



SINCE 1828

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eyeconic.  
SHOP SUNGLASSES  
Eyeglasses, sunglasses, contacts—we've got it all.  
SHOP EYEWEAR

## led

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### Definition of *led*

(Entry 1 of 2)

past tense and past participle of [lead](#)

LED

[noun](#)

\ ,el-(.)ē-'dē 

Definition of *LED* (Entry 2 of 2)

: a semiconductor diode that emits light when a voltage is applied to it and that is used especially in electronic devices (as for an indicator light)

## When to Use Lead or Led

There is some persistent confusion about *lead* and *led*. Or, we should say, there is confusion about the *leads* and *led*. *Lead* is both a noun and a verb, as most people know. There are several unrelated nouns spelled *lead*: one most commonly refers to a metal (as in, "The paint was made with lead"), and the other most commonly refers to a position of advantage (as in, "Our team was in the lead"). The verb *lead* is pronounced /LEED/, with a long *e*; the noun that refers to a position or advantage is also pronounced /LEED/, with a long *e*; the noun that refers to the metal, however, is pronounced /LED/, with a short *e*. To this moderately convoluted situation, add the past tense and [past participle](#) of the verb *lead*, which is *led* and pronounced like the metal noun *lead* with a short *e*. The homophonic confusion leads to homographic confusion, and you will therefore occasionally see *lead* in constructions where *led* is called for (as in, "She lead the ducklings to safety" instead of "She led the ducklings to safety"). The correct past and past participle of *lead* is spelled *led*. If you aren't sure whether to use *led* or *lead* as the verb in your sentence, try reading it aloud to yourself. If the verb is pronounced /LED/, use *led*.

## First Known Use of *led*

Noun

1968, in the meaning defined [above](#)

## History and Etymology for *led*

Noun

*light-emitting diode*

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## English Language Learners Definition of *LED*

technical : a device that lights up and displays information when electricity passes through it

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led

## Kids Definition of *led*

past tense and past participle of [lead](#)

LED

[noun](#)

\ ,eɪ-, ē-'dē

## Kids Definition of *LED*

: an electronic device that emits light when power is supplied to it

led

## Legal Definition of *led*

past and past participle of [lead](#)

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