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operator

noun | op·er·a·tor | \ 'ä-pə-,rā-tər, 'ä-prā-\

Popularity: Bottom 40% of words | Updated on: 17 Nov 2017

Examples: OPERATOR in a Sentence ▼

Definition of OPERATOR

- 1 : one that **operates**: such as
 - a : one that operates a machine or device
 - b : one that operates a business
 - c : one that performs surgical **operations**
 - d : one that deals in stocks or commodities
- 2 a : **MOUNTEBANK, FRAUD**
 - b : a shrewd and skillful person who knows how to circumvent restrictions or difficulties
- 3 a : something and especially a symbol that denotes or performs a mathematical or logical **operation**
 - b : a mathematical function
- 4 : a binding site in a DNA chain at which a genetic repressor binds to inhibit the initiation of transcription of messenger RNA by one or more nearby structural genes — called also *operator gene*; compare **OPERON**

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-operatorless adjective

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First Known Use: 1598

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See *operator* defined for English-language learners

See *operator* defined for kids

People Are Reading



8 Words for Setting the Table



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Words We're Watching: 'Streisand Effect'



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Examples of OPERATOR in a Sentence

the *operator* of an automobile

the *operator* of a nuclear power plant

Call the *operator* for the phone number.



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operator, please connect me with extension 123.

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is quite an *operator*—no one else could have gotten them all to agree to the project.



Recent Examples of OPERATOR from the Web

The two *operators* of this meat chariot are Mustard Maddie and Jalapeño Jackie, AKA Maddie Murphy and Jackie Stumm.

— Maggie Lange, *Bon Appetit*, "The Most Exclusive Summer Internship Is Aboard the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile," 6 June 2017

The film's especially harsh in its portrayal of attorney general Robert F. Kennedy (Michael Stahl-David) as a steely weasel of an *operator*, initially uncomprehending of Johnson's usefulness.

— Michael Phillips, *idahostatesman*, "Woody Harrelson tries on the prosthetic ears in 'LBJ,'" 2 Nov. 2017

In a series of orders issued on Monday, the agency asked all North Slope *operators* with similar well designs to temporarily shut them down and provide a list of such wells by Dec. 31.

— Alex Demarban, *Alaska Dispatch News*, "State regulators launch wide review of North Slope oil fields following BP leak," 31 Oct. 2017



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ces to reflect current usage of the word
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Origin and Etymology of OPERATOR



derived from Late Latin *operātor* "worker, producer," from *operārī* "to be efficacious" + Latin *-tor*, agent suffix — more at **OPERATE**

NEW! Time Traveler

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Phrases Related to OPERATOR

Related Phrases

[crane operator](#)

[smooth operator](#)

OPERATOR Defined for English Language Learners

operator

noun

Definition of OPERATOR for English Language Learners

: a person who uses and controls something (such as a machine, device, or business) : someone who operates something [LEARN MORE FROM M-W](#)

: a person whose job is to help to connect telephone calls : a person in charge of a telephone switchboard



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: a person who is able to easily achieve things especially by persuading people or by being dishonest



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OPERATOR Defined for Kids

operator

noun | op·er·a·tor | \ 'ä-pə-,rā-tər\

Definition of OPERATOR for Students

- 1 : a person who manages or controls something • a plow *operator*
- 2 : a person in charge of a telephone switchboard
- 3 : a person who is skillful at achieving things by persuasion or deception

Medical Dictionary

operator

noun | op·er·a·tor | \ 'äp-(ə-),rāt-ər\

Medical Definition of OPERATOR

- 1 : one (as a dentist or surgeon) who performs surgical **operations**
- 2 : a binding site in a DNA chain at which a genetic repressor binds to inhibit the initiation of transcription of messenger RNA by one or more nearby structural genes — called also *operator gene*; compare **OPERON**



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Learn More about OPERATOR

See **words that rhyme with operator**