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hold ¹  (hōld)

Share:

v. **held** (hēld), **hold-ing**, **holds**

v.tr.

1.

a. To have and keep in one's grasp: *held the reins tightly.*

b. To aim or direct; point: *held a hose on the fire.*

c. To keep from falling or moving; support: *a nail too small to hold the mirror; hold the horse steady; papers that were held together with staples.*

d. To sustain the pressure of: *The old bridge can't hold much weight.*

2.

a. To keep from departing or getting away: *Hold the bus! Hold the dog until I find the leash.*

b. To keep in custody: *held the suspect for questioning.*

c. To retain (one's attention or interest): *Televised sports can't hold my interest.*

d. To avoid letting out or expelling: *The swimmer held her breath while underwater.*

3.

a. To be filled by; contain: *This drawer holds socks.*

b. To be capable of holding: *a pitcher that holds a quart.* See Synonyms at [contain](#).

c. To have as a chief characteristic or quality: *The film holds many surprises.*

d. To have in store: *Let's see what the future holds.*

4.

a. To have and maintain in one's possession: *holds a great deal of property.*

b. To have as a responsible position or a privilege: *held the governorship for six years.*

c. To have in recognition of achievement or superiority: *holds the record for the one-mile race; holds the respect of her peers.*

5.

a. To maintain control over: *Thieves held the stolen painting for ransom.*

b. To maintain occupation of by force or coercion: *Protesters held the embassy for a week.*

c. To withstand the efforts or advance of (an opposing team, for example).

d. To maintain in a given condition, situation, or action: *The storyteller held the crowd spellbound.*

6.

a. To impose control or restraint on; curb: *She held her temper.*

b. To stop the movement or progress of: *Hold the presses!*

c. To reserve or keep back from use: *Please hold two tickets for us. Hold the relish on that hamburger.*

d. To defer the immediate handling of: *The receptionist held all calls during the meeting.*

7.

a. To own or have title to.

b. To be in possession of, whether legally entitled or not: *holds an interest in the company.*

c. To bind by a contract.

d. To adjudge or decree: *The court held that the defendant was at fault.*

e. To make accountable; obligate: *He held me to my promise.*

8.

a. To keep in the mind or convey as a judgment, conviction, or point of view: *holds that this economic program is the only answer to high prices.*

b. To assert or affirm, especially formally: *This doctrine holds that people are inherently good.*

c. To regard in a certain way: *I hold you in high esteem.*

9.

a. To cause to take place; carry on: *held the race in Texas; hold a yard sale.*

b. To assemble for and conduct the activity of; convene: *held a meeting of the board.*

10.

a. To carry or support (the body or a bodily part) in a certain position: *Can the baby hold herself up yet? Hold up your leg.*

b. To cover (the ears or the nose, for example) especially for protection: *held my nose against the stench.*

v.intr.

1.

a. To maintain a grasp or grip on something.

b. To stay securely fastened: *The chain held.*

2.

a. To maintain a desired or accustomed position or condition: *hopes the weather will hold.*

b. To withstand stress, pressure, or opposition: *The defense held. We held firm on the negotiations.*

3. To continue in the same direction: *The ship held to an easterly course.*

4. To be valid, applicable, or true: *The observation still holds in cases like this.*

5. To halt an intended action. Often used in the imperative.

6. To stop the countdown during a missile or spacecraft launch.

7. Slang To have in one's possession illicit or illegally obtained material or goods, especially narcotics: *The suspect was holding.*

n.

1.

a. The act or a means of grasping.

b. A manner of grasping an opponent, as in wrestling or aikido: *a neck hold; an arm hold.*

2. Something that may be grasped or gripped, as for support.

3. A control or adjuster on a television that keeps the screen image in proper position: *adjusted the horizontal hold.*

4. A telephone service that allows one to temporarily interrupt a call without severing the connection.

5.

a. A bond or force that attaches or restrains, or by which something is affected or dominated: *a writer with a strong hold on her readership.*

b. Complete control: *has a firm hold on the complex issues.*

c. Full understanding: *has a good hold on physics.*

6. Music

a. The sustaining of a note longer than its indicated time value.

b. The symbol designating this pause; a fermata.

