

# America's Best-Selling Dictionary

# Merriam-Webster's Collegiate<sup>®</sup> Dictionary

Eleventh Edition

New Ways to Find  
the Words You Need Today

AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA<sup>®</sup> COMPANY

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impassive • impermanently 623

ard often violence and wasteful diffusion of emotion <a passionate de-  
 mation). **ARDENT** implies an intense degree of zeal, devotion, or  
 enthusiasm <an ardent supporter of human rights>. **FERVENT** stresses  
 intensity and steadiness of emotional warmth or zeal <fervent good  
 wishes>. **FERVID** suggests warmly and spontaneously and often fever-  
 ishly expressed emotion <fervid love letters>. **PERFERVID** implies the  
 expression of exaggerated or overwrought feelings <perfervid expres-  
 sions of patriotism>.

**im-pas-sive** \im-'pa-siv\ *adj* (1605) 1 *a* archaic : unsusceptible to  
 b : unsusceptible to physical feeling : **INSENSIBLE** c : unsuscep-  
 tible to or destitute of emotion : **APATHETIC** 2 : giving no sign of feel-  
 ing or emotion : **EXPRESSIONLESS** — **im-pas-sive-ly** *adv* — **im-pas-**  
**sive-ness** *n* — **im-pas-siv-i-ty** \im-'pa-'si-vo-tē\ *n*

**IMPASSIVE**, **STOIC**, **PHLEGMATIC**, **APATHETIC**, **STOLID** mean unre-  
 sponsive to something that might normally excite interest or emotion.  
**IMPASSIVE** stresses the absence of any external sign of emotion in ac-  
 tion or facial expression <met the news with an impassive look>. **STOIC**  
 implies an apparent indifference to pleasure or esp. to pain often as a  
 matter of principle or self-discipline <was resolutely stoic even in ad-  
 versity>. **PHLEGMATIC** implies a temperament or constitution hard to  
 arouse <a phlegmatic man unmoved by tears>. **APATHETIC** may imply  
 a puzzling or deplorable indifference or inertness <charitable appeals  
 met an apathetic response>. **STOLID** implies a habitual absence of in-  
 terest, responsiveness, or curiosity <stolid workers wedded to rou-  
 tine>.

**im-paste** \im-'päst\ *w* [It *impastare*, fr. *in-* (fr. *L*) + *pasta* *paste*, fr. *LL*]  
 (1536) *obs* : to make into a paste or crust

**im-pas-to** \im-'pas-'(t)ē, -'päs-' *n*, pl. *-tos* [It, fr. *impastare*] (1784) 1  
 : the thick application of a pigment to a canvas or panel in painting;  
 2 : the body of pigment so applied 2 : raised decoration on ceramic  
 ware usu. of slip or enamel — **im-pas-toed** \-(t)ōd\ *adj*

**im-pa-tience** \jim-'pā-shən(t)s\ *n* (13c) : the quality or state of being  
 impatient

**im-pa-tiens** \im-'pā-shən-, -shən(t)s\ *n* [NL, fr. *L*, *impatiens*] (1785)  
 : any of a widely distributed genus (*Impatiens*) of the family Balsami-  
 naceae and of annual or perennial herbs with irregular spurred or saccate  
 flowers and forcefully dehiscent capsules — compare **TOUCH-ME-NOT**

**im-pa-tient** \jim-'pā-shənt\ *adj* [ME *impacient*, fr. AF *impatient*, fr. *L*  
*impatiens*, *impatiens*, fr. *in-* + *patient*, *patiens* patient] (14c) 1 *a* : not  
 patient : restless or short of temper esp. under irritation, delay, or op-  
 position **b** : **INTOLERANT** 1 (<of delay) 2 : prompted or marked by  
 impatience (an ~ reply) 3 : eagerly desirous : **ANXIOUS** (<to get  
 home) — **im-pa-tient-ly** *adv*

**im-pawn** \im-'pān\ *v* (1567) archaic : to put in pawn : **FLEDGE**

**im-peach** \im-'pēch\ *w* [ME *empechen*, fr. AF *empecher*, *empechier* to  
 hinder, impede, prosecute, fr. LL *impedicare* to fetter, fr. *L* *in-*  
*pedica* fetter, fr. *ped-*, *pes* foot — more at **FOOT**] (14c) 1 *a* : to bring  
 an accusation against **b** : to charge with a crime or misdemeanor;  
*specif* : to charge (a public official) before a competent tribunal with  
 misconduct in office **c** : to remove from office esp. for misconduct 2  
 : to cast doubt on; esp. : to challenge the credibility or validity of (<  
 the testimony of a witness) — **im-peach-able** \-'pē-cha-bəl\ *adj* —  
**im-peach-ment** \-'pēch-mənt\ *n*

