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ambient
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ambient

[adjective](#)

am·bi·ent | \ˈam-bē-ənt  \

Definition of *ambient*

(Entry 1 of 2)

1 : existing or present on all sides : [encompassing](#) the ambient air temperature ambient light ambient sound

2 : of or relating to ambient music (see [ambient entry 2 sense 2](#))

ambient

[noun](#)

Definition of *ambient* (Entry 2 of 2)

1 : an encompassing atmosphere : [environment](#)

2 : music intended to serve as an unobtrusive accompaniment to other activities (as in a public place) and characterized especially by quiet and repetitive instrumental melodies

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Synonyms for *ambient*

Synonyms: Noun

[atmosphere](#), [climate](#), [clime](#), [context](#), [environment](#), [environs](#), [medium](#), [milieu](#), [setting](#), [surround](#), [surroundings](#), [terrain](#)

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Did You Know?

Adjective

Biologists explore the effects of ambient light on plants; acoustics experts try to control ambient sound; and meteorologists study ambient pressure, air, or temperature. All this can make *ambient* seem like a technical term, but when it first saw light of day, that all-encompassing adjective was as likely to be used in poetry as in science. John Milton used it in *Paradise Lost*, and Alexander Pope wrote of a mountain "whose tow'ring summit ambient clouds conceal'd." Both poets and scientists who use *ambient* owe a debt to the Latin verb *ambire*, meaning "to go around," the grandparent of our English word.

Examples of *ambient* in a Sentence

Adjective

Keep the chemicals at an *ambient* temperature of 70°F. the bright *ambient* light of the room

See More  

Recent Examples on the Web: Adjective

Both computers feature Retina displays with True Tone technology that is supposed to properly match colors to *ambient* lighting conditions. — [Edward C. Baig, USA TODAY, "Apple boosts oomph in priciest MacBook Pros," 12 July 2018](#) But nothing like that dark night sky, away from *ambient* city light, to make those fireworks spectacles pop. — [Chicago Tribune, chicagotribune.com, "Where to go for Fourth fireworks," 29 June 2018](#)

These example sentences are selected automatically from various online news sources to reflect current usage of the word 'ambient.' Views expressed in the examples do not represent the opinion of Merriam-Webster or its editors. [Send us feedback](#).

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First Known Use of *ambient*

Adjective

1596, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

Noun

1624, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

History and Etymology for *ambient*

Adjective

Latin *ambient-*, *ambiens*, present participle of *ambire* to go around, from *ambi-* + *ire* to go — more at [issue entry 1](#)

Noun

see [ambient entry 1](#)

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Time Traveler for *ambient*

The first known use of *ambient* was in 1596

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More Definitions for *ambient*

ambient

[adjective](#)



English Language Learners Definition of *ambient*


: surrounding on all sides

of electronic music : quiet and relaxing with melodies that repeat many times

[See the full definition for *ambient* in the English Language Learners Dictionary](#)

ambient

[adjective](#)

am·bi·ent | \ˈam-bē-ənt  \

Medical Definition of *ambient*

: surrounding on all sides the ambient environment ambient air pollution

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recalcitrant 

obstinately defiant of authority

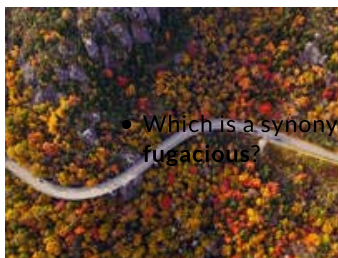
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impermanent

brawny

hidden

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Two words. One hundred years. ...

•

The Good, The Bad, & The Semantically Imprecise - 11/9

Words from the week of 11/9/2018 ...

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An Irresistible Piece On 'Dessert Stomach'

There's always room for another ar ...

ASK THE EDITORS

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How Do You Pronounce 'Vase'?

And is one way more correct ...

•

Ghost Word

The story of an imaginary word that managed to sneak past our e ...

•

Literally

How to use a word that (literally) drives s ...

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Is Singular 'They' a Better Choice?

The awkward case of 'his or] ...

WORD GAMES

Autumn Words of the Day 2018

(Secret October WOTD Qu ...

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