come near, from *proximus*, nearest; see **per**<sup>1</sup> in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

**prox'i·mate·ly** *adv.*  
**prox'i·mate·ness** *n.*

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