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dictionary

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English
Language



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fer·ment  (fûr mĕnt')

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n.

1.

a. An agent, such as an enzyme, bacterium, or fungus, that brings about fermentation.

b. Fermentation.

2.

a. A state of agitation or of turbulent change or development.

b. An agent that precipitates or is capable of precipitating such a state; a catalyst.

v. (fər-mĕnt) **fer·ment·ed**, **fer·ment·ing**, **fer·ments**

v.intr.

1. To undergo fermentation: *cabbage that has fermented.*

2. To develop in a turbulent or agitated way; seethe: *an idea that was fermenting in his mind for months.*

v.tr.

1. To cause to undergo fermentation: *Yeasts ferment sugars.*

2. To produce by or as if by fermentation: *ferment the wine in oak barrels; hostility that was fermented by envy.*

3. To make turbulent; excite or agitate: *a fiery speech that fermented the crowd.*

[Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *fermentum*; see **bhreu-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

fer·ment'a·bil i·ty *n.*

fer·ment a·ble *adj.*

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