

recreation, n.1

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Pronunciation: Brit. /ˌrɛkrɪˈeɪʃn/, U.S. /ˌrɛkri

'eɪʃ(ə)n/

Forms: ME **recreacioun**, ME **recreacioune**, ME **recreacyone**, ME **recreacyoun**, ME-15 ... (Show More)**Etymology:** < Anglo-Norman *recreaciun*, *recreacione*, *recreacioun* and Middle French *recreacion*, ... (Show More)†1. Refreshment by eating; nourishment; a meal. *Obs.* [Thesaurus](#) » [Categories](#) »

- a1393 Gower *Confessio Amantis* (Fairf.) vii. 477 To sustienen hem and fede In time of recreacion.
- c1438 *Bk. Margery Kempe* ii. 239 (MED), I wote wel þer is a place of recreacyon..Late us gon þedyr & drynkyn.
- 1490 *Caxton's Blanchardyn & Eglantine* (1962) 145 Blanchardyn, Sadoyne, and his wyff..were sittyng at the bord takynge their recreacyon.
- 1538 in J. Strype *Eccl. Mem.* (1721) I. ii. App. xc. 251, I bequest to the Maister, Wardens and Felyshyp of the Drapers, v. pounde, for a recreation or a dynyr.
- 1600 R. Surfler tr. C. Estienne & J. Liébault *Maison Rustique* iii. xlvi. 516 The tree must haue some recreation giuen it in winter, after his great trauell in bringing forth of his fruite.

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†2.

a. Physical refreshment or comfort produced by something affecting the senses or body. *Obs.* [Thesaurus](#) »

- a1393 Gower *Confessio Amantis* (Fairf.) vii. 873 The Sonne..The chief Planete..and of his face Be glade alle erthly creatures, And taken after the natures Here ese and recreacion.
- ?1435 (•1432) Lydgate *Minor Poems* (1934) ii. 641 (MED), Wyn ys a likour off grete recreacioun.
- a1500 (1450) *Gesta Romanorum* (Harl. 7333) 6 (MED), He vsid to ligge ny þe fire, for to haue comfort and recreacion of þe fire.
- ?1587 A. H. tr. J. Guillemeau *Worthy Treat. Eyes* (new ed.) i. iii. f. 6^v, This change and diuersitie of colours refresheth the weried eies in such sort, that before we haue viewed and looked on a thing diligently, we stay our eyes for this purpose, that the spirites of sight may as it were, retire themselues to this diuersitie of colours as to a place of recreation and comfort.

[\(Hide quotations\)](#)b. Mental or spiritual comfort or consolation; a comfort, a consolation. *Obs.* [Thesaurus](#) »

- ?a1425 *Orchard of Syon* (Harl. 3432) (1966) 1 (MED), I..to loure goostly recreacioun..purpose to wryte to lou..þe reuelaciouns of oure Lord.
- a1450 *York Plays* 481 Vnkyndely þei kidde þem þer kyng for to kenne, With carefull comforth and colde recreacioun.
- a1475 (•?a1430) Lydgate tr. G. Deguileville *Pilgrimage Life Man* (Vitell.) 7338 (MED), Fastyng..Ys hys recreacioun.
- ?a1518 H. Watson *Ualentyne & Orson* (1555) x. sig. H.ii^v, She was so esprysed with his loue in all honoure, that without hym she might neyther haue solace nor recreacion.
- 1592 B. Rich *Aduentures of Brvsanus* ii. iv. 57 If thou didest knowe

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Brusanus, the ioy, the comferte, and recreation that is conuersante with beautye.

- 1633 King Charles I 18 Oct. in P. Heylyn *Cyprianus Angl.* (1719) ii. iv. 9 Now out of a like Pious Care..for the Service of God..and for the ease, and comfort, and recreation of Our well-deserving People, We do Ratify and Publish this Our Blessed Father's Declaration.
- 1725 J. Morgan tr. M. Rabadan *Mahometism Explained* II. 162 This shall be now your Mother; This all your Comfort, and all your Recreation!
- 1780 Miss Palmer *Female Stability* III. 122, I still remember the virtues and extraordinary qualifications of Mr. Grenville..with the utmost delight: they are my comfort and recreation to think on.
- 1785 R. Cumberland *Arab* i. 2 If there be comfort, If recreation to a wasted Spirit In a proud rivall's fall, give my revenge What name thou wilt.

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3.

a. The action or fact of refreshing or entertaining oneself [Thesaurus »](#) through a pleasurable or interesting pastime, amusement, activity, etc. (esp. habitually); amusement, entertainment.

