Pronunciation: restrain, v.1 Brit. /rᵻˈstreɪn/, U.S. /rəˈstreɪn/

Forms:
a. ME resstrayne, ME restrane, ME restren, ME restryne, ME–16 restraine, ME–16 restrayn, ME–16 restrayne, ME–16 restraign, ME–16 restreign, ME–16 restrayn, 15 restraygne, 15 restrayn, 15 restrein, 15–17 restrain; also Scottish pre-17 restreign, pre-17 restreigne, pre-17 restreine, 15–17 restraygne, pre-17 restrayn, pre-17 restreyne, pre-17 restreyne, pre-17 restreyne, 19– restryn (south-western).

β. (Perhaps transmission errors) lME resteine, 15 restain, 15 restayned, 15–16 restaine.

Frequency (in current use):
Origin: A borrowing from French. Etymons: French restreindre, restrain-.

Etymology: < Anglo-Norman restreindre, Anglo-Norman and Middle French restraindre (stressed stem restrain-, restrein-, restreign-, restraign-; in Anglo-Norman also, with change of conjugation, restreigner ; French restreindre ) to fasten armour (mid 12th cent. in Old French), to grip, to press, compress (c1155), to bind, tie, bandage (second half of the 12th cent.), to control (a horse with the reins) (c1177), to check, control (c1225), to control the flow (of a body fluid) (1240 or earlier in Anglo-Norman with reference to tears, 1256 with reference to dysentery, 1314 with reference to blood), to limit (1283), to limit (a person's range of movement) (c1370), to withhold (food or resources) (late 14th cent.), to arrest, detain (a1397), (reflexively) to refrain or hold back (late 12th cent.) < classical Latin restringere RESTRINGE v. Compare Old Occitan restrenher (c1300), Catalan restrènyer (13th cent.), Spanish †restrenir †restreinnir (c1250), also Portuguese restringir and Italian ristringere (for both see RESTRINGE v.). Compare REFRAIN v.
The β. forms may all show transmission errors for α. forms, but it is notable that they are found with some frequency in the early modern period.

1.

a. transitive. To restrict, limit, confine.

a1325 Statutes of Realm (2011) ix. 63 Ant te lord king ne attendez noʒt þoru þis statut to restreinen þe laste Statut of Westmunestre.

☆ a1398 J. TREvisa tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus De Proprietatibus Rerum (BL Add.) f. 130 Mater is I-clepid endeles..by cause þat his appetites beþ nouʒt restreynd neipir I-lymytid in certeyne.

a1425 (☆a1400) Prick of Conscience (Galba & Harl.) (1863) 3873 (MED) Bischopes here of lagher state..For-why þair dignite here is les And þarfor þair powere restreynd es.

☆ a1475 J. FORTEsCUE Governance of Eng. (Laud) (1885) 121 (MED) Be reason hereoff he will þe more restrayn his yeftis off oþer off his livelod.
b. *transitive*. To restrict or limit to (also †unto).


1509 J. FISHER *Mornynge Remembrance Countesse of Rychemonde* (de Worde) sig. Aiv She restrayned her appetyte tyl one mele & tyl one fyssh he on y’ day.

1529 T. MORE *Supplyc. Soulys* f. xviii’ Therfore ys moste comenly thys word hell restayned to the specyall syngyfycacyon of that low place byneth.

1581 R. MULCASTER *Positions* xxxix. 199 The tearme of nobilitie amongst vs, is restrained to one order.

1644 C. JESSOP *Angel Church of Ephesus* 50 When the title of Bishop was restrained unto one of the Presbyters.

1696 R. BENTLEY *Of Revel. & Messias* 20 The conditions of Salvation..are..restrain’d to those times and countries alone.

1712 J. ADDISON *Spectator* No. 418. ¶7 His Soil is not restrained to any particular Sett of Plants.

1785 W. PALEY *Princ. Moral & Polit. Philos.* III. i. xvii. 167 He swears ‘to speak the whole truth’, without restraining it, as before, to the questions that shall be asked.

1850 R. C. TRENCH *Notes Miracles* (ed. 3) xxvii. 365 The language shows that the rebuke is not restrained to him, but intended to pass on to many more.

1864 H. JAMES in *N. Amer. Rev.* Oct. 583 Mr. Senior has restrained the partiality of blood to decent limits.
To make this device practical, it is necessary only to restrain the beam to a closed path around the flux.

