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vict·ual  (vīt l)

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n.

1. Food fit for human consumption.

2. **victuals** Food supplies; provisions.

v. **vict·ualed**, **vict·ual·ing**, **vict·uals** or **vict·ualled** or **vict·ual·ling**

v.tr.

To provide with food.

v.intr.

1. To lay in food supplies.

2. To eat.

[Alteration (influenced by Late Latin *vīctuālia*, provisions) of Middle English *vitaille*, from Old French, from Late Latin *vīctuālia*, provisions, from neuter pl. of Latin *vīctūālis*, of nourishment, from *vīctus*, nourishment, from past participle of *vīvere*, to live; see **g^wei-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

Usage Note: *Victual* is properly pronounced (vīt l), with two syllables and no (k) sound. It was borrowed in the 1300s from the Old French form *vitaille*, which had stress and a diphthong in the second syllable, but the word was Anglicized after that to put the stress up front in the manner of most native English words. The spelling with *c* (and a little later with *u*) has a long history too, in both French and English. This spelling is a learned one, showing off the knowledge that the word came from Late Latin *vīctuālia*, "provisions." The word is now usually spelled *victual*, or on occasion *vittle*, but the pronunciation has remained (vīt l).

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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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