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leaf



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# leaf

[noun](#), often attributive

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\ 'lēf 

plural leaves \ 'lēvz  \ also leafs \ 'lēfs 

## Definition of *leaf*

(Entry 1 of 2)

1a(1) : a lateral (see [lateral entry 1 sense 2](#)) outgrowth from a plant stem that is typically a flattened expanded variably shaped greenish organ, constitutes a unit of the foliage, and functions primarily in food manufacture by [photosynthesis](#)

(2) : a modified leaf (such as a [bract](#) or [sepal](#)) primarily engaged in functions other than food manufacture

b(1) : [foliage](#) trees in full leaf

(2) : the leaves of a plant as an article of commerce

2 : something suggestive of a leaf: such as

a : a part of a book or folded sheet containing a page on each side

b(1) : a part (as of window shutters, folding doors, or gates) that slides or is hinged

(2) : the movable parts of a table top added a leaf to the table to accommodate more people

c(1) : a thin sheet or plate of any substance : [lamina](#)

(2) : metal (such as gold or silver) in sheets usually thinner than foil

(3) : one of the plates of a leaf spring

leaf

[verb](#)

leafed; leafing; leafs

Definition of *leaf* (Entry 2 of 2)

[intransitive verb](#)

1 : to shoot out or produce leaves will leaf out in spring

2 : to turn over pages especially to browse or skim leaf through a book

[transitive verb](#)

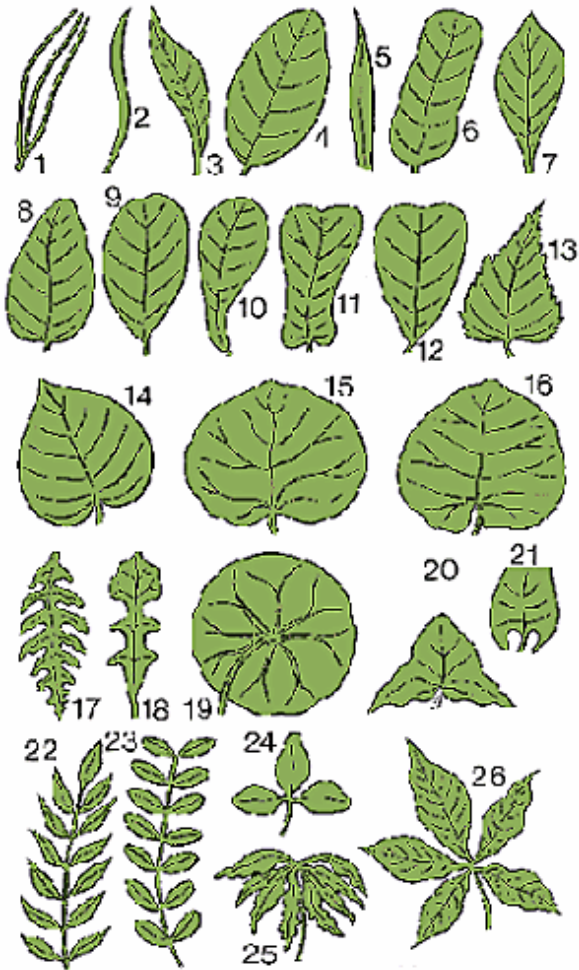
: to turn over the pages of

## Illustration of *leaf*

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Noun

forms of leaf 1a(1): 1 needle-shaped, 2 linear, 3 lanceolate, 4 elliptical, 5 ensiform, 6 oblong, 7 oblanceolate with acuminate tip, 8 ovate with acute tip, 9 obovate, 10 spatulate, 11 fiddle-shaped, 12 cuneate, 13 deltoid, 14 cordate, 15 reniform, 16 orbiculate, 17 runcinate, 18 lyrate, 19 peltate, 20 hastate, 21 sagittate, 22 odd-pinnate, 23 abruptly pinnate, 24 trifoliolate, 25, 26 palmate

In the meaning defined [above](#)

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## Other Words from *leaf*

Noun


leafless \ 'lēf-ləs \ adjective

leaflike \ 'lēf-,līk \ adjective

## Synonyms for *leaf*

Synonyms: Verb

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- [flip](#),
- [riffle](#),
- [skim](#),
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## Examples of *leaf* in a Sentence