7.

a. A direction or indication that something is to be reserved or deferred.

b. A temporary halt, as in a countdown.

8.

a. A prison cell.

b. The state of being in confinement; custody.

9. Archaic A fortified place; a stronghold.

Phrasal Verbs:

hold back

1. To retain in one's possession or control: *held back valuable information; held back my tears.*

2. To impede the progress of.

3. To restrain oneself: *Tell us what happened. Don't hold back.*

hold down

1. To limit: *Please hold the noise down.*

2. To fulfill the duties of (a job): *holds down two jobs.*

hold forth

To talk at great length.

hold off

1. To keep at a distance; resist: *held the creditors off.*

2. To stop or delay doing something: *Let's hold off until we have more data.*

hold on

1. To maintain one's grip; cling.

2. To endure or continue to do something despite difficulty: *They held on until fresh supplies arrived.*

3. To wait for something wanted or requested.

hold out

1. To present or offer: *She held out the possibility that she might run for office.*
2. To continue to be in supply or service; last: *How long can our food hold out?*
3. To continue to resist: *The defending garrison held out for a month.*
4. To refuse to reach an agreement or insist on certain demands: *The union held out for a better raise.*

hold over

1. To postpone or delay.
2. To keep in a position or state from an earlier period of time.
3. To continue a term of office past the usual length of time.
4. To prolong the engagement of: *The film was held over for weeks.*

hold to

To remain loyal or faithful to: *She held to her resolutions.*

hold up

1. To obstruct or delay.
2. To rob while armed, often at gunpoint.
3. To offer or present as an example: *held the essay up as a model for the students.*
4. To continue to function without losing force or effectiveness; cope: *managed to hold up under the stress.*

hold with

To agree with; support: *I don't hold with your theories.*

Idioms:

get hold of

1. To come into possession of; find: *Where can I get hold of a copy?*
2. To communicate with, as by telephone: *tried to get hold of you but the line was busy.*
3. To gain control of. Often used reflexively: *You must get hold of yourself!*

hold a candle to

To compare favorably with: *This film doesn't hold a candle to his previous ones.*

hold/keep (one's) end up

To fulfill one's part of an agreement; do one's share.

hold (one's) own

To do reasonably well despite difficulty or criticism.

hold out on (someone)

To withhold something from: *Don't hold out on me; start telling the truth.*

hold (someone's) feet to the fire

To pressure (someone) to consent to or undertake something.

hold sway

To have a controlling influence; dominate.

hold the bag *Informal*

1. To be left with empty hands.
2. To be forced to assume total responsibility when it ought to have been shared.

hold the fort *Informal*

1. To assume responsibility, especially in another's absence.
2. To maintain a secure position.

hold the line

To maintain the existing position or state of affairs: *had to hold the line on salary increases.*

hold the phone *Slang*

To stop doing what one is engaged in doing. Often used in the imperative: *Hold the phone! Let's end this argument.*

hold water

To stand up to critical examination: *Your explanation doesn't hold water.*

no holds barred

Without limits, regulations, or restraints.

on hold

1. Into a state of temporary interruption without severing a telephone connection: *put me on hold for 10 minutes.*
2. *Informal* Into a state of delay or indeterminate suspension: *had to put the romance on hold.*

[Middle English *holden*, from Old English *healdan*.]

n.

The lower interior part of a ship or airplane where cargo is stored.

[Alteration (influenced by [HOLD](#)¹) of Middle English *hole*, husk, hull of a ship, from Old English *hulu*; see [kel](#)-¹ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

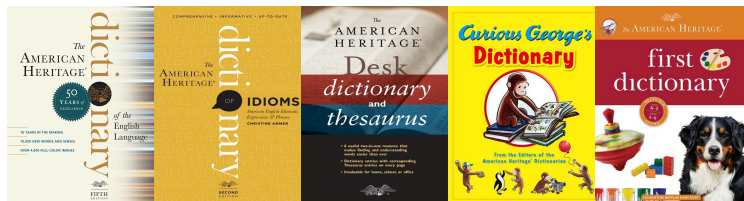
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