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fool  (f l)

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n.

1. One who is deficient in judgment, sense, or understanding.
2. One who acts unwisely on a given occasion: *I was a fool to have quit my job.*
3. One who has been tricked or made to appear ridiculous; a dupe: *They made a fool of me by pretending I had won.*
4. *Informal* A person with a talent or enthusiasm for a certain activity: *a dancing fool; a fool for skiing.*
5. A member of a royal or noble household who provided entertainment, as with jokes or antics; a jester.
6. One who subverts convention or orthodoxy or varies from social conformity in order to reveal spiritual or moral truth: *a holy fool.*
7. A dessert made of stewed or puréed fruit mixed with cream or custard and served cold.
8. *Archaic* A mentally deficient person; an idiot.

v. **fooled, fool-ing, fools**

v.tr.

1. To deceive or trick; dupe: *"trying to learn how to fool a trout with a little bit of floating fur and feather" (Charles Kuralt).*
2. To confound or prove wrong; surprise, especially pleasantly: *We were sure they would fail, but they fooled us.*

v.intr.

1. Informal

- a. To speak or act facetiously or in jest; joke: *I was just fooling when I said I had to leave.*
 - b. To behave comically; clown.
 - c. To feign; pretend: *He said he had a toothache but he was only fooling.*
2. To engage in idle or frivolous activity.
 3. To toy, tinker, or mess: *shouldn't fool with matches.*

adj.

Informal

Foolish; stupid: *off on some fool errand or other.*

Phrasal Verbs:

fool around *Informal*

1. To engage in idle or casual activity; putter: *was fooling around with the old car in hopes of fixing it.*
2. To engage in frivolous activity; make fun.
3. To engage in casual sexual activity.
4.
 - a. To have a sexual affair with someone who is not one's spouse or partner.
 - b. To have many sexual affairs.

fool away

To waste (time or money) foolishly; squander: *fooled away the week's pay on Friday night.*

Idiom:

play/act the fool

1. To act in an irresponsible or foolish manner.
2. To behave in a playful or comical manner.

[Middle English *fol*, from Old French, from Late Latin *follis*, windbag, fool, from Latin *follis*, bellows; see [bhel-² in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.](#)]

Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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