**im-peach** *n* (1590) *obs* : **CHARGE**, **IMPEACHMENT**

**im-pearl** \im-'pär-(ə)\ *v* [ME *emperlen*, fr. *en-* + *perle* pearl] (15c) : to  
 form into pearls; also : to form of or adorn with pearls

**im-pecc-a-ble** \jim-'pek-'ə-bəl\ *adj* [It *impeccabilis*, fr. *in-* + *peccare* to  
 fail] (1531) 1 : not capable of sinning or liable to sin 2 : free from  
 fault or blame : **FLAWLESS** (<spoke ~ French) — **im-pecc-a-bil-i-ty**  
 \-'pek-'ə-bil-ē-tē\ *n* — **im-pecc-a-bly** \-'pe-ka-blē\ *adv*

**im-pe-cu-nious** \im-'pi-'kyū-nyəs-, -nē-əs\ *adj* [*in-* + *obs. E* *pecuniosus*  
 rich, fr. ME, fr. *L* *pecuniosus*, fr. *pecunia* money — more at **FEEL**] (1596)  
 : having very little or no money usu. habitually : **PENNYLESS** — **im-pe-**  
**cu-ni-ous-ly** \-'kyū-nē-'ā-sə-tē\ *n* — **im-pe-cu-nious-ly** *adv* — **im-pe-**  
**cu-nious-ness** *n*

**im-ped-ance** \im-'pē-dəns\ *n* (1886) : something that impedes : **HIN-**  
**DANCE**; as **a** : the apparent opposition in an electrical circuit to the  
 flow of an alternating current that is analogous to the actual electrical  
 resistance to a direct current and that is the ratio of effective electro-  
 motive force to the effective current **b** : the ratio of the pressure to  
 the volume displacement at a given surface in a sound-transmitting me-  
 dium

**im-pede** \im-'pēd\ *v* **im-ped-ed**; **im-ped-ing** [L *impedire*, fr. *in-* +  
*ped-*, *pes* foot — more at **FOOT**] (ca. 1595) : to interfere with or slow the  
 progress of *syn* see **HINDER** — **im-ped-er** *n*

**im-ped-i-ment** \im-'pē-da-mənt\ *n* (14c) 1 : something that impedes;  
*esp.* : an impairment (as a stutter or a lisp) that interferes with the pro-  
 per articulation of speech 2 : a bar or hindrance (as lack of sufficient  
 funds) a lawful marriage

**im-ped-i-men-ta** \jim-'pē-de-'men-tə\ *n* pl [L, pl. of *impedimentum*  
 impediment, fr. *impedire*] (1600) 1 : **APPURTENANCES**, **EQUIPMENT**  
 2 : things that impede

**im-pel** \im-'pel\ *v* **im-pel-led**; **im-pel-ling** [ME *impellen*, fr. *L* *impel-*  
*lere*, fr. *in-* + *pellere* to drive — more at **FEELT**] (15c) 1 : to urge or  
 drive forward or on by or as if by the exertion of strong moral pressure  
 2 : **FORCE** (<felt impelled to correct the misconception) 2 : to impart  
 motion to : **PROPEL** *syn* see **MOVE**

**im-pel-ler** also **im-pel-lor** \im-'pel-lər\ *n* (1685) 1 : one that impels 2  
 : a rotor located in a conduit to impart motion to a fluid **b** : a blade  
 of a rotor

**im-pend** \im-'pend\ *v* [L *impendere*, fr. *in-* + *pendere* to hang — more  
 at **PENDANT**] (1585) 1 *a* : to hover threateningly : **MENACE** **b** : to be  
 about to occur (<the impending trial) 2 archaic : to hang suspended

**im-pen-dent** \im-'pen-dənt\ *adj* (1590) : being near at hand : **AP-**  
**PROACHING**

**im-pen-e-tr-a-bil-i-ty** \jim-'pē-nə-tra-'bil-ē-tē\ *n* (1653) 1 : the inabil-  
 ity of two portions of matter to occupy the same space at the same time  
 2 : the quality or state of being impenetrable

