

licence

See definition in [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary](#)

Line breaks: li|cence

Pronunciation: /ˈlɪs(ə)ns/

(**US** license)

Definition of *licence* in English:

noun

- 1 A **permit** from an authority to **own** or **use** something, do a particular thing, or carry on a trade (especially in **alcoholic** drink):

a gun licence

[**AS MODIFIER**]: *a television licence fee*

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES

SYNONYMS

- 1.1 [**MASS NOUN**] Formal or official **permission** to do something:

a subsidiary company manufactured cranes under licence from a Norwegian firm

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES

SYNONYMS

- 2 [**MASS NOUN**] **Freedom** to **behave** as one **wishes**, especially in a way

which **results** in **excessive** or **unacceptable behaviour**:

the government was criticized for giving the army too much licence

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES

SYNONYMS

- 2.1 A writer's or artist's **freedom** to **deviate** from fact, or from **conventions** such as **grammar**, **for effect**:

artistic licence

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES

SYNONYMS

2.2 Licentiousness.

EXAMPLE SENTENCES

SYNONYMS

2.3 (a licence to do something) A reason or **excuse** to do something **unacceptable**:
*police say that the **lenient** sentence is a licence to **assault***

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES

Usage

Note that in **British English** **licence** is the correct **spelling** for the **noun**, and is also an **acceptable variant spelling** of the **verb**. In US English both **noun** and **verb** are spelled **license**.

Phrases

licence to print money

A very **lucrative** commercial activity, regarded as requiring little effort:
*people see music **publishing** as a licence to print money*

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES

Origin

Late Middle English: via **Old French** from **Latin** *licentia* 'freedom, licentiousness' (in **medieval Latin** 'authority, permission'), from *licere* 'be lawful or permitted'.

MORE

Words that rhyme with licence

delicense, license

Definition of licence in:

- [US English](#) dictionary
- [English synonyms](#)
- [US English synonyms](#)