

## civic, *adj.*

View as: Outline | Full entry

Quotations: Show all | Hide all Keywords: On | Off

Text size: A A

**Pronunciation:** Brit. /ˈsɪvɪk/, U.S. /ˈsɪvɪk/

**Forms:** 15 *ciuicque*, 15 *ciuicke*, 15 *cyuicke*, 15–16 *ciuique*, 16 *ciuicke*, 16 *ciuik* ... (Show More)

**Frequency (in current use):** ●●●●●●●●

**Origin:** A borrowing from Latin. **Etymon:** Latin *cīvicus*.

**Etymology:** < classical Latin *cīvicus*... (Show More)

**1. Roman Hist.** Designating a crown or garland of oak leaves and acorns given in ancient Rome as a mark of distinction to a person who saved the life of a fellow citizen in war; of or relating to this. Also in extended use.

Chiefly in *civic crown*, *civic garland*, etc.

Thesaurus »  
Categories »

- 1542 N. UDALL tr. Erasmus *Apophtegmes* f. 254. A garlande *ciuike*..whiche was woont to bee made of oken leues.
- 1591 J. HARINGTON tr. L. Ariosto *Orlando Furioso* xvi. xxxii. 123 In auncient times a laurell *cyuicke* crowne To him that sau'd one citizen they gaue.
- 1600 P. HOLLAND tr. Livy *Rom. Hist.* vi. 231 Eight *civick* coronets for saving the lives of citizens in danger.
- 1615 E. GRIMESTON tr. P. d'Avity *Estates* 409 [The Romans] were accustomed to giue crowns vnto souldiers in recompence of their valour..the *Ciuique* was of oake, which they gaue him that had deliuered a citizen from danger.
- 1630 P. MASSINGER *Picture* sig. E4. The *Ciuicke* garland, The murall wreath.
- 1649 A. MARVELL *Poems in Wks.* I. Pref. 53 Our civil warrs have lost the *civick* crowne.
- 1720 J. OZELL et al. tr. R. A. de Vertot *Hist. Revol. Rom. Republic* I. iv. 241 He had obtained fourteen *Civic Crowns*..three Mural Crowns.
- 1750 W. WHITEHEAD *Roman Father* iv. ii. 57 Scatter here the Oaken Bough; Ev'n for one averted Fate We that *Civic* Meed bestow—He sav'd all, who sav'd the State.
- 1778 W. HUTCHINSON *View Northumberland* I. 141 A centurial stone..with a *civic* garland rudely sculptured, and a figure of the Roman Eagle.
- 1828 W. SOTHEBY *Italy & Other Poems* 220 Rome round thy front her *civic* garland binds.
- 1842 TENNYSON *Vision of Sin in Poems* (new ed.) II. 220 Freedom, gaily doth she tread; In her right a *civic* wreath, In her left a human head.
- 1842 J. GWILT *Encycl. Archit.* 951 *Civic crown*, a garland of oak leaves and acorns, often used as an architectural ornament.
- 1931 J. GAVORSE *Suetonius' Lives Twelve Caesars* i. 4 Thermus honored him with a *civic* garland.
- 1965 *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 109 376/1 Set on a shield, which has a high border in the form of a *civic crown*, this wreathed, himation-clad deep bust shows Trajan in his extreme old age.
- 2007 R. COWAN *Rom. Battle Tactics* 6 (caption) Funerary memorial raised by his brother to Marcus Caelius... Note his numerous military decorations, especially the *civic crown* of oak leaves.

