synonym

[**sin**-*uh*-nim]

Spell Syllables

* Examples
* Word Origin

[See more synonyms on Thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/synonym)

noun

1.

a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the language, as *happy, joyful, elated.* A dictionary of synonyms and antonyms (or opposites), such as [Thesaurus.com,](http://thesaurus.com/) is called a [thesaurus](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/thesaurus).

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3.

*Biology.*one of two or more scientific names applied to a single taxon.

Origin of synonymExpand

[Middle English](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/middle-english)

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[Latin](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/latin)

[Greek](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/greek)

1400-1450

1400-50; < Latin *synōnymum* < Greek *synṓnymon,* noun use of neuter of *synṓnymos* [synonymous](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/synonymous); replacing Middle English *sinonyme* < Middle French < Latin, as above

Related formsExpand

**synonymic, synonymical,**adjective

**synonymity**

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Grammar noteExpand

English, with its long history of absorbing terminology from a wealth of other tongues, is a language particularly rich in synonyms—words so close in meaning that in many contexts they are interchangeable, like the nouns *tongue* and *language* in the first part of this sentence. Just about every popular dictionary defines *synonym* as a term having “the same or nearly the same” meaning as another, but there is an important difference between “the same” and “nearly the same.”
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British Dictionary definitions for synonymsExpand

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synonyms in CultureExpand

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Words that mean roughly the same thing. *Container* and *receptacle* are synonyms.

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