Making designs with cutouts of colored paper can help you restrain your drawing to the silhouette shapes ideal for stylized needlework.

A team of writers formed..to continue the project, but decided to restrain it to the British Isles.

c. **transitive.** Chiefly in legal contexts: to prohibit or forbid (a thing or action).

1491 in *Acts Lords of Council Civil Causes* (1839) I. 169/1  All þe saidis giftis..Ar derogate adnullit restrenyeit & defendit quhill þe kingis age of xxj ȝeris.

1526 W. Bonde *Pilgrimage of Perfection* III. sig. PPiii In the which god restrayneth or forbyddeth man any thyng.

c.1533 in H. Ellis *Orig. Lett. Eng. Hist.* (1827) 2nd Ser. II. 53  The said blake rentes whiche by parliament is restrayned to be any further payd by any of the Kinges subjectes.

1628 *Buccleuch MSS* (Hist. MSS Comm.) (1899) I. 268  The doubt..you may well understand to go only to the trees and timber—the coppice woods are not meant to be restrained.

1720 J. Cockburn *Hist. & Exam. Duels* iv. 97  There was good reson to forbid and restrain these Meetings of Persons and People to fight.

1785 *Acts & Laws Mass.* (1890) 429  Assign some certain places for the exercising of any of the trades or employments..and forbid and restrain the exercise of either of them in other places.

1840 R. Godson *Pract. Treat. Law Patents* (ed. 2) II. viii. 255  The Court will grant an injunction to restrain the sale of articles.

1898 R. B. Michell *Law of Easements* (ed. 2) App. vi. 320  B may obtain an injunction to restrain the piracy.

1930 *Federal Reporter* 2nd Ser. 38 470  This action was begun June 5, 1909..to restrain the proving up of homestead entries..upon tracts of land.

1999 K. Scott *Gareth Evans* xi. 132  The court..upheld the Commonwealth’s right to restrain publication of the book.

†d. **intransitive** with reflexive meaning. To limit or confine oneself to something. *Obsolete. rare.*

1629 E. Sandys *Europæ Speculum* 13  Not to enlarge in Moderne graunts; but to restraine to one Pope of renowned fresh memorie.

1649 Br. J. Hall *Resol. & Decisions* IV. v. 4350  Cornelius à Lapide..would seeme to restraine to the ensuing particularities onely.

2. **transitive.**
a. To check, hold back, or prevent (a person or thing) from some course of action. Also with †of, †for to do something.

In quot. 1795, with object implied.


c1405 (•c1390) CHAUCER Melibeeus (Hengwrt) (2003) §522 Ther be ful manye thynges þþ shul restreyne yow of vengeance takynge.

c1440 in G. G. Perry Eng. Prose Treat. (1921) 7 (MED) Till þat my herte heldede mare, and bowghede, Thane to restreyne me fra all thoghtes þþ I knewe agaynes Goddes will.

c1450 (•c1375) CHAUCER Anelida & Arcite (Digby) (1878) l. 235 I ne can my hert not restreyne For to love hym alwey.

1483 (•1413) tr. G. Deguileville Pilgrimage of Soul (Caxton) iv. xx. f. lxvj” How may ye now fro wepyng ye restreyne.

1577 B. GOOGE tr. C. Heresbach Foure Bks. Husbandry ii. f. 55” The sweeter also they wyl be, the more you restrayn the stalke from shooting vp.

1617 F. MORYSON Itinerary i. 171 I..restained my curiositie from attempting to view this Castle.

1654 E. WOLLEY tr. ‘G. de Scudéry’ Curia Politiæ 123 The multitudes could not be restrained from calling me the Restaurator of his Empire.

1726 BP. J. BUTLER 15 Serm. i. 14 This Principle in Man..tends to restrain Men from doing Mischief to each other.

1788 GIBBON Decline & Fall V. l. 245 The weakness of their Arabian brethren had restrained them from opposing his ambition.

1795 M. EDGEWORTH Lett. for Lit. Ladies 62 The motives which restrayn from vice must be encreased, by the clear conviction that vice and wretchedness are inseparably united.

1818 W. CRUISE Digest Laws Eng. Real Prop. (ed. 2) I. 147 The Court of Chancery will also restrain a tenant for life..from cutting down timber.