- c1400 *Bk. to Mother* (Bodl.) 124 (*MED*), Crist..wol leue þe no leue to ride ne to go out of þi cloister for recreacioun.
- ?a1425 *Mandeville's Trav.* (Egerton) (1889) 155 New thinges..to tell off for solace and recreacioun.
- 1484 Caxton tr. *Subtyl Historyes & Fables Esope* vi, To take his recreacion he entryd in to his gardyn.
- 1532 T. More *Confut. Tyndale in Wks.* 558/1 Tindall is as it semeth..set vpon reading of rydles for his recreacion.
- 1584 T. Cogan *Hauen of Health* ii. 18 Socrates..for recreation..blushed not to ride uppon a reede among his litle children.
- 1651 T. Hobbes *Leviathan* ii. xxiv. 129 Forrests, and Chases, either for his recreation, or for preservation of Woods.
- 1683 *Britanniæ Speculum* 17 The Forests, Parks..Warrens, and Woods stored with wild Beasts only for Recreation and Food.
- 1755 E. Young *Centaur* ii, in *Wks.* (1757) IV. 140 Too much recreation tires as much, as too much business.
- 1791 W. Cowper tr. Homer *Iliad* in *Iliad & Odyssey* I. xxi. 56 Eleven days, at his return, he gave To recreation joyous with his friends.
- 1814 *Sporting Mag.* 43 220 The ride being intended for the recreation of Noblemen, Gentlemen, &c.
- 1860 W. F. Hook *Lives Archbps.* I. i. 2 He sought his recreation in the study of Ecclesiastical History.
- 1891 F. W. Farrar *Darkness & Dawn* I. xv. 131 To Nero..every man was sluggish and plebeian who did not care to season his recreation with a variety of vices.
- 1928 E. Waugh *Let.* Aug. (1980) 28 As recreation I am beginning a detective story full of murder and mystery.
- 1958 *Observer* 10 Aug. 2/7 Our recreation was spent in back entries.
- 1990 J. Halperin *Novelists in their Youth* ii. 59 One of Hardy's earliest forms of juvenile recreation, significantly, was to wrap himself in a tablecloth and imitate the local vicar.

(Hide quotations)

b. An activity or pastime which is pursued for the pleasure or interest it provides.

- ?a1425 *Orchard of Syon* (Harl. 3432) (1966) 213 (*MED*), A soul vsynge siche teeris..setteþ rilt noult by ony maner of recreaciouns.
- c1475 (†a1449) Lydgate *Minor Poems* (1934) ii. 775 (*MED*), Travaile requyriþ a recreacioun.
- 1531 T. Elyot *Bk. named Governour* i. xvi. sig. K1^v, The pastors & curates dyd wynke at suche recreations.
- 1585 T. Washington tr. N. de Nicolay *Navigations Turkie* iii. x. 86 The Turke hath observed the Palester of the Athletes..for one of his accustomed recreations.
- 1608 S. Hieron *Helpe vnto Deuotion* in *Wks.* (1620) I. 691 Taking heed to our selues in our eatings, in our apparrell, in our companie, in our recreations.

- 1631 W. Gouge *Gods Three Arrowes* iii. §11. 206 Such kind of recreations as make men fitter for warre.
- 1749 G. Lavington *Enthusiasm Methodists & Papists* 23 Our love of Recreations and Diversions has indeed confessedly exceeded all bounds.
- 1790 J. S. Murray *On Equality of Sexes* in *Massachusetts Mag.* Apr. 223/1 Employments and recreations which naturally tend to enervate the body, and debilitate the mind.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* II. vii. 169 The chase was his favourite recreation.
- 1881 *Harper's Mag.* Dec. 147/2 His especial recreation was yachting upon the river in his steam-launch.
- 1906 J. Galsworthy *Man of Prop.* 243 Incredible quantities of Forsytes, whose chief recreation out of business hours is the discussion of each other's affairs.
- 1948 *Life* 6 Sept. 5/1 (*adv.*) Roller skating is a healthy, delightful recreation for young and old.
- 1994 *New Scientist* 15 Oct. (Future Suppl.) 27/3 Hang-gliding, parascending, potholing have all shifted from being sports for the mad few to recreations for the careful many.

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†c. A person who or thing which provides entertainment or enjoyment for others; a source of recreation. *Obs.* [Thesaurus »](#)

- α1616 Shakespeare *Twelfth Night* (1623) ii. iii. 131 If I do not gull him into an ayword, and make him a common recreation [etc.].
- 1863 *Sat. Rev.* 15 Aug. 224 These *Tragedies and other Plays* will live..not as the recreation of an idle hour [etc.].

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d. An educational exercise, lesson, or problem intended to be both instructive and enjoyable. Chiefly in *pl.*, esp. in the titles of collections of such exercises or problems.

