

OXFORD

Illustrated

Children's

Thesaurus



The perfect family thesaurus

bird noun

You can use these words to describe *how a bird moves*: circle, dart, flit, flutter, fly, glide, hop, hover, peck, perch, preen, skim, soar, swoop, waddle, wheel



feather noun

A large feather is a *plume*. All the feathers on a bird are its *plumage*. Soft, fluffy feathers are *down*. A feather used as a pen is a *quill*.

Parts of a bird's body

beak, bill; claw, talon; breast, crown, throat; crest, feather, down, plumage, plume, wing

coat, coating, covering, thickness, film, sheet, skin
2 You can see various layers of rock in the cliff.
 seam, stratum

laze verb

We spent the day lazing in the garden.
 be lazy, idle, loaf, lounge, lie about, relax, loll

lazy adjective

My lazy little brother stayed in bed all day!
 idle, inactive, lethargic, slack, slothful, indolent
 An informal name for a lazy person is *lazybones*.

lead verb

1 The rescuers led the climbers to safety.
 guide, conduct, escort, usher, steer, pilot, shepherd
 OPPOSITE follow

2 Dr Martez will lead the expedition to Peru.
 be in charge of, direct, command, head, manage, supervise
3 The British cyclist led from the start of the race.
 be in front, be in the lead, head the field

4 The animals in the zoo lead a peaceful life.
 have, pass, spend, experience

lead noun

1 The team followed the captain's lead.
 example, guidance, leadership, direction

2 The Australian swimmer is in the lead.

first place, front position

3 Don't trip over the electrical lead.
 cable, flex, wire

leader noun

The leader of the pirates was Captain Cutlass.
 head, chief, commander, captain, director, principal, ruler (informal) boss
 The leader of a group of wrongdoers is the ringleader.

leak noun/leak verb

1 The juice had leaked all over my schoolbag.
 escape, drip, seep, ooze, trickle

2 Details of a secret plan were leaked to the newspaper.
 reveal, disclose, make known, pass on, give away, let out

lean verb

1 I leaned against the wall.
 recline, rest, prop

yourself, support yourself

2 The yacht leaned to one side in the wind.
 slope, tilt, tip, incline, slant, list, bank

leap verb

The dog leaped in the air to catch the ball.
 jump, spring, bound, vault

learn verb

1 We are learning about the Vikings this term.
 discover, find out, gather, grasp, pick up

2 I've got to learn the words of this song.

learn by heart, memorize, master

learner noun

This swimming class is for learners only.

beginner, starter, novice
 Someone learning things at school or college is a *pupil* or *student*.

Someone learning a trade is an *apprentice* or *trainee*.

leave verb

1 Do you have to leave now?
 go, go away, depart, withdraw, take your leave, go out, set off, say goodbye (informal) take off, disappear

OPPOSITE arrive
2 The doctor left the room in a hurry.

exit, go out of, depart from, quit, vacate

OPPOSITE enter

3 Don't leave me here on my own!
 abandon, desert, forsake

4 The crew left the sinking ship.

evacuate, get out of

5 My sister has left her job at the bank.

give up, quit, resign from (informal) walk out of

6 Leave the milk bottles by the front door.

place, position, put down, set down, deposit

7 Lady Bigwig left all her money to charity.

bequeath, hand down, will, endow

lecture noun

1 There is a lecture about dinosaurs at the museum today.
 talk, lesson, speech, address

2 The teacher gave us a lecture on how to behave.

reprimand, warning (informal) telling off

ledge noun

The climbers rested on a ledge of rock.
 shelf, projection
 A ledge under a window is a *windowsill*.

leg noun

1 Boris fell and bruised his leg.
 FOR PARTS OF YOUR BODY, SEE BODY.
2 The rowers completed the first leg of the race.
 part, stage, section, phase, stretch

legal adjective

Is it legal to park here on Sundays?
 lawful, legitimate, permissible, permitted, allowed
 OPPOSITE illegal

legend noun

I like reading legends about ancient heroes.
 myth, story, folk tale, fairy tale, fable, tradition

leisure noun

Grandad has plenty of leisure since he retired.
 free time, spare time, relaxation, recreation, rest

lend verb

Can you lend me some money until the weekend?
 loan, advance, let you have
 OPPOSITE borrow

length noun

1 My heart sank when I saw the length of the queue.
 extent, size

2 We only had to wait a short length of time.

space, period, stretch

lengthen verb

1 Is it possible to lengthen these curtains?
 extend, make longer, increase, stretch

2 The days lengthen in spring.

draw out, get longer, stretch out

lenient adjective

The teacher was lenient and let us off.
 easygoing, soft-hearted, tolerant, forgiving, indulgent, kind, merciful
 OPPOSITE strict

lesson noun

My piano lesson is on Friday afternoon.
 class, period, tutorial, instruction



let verb

1 *Abby's parents let her go to the party.*
allow, give permission to, permit, consent to, agree to
OPPOSITE forbid