1880 L. STEPHEN Alexander Pope iii. 77 This independence did not restrain him from writing poetry.

1913 W. CATHER O Pioneers! ii. x. 172 Ask your lawyers what you can do to restrain me from disposing of my own property.

1991 Daily Tel. 5 Jan. 1/2 Aziz will be seeking a commitment from America to restrain Israel from launching a pre-emptive strike.

†b. To forbid (a person) to do something. Obsolete.

1544 P. BETHAM tr. Earl of Purlilia Precepts War ii. xxii. sig. Kiiiij Forbydde and restrayne, thy souldyours to bye theyr vitayles, in those places where they kepe warre.

1579 T. NORTH tr. Plutarch Lives 7 Restrayning all manner of people to beare sayle in any vessell or bottome.

1649 G. LANGBAINE Answer Vniv. Oxford 10 Restrained all Bakers and Brewers..to bake or brew within the Citty, except [etc.].
3. transitive.

a. To keep (a person or animal) in check or under control.
Frequently reflexive.
In quot. 1733 intransitive.

▸ a1387  J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden Polychron. (St. John's Cambr.) (1871) III. 187 (MED) Þere were i-made tweye consuls, þat ȝif þat oon wolde outrage, þe ȝoer myȝte hym restreyne [v.r. refreyne].

▸ a1393  GOWER Confessio Amantis (Fairf.) VII. 5413 (MED) I mai miselve noght restreigne, That I nam evere in loves peine.

a1500  tr. Thomas à Kempis De Imitatione Christi (Trin. Dublin) (1893) 18 (MED) We wol haue oþir restreynd by statutes, & we wol suffre us in no wyse to be more restreynd.

1535  W. STEWART tr. H. Boethius Bk. Cron. Scotl. (1858) II. 102  Without..that oure wnworthines Restrenȝe ws, we ma..Baithe land and law, and libertie agane..reskew.

1591  SPENSER Prosopopoia in Complaints 1073  Hardly..were they restrayned so, Till that the Foxe [etc.].

a1667  A. COWLEY Several Disc. by Way of Ess., Verse & Prose 85 in Wks. (1668)  If I want skill or force to restrain the Beast that I ride upon.

1678  J. BUNYAN Pilgrim's Progress (ed. 2) 2  In this plight therefore he went home, and restrained himself as long as he could.

1715  D. DEFOE Family Instructor I. I. iii. 75  Because I have not restrain’d them, and show’d them their Duty.

1733  POPE Ess. Man II. 44  Two Principles in Human Nature reign; Self-Love, to urge; and Reason, to restrain.

1761  F. SHERIDAN Mem. Miss Sidney Bidulph II. 170  Our present state will not suffer us to keep pace with you.: restrain yourself a little.

1827  R. SOUTHEY Hist. Peninsular War II. 67  The officers made not the slightest attempt at restraining the wretches under their command.

1883  J. A. FROUDE Short Stud. 4th Ser. i. vii. 82  Alexander told him that, unless peace was made, he could not restrain the archbishop longer.

1930  A. P. HERBERT Water Gipsies xxi. 318  He had caught sight of Jane, able to restrain herself no more, clapping, laughing, crying.

1963  P. WHITE Let. 10 Feb. (1994) vii. 218  There seem to have been wild scenes in N.Z. with police dogs brought in to restrain the crowds.

2005  New Yorker 11 July 70/2  Interrogators encountering resistance begin to lose the ability to restrain themselves.

b. To deprive (a person or animal) of liberty or rights. Also with † from. Now rare.
1397–8  *Rolls of Parl.: Richard II* (Electronic ed.) Parl. Sept. 1397 Pleas §7. m. 4  In the which commissioun I..restreyned my lord of his fredom.

1530  J. PALSGRAVE  *Lesclarcissement* 689/1  It is a sore thyng to restrayne a man of his libertye.

1532  LD. BURGLEY  *Execution of Iustice* sig. B.i.  Yet was he not restrayned of his libertie.

1655  W. GOUGE & T. GOUGE  *Learned Comm. Hebrewes* (xiii. 3) IV. 22  At another time we may be bound and restrained of liberty.

1661  W. CATON tr. Eusebius  *Abridgem. Eccl. Hist.* App. 223  The Christian-Quakers have bene much more restrained of their Lybertie then other Sects.

1719  W. WOOD  *Surv. Trade* (ed. 2) 297  To curb or restrain our own Subjects from their natural Rights.

1785  W. PALEY  *Princ. Moral & Polit. Philos.* ii. xi. 83  The pain..which we occasion to brutes by restraining them of their liberty.