(Hide quotations)

**2. Of, belonging to, or relating to a citizen or citizens; of or relating to citizenship or to the rights, duties, etc., of the citizen; befitting a citizen.**

Thesaurus »

- 1655 E. GAYTON *Charity Triumphant* 4. I cannot here set forth the reason of the late extinguishing these *Civick* Lights, and suppressing the Genius of our Metropolis, which for these Planetary Pageants and Pretorian Pumps was as famous and renowned in forraign Nations, as for their faith, wealth, and valour.
- 1747 *Hist. Rise, Progress, & Tendency of Patriotism* 14 All Men who appear in Publick Affairs affect to have this thought their Sense of that *Civic* Virtue.
- 1749 *Ninth Let. Farmer to Electors Dublin* 13 Give no such Advantage, my worthy and true Brothers, to the Adversaries of Liberty, to the Miners and Supplanters of your *Civic* Estate.
- 1790 E. BURKE *Refl. Revol. in France* 219 Of late they distinguish it..by the name of a *Civic* Education.
- 1797 tr. *Decree Suspected Persons* Art. II. in 'English Lady' *Resid. in France* I. 400 Those who have not demonstrated their means of living or the performance of their *civic* duties.
- 1805 *Ann. Rev.* 1 298 Volney printed a *civic* catechism.
- 1827 R. SOUTHEY *Hist. Peninsular War* II. 596 Efforts..for organizing a *civic* and national resistance.
- 1841 W. SPALDING *Italy & Ital. Islands* I. 56 Every individual possessing the *civic* franchise.
- 1880 J. MUIRHEAD tr. *Gaius Institutes* 1. 49 A person who, on account of crime..has been interdicted fire and water, forfeits his *civic* privileges.
- 1937 J. P. MARQUAND *Late George Apley* xvi. 181 It was not his way to shirk a *civic* duty and he attended the meetings of this committee assiduously.
- 1963 *New Statesman* 18 Oct. 537/1 The police..accuse the public of a lack of *civic* responsibility.
- 1997 *Jrnl. Econ. Hist.* 57 582 Successful *civic* resistance, in Belgium during World War I..relied on external support, and withered without it.
- 2005 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 1 Apr. 16/1 His writing is a model of discretion, astute observation about himself and others, and appreciation of ordinary *civic* decency.

(Hide quotations)

This entry has been updated (OED Third Edition, November 2010).

Publication history  
Entry profile  
Previous version

### In this entry:

*civic* centre  
*civic* crown  
*civic* garland  
*civic* humanism  
*civic* journalism  
*civic*-minded  
*civic*-mindedness  
*civic* oath  
*civic* republicanism

### In other dictionaries:



*civic*: view definition in Oxford Dictionaries (?)

My entries (1)

My searches (0)

Jump to:

Entry	Date
city way, n.	1588
citywide, adj. and adv.	1870
divantick, n.	
div, n.	
divet, n.1	1632
divet, n.2	1531
divet, n.3	1708
divet, v.	1601
divet-cat, n.	1607
<b>civic, adj.</b>	<b>1542</b>
civical, adj.	1602
civically, adv.	1631
civicism, n.	1822
dividize, v.	1888
divis, n.	1885
civil, adj., n., and...	1387
civil, v.	1584
civilian, n. and adj.	1425
civilianism, n.	1853
civilization, n.	1928

**a.** Of, belonging to, or relating to a city, town, borough, or other community of citizens; *esp.* of or relating to the administration and affairs of such a community; municipal.

Thesaurus »

