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dictionary

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Language



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in·crease  (in-kreēs)

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v. **in·creased**, **in·creas·ing**, **in·creas·es**

v.*intr.*

1. To become greater or larger.
2. To multiply; reproduce.

v.*tr.*

To make greater or larger.

n. (in kreēs')

1. The act of increasing: *a steady increase in temperature.*
2. The amount or rate by which something is increased: *a tax increase of 15 percent.*
3. *Obsolete* Reproduction and spread; propagation.

Idiom:

on the increase

Increasing, especially in frequency of occurrence: *Crime is on the increase.*

[Middle English *encresen*, from Old French *encreistre*, *encreiss-*, from Latin *incrēscere* : *in-*, intensive pref.; see [in-](#)² + *crēscere*, to grow; see **ker-**² in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

in·creas a·ble *adj.*

in·creas er *n.*

in·creas ing·ly *adv.*

Synonyms: [increase](#), [expand](#), [enlarge](#), [augment](#), [multiply](#)¹

These verbs mean to make or become greater or larger. *Increase* sometimes suggests steady growth: *The president's economic program is designed to increase consumer confidence. The city's population increased during the last decade.* *Expand* applies especially to an increase in size, volume, or scope: *Visiting the botanical garden has expanded my interest in tropical plants. These plant fibers expand when water is plentiful.* *Enlarge* often implies an increase in size, area, or extent, as by widening or broadening: *The landowner enlarged her property by repeated purchases. The disease causes the kidneys to enlarge.* *Augment* usually applies to an increase that is already developed or well under way: *She augmented her collection of books each month. As the pressure augments, the volume of the steam decreases.* To *multiply* is to increase in number: *The internet has multiplied the ways in which consumers can buy goods. The number of tourists visiting the town has multiplied since the highway opened.*

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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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