2 *Our friends are letting their house for the summer.*
lease, rent out, hire out

lethal adjective

This bottle contains a lethal potion.
deadly, fatal, mortal, poisonous

level adjective

1 *You need a level field for playing rounders.*

even, flat, horizontal, smooth
OPPOSITE uneven
2 *At half-time the scores were level.*
equal, even, the same, matching
(informal) neck-and-neck

level noun

1 *The water had reached a high level.*
height
2 *The lift takes you up to the sixth level.*
floor, storey, tier
3 *What level have you reached in judo?*
grade, standard, stage, rank, degree

lid noun

Can you help me get the lid off this jar?
cap, cover, covering, top

lie noun

He accused the newspaper of printing lies.
deceit, falsehood, dishonesty
(informal) fib
OPPOSITE truth

lie verb

1 *It's twelve o'clock and he's still lying in bed!*
recline, stretch out, lounge, sprawl, rest
To lie face down is to be **prone**.
To lie face upwards is to be **supine**.
2 *The castle lies in a valley.*
be sited, be situated, be located, be found
3 *I don't trust her—I think she's lying.*
deceive someone, bluff
(informal) fib

life noun

1 *My hamster, Fluffy, leads a very easy life.*
existence, being, way of life
2 *Our lives depended on finding water.*
survival
3 *You seem to be full of life today!*
energy, liveliness, vigour, vitality, spirit, sprightliness, animation

4 *I'm reading a life of Elvis Presley.*
life story, autobiography, biography

lift verb

1 *The removal men lifted the piano carefully.*
pick up, raise, elevate, pull up, hoist

2 *The plane lifted off the ground.*
rise, ascend, soar

WRITING TIPS

**light** noun

You can use these words to describe **light**.

TO DESCRIBE how light appears
bright, brilliant, harsh, luminous, lustrous, strong; diffused, dim, muted, soft, warm

LIGHT MAY:

beam, blaze, dazzle, flash, flicker, glare, gleam, glimmer, glint, glisten, glitter, glow, shimmer, shine, sparkle, twinkle

light adjective

1 *The artist worked in a light and airy studio.*
bright, well-lit, illuminated
OPPOSITE dim, gloomy
2 *She was wearing light blue jeans.*
pale
OPPOSITE dark
3 *The parcel looks big, but it is quite light.*
lightweight, portable, weightless, slight
A common simile is *as light as a feather*.
OPPOSITE heavy
4 *A light wind rippled the surface of the water.*
gentle, faint, slight
OPPOSITE strong
5 *We had a light meal before we went out.*
small, modest, simple, insubstantial
OPPOSITE heavy, substantial

light verb

1 *We lit the candles on my*

birthday cake.
ignite, kindle, set alight, set fire to, switch on
OPPOSITE extinguish

2 *The fireworks lit the sky.*
light up, brighten, illuminate, shed light on, shine on
OPPOSITE darken

like verb

1 *Lauren likes her new puppy more than anything.*
admire, adore, be attached to, be fond of, care for, cherish, esteem, hold dear, love
(informal) have a soft spot for
2 *Alex likes chocolate cake very much. What sort of films do you like?*

appreciate, be interested in, be keen on, be partial to, delight in, enjoy, prefer, relish
OPPOSITE dislike

likely adjective

It's likely that the shop will be closed tomorrow.
probable, expected, anticipated, predictable, foreseeable
OPPOSITE unlikely

limit noun

1 *There is a limit of twenty pupils for this class.*
maximum, restriction, threshold, ceiling, cut-off point
A limit on time is a **deadline** or **time limit**.
2 *The fence marks the limit of the school grounds.*
border, boundary, edge, perimeter, frontier

limit verb

I had to limit the invitations to my party.
put a limit on, restrict, control, ration

limp adjective

The leaves on the plant are looking limp.
drooping, floppy, sagging, wilting, soft, flabby, slack
OPPOSITE rigid

line noun

1 *I drew a pencil line across the page.*
stroke, rule, underline, stripe, streak, band, bar, dash
A line that is cut into a surface is a **groove**, **score**, or **scratch**.
A line on a person's skin is a **wrinkle**.
A deep groove or wrinkle is a **furrow**.
A line on fabric is a **crease**
2 *There was a long line of people waiting at the bus stop.*
queue, row, file, column, rank, procession, chain
A line of police officers forming a barrier is a **cordon**.
A line of schoolchildren walking



