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addiction



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addiction

[noun](#)

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ad·dic·tion | \ ə-ˈdik-shən , a- \

Definition of addiction

1 : a compulsive, chronic, physiological or psychological need for a habit-forming substance, behavior, or activity having harmful physical, psychological, or social effects and typically causing well-defined symptoms (such as anxiety, irritability, tremors, or nausea) upon withdrawal or abstinence : the state of being addicted alcohol addiction an addiction to prescription painkillers drug addictions gambling addiction

2 : a strong inclination to do, use, or indulge in something repeatedly But those who know him well say he isn't driven by politics as much as his addiction to breaking news.— Amanda Ripley If we do not find the courage to kick our fossil fuel addiction and transition to clean energy, we will warm the atmosphere to the extent that areas typically covered in white all winter long could see only sporadic snow.— Steven Nyman

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Synonyms for addiction

Synonyms

- [dependence](#)

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- (also [dependance](#)),
- [habit](#),
- [jones](#)
- [slang],
- [monkey](#).

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Examples of *addiction* in a Sentence

He has a drug *addiction*. His life has been ruined by heroin *addiction*.

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Recent Examples on the Web The first public service campaign addressed the crack epidemic of the 1980s, using sports figures like Lou Piniella, the manager of the Yankees at the time, and the country singer Larry Gatlin of the Gatlin Brothers, who struggled with *addiction*. — [New York Times](#), "[Herb Goldsmith, the Man Behind the Members Only Jacket, Dies at 92](#)," 14 Mar. 2020 Polk had a history of mental health and *addiction* issues, including trouble with methamphetamine, alcohol and cocaine. — [Evan Semoffsky](#), [San Francisco Chronicle](#), "[Did Kevin Epps kill in self-defense?](#)," 21 Feb. 2020

These example sentences are selected automatically from various online news sources to reflect current usage of the word 'addiction.' Views expressed in the examples do not represent the opinion of Merriam-Webster or its editors. [Send us feedback](#).

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First Known Use of *addiction*

circa 1532, in the meaning defined at [sense 2](#)

History and Etymology for *addiction*

earlier, "inclination, bent," in part derivative of [addict entry 2](#), in part borrowed from Latin *addictiōn-*, *addictiō* "adjudging (of disputed property), assignment of a debtor to the custody of his creditor," from *addicere* "to assign (property), hand over, give up to" + *-tiōn-*, *-tiō*, suffix of action nouns — more at [addict entry 2](#)

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Time Traveler for *addiction*



The first known use of *addiction* was circa 1532

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More Definitions for *addiction*

addiction

[noun](#)



English Language Learners Definition of *addiction*

: a strong and harmful need to regularly have something (such as a drug) or do something (such as gamble)
: an unusually great interest in something or a need to do or have something

[See the full definition for *addiction* in the English Language Learners Dictionary.](#)

addiction

[noun](#)

ad·dic·tion | \ ə-ˈdik-shən \

Medical Definition of *addiction*

: a compulsive, chronic, physiological or psychological need for a habit-forming substance, behavior, or activity having harmful physical, psychological, or social effects and typically causing well-defined symptoms (such as anxiety, irritability, tremors, or nausea) upon withdrawal or abstinence : the state of being addicted alcohol
addiction an *addiction* to prescription painkillers drug *addictions* gambling *addiction/it*

addiction

[noun](#)

ad·dic·tion | \ ə-ˈdik-shən \

Legal Definition of *addiction*

: compulsive physiological need for a habit-forming drug (as heroin)

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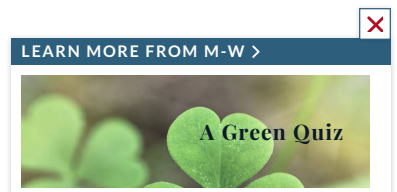
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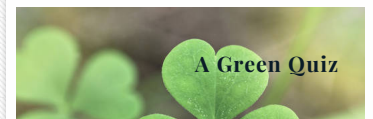
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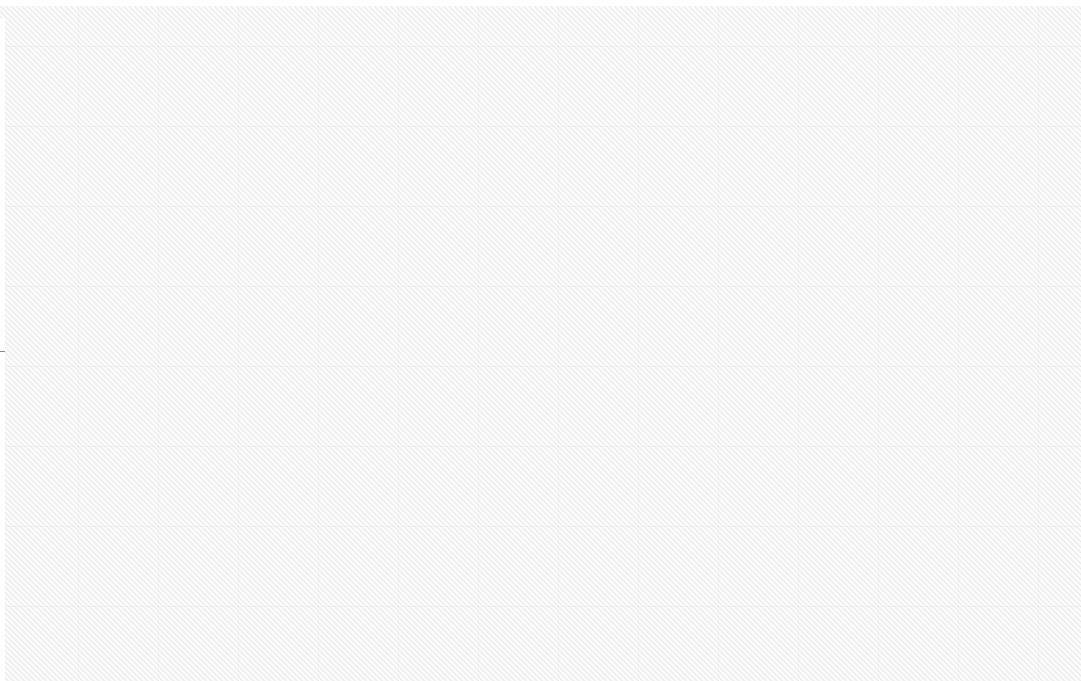
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The awkward case of 'his or her'

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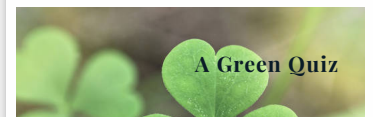
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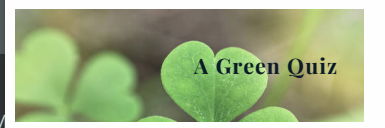
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