- 1656 T. BLOUNT *Glossographia* *Civick*, pertaining to the city.
- 1675 J. SMITH *Christian Relig. Appeal* i. v. §4 33 [Seneca] reprehends the Urban Religion... And so vehemently that the sharpest taunts, which Tertullian gave the *civick* worship, were not comparable to those bitter declamations of Seneca against it.
- 1766 *Let. to Citizens Dublin* 4. I stood, and still do stand, wholly unconnected with...any Set of Men, who have been on this, or that Side of a Question, in your *civic* Affairs.
- 1789 *Let. to Voters of Chichester* 6 Except indeed the Stone Figure in the Fish-Market be deem'd a *civic* Embellishment to Chichester, which would be thought a Disgrace to Billingsgate.
- 1828 SCOTT *Fair Maid of Perth* vii, in *Chron. Canongate* 2nd Ser. I. 164 Bailie Craigdallie...who had advised the prorogation of their civic council to the present place and hour.
- 1849 MACAULAY *Hist. Eng.* I. 354 The first *civic* magistrate.
- 1861 C. H. PEARSON *Early & Middle Ages Eng.* I. 84 The *præfectus*, or burh-gerefa, was rather a royal than a *civic* officer.
- 1907 *Daily Chron.* 8 Nov. 4/6 The same arrayment of *civic* dignitaries in scarlet and fur.
- 1944 *Jrnl. Rom. Stud.* 34 13 The Italian allies...still treasured their *civic* identity and would resist any unjustified pressure on their local affairs.
- 1974 B. FRIEL *Freedom of City* 1. 18 These three people came together, seized possession of a *civic* building, and openly defied the security forces.
- 1997 *Lancashire Evening Tel.* (Electronic ed.) 24 Jan. The nuclear bunker under Clitheroe's *civic* hall is to be abandoned.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** Of, relating to, or characteristic of the city or town considered as a locality; urban.  
Now *rare*.

Thesaurus »  
Categories »

- 1760 S. FOOTE *Minor* l. 12 Had you stuck to your old *civic* vices, hypocrisy, couzenage, and avarice, I don't know whether I might not have committed George to your care; but, you cockneys now beat us suburbanians at our own weapons.
- 1787 H. LEWIS *Excursion to Margate* xviii. 77 This venerable pile of antiquity has been lately disgraced by hewing down the trees...for the purpose of amusing refined Londoners with the game of bowls.—Oh! how my resentment rose to see *civic* poppinjays in paltry sports profane the spot.
- 1821 BYRON *Don Juan: Canto V* xxxvii. 153 That he...Should now be butcher'd in a *civic* alley.
- 1845 R. W. HAMILTON *Inst. Pop. Educ.* iii. 51 *Civic* residence is our peculiarity.
- 1877 M. OLIPHANT *Makers of Florence* (ed. 2) vi. 165 This mood of mind is essentially *civic*, belonging to that straitened atmosphere of the town.
- 1975 D. LODGE *Changing Places* i. 9 Rummidge...had lately suffered the mortifying fate of most English universities of its type (*civic* redbrick).

(Hide quotations)

**†4.** Of or relating to the community of ordinary citizens; not military; civilian. Cf. *CIVIL* *adj.* 15. *Obs. rare*.

Categories »

- 1789 in J. Sparks *Corr. Amer. Revol.* (1853) IV. 262 Your military rank holds its place in my mind notwithstanding your *civic* glory.

(Hide quotations)

## SPECIAL USES

**civic centre** *n.* the centre of a city, municipality, etc., *esp.* as a focal point for local government and civic amenities; (in later use) *spec.* a purpose built complex in which the principal public buildings of a municipality are grouped together; a single large public building serving a similar function.

Thesaurus »

- 1867 *Derby Mercury* 24 July Suppl., Not merely were there dense crowds to cheer him [*sc.* the sultan] as he progressed from Buckingham Palace to the Guildhall, but at the *civic centre* a brilliant company was gathered to do him honour.
- 1909 H. I. TRIGGS *Town Planning* i. 12 Every effort should be made...to make the open spaces more extensive the farther they are removed from the *civic centre*.
- 1934 A. HUXLEY *Beyond Mexique Bay* 270 Give to London all the town planning, all the *civic centres*, all the garden suburbs that the ingenuity of man can devise.
- 1996 *PC World* Aug. 62/2, I met Beyers de Klerk in his office in the new Boksburg *Civic Center*, a concrete tower that looms above the old, low-rise downtown.

(Hide quotations)

**civic humanism** *n.* the following of humanist ideals and values in political life, *esp.* the use of classical models of government, political rhetoric, etc.