WORD WEB

music noun

VARIOUS KINDS OF MUSIC

blues, classical music, country and western, dance music, disco music, folk music, gospel, hip hop, jazz, orchestral music, pop music, punk, ragtime, rap, reggae, rock, soul, swing

TYPES OF MUSICAL COMPOSITION
anthem, ballad, carol, concerto, folk song, fugue, hymn, lullaby, march, melody, musical, opera, operetta, sonata, song, symphony, tune

FAMILIES OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
brass, keyboard, percussion, strings, woodwind

STRINGED INSTRUMENTS THAT CAN BE PLAYED WITH A BOW
cello, double bass, viola, violin or fiddle

STRINGED INSTRUMENTS PLAYED BY PLUCKING OR STRUMMING
banjo, cittern, guitar, harp, lute, lyre, mandolin, sitar, ukulele, zither

BRASS INSTRUMENTS
bugle, cornet, euphonium, flugelhorn, French horn, trombone, trumpet, tuba

OTHER INSTRUMENTS PLAYED BY BLOWING
bagpipes, bassoon, clarinet, cor anglais, flute, harmonica or mouth organ, oboe, piccolo, recorder, saxophone

KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

accordion, harmonium, harpsichord, keyboard, organ, piano, synthesizer

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

bass drum, bongo drum, castanets, cymbals, drum, glockenspiel, gong, kettledrum, maracas, marimba, rattle, snare drum, tabor, tambour, tambourine, timpani, tom-tom, triangle, tubular bells, vibraphone, xylophone

PEOPLE WHO PLAY

VARIOUS INSTRUMENTS

bugler, cellist, clarinettist, drummer, fiddler, flautist, guitarist, harpist, lutenist, oboist, organist, percussionist, pianist, piper, timpanist, trombonist, trumpeter, violinist

SOME OTHER MUSICIANS

accompanist, composer, conductor, instrumentalist, singer, vocalist

GROUPS OF MUSICIANS

band, choir or chorus, duet or duo, ensemble, group, orchestra, quartet, quintet, trio

TERMS USED IN MUSIC

chord, counterpoint, discord, harmony, melody, note, octave, pitch, rhythm, scale, semitone, tempo, theme, tone, tune

NAMES OF NOTES AND SIGNS IN WRITTEN MUSIC

clef, crotchet, flat, key signature, minim, natural, quaver, semibreve, semiquaver, sharp, stave, time signature



saxophone



violin



accordion



guitar



drums

a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
i
j
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m
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o
p
q
r
s
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v
w
x
y
z

Nn

nag verb

He was always *nagging* her to work harder.

badger, pester, scold

naked adjective

He walked *naked* into the bathroom.

bare, nude, unclothed, undressed

OPPOSITE clothed

name noun

The official names you have are your *first names* or *forenames*, and *surname*.

Names a Christian is given at baptism are *Christian names*.

A false name is an *alias*.

A name people use instead of your real name is a *nickname*.

A false name an author uses is a *pen name* or *pseudonym*.

The name of a book or film is its *title*.

name verb

The zoo *named* the new lion cubs, Kiara and Kovu.

call

To name someone at the ceremony of baptism is to *baptize* or *christen* them.

nap noun

Granny always takes a *nap* on Sunday afternoons.

rest, sleep, doze, lie-down, siesta (informal) snooze, forty winks

narrow adjective

The rabbit squeezed through a *narrow* opening in the fence.

thin, slender, slim

OPPOSITE wide

nasty adjective

1 *Ogres* have a thoroughly *nasty* temper.

unkind, unpleasant, unfriendly, disagreeable, objectionable, odious, mean, malicious, cruel, spiteful, vicious

2 A *nasty* smell wafted from the laboratory.

unpleasant, offensive, disgusting, repulsive, revolting, horrible, foul, rotten, sickening

OPPOSITE agreeable, pleasant

3 The weather suddenly turned *nasty*.

unpleasant, rough, stormy, squally

national adjective

The programme will be broadcast on *national* television.

nationwide

OPPOSITE local

natural adjective

1 *Karen* has a *natural* gift for music.

born, inborn, instinctive, intuitive, native

2 It's only *natural* to be nervous before an exam.

normal, common, understandable, reasonable, predictable

OPPOSITE unnatural

nature noun

1 I like TV programmes about *nature*.

natural history, wildlife

2 The old sheepdog has a very kind *nature*.

character, disposition, personality, manner

3 I collect coins, medals, and things of that *nature*.

kind, sort, type, description, variety

naughty adjective

The puppies were quite *naughty* when they were young.