Noun I heard the rustle of the autumn *leaves*. a pile of dead *leaves*

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Recent Examples on the Web: Noun Hemann views the resident mask donation similar to how the city using a previous grant gave out lawn and *leaf* bags. — [John Benson, \*cleveland\*, "North Olmsted City Council using CARES Act funding to purchase reusable masks for residents," 12 Aug. 2020](#) Earlier this year, for instance, Nigerian comedian Josh Alfred (known as Josh2funny) touched off a global hashtag, #dontleaveme, with an Instagram video featuring a series of puns on the word *leaf*. — [Wilfred Okiche, \*The Christian Science Monitor\*, "How two Nigerian women are breaking into comedy's boys club," 10 Aug. 2020](#)

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

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## First Known Use of *leaf*

Noun

before the 12th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a\(1\)](#)

Verb

1611, in the meaning defined at [intransitive sense 1](#)

## History and Etymology for *leaf*

Noun

Middle English *leef*, from Old English *lēaf*; akin to Old High German *loub* leaf

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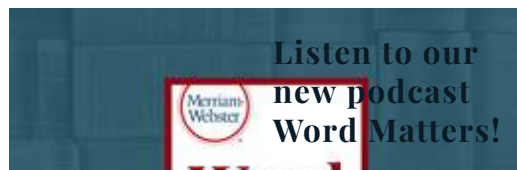
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Time Traveler for *leaf*

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## The first known use of *leaf* was before the 12th century

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## Dictionary Entries near *leaf*

[leadwork](#)

[leadwort](#)

[leady](#)

[leaf](#)

[leafage](#)

[leaf and square](#)

[leaf-and-tongue](#)

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## Phrases Related to *leaf*

[in leaf](#)

[leaf out](#)

[leaf through](#)

[take/borrow a leaf out of someone's book](#)

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# Statistics for *leaf*

Last Updated

15 Aug 2020

Look-up Popularity

Top 40% of words

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More Definitions for *leaf*

leaf

[noun](#)



## English Language Learners Definition of *leaf*

: one of the flat and typically green parts of a plant that grow from a stem or twig

: a sheet of paper in a book

: a part that can be added to or removed from a table to change the size of its top surface

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

leaf

[noun](#)

\ 'lēf \

plural leaves \ 'lēvz \

## Kids Definition of *leaf*

(Entry 1 of 2)

1 : one of the usually flat green parts that grow from a plant stem and perform photosynthesis

2 : [foliage](#) The trees are in full *leaf*.

3 : a single sheet of a book containing a page on each side

4 : a part that can be added to or removed from a table top

Other Words from *leaf*

leafless \ 'lēf-ləs \ adjective

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leaflike \ 'lēf-, līk \ adjective

leaf

[verb](#)

leafed; leafing

Kids Definition of *leaf* (Entry 2 of 2)

1 : to grow leaves The trees will *leaf* out in the spring.

2 : to turn the pages of a book

leaf

[noun](#)

\ 'lēf  \

## Medical Definition of *leaf*

: a thin layer or sheet of tissue the anterior leaf of the coronary ligament

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Spanish Central: [Translation of leaf.](#)

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Britannica English: [Translation of leaf for Arabic Speakers](#)

Britannica.com: [Encyclopedia article about leaf.](#)

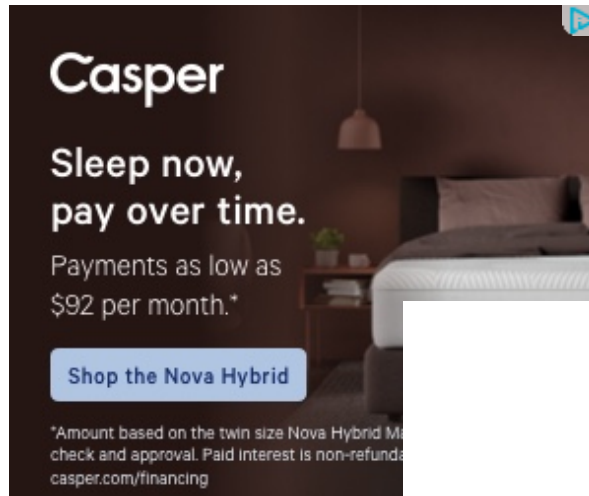
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WORD OF THE DAY

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## Odd Habits and Quirks Quiz

•



• Which of the following best describes an easily irritated person?

[flashy](#)

[tetchy](#)

[gregarious](#)

[superficial](#)



Can you spell these 10 commonly misspelled words?


