

The word “enter” has several meanings. The Oxford Dictionary begins with the straightforward: “Come or go into (a place),” i.e. *she entered the kitchen*. By this definition, the act of entering might be welcoming, momentous, or intrusive. Synonyms include “set foot in,” “gain access to,” and “invade.” To break and enter is to commit the crime of burglary, or to burgle, or to burglarize. The word “burglary” helps us understand a certain form or flavor of “enter,” but “enter” doesn’t leave the same specific (and negative) impression. On the contrary, the word “enter” is normally understood to be natural and harmless, and even necessary when seeking progress both personally and professionally. *That autumn, he entered college* — here, “enter” is synonymous with joining, enlisting, and becoming associated with something educational and enlightening.

Despite its broad definition, though, “enter” comes with an inherent entitlement issue. If the word were personified, it would claim to be both acceptable and accepting, innocently make space for more aggressive forms of conquest while also avoiding accountability for its uglier acts and accommodations. “Enter” is to the English language as “free” is to the American economy. Both words sound nice on the surface, and both words remain nice on the surface. But when we study these types of words from all possible angles — their sharp peaks and round valleys — the implications become unavoidable and the nice stuff induces skepticism.

This piece features a series of sample sentences that accompany the Oxford Dictionary’s definition of “enter.” The samples have been expanded, sequenced, and categorized into verbs that operate as their own entry points. The original sentences have been revised and rearranged for the sake of telling a story that remains alphabetized, thus replicating the structure and navigation of the dictionary.

Please join me as I attempt to face this word “enter” in its many forms, functions, and facets.

Access:

Get your troops over here, and make sure they don't enter the city or they'll be killed on site. The number and size of freight vehicles will need to be reduced as we enter this strategic phase. Some might say we are entering the World of the Weird, but I beg to differ.

Admit:

Until recently, two giant totem poles used to greet visitors as they entered the Field Museum. We don't know what will replace them yet, but to enter the city, visitors will now need to buy a swipe card.

Affiliate:

That autumn, he entered college, and after graduating, he became

a high school instructor, entering the same profession as his father. His medical condition was discovered while he was a teenager and had been treated and noted before he went to school.

Ascend:

Enter Hamlet. As he exits from the stage, enter three women from Ukraine, dressed in vibrant costumes.

Begin:

The election campaign enters its first phase tomorrow, and it's expected to transform every life stage that it enters. I should also note that my political party is entering its 20th year in existence this week.

Burst:

The dreams of our youth are already losing their sparkle just as we enter adulthood for the first time. The shooting sparked fears of retaliatory attack by an unidentified group, who tried to enter City Hall on Thursday. We entered the building and were immediately struck by its sense of space and the feeling of being in a cultural retreat—rich and wise.

Come in:

She entered the kitchen. The door opened and Karl entered, too. When reading the Bible, they entered a new world of thoughts. It must have been a dream.

Commit:

He rubbed his eyes as she entered the last of their notes into the dataset. "If you forget to enter a note," she said, "you will want to let me know." She jotted a few things down and handed him his pen.

Cross:

We entered the city and descended King Street, now a mere shadow of its former self. My grandfather once entered this city to attend a festival. When I entered the same city last week, I was in a complete daze.

Erupt:

The thought never entered his head, but the bullet entered his stomach. Then he entered her, harsh in his passion.

Facilitate:

Typically, all the action takes place in one setting, giving it a theatrical feel with characters constantly entering and exiting from the wings. For instance, when we tell a story, we may have a character who enters, speaks his lines and then exits.

Get in:

To enter into dialogue with a culture that does not possess the security of the dominant culture is to enter a symbolic space of intimacy. How often does that happen, though?

Go:

They won every race that they entered. Nevertheless, success was not an easy feat. Luxembourg

had entered the games fifteen times and finished bottom of their qualifying group every time. Germany entered their first game in 1995, winning only two silvers and a bronze. England didn't enter until 1998, and from then on, they were quickly instilled as the favorites.

Gush:

I felt butterflies in my belly as I watched him enter from center stage, greeted by a long round of applause.

Pierce:

After paying a highly-inflated price for gasoline, we entered the Capital Beltway. We eventually entered a building through its double doors and found it filling

with smoke. My mother shook her head, dismissing all of my thoughts, as she headed back to the Town Square.

Record:

Unsigned vouchers had been entered in the books of his accounts. Also entered was information about his family and friends. New buttons formed, and on the screen it indicated for him to enter how far into the future to move.

Sign up:

Should you wish to enter the World Handwriting Contest next year, please visit their website. But know that you must rely on skill and perseverance to win your way to the top level, and you will be

subject to a lot of hard knocks. Alternatively, those of you with a singing voice can enter the Sopranos Karaoke Competition, which will begin before the end of the year.

Slice:

When he entered the World Pizza Games in Las Vegas, he won first place three years running.

Submit:

Children can enter their data into the computer. They can deliberately enter information about themselves and add it to a digital profile. They can use their profile to enter information about themselves on any website without having to type it in manually every time. And when

they enter their information,
it goes to a criminal somewhere on
the Internet, who's taking that
data and using it for financial gain.

Take:

In 1941, America entered the war.
In the last surviving section, we
were introduced to a new family of
forts. I'm still not sure of what
they wanted from me.

Tender:

In nearly all cases, the defendant
enters a guilty plea before trial.
During a hearing on Monday,
however, his solicitor entered no
plea and made no application
for bail. Weeks later, an attorney
entered a plea of guilty on his
behalf. He eventually told me
that he wouldn't have entered his

guilty plea had he known that
his license would be suspended.

Think:

The thought never entered
my head.