bad, badly behaved, disobedient, mischievous, uncontrollable, unmanageable, troublesome, unruly

OPPOSITE well behaved

near adjective

1 We get on well with our *near* neighbours.

next-door, nearby, close, adjacent, surrounding

2 My birthday is *near*.

approaching, coming (informal) round the corner

3 We sent cards to all our *near* relatives.

close, dear, familiar, intimate

OPPOSITE distant

nearly adverb

Thank goodness, it's *nearly* dinner time!

almost, practically, virtually, just about, approaching

neat adjective

1 Please leave the room as *neat* as possible.

clean, orderly, tidy, uncluttered, immaculate

(informal) spick and span

2 *Craig* always looks *neat* in his school uniform.

smart, elegant, spruce, trim

3 Her handwriting is very *neat*.

precise, skilful, well-formed

OPPOSITE untidy

necessary adjective

The recipe lists all the *necessary* ingredients.

essential, required, needed, needful, compulsory, obligatory, unavoidable

OPPOSITE unnecessary

need noun

There's a *need* for more shops in our area.

call, demand, requirement

need verb

1 I *need* a pound coin for the locker.

require, want, be short of, lack

2 The charity *needs* our support.

depend on, rely on

neglect verb

She's been *neglecting* her work.

forget, ignore, overlook, abandon, disregard, pay no attention to, shirk

nervous adjective

She always feels *nervous* before an exam.

anxious, worried, apprehensive, concerned, uneasy, fearful, edgy, fraught, tense, troubled (informal) uptight, jittery

OPPOSITE calm

neutral adjective

A referee has to be *neutral*.

impartial, unbiased, unprejudiced, even-handed

OPPOSITE biased, prejudiced

new adjective

1 Start on a *new* sheet of paper.

clean, fresh, unused, brand-new

Something new and unused is *in mint condition*.

2 They went to the motor show to see the *new* models.

latest, current, modern, recent, up-to-date

3 They've found a *new* bug in the computer program.

additional, extra, unexpected, unfamiliar

4 Haven't you got any *new* ideas? fresh, original, novel, innovative, creative, different

OPPOSITE old

news noun

What's the latest *news*?

information, word, report, bulletin (old use) tidings

next adjective

1 He lives in the house *next* to the chip shop.

adjacent, closest, nearest

OPPOSITE distant

2 If you miss this bus, you can catch the *next* one.

following, subsequent

OPPOSITE previous

nice adjective see panel on following page

1 That's not a very *nice* thing to say!

pleasant, agreeable

OPPOSITE nasty

2 There is a *nice* distinction between borrowing and stealing.

delicate, fine, precise, subtle

night noun

Badgers usually come out at *night*.

night-time, dark

Animals which are active at night are *nocturnal* animals.

2 I'll *pick up* some milk on the way home.
get, collect, fetch

picture noun

1 There's a *picture* of a pyramid in this book.

illustration, image, print
A picture which represents a particular person is a *portrait*.

A picture which represents the artist himself or herself is a *self-portrait*. A picture which represents

a group of objects is a *still life*.

A picture which represents a country scene is a *landscape*. Pictures on a computer are *graphics*.

2 Mum took some *pictures* of us building a sandcastle.

photograph, snapshot, snap

picture verb

1 The girl is *pictured against* a background of flowers.
depict, illustrate, represent, show, portray

2 Can you *picture* what the world will be like in 100 years?
imagine, visualize

piece noun

1 They collected *pieces* of wood to build a raft.

bar, block, length, stick, chunk, lump, hunk, bit, chip, fragment, particle, scrap, shred

2 I've only got two *pieces* of chocolate left.
bit, portion, part, section, segment, share, slice

3 I've lost one of the *pieces* of the jigsaw.

WORD WEB

pirate noun

The ship was overrun by *bloodthirsty pirates*.
buccaneer, marauder

THINGS YOU MIGHT FIND ON A PIRATE SHIP

barrels, cabin, crow's nest, deck, hammock, lantern, mast, plank, pirate flag, rigging, sail, treasure chest, wheel

telescope



A pirate flag is a *Jolly Roger* or *skull-and-crossbones*.

A pirate ship might sail on the *high seas* or the *Spanish Main*.

PEOPLE YOU MIGHT FIND ON A PIRATE SHIP
cabin boy or girl, captain, captives, cook, crew, first mate, lookout, stowaway

PIRATE TREASURE MIGHT CONTAIN
doubloons or ducats, gold bullion, pieces of eight
Goods or treasure seized by pirates is *booty*.