- 1633 tr. 'H. van Etten' (*title*) *Mathematicall recreations. Or a Collection of sundrie Problemes, extracted out of the Ancient and Moderne Philosophers...* Usefull for others, to acuate and stirre them up to the search of further knowledge; and serviceable to all for many excellent things, both for pleasure and Recreation.
- 1666 J. Corss (*title*) *Practical geometry. Or a manual of mathematical recreations.*
- 1708 tr. J. Ozanam (*title*) *Recreations mathematical and physical.*
- 1782 W. Hooper *Rational Recreations* (ed. 2) II. xlv. 180 This design differs in the construction from that in the first Recreation.
- 1880 C. V. Clay (*title*) *Roses and lilies. Six recreations arranged for the piano for teachers' use.*
- 1964 A. H. Beiler (*title*) *Recreations in the theory of numbers: the queen of mathematics entertains.*
- 2001 J. Ruggero (*title*) *Five by five: 25 intermediate five-finger piano recreations in styles from Bach to rock.*

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†4. A place of refreshment or for recreation. *Obs.* [Thesaurus »](#)

- *1440 *Promptorium Parvulorum* (Harl. 221) 426 Recreacyon, or howse of refreschyng, *recreatorium*.
- 1619 E. M. Bolton tr. Florus *Rom. Hist.* 44 Tibur which is now but a suburb, and Præneste but our summer-recreation.

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Compounds

recreation area *n.*

- 1901 *N.Y. Times* 7 Apr. 20/3 A public garden of two and a half acres, which will be the principal recreation area of the settlement.
- 1961 *Recreation* Dec. 531/1 Recreation areas are never too large for the future.
- 1995 *Denver Post* 27 May b2/2 A time for..slapping on a pair of cutoffs and heading for a ridiculously crowded recreation area.

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recreation centre *n.*

- 1902 J. A. Riis *Battle with Slum* xiii. 376 (*heading*) Constitution of the Jackson Pleasure Club. Evening recreation centre P. S. No. 160, New York City.
- 1927 F. M. Thrasher *Gang* iv. xxi. 453 North Side politicians have planned to build near the Chicago Commons a huge recreation center for these gangs, which will become a sort of junior Tammany Hall.
- 1943 J. S. Huxley *TVA* 17 Guntersville, formerly a sleepy market town..is now becoming..an important recreation centre.
- 1994 *Maturity Mag.* (New Westminster, Brit. Columbia) May–June 7/3 A cycle safety course, offered by a community recreation centre or a local college.

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recreation day *n.*

- 1647 *Maids Petition to Honourable Members Both Houses* (title page), Presented on Tuesday the 9. of August, the 2^d. Recreation day for Apprentices 1647.
- 1756 M. Calderwood *Jrnl.* (1884) xii. 310 In summer they are allowed to walk in the garden on recreation days, and to speak at their work.
- 1866 *Catholic World* July 435/1 If this be recreation day, you will see congregated here the liveliest and happiest set of faces that it has ever been your good fortune to meet in this world.
- 1992 *Jrnl. Econ. Lit.* 30 706/2 The choice of which site to visit on the first recreation day.

(Hide quotations)

recreation ground *n.*

- a1784 R. Bigland *Hist. Coll. County of Gloucester* (1792) II. ccxxxii, The Award assigns to Charles Owen Cambridge, as Lord of Manor 13*p.* and for Recreation Ground 1 *r.* 17*p.* and allotments for private Lands to C. O. Cambridge.
- 1818 *Times* 16 Mar. 1/1 (*adv.*) Great Stanmore School, Middlesex..a genteel circle of juvenile society.., excellent domestic accommodations, large recreation grounds.
- 1898 E. Howard *To-morrow* xiv. 147 These wretched slums will be pulled down, and their sites occupied by parks, recreation grounds, and allotment gardens.
- 1969 I. Opie & P. Opie *Children's Games* xii. 341 The merry-go-round is a type of swing placed in the recreation ground by the local council.
- 2006 *Daily Tel.* 13 July 7/1 They will be in total lockdown for 23 out of 24 hours, with little space for exercise in the prison's small recreation ground.

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recreation hall *n.*

- 1798 W. Tooke *Castera's Life Catherine II* III. ix. 69 The same practice is observed in the recreation-halls and the sleeping rooms.
- 1866 *Catholic World* July 435/1 Keeping still to the left you pass into the Recreation Hall.
- 1935 A. MacArthur & H. K. Long *No Mean City* xx. 312 By the time of the Glasgow Fair..the first of the clubs and recreation halls which now play an important part in tenement life were opened.
- 1994 *News-Record* (Maplewood & South Orange, New Jersey) 28 July b3/1 The theme is 'Western Adventure', and takes place at a real farm with bunkhouses, a dining hall in a barn, and a recreation hall in the former