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## occurrence, *n.*

**REVIEWED**

By Chris at 1:40 pm, Jul 08, 2020

**Pronunciation:** Brit. /əˈkʌrəns/, /əˈkʌrɪs/, U.S. /əˈkərəns/

**Forms:** 15 **accoranse**, 15 **accurauntes** (plural), 15– **occurrence**, 16 (18– *irregular*) ...

**Frequency (in current use):**

**Origin:** Either (i) a borrowing from Latin. Or (ii) formed within English, by derivation. **Etymons:** Latin *occurentia*; **OCCURRENT** *adj.*, **-ENCE** *suffix*.

**Etymology:** Either < post-classical Latin *occurentia*, *occurrencia*...

**1.** A thing that occurs, happens, or takes place; an event, an incident.

Formerly also (as mass noun): †that which occurs, is met with, or presents itself (*obsolete*).

- 1539 T. CROMWELL *Let.* 13 Feb. in R. B. Merriman *Life & Lett. T. Cromwell* (1902) II. 178 Here we have no notable newes nor occurrences.
- 1587 in L. B. Taylor *Aberdeen Council Lett.* (1942) I. 38 To advertise you of sic occurrences as hes fallen furtht heir.
- a1616 W. SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* (1623) V. i. 255 All the occurrence of my fortune since Hath beene betweene this Lady, and this Lord.
- 1623 J. BINGHAM tr. Xenophon *Hist.* 109 While we march, let Timasion with the horse scout before..giuing aduertisement of all occurrence.
- 1652 M. NEDHAM tr. J. Selden *Of Dominion of Sea* 3 What Occurrences seem to oppose the Dominion of Sea and what Arguments are wont to bee made against it.
- 1711 R. STEELE *Spectator* No. 96. ¶8 The chief Occurrences of my Life.
- 1721 E. YOUNG *Revenge* V. ii The fix'd and noble mind Turns all occurrence to its own advantage.
- 1773 O. GOLDSMITH *She stoops to Conquer* I. 9 Trust to occurrences for success.
- 1816 W. SCOTT *Antiquary* II. ix. 233 He..instantly began to sound the mendicant on the occurrences of the day.
- 1884 B. BOSANQUET et al. tr. H. Lotze *Metaphysic* 239 The relation in which empty Time stands to the occurrences which fall within it.
- 1951 *Biol. Abstr.* 25 657/1 The author opposes what he describes as the 'theories of the Mendelists and the Morganists' that the origin of life on earth is an extraordinarily rare occurrence.
- 1991 D. RIEFF *Los Angeles* I. i. 38 In their neighborhoods, so-called drive-by shootings..had become nightly occurrences.

†**2.** An incidental meeting or encounter. *Obsolete. rare.*

- 1607 E. TOPSELL *Hist. Foure-footed Beastes* 470 When Androcles was..cast in among these Sauage beastes, this Lyon..came toward him softly..so the man began to know him, and both of them to congratulate each other in that their imprisoned occurrence.

**3.**

**a.** The fact of occurring, being found or met with, turning up, or happening; an instance of this.

- 1725 I. WATTS *Logick* II. v. 391 Things of the most frequent Occurrence.  
 a1748 I. WATTS *Improvem. Mind* (1838) xv. 144 Voyages detain the mind by the perpetual occurrence and expectation of something new.  
 1816 W. SCOTT *Antiquary* II. xiv. 344 In cases of infrequent occurrence.  
 1866 J. E. T. ROGERS *Hist. Agric. & Prices* I. xxiv. 607 Evidence of the occurrence of that fish on the Kentish coast.  
 1897 *Westm. Gaz.* 2 Nov. 3/2 A bird whose occurrences in England can be counted on one hand.  
 1900 *Engin. Mag.* **19** 762/1 Several iron mines have been reported, lead and zinc are frequently found, and copper occurrences are plentiful.  
 1964 M. GOWING *Brit. & Atomic Energy 1939–45* xi. 316 Thorium posed rather different problems from uranium; in particular, occurrences of ore were known to be much more widespread than those of uranium minerals.  
 1991 *Pulse* 6 Apr. 73/1 The conditions are, in descending order of frequency of occurrence: painful diabetic neuropathy, trigeminal neuralgia, [etc.].

**b.** The frequency or rate with which something occurs; numerical distribution.

- 1921 *Jrnl. Ecol.* **9** 97 If we know the absolute degree of frequency of a species (that is the number of individuals belonging to one species growing on a large area Y) we can calculate the probable occurrence on every area (y) which is smaller than Y.  
 1956 J. WHATMOUGH *Poetic, Sci. & other Forms Discourse* ii. 37 The *hapax legomenon*, although statistically it hardly differs from a word of very low occurrence..is nevertheless anomalous.  
 1992 *B.B.C. Wildlife* Jan. 54/3 To the above list we can also add..widespread ulcerative diseases in coastal fin fish, the increasing occurrence of wasting disease in seagrass communities, [etc.].

**4. Christian Church.** A coincidence of two festivals on the same day. Cf. **CONCURRENCE** *n.* 2b.

- 1863 J. M. NEALE *Ess. Liturgiol.* 109 These are all the occurrences, etc. which take place during this year.  
 1879 MARQUIS OF BUTE tr. *Rom. Breviary* I. p. xix By Concurrence (as opposed to Occurrence, which is two Offices falling on the same day), is meant the case of the Second Vespers of one Office falling on the same evening as the First Vespers of another.  
 1889 *Sarum Dioc. Kalendar* Tables of rules for Occurrences and Concurrences.  
 1991 *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Encycl.* (at cited word) Occurrence, The falling of two feasts on the same day of the liturgical calendar.

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**COMPOUNDS**

**occurrence book** *n.* (also **occurrences book**) a record of events kept at a police station, drawn from the diaries of police officers.

1929 J. MOYLAN *Scotl. Yard* vi. 138 Occurrence Books are kept at all stations, so that there may be a complete daily record of all occurrences, etc., at the station or within the area assigned to it.

1955 M. GILBERT *Sky High* v. 72 Everything that a policeman hears, sees and does goes down in the Occurrences Book.

1997 *E. Midland Historian* 7 36/2 Pit records also survive in the collection, as does the local constable's occurrence book for 1838.

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