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dictionary

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pen·al·ty  (pěn əl-tē)

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n. pl. **pen·al·ties**

1. A punishment imposed for a violation of law.
2. A sum established by a contract to be forfeited in lieu of actual damages in the event of a breach of the contract.
3. The disadvantage or painful consequences resulting from an action or condition: *neglected his health and paid the penalty.*
4. *Sports*
 - a. A punishment, handicap, or loss of advantage imposed on a team or competitor for infraction of a rule.
 - b. An infraction of a rule; a foul.
 - c. A penalty kick.
 - d. A penalty shot.
5. *Games* Points scored in contract bridge by the opponents when the declarer fails to make a bid.

[Middle English *penalte*, from Old French *penalite*, from Medieval Latin *poenālitās*, from Latin *poenālis*, penal; see [PENAL](#).]

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