**im-pen-i-tence** \jim-'pē-nə-tən(t)s\ *n* (1595) : the quality or state of  
 being impenitent

**im-pen-i-tent** \-tənt\ *adj* [ME, fr. LL *impenitent*, *impenitens*, fr. *L* *in-*  
*+ paenitent*, *paenitens* penitent] (15c) : not penitent — **im-pen-i-tent-**  
**ly** *adv*

**im-per-a-tive** \im-'pər-a-tiv-, -'pē-rə-\ *adj* [ME *imperatīv*, fr. LL *impera-*  
*tīvus*, fr. *L* *imperatus*, pp. of *imperare* to command — more at  
**EMPEROR**] (15c) 1 *a* : of, relating to, or constituting the grammatical  
 mood that expresses the will to influence the behavior of another **b**  
 : expressive of a command, entreaty, or exhortation **c** : having power  
 to restrain, control, and direct 2 : not to be avoided or evaded : **NEC-**  
**CESSARY** (<an ~ duty) *syn* see **MASTERFUL** — **im-per-a-tive-ly** *adv* —  
**im-per-a-tive-ness** *n*

**imperative** *n* (1530) 1 : the imperative mood or a verb form or verbal  
 phrase expressing it 2 : something that is imperative; as **a** : **COM-**  
**MAND**, **ORDER** **b** : **RULE**, **GUIDE** **c** : an obligatory act or duty **d** : an  
 imperative judgment or proposition

**im-pe-r-a-tor** \im-'pə-'rā-tər-, -'tōr\ *n* [L — more at **EMPEROR**] (ca. 1580)  
 : a commander in chief or emperor of the ancient Romans — **im-per-**  
**a-to-ri-al** \jim-'pər-a-'tōr-ē-əl\ *adj*

**im-per-cep-ti-ble** \im-'pər-'sep-tə-bəl\ *adj* [ME, fr. MF, fr. ML *imper-*  
*ceptibilis*, fr. *L* *in-* + LL *perceptibilis* perceptible] (15c) : not perceptible  
 by a sense or by the mind : extremely slight, gradual, or subtle (<~ dif-  
 ferences) — **im-per-cep-ti-bly** \-'sep-tə-blē\ *adv*

**im-per-cep-tive** \im-'pər-'sep-tiv\ *adj* (1661) : not perceptive (<an ~  
 reader) — **im-per-cep-tive-ness** *n*

**im-per-cip-i-ence** \-'si-'pē-ən(t)s\ *n* (1891) : the quality or state of being  
 imperceptive — **im-per-cip-i-ent** \-ənt\ *adj*

**im-per** *abbr* 1 imperfect 2 imperforate

**im-per-fect** \jim-'pər-'fikt\ *adj* [alter. of ME *imparfit*, fr. *L* *imperfectus*,  
 fr. *in-* + *perfectus* perfect] (14c) 1 : not perfect; as **a** : **DEFECTIVE** **b**  
 : of a flower : having stamens or pistils but not both **c** : lacking or not  
 involving sexual reproduction (<the ~ stage of a fungus) 2 : of, relat-  
 ing to, or constituting a verb tense used to designate a continuing state  
 or an incomplete action esp. in the past 3 : not enforceable at law —  
**im-per-fect-ly** \-'fikt(t)-lē\ *adv* — **im-per-fect-ness** \-'fikt(t)-nəs\ *n*

**imperfect** *n* (1871) : an imperfect tense; also : the verb form expressing  
 it

**imperfect fungus** *n* (ca. 1895) : any of various fungi (order Fungi Im-  
 perfecti *syn*. Deuteromycoetes) of which only the conidial stage is  
 known

**im-per-fec-tion** \im-'pər-'fek-shən\ *n* (14c) : the quality or state of be-  
 ing imperfect; also : **FAULT**, **BLEMISH**

**im-per-fec-tive** \im-'pər-'fek-tiv\ *adj* (1887) *of a verb form or aspect*  
 : expressing action as incomplete or without reference to completion  
 or as reiterated — compare **PERFECTIVE** — **imperfective** *n*

