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Language



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hap·pen  (hăp ən)

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v. **hap·pened**, **hap·pen·ing**, **hap·pens**

v.*intr.*

1.
 - a. To come to pass: *Where did the accident happen?*
 - b. To come about as a consequence; result: *Trouble always seems to happen when he's around.*
 - c. To be the fate; become: *What will happen to the business when the owner retires?*
2. To encounter something by chance: *I happened upon an interesting article in the newspaper.*
3. To come or go casually; make an appearance: *My friend happened by around dinnertime.*

v.*tr.*

1. Used with the impersonal subject *it* and a following clause or infinitive to indicate the occurrence of a usually unexpected or chance event: *It happened that I was in the shower when you called. It happened to snow on the night she was born.*
2. To have the fortune (to be or do something); be in a situation or position (to be or do something): *The bus station happens to be close to the museum. I happen to know the answer to that question.*
3. Used with an infinitive to make polite requests: *Do you happen to know the time?*

[Middle English *happenen*, from *hap*, chance; see [HAP](#).]

Synonyms: happen, befall, betide, chance, occur

These verbs mean to come about: *saw an awful thing happen; predicted that misery will befall humankind; woe that betides the poor soldier; former friends who chanced to meet again; described the accident exactly as it occurred.*

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