



public

adjective **2** Synonyms Example Sentences Word History Phrases Containing Er

# public 1 of 2 adjective

pub·lic ('pə-blik)

[Synonyms of public >](#)

**1 a** : exposed to general view : **OPEN**

**b** : **WELL-KNOWN, PROMINENT**

**c** : **PERCEPTIBLE, MATERIAL**

**2 a** : of, relating to, or affecting all the people or the whole area of a nation or state

| *public law*

**b** : of or relating to a government

**c** : of, relating to, or being in the service of the community or nation

**3 a** : of or relating to people in general : **UNIVERSAL**

**b** : of, by, for, or directed to the public (see **PUBLIC** entry 2 sense 2) : **POPULAR**

| *in the public eye*

| a campaign to raise *public* awareness of the issue

| He's certainly aware that **public opinion** has soured on him this year ...

— Bryan Rolli

**4** : of or relating to business or community interests as opposed to private affairs :

**SOCIAL**

**5** : devoted to the general or national welfare : **HUMANITARIAN**



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with go

**7** : supported by public funds and private contributions rather than by income from commercials

| *public* radio

| *public* television

• **publicness** **noun**

# public **2 of 2** **noun**

## plural **publics**

**1** : a place accessible or visible to the public → usually used in the phrase *in public*

**2** : the people as a whole : **POPULACE**

**3** : a group of people having common interests or characteristics

*specifically* : the group at which a particular activity or enterprise aims

## • **Synonyms**

### **Adjective**

open

### **Noun**

folks

humanity

humankind

people

species

world



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## Examples of *public* in a Sentence

### Adjective

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**Public** outrage over the scandal eventually forced him to resign.

The ads are intended to increase **public** awareness of the risks of smoking.

She was elected to a **public** office.

[See More](#)

### Recent Examples on the Web

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#### Adjective

The money couldn't be used on issues such as affordable housing, homelessness or **public** safety, Council member Malcolm Graham said Monday.

— Mary Ramsey, *Charlotte Observer*, 5 June 2024

The district has refused to detail its allegations of misconduct against Phelps or release a copy of its investigation findings about Phelps in response to **public** record requests.

— Kristen Taketa, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 5 June 2024

#### Noun

The executive order comes as Biden struggles in the polls against Donald Trump, whose hardline views on immigration can resonate with the American **public**.

— *TIME*, 4 June 2024

To see them actually be introduced to the mainstream **public** in this way and being



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## Word History

### Etymology

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#### Adjective

Middle English *publique*, from Anglo-French, from Latin *publicus*; akin to Latin *populus* people

### First Known Use

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#### Adjective

14th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a](#)

#### Noun

15th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

### Time Traveler

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**The first known use of *public* was in the 14th century**

[See more words from the same century](#)

## Phrases Containing *public*

[caught the public imagination](#)

[certified public accountant](#)

[come to public notice](#)

[for the common \(public\) good](#)



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[in public](#)

[in the national/public interest](#)

[in the public domain](#)

[in the public eye](#)

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## Dictionary Entries Near *public*

[publ](#)

**public**

[public access](#)

[See More Nearby Entries](#)

## Cite this Entry

Style

MLA

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## Kids Definition



adjective **2** Synonyms Example Sentences Word History Phrases Containing Er

pub·lic ('pəb-lik )

**1 a** : of, relating to, belonging to, or affecting all the people

| *public law*

**b** : provided by the government

| *public education*

**c** : relating to or engaged in the service of the community or nation

| *public life*

**2** : of or relating to community interests as opposed to private affairs

| a radio program in the *public* interest

**3** : devoted to the general welfare

| needed leaders with *public* spirit

**4** : open to or shared by all

| a *public* meeting

| the *public* library

**5 a** : generally known

| the story became *public*

**b** : **WELL-KNOWN**

| a *public* figure

**6** : supported by income from public funds and private contributions rather than by commercials

| *public* television

• **publicly** **adverb**

**public** **2 of 2** **noun**

**1** : a place open or visible to people



adjective **2** ▾ Synonyms Example Sentences Word History Phrases Containing Er

**3** : a particular group of people

| a writer's *public*

## Etymology

### Adjective

Middle English *publique* "relating to the people as a whole, public," from early French *publique* (same meaning), from Latin *publicus* "belonging to the people as a whole," from *populus* "the people" — related to [POPULAR](#), [REPUBLIC](#)

## Legal Definition

# public

1 of 2 **adjective**

pub·lic

**1 a** : exposed to general view

| *public* indecency

**b** : known or recognized by many or most people

**2 a** : of, relating to, or affecting all of the people or the whole area of a nation or state

| *public* statutes

**b** : of or relating to a government : authorized by, administered by, or acting for the people as a political entity

| *public* expenditures

| the *public* prosecutor

**c** : of, relating to, or being in the service of the community or nation

| holding *public* office

**d** : provided for, used by, or containing the records of a government agency



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*public policy*

**5** : devoted to the general or national welfare

**6** : accessible to or shared by all members of the community

*a public hearing*

→ compare **PRIVATE**

**7** : capitalized in shares that can be freely traded on the open market → often used with *go*

• **publicly** *adverb*

# public **2 of 2** noun

**1** : a place accessible or visible to the public → usually used in the phrase *in public*

**2** : the people as a whole

## • More from Merriam-Webster on *public*

English: [Translation of \*public\* for Spanish Speakers](#)

Britannica English: [Translation of \*public\* for Arabic Speakers](#)

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**Quordle**

W	O	R	D	Y
L	O	V	E	R
P	L	A	Y	S
D	A	I	L	Y

Can you solve 4 words at once?

**Play**

**WORD OF THE DAY**

**lodestone**

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