Categories »

- 1938 *Speculum* 13 14 Guarino in 1408 sent to...Francesco Barbaro, who afterwards became the pioneer champion of *civic* humanism in the republic of San Marco, an admonition never to regard possessions and wealth as valuable.



2007 *Chicago Sun Times* (Nexis) 15 July 83 Civic humanism and religious faith must always remain in tension in American life. Faith can easily get co-opted by civic humanism, resulting in the loss of religion's prophetic voice in society.

(Hide quotations)

**civic journalism** *n.* journalism conducted with the aim of promoting greater involvement by the general public in politics and community issues.

Categories »

1916 *Amer. Jnl. Sociol.* 21 502 The universities should train men and women in the technique and ideals of civic journalism. Probably most voters need only to know the sensible thing to do and only from lack of information vote incompetents into office.

2004 *Philadelphia Inquirer* 26 Sept. c7/2 The blogosphere is a dynamic expansion of things newspapers have long done to aid democratic dialogue, from letters to the editor to experiments in civic journalism.

(Hide quotations)

**civic-minded** *adj.* concerned with or active in civic affairs; concerned with the welfare of the community as a whole, public-spirited.

Thesaurus »

1907 E. A. Ross *Sin & Society* vi. 160 It is easy to foresee what a lively public appreciation and support of truth-telling newspapers, of plain-spoken preachers, of fearless scholars, of civic-minded lawyers..would do to populate these walks with good men.

1947 N. CARDUS *Autobiogr.* 207 He..was not civic-minded, and could never be trusted at a garden-party.

2000 *U.S. News & World Rep.* 24 Apr. 26/1 Civic-minded Wisconsinites boast one of the nation's highest rates of organ donation.

(Hide quotations)

**civic-mindedness** *n.* the state or quality of being civic-minded.

1922 T. H. REED *Loyal Citizenship* Pref. p.v. To inculcate the habit of civic-mindedness not merely by example and precept but by practice as well.

1942 M. McCARTHY *Company she Keeps* (1943) vi. 203 His methodical habits, his civic-mindedness, his devout sense of what was proper.

2004 *Independent* 14 Jan. (Property review) 5/5 It gives me pleasure to report..on a show of civic-mindedness that would never happen in Hampstead.

(Hide quotations)

**civic oath** *n.* [originally after French *serment civique* (1790)] (in some states or political systems) an oath of allegiance taken by those in public office, by the citizenry in general, or by those wishing to attain citizenship.

Categories »

1790 *Times* 10 Feb. 3/3 It was afterwards proposed that every member [of the *Assemblée nationale*]..should take the civic oath.

1791 E. BURKE *Let. to Member Nat. Assembly* 15 [Cromwell] chose an Hales for his chief justice, though he absolutely refused to take his civic oaths, or to make any acknowledgment whatsoever of the legality of his government.

1890 *Atlantic Monthly* June 734/2 It had long been the custom..for the senators there to take their civic oath of fidelity to the Emperor.

1955 *Church Hist.* 24 105 One of their leading members..published..a four-page pamphlet listing the Biblical reasons for refusing to swear the civic oath.

1992 *Internat. Migration Rev.* 26 284 Strict naturalization requirements for those who are not members of the existing community of citizens: at least sixteen years residence, renunciation of previous citizenship..a civic oath and knowledge of the Latvian constitution.

(Hide quotations)

**civic republicanism** *n.* an approach to republican government which emphasizes active engagement by citizens.

1850 *N.Y. Herald* 1 Oct. 6/4 In Italy, the tendency was toward civic republicanism; in France, toward absolute monarchy; in England, toward constitutional monarchy.

1907 T. WHITTAKER *Liberal State* iv. 101 Civic republicanism offered nothing congenial to the ennobled plutocrats of the nineteenth century.

2003 M. BAKER & J. KUSEL *Community Forestry in U.S.* vi. 102 The images associated with civic republicanism have an inherent appeal: citizens gathered together in a public meeting place to engage in face-to-face deliberations over issues of common concern.

(Hide quotations)

