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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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choice  (chois)

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n.

1. The act of choosing; selection: *It is time to make a choice between the candidates.*

2.

a. The power, right, or liberty to choose; option: *The teacher gave me the choice between taking an exam and writing a paper.*

b. An alternative: *With no money, he had no choice but to walk home.*

3. One that is chosen: *That vase on sale looks like an excellent choice.*

4. A number or variety from which to choose: *a wide choice of styles and colors.*

5. The right to terminate a pregnancy by induced abortion.

adj. **choic·er, choic·est**

1. Of very fine quality: *choice peaches.*

2. Selected with care; well-chosen: *choice phrases.*

3. Expressive of intense disapproval: *had some choice words for the movers who dropped her antique spinet.*

4. Of or relating to the USDA grade of beef with more marbling than select cuts and less marbling than prime cuts.

Idiom:

of choice

Preferred above others of the same kind or set: *"the much used leveraged buyout as the weapon of choice" (Alison Leigh Cowan).*

[Middle English *chois*, from Old French, from *choisir*, to choose, from Vulgar Latin **causīre*, of Germanic origin; see **geus-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

choice **ly** *adv.*

choice **ness** *n.*

Synonyms: [choice](#), [selection](#), [alternative](#), [option](#), [preference](#)

These nouns denote something chosen or available for choosing: *Choice and selection are the most general: My first choice was too costly. My selection from the menu turned out to be delicious.* Both words can refer to a range of things available for choosing: *You have a wide choice of colors. The store had a good selection of wines.* *Alternative* emphasizes choice between two possibilities or courses of action: *"Since the days of Thomas A. Edison, the auto industry has been trying to make a credible alternative to the internal combustion engine" (Danny Hakim).* *Option* is often used of a choice that requires careful consideration: *The legislature outlined many tax options.* *Preference* indicates a choice based on one's values, bias, or predilections: *We were offered our preference of appetizers.*

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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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