**im-per-for-ate** \jim-'pər-'fə-'rət-, -'rāt\ *adj* (1673) 1 : having no  
 opening or aperture; *specif* : lacking the usual or normal opening 2 *of*  
 a stamp or a sheet of stamps : lacking perforations or roulettes

**im-pe-ri-al** \im-'pīr-ē-əl\ *adj* [ME, fr. AF, fr. LL *imperialis*, fr. *L* *imper-*  
*ium* command, empire] (14c) 1 *a* : of, relating to, befitting, or sugges-  
 tive of an empire or an emperor **b** (1) : of or relating to the United  
 Kingdom as distinguished from the constituent parts (2) : of or relat-  
 ing to the Commonwealth of Nations and British Empire 2 *a* : **SOVER-**  
**EIGN** **b** : **REGAL**, **IMPERIOUS** 3 : of superior or unusual size or excel-  
 lence 4 : belonging to the official British series of weights and mea-  
 sures — see **WEIGHT** table — **im-pe-ri-al-ly** \-'ə-lē\ *adv*

**imperial** *n* (ca. 1524) 1 *cap* : an adherent or soldier of the Holy Roman  
 emperor 2 : **EMPEROR** 3 [F *impériale*; fr. the beard worn by  
 Napoleon III] : a pointed beard growing below the lower lip 4 : some-  
 thing of unusual size or excellence

**im-pe-ri-al-ism** \im-'pīr-ē-əl-iz-əm\ *n* (1800) 1 : imperial government,  
 authority, or system 2 : the policy, practice, or advocacy of extending  
 the power and dominion of a nation esp. by direct territorial acquisi-  
 tions or by gaining indirect control over the political or economic life  
 of other areas; *broadly* : the extension or imposition of power, author-  
 ity, or influence (<union ~) — **im-pe-ri-al-ist** \-'list\ *n* or *adj* — **im-pe-**  
**ri-al-is-tic** \-'pīr-ē-'līs-tik\ *adj* — **im-pe-ri-al-is-ti-cal-ly** \-'ti-k(ə)-lē\ *adv*

**imperial moth** *n* (ca. 1904) : a large No. American saturniid moth  
 (*Eacles imperialis*) having yellow wings marked with reddish-brown  
 spots and patches

**im-per-il** \im-'pər-əl-, -'pē-rəl\ *v* -iled or -illed; -il-ing or -il-ling (15c)  
 : to bring into peril : **ENDANGER** — **im-per-il-ment** \-mənt\ *n*

**im-pe-ri-ous** \im-'pīr-ē-əs\ *adj* [L *imperiosus*, fr. *imperium*] (1540) 1 *a*  
 : befitting or characteristic of one of eminent rank or attainments  
 : **COMMANDING**, **DOMINANT** (<an ~ manner) **b** : marked by arrogant  
 assurance : **DOMINEERING** 2 : intensely compelling : **URGENT** (<the ~  
 problems of the new age — J. F. Kennedy) *syn* see **MASTERFUL** —  
**im-pe-ri-ous-ly** *adv* — **im-pe-ri-ous-ness** *n*

**im-per-ish-able** \jim-'pər-'i-shə-bəl\ *adj* (ca. 1585) 1 : not perishable  
 or subject to decay 2 : enduring or occurring forever (<~ fame) —  
**im-per-ish-abil-i-ty** \-'pər-'i-shə-'bil-ē-tē\ *n* — **im-per-ish-able** *n* — **im-per-**  
**ish-able-ness** \-'pər-'i-shə-bəl-nəs\ *n* — **im-per-ish-ably** \-blē\ *adv*

**im-pe-ri-um** \im-'pīr-ē-əm\ *n*, [L — more at **EMPIRE**] (1651) 1 *a* : su-  
 preme power or absolute dominion : **CONTROL** **b** : **EMPIRE** 1 **c** : **EM-**  
**PIRE** 2 2 : the right to command or to employ the force of the state  
 : **SOVEREIGNTY**

**im-per-man-ence** \jim-'pər-mən-ən(t)s-, -'pər-mə-\ *n* (1796) : the qual-  
 ity or state of being impermanent

**im-per-man-ent** \-nənt\ *adj* (1648) : **IMPERMANENCE**

**im-per-man-ent-ly** \-nənt-ē\ *adv* (1653) : not permanent : **TRANSIENT** —  
**im-per-man-ent-ly** *adv*

