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tick ¹ (tĭk)

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n.

1. A light, sharp, clicking sound made repeatedly by a machine, such as a clock.
2. *Chiefly British* A moment.
3. A light mark used to check off or call attention to an item.
4. *Informal* A unit on a scale; a degree: *when interest rates move up a tick.*

v. **ticked, tick-ing, ticks**

v.intr.

1. To emit recurring clicking sounds: *as the clock ticked.*
2. To function characteristically or well: *machines ticking away; curious about what makes people tick.*

v.tr.

1. To count or record with the sound of ticks: *a clock ticking the hours; a taxi meter ticking the fare.*
2. To mark or check off (a listed item) with a tick: *ticked off each name on the list.*

Phrasal Verb:

tick off *Informal*

To make angry or annoyed: *Constant delays ticked me off.*

[Middle English *tik*, light tap.]

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tick ² (tĭk)

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n.

1. Any of various small bloodsucking arachnids of the order Ixodida that are parasitic on terrestrial vertebrates. Many species transmit diseases, such as Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Lyme disease.
2. Any of various usually wingless insects that resemble a tick, such as a sheep ked.

[Middle English *tike*, *tik*, perhaps from Old English **ticca*.]

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tick ³ (tĭk)

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n.

1.

- a. A cloth case for a mattress or pillow.
 - b. A light mattress without inner springs.
2. Ticking.

[Middle English *tikke*, probably from Middle Dutch *tīke*, ultimately from Latin *thēca*, receptacle, from Greek *thēkē*; see **dhē-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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tick⁴  (tĭk)

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n.
Chiefly British
Credit or an amount of credit.

[Short for [TICKET](#).]

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[Semitic Roots](#)

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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