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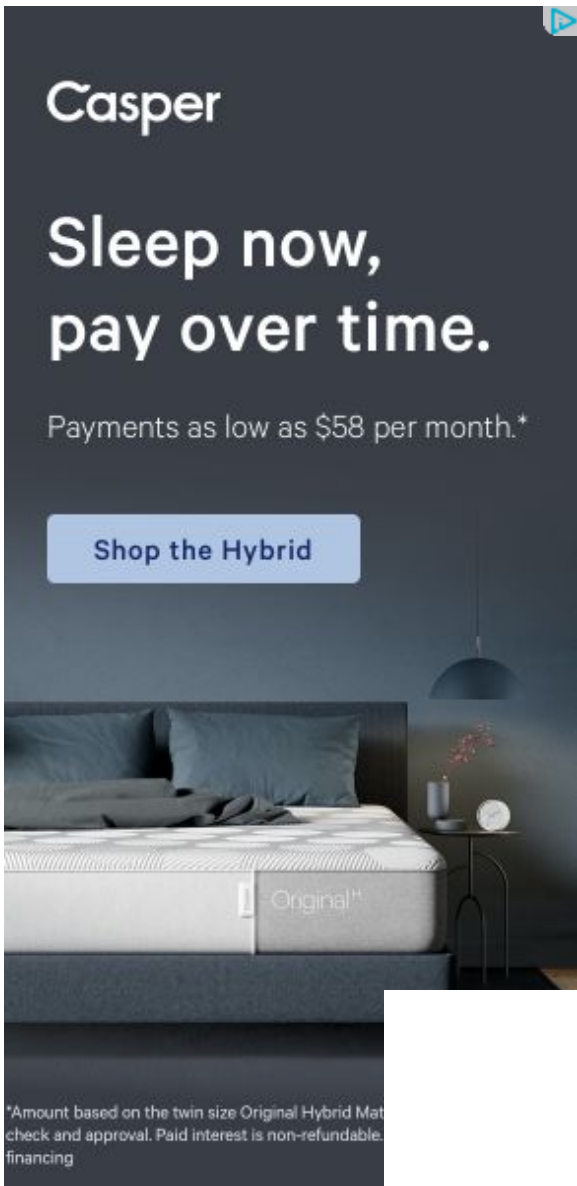
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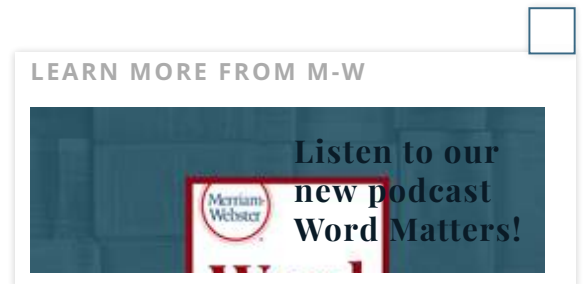
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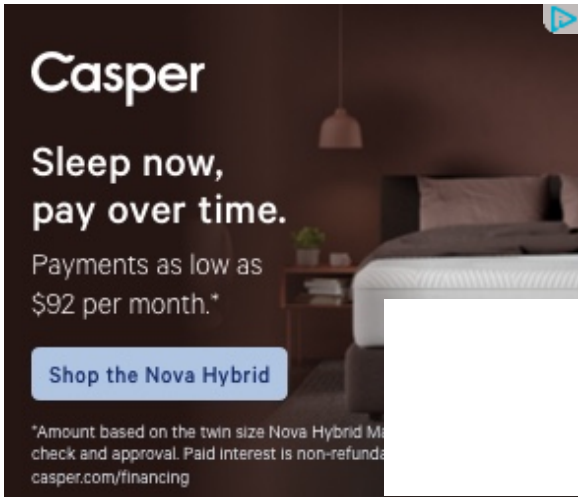
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Words from the week of 8/21/2020

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**6 Words for When You're Not  
Sure**

Just a shot in the dark here

•

**The New 'Bubble' Popping  
Up in Sports**

Thinking inside the bubble

**ASK THE EDITORS**

•

**'Intensive purposes': An  
Eggcorn**

We're intent on clearing it up

•

**'Nip it in the butt'  
Eggcorn**

We're gonna stop you rig

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## Literally

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

•

## Is Singular 'They' a Better Choice?

The awkward case of 'his or her'

### WORD GAMES

•

## Odd Habits and Quirks Quiz

Test your knowledge of strange  
human behaviors.

**TAKE THE QUIZ**

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## Name That Thing: Animal Edition

How many animals can you  
identify?

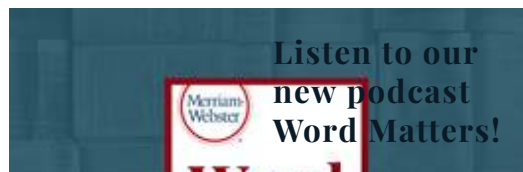
**TAKE THE QUIZ**

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## Spell It

Can you spell these 10 commonly  
misspelled words?

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—can you put it back together?

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