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on [on, awn]

WORD ORIGIN | IDIOMS

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preposition

- 1 so as to be or remain supported by or suspended from:
Put your package down on the table; Hang your coat on the hook.
- 2 so as to be attached to or unified with:
Hang the picture on the wall. Paste the label on the package.

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adverb

- 31 in, into, or onto a position of being supported or attached:
Sew the buttons on.
- 32 in, into, or onto a position of covering or wrapping:
Put your raincoat on.

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adjective

- 38 operating or in use:
The television set was on. Is your brake on?
- 39 taking place; occurring:
Don't you know there's a war on?

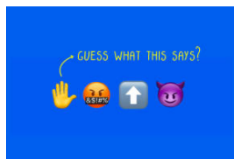
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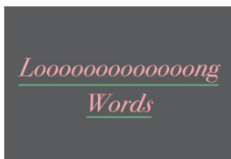
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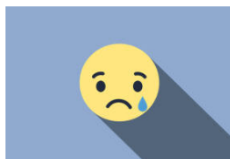
The Word Possible Changes Headlines



Can You Translate These Famous Phrases From Emoji?



These Are the Longest Words in English



These Are the Saddest Phrases in English

Idioms

- 46 **on and off** , **off**(def 54a).
- 47 **on and on** , at great length, so as to become tiresome:
They rambled on and on about their grandchildren.
- 48 **on the bow** , *Nautical* . **bow**³(def 8).
- 49 **on to** , aware of the true nature, motive, or meaning of:
I'm on to your little game.

Origin of on

before 900; Middle English *on, an*, Old English: *on, in, to*; cognate with Dutch *aan*, German *an*, Old Norse *ā*, Gothic *ana*; akin to Greek *aná* up, upon (see *ana-*)

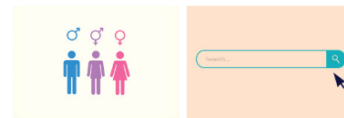
Can be confused

on on to **onto**

On [on]

noun

Others Are Reading



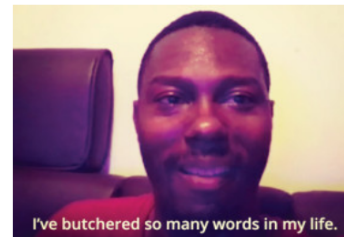
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The Year's Top Word Trends

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Word of the Day

petrichor



Words We Get Wrong: How Many of These Can You Say?



Did You Know Real People Write the Dictionary?

¹ Biblical name of [Heliopolis](#).

ON

- ¹ Also **ON.**, **O.N.** Old Norse.
- ² Ontario, Canada (approved for postal use).

-on¹

- ¹ a suffix used in the names of subatomic particles (*gluon*; *meson*; *neutron*), quanta (*graviton*), and other minimal entities or components (*cistron*; *codon*; *magneton*; *photon*).

Origin of -on¹

probably extracted from [ion](#); cf. [proton](#)

-on²

- ¹ a suffix used in the naming of inert gaseous elements:
neon.

Origin of -on²

<< Greek *-on*, neuter of *-os* adj. ending

Dictionary.com Unabridged

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Related Words for on

[about](#), [above](#), [adjacent](#), [against](#), [approaching](#), [at](#), [beside](#), [covering](#), [forth](#), [forward](#), [held](#), [near](#), [next](#), [onward](#), [over](#), [touching](#), [toward](#), [upon](#), [with](#)

British Dictionary definitions for on

on

preposition

- ¹ in contact or connection with the surface of; at the upper surface of: *an apple on the ground* ; *a mark on the table cloth*
- ² attached to: *a puppet on a string*
- ³ carried with : *I've no money on me*
- ⁴ in the immediate vicinity of; close to or along the side of: *a house on the sea* ; *this verges on the ridiculous!*
- ⁵ within the time limits of a day or date : *he arrived on Thursday*
- ⁶ being performed upon or relayed through the medium of: *what's on the television?*
- ⁷ at the occasion of: *on his retirement*
- ⁸ used to indicate support, subsistence, contingency, etc : *he lives on bread* ; *it depends on what you want*
- ⁹ a regularly taking (a drug) : *she's on the pill*
 - ^b addicted to: *he's on heroin*
- ¹⁰ by means of (something considered as a mode of transport) (esp in such phrases as **on foot**, **on wheels**, **on horseback**, etc)
- ¹¹ in the process or course of: *on a journey* ; *on strike*
- ¹² concerned with or relating to: *a tax on potatoes* ; *a programme on archaeology*
- ¹³ used to indicate the basis, grounds, or cause, as of a statement or action : *I have it on good authority*
- ¹⁴ against: used to indicate opposition : *they marched on the city at dawn*
- ¹⁵ used to indicate a meeting or encounter : *he crept u*

Show More

adverb (often used as a particle)



Nearby words for on

[omphalotomy](#)

[omri](#)

[oms](#)

[omsk](#)

[omuta](#)

on

[on a dime](#)

[on a first-name basis](#)

[on a limb](#)

[on a par with](#)

[on a pedestal](#), [put](#)

- 20 in the position or state required for the commencement or sustained continuation, as of a mechanical operation : *the radio's been on all night*
- 21 attached to, surrounding, or placed in contact with something : *the girl had nothing on*
- 22 taking place : *what's on tonight?*
- 23 in a manner indicating continuity, persistence, concentration, etc : *don't keep on about it; the play went on all afternoon*
- 24 in a direction towards something, esp forwards; so as to make progress : *we drove on towards London ; march on!*
- 25 **on and off** or **off and on** intermittently; from time to time
- 26 **on and on** without ceasing; continually

adjective

- 27 functioning; operating : *turn the switch to the on position*
- 28 (*postpositive*) *informal*
 - a performing, as on stage : *I'm on in five minutes*
 - b definitely taking place : *the match is on for Friday ; their marriage is still on*
 - c tolerable, practicable, acceptable, etc : *your plan just isn't on*
 - d (of a person) willing to do something
- 29 **on at** *informal* nagging : *she was always on at her husband*
- 30 cricket (of a bowler) bowling

noun

- 31 cricket
 - a (*modifier*) relating to or denoting the leg side of a cricket field or pitch : *the on side ; an on drive*
 - b (*in combination*) used to designate certain fielding positions on the leg side : *long-on ; mid-on*

Word Origin for on

Old English *an, on*; related to Old Saxon *an*, Old High German, Gothic *ana*

On

noun

- 1 the ancient Egyptian and biblical name for [Heliopolis](#)

ON

abbreviation for

- 1 Old Norse
- 2 (esp in postal addresses) Ontario

-on

suffix forming nouns

- 1 indicating a chemical substance : *interferon ; parathion*
- 2 (in physics) indicating an elementary particle or quantum : *electron ; photon*
- 3 (in chemistry) indicating an inert gas : *neon ; radon*
- 4 (in biochemistry) a molecular unit : *codon ; operon*

Word Origin for -on

from ion

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Word Origin and History for on

prep.

Old English *on*, unstressed variant of *an* "in, on, into," from Proto-Germanic **ana* "on" (cf. Dutch *aan*, German *an*, Gothic *ana* "on, upon"), from PIE root **an-* "on" (cf. Avestan *ana* "on," Greek *ana* "on, upon," Latin *an-*, Old Church Slavonic *na*, Lithuanian *nuo* "down from"). Also used in Old English in many places where we would now use *in*. From 16c.-18c. (and still in northern England dialect) often reduced to *o'*. Phrase *on to* "aware" is from 1877. *On time* is from 1890.

-on

subatomic particle suffix, from [ion](#).

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