WEAPONS A PIRATE MIGHT USE
cannon, cutlass, dagger, gunpowder, musket, pistol

OTHER THINGS A PIRATE MIGHT WEAR OR CARRY

bandanna or kerchief, bottle of rum, breeches, cocked hat, earrings, eye patch, hook, parrot or cockatoo, pigtail, sea chart, spyglass or telescope, treasure map, wooden leg or peg leg

SOME WORDS TO DESCRIBE A PIRATE
barbaric, black-hearted, bloodthirsty, cut-throat, daring, dastardly, fearless, heartless, lawless, merciless, murderous, pitiless, ruthless, savage, swashbuckling, vengeful, vicious, villainous

musket



jolly roger



treasure



hat
parrot

dagger



treasure map

a
b
c
d
e
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v
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x
y
z

part, element, unit, component, constituent

4 There's a piece about our school in the local paper.

article, item, report, feature

pierce verb

The arrow had pierced the knight's armour.

enter, go through, make a hole in, penetrate, bore through
To pierce a hole through paper is to **punch** a hole or **perforate** it. To pierce a hole in a tyre is to **puncture** it.

To pierce someone with a spike is to **impale** or **spear** them.

pile noun

1 Where did this pile of rubbish come from?

heap, mound, mountain, stack, hoard, mass, quantity, collection, assortment

2 I've still got piles of homework to do.

plenty, a lot, a great deal (informal) lots, masses

pile verb

Pile everything in the corner and we'll sort it out later.

heap, stack, collect, gather, assemble, hoard

to pile up

The bills are beginning to pile up. build up, mount up, accumulate

pillar noun

The roof was supported by tall pillars.

column, pier, post, prop, support

pinch verb

1 The baby pinched my arm and wouldn't let go.

nip, squeeze, press, tweak, grip

2 (informal) Who pinched my calculator?

steal, take, snatch, pilfer (informal) nick, swipe, make off with

pipe noun

The water flows away along this pipe.

tube

A pipe used for watering the garden is a **hose**.

A pipe in the street which supplies water for fighting fires is a **hydrant**.

A pipe which carries oil, etc., over long distances is a **pipeline**.

The system of water pipes in a house is the **plumbing**.

pirate noun

see panel on previous page

pit noun

The pirates showed no pity towards the captives.

mercy, compassion, sympathy, humanity, kindness, concern, feeling

OPPOSITE cruelty

a pity

It's a pity that you have to leave so early.

a shame, unfortunate, bad luck

pity verb

We pitied anyone who was caught up in the storm.

feel sorry for, feel for, sympathize with, take pity on

place noun

1 This is a good place to park. site, venue, spot, location, position, situation

2 They are looking for a quiet place to live. area, district, locality, neighbourhood, region, vicinity

3 Save me a place on the bus. seat, space

place verb

1 The hotel is placed next to the beach. locate, situate, position, station

2 You can place your coats on the bed. put down, set down, leave, deposit, lay (informal) dump, plonk

plain adjective

1 The furniture in the room was very plain. simple, modest, basic, unelaborate

OPPOSITE elaborate

2 Some people say she looks plain compared with her sister. unattractive, ordinary

OPPOSITE attractive

3 It is plain to me that you are not interested. clear, evident, obvious, apparent, unmistakable

OPPOSITE unclear

4 She told us what she thought in very plain terms. direct, frank, blunt, outspoken, honest, sincere, straightforward

5 We need to wear a plain t-shirt for sports. unpatterned, self-coloured

plan noun

1 The captain explained her plan to the rest of the team. idea, proposal, scheme, strategy, project, suggestion, proposition

A plan to do something bad is a **plot**.

2 They looked at the plans for the new sports centre. design, diagram, chart, map, drawing, blueprint

plan verb

1 The outlaws planned an attack upon the sheriff. scheme, design, devise, work out, formulate, prepare, organize

To plan to do something bad is to **plot**.

2 What do you plan to do next? aim, intend, propose, mean



WORD WEB

planet noun

The new space probe will travel to far-off planets.

world

THE PLANETS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM (IN ORDER FROM THE SUN) ARE

Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus,

Neptune.

The path followed by a planet is its **orbit**.

Minor planets orbiting the sun are **asteroids**.

Something which orbits a planet is a **satellite**.

The earth's large satellite is the **Moon**.



WRITING TIPS

You can use these words to describe an **alien planet**

Earth-like, gaseous, inhospitable, uninhabitable

TO DESCRIBE ITS surface barren, desolate, dusty, frozen, icy, molten, rocky, volcanic

TO DESCRIBE ITS atmosphere OR air airless, noxious, poisonous, thin, unbreathable



a
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c
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