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hay

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hay

noun \ 'hā \

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1. [sequacious 'intellectually servile'](#)
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3. [oligarch, pejorative 'a member a government in which a small group exercises control especially for corrupt and selfish purposes'](#)
4. [emolument 'the returns arising from office or employment usually in the form of compensation or perquisites'](#)
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[Examples: hay in a Sentence](#)▼

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Definition of hay

1 : herbage and especially grass mowed and cured for fodder

2 : [reward](#)

3 slang : [bed](#)

4 : a small sum of money

- a saving of ... \$14 million is not hay
- —H. C. Schonberg

See [hay defined for English-language learners](#)

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Examples of hay in a Sentence

1. their credit card debt isn't *hay*—it'll take years to pay it off
2. dragging myself out of the *hay* on such a cold, dreary morning seemed like an act of sheer masochism

saambaa
Find Your Fun

Recent Examples of *hay* from the Web

- The family farm where Dan Stucker, 69, spent summers pitching *hay* turned 104 his year.
— [zack colman, Scientific American, "A Trump Oil Boom Could Transform This Rocky Mountain Landscape," 13 July 2018](#)
- The blazes destroyed 1,600 bales of *hay* valued at \$20,000.
— [Fox News, "Northern California arson suspect livestreamed police chase," 10 July 2018](#)
- The blazes destroyed 1,600 bales of *hay* valued at \$20,000.
— [lorin eleni gill, The Seattle Times, "Northern California arson suspect livestreamed police chase," 9 July 2018](#)
- From *hay* rides to a cemetery to maybe spotting the headless horseman, this is your ultimate Sleepy Hollow bucket list. 1.
— [sienna fantozzi, House Beautiful, "The Best Things To Do In Sleepy Hollow On Halloween," 9 July 2018](#)
- Flags fluttered from tractors, telephone poles, *hay* balers and farm irrigation systems.
— [greg jaffe, Anchorage Daily News, "Imperfect answers: A JBER soldier was killed in action, and his parents ask why," 27 May 2018](#)
- The blander, less appealing winter feed—such as *hay*—can now be left behind.
— [fen fenton, courant.com, "Kick Off Milking Season With Springtime Milk Jam," 30 Apr. 2018](#)
- Federal investigators are looking for needles in the haystack, with banks continuing to dump more *hay*.
— [the washington post, OregonLive.com, "North Korean leader suspends nuclear and missile tests, shuts down test site," 20 Apr. 2018](#)
- And investigators are making *hay* of conversations Trump associates clearly believed would be more secure but were actually easily foiled.
— [derek hawkins, Washington Post, "The Cybersecurity 202: Trump associates may need a lesson on how to use their encrypted apps," 18 June 2018](#)

These example sentences are selected automatically from various online news sources to reflect current usage of the word 'hay.' Views expressed in the examples do not represent the opinion of Merriam-Webster or its editors.
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Origin and Etymology of *hay*

Middle English *hey*, from Old English *hīeg*; akin to Old High German *hewi* hay, Old English *hēawan* to hew

NEW! Time Traveler

First Known Use: before 12th century

in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

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2

hay

[verb](#)

Definition of hay

hayed; haying; hays

[intransitive verb](#)

: to cut, cure, and store hay

[transitive verb](#)

: to feed with hay

Recent Examples of *hay* from the Web

- The fields are still *hayed* and a small herd of cattle often draws visits from people driving along a busy Route 151.
— [peter marteka, Courant Community, "Preserving An East Haddam Farm With A Lifetime Full Of Memories," 18 Aug. 2017](#)
- Seybolt used the Belgians to *hay*, spread manure and log.
— [denise coffey, Courant Community, "Reva Seybolt: A Quiet Force Of Nature," 3 May 2017](#)

These example sentences are selected automatically from various online news sources to reflect current usage of the word 'hay.' Views expressed in the examples do not represent the opinion of Merriam-Webster or its editors.

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First Known Use of *hay*

1535

in the meaning defined at [intransitive sense](#)

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NEW! Time Traveler

Hay

biographical name \ 'hā \

Definition of Hay

John Milton 1838–1905 American statesman

Hay

geographical name \ 'hā \

Definition of Hay

river 530 miles (853 kilometers) long in northern Alberta and the southern Northwest Territories, Canada, flowing northeast into Great Slave Lake

Phrases Related to HAY

Related Phrases

- [a roll in the hay](#)
 - [ain't hay](#)
-

HAY Defined for English Language Learners

hay

noun

Definition of *hay* for English Language Learners

- : grass that has been cut and dried to be used as food for animals
 - : a small amount of money
-

HAY Defined for Kids

1

hay

noun \ 'hā \

Definition of *hay* for Students

: any of various herbs (as grasses) cut and dried for use as food for animals

- bales of *hay*
-

2

hay

verb

Definition of *hay* for Students

hayed; haying

: to cut plants for hay

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WORD OF THE DAY

weald^{play}

a forest or a wild upland region

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[hawthorn rust](#)

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hay

[Hay](#)

hay bacillus



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hoax

dutch

golf

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'Forego' vs. 'Forgo': The E Is Important

Does dinner forego or forgo dessert?

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14 Words Inspired by Dogs

A lexicographer's best friend

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The Good, The Bad, & The Semantically Imprecise - 8/3/2018

Words from the week of 8/3/2018

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Rare and Amusing Insults: Pillock, Mooncalf, and More

Rare and Amusing Insults

ASK THE EDITORS

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Ghost Word

The story of an imaginary word that managed to sneak past our editors and enter the dictionary.

-

2017 Word of the Year: Behind the Scenes

How we chose 'feminism'

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Literally

How to use a word that (literally) drives some people nuts.

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Is Singular 'They' a Better Choice?

The awkward case of 'his or her'

WORD GAMES

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