1824  J. DUNCAN  *Treat. Slavery* iii. 31  The question is..whether all masters..have a power according to the laws and regulations of slave states, to restrain them [sc. slaves] of these natural rights and privileges.

1882  *Times* 2 Oct. 8/2  I was not discharged until nearly midnight,..having been restrained of my liberty for about ten hours.

1931  J. P. CLARK  *Deportation of Aliens from U.S. to Europe* viii. 315  Being unlawfully restrained of his liberty he is entitled to a writ of *habeas corpus*.

c. To confine or imprison (a person or thing); to restrict freedom of movement or action using some means of restraint. In early use also:

†to embargo (cf. *restraint of princes* at RESTRAINT n. 1b) (obsolete).

1491  tr. Peter of Blois  *XII. Proffites of Tribulacyon* v. sig. Ciiij †, in  *Bk. Diiverse Ghostly Maters* (Caxton)  If thou wylte haue god to the merciable, suffre the to be restreyned with thyse bondis of tribulacyon.

1542  *Chronicle of Fabyan* II. 487  This yere corn was verie dere & had ben dearer if marchuntes of y^e^ styliarde had not been, & dutche shippes restrined.

1548  *Hall's Vnion: Henry VIII* f. clxij †  [She] caused all the Englishemen and their goodes and Shippes to bee restrained.

1587  SIR P. SIDNEY & A. GOLDING tr. P. de Mornay  *Treunennes Christian Relig.* i. 11  Nature and conscience (which they would haue restreined and imprisoned).

1612  I. M. tr.  *Most Famous Hist. Meruine* i. xv. 100  He was neither restrained nor imprisoned, but suffered to goe and dispose himselfe round about the towne at his own pleasure.

1652  I. JONES  *Most Notable Antiq. called Stone-Heng* (1655) 11  They thought it not fit to restrain their Deities within compacted walls.

1708  J. CHAMBERLAYNE  *Magnæ Britanniæ Notitia* (1710) i. III. iv. 194  No Freeman of England ought to be imprison'd, or otherwise restrain'd, without Cause shewn.

1766  O. GOLDSMITH  *Vicar of Wakefield* xxviii. 235  I shall soon be free, in spite of all his bolts to restrain me.
1838 *Proc. Lincoln Asylum* (1847) 30 Number of Patients Restrained or Secluded, and of the Instances and Hours of Restraint or Seclusion.

1876 S. MOSSMAN *Mandarin’s Daughter* iv. 25 I found the horses...in front of the trooper’s tents, their movements restrained by ropes round their fetlocks.

1901 *Daily News* 1 Feb. 7/5 The illegal use...of belts, anklets, and wristlets, in restraining violent lunatics.

1993 E. BLOOM & L. BLOOM *Piozzi Lett.* III. 455 Once again the king was restrained in a straightcoat. And again there was talk of a regency bill.

4. transitive.

a. To check, keep back, or control (a natural force or agent). Also in figurative contexts.

- a1393 GOWER *Confessio Amantis* (Fairf.) vii. 1286 (*MED*) The water mai the fyre restraigne.

- c1405 (*c1375*) CHAUCER *Monk’s Tale* (Hengwrt) (2003) l. 501 He wende he myghte...alle the floodes of the seu restrayne.

- c1450 LYDGATE *Minor Poems* (1934) ii. 440 (*MED*) What man may the wynde restreyne?

- c1480 (*c1400*) *St. Margaret* 7 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) II. 47 Vertu It is blud to restrenȝe, & flux of wame refrenȝe.

- a1500 in A. Zettersten *Middle Eng. Lapidary* (1968) 28 (*MED*) Cornelines...restrynyth moche all blody veynys.

- a1596 G. PEELE *Louve King Davuid & Fair Bethsabe* (1599) sig. Hj’ Take but your Lute, and...Retriue the sunnes sphere, and restraine the clouds.

- a1600 (+e1535) tr. H. Boece *Hist. Scotl.* (Mar Lodge) f. 586, in *Dict. Older Sc. Tongue* at *Restrenȝe* Attempting with dikis to stop the mouth of the watter passing fra the louch quhilk being restrenȝe be invndacioun and gorging of the watter the castell suld be drownit.

- 1611 *Bible* (*King James*) Gen. viii. 2 The windowes of heauen were stopped, and the raine from heauen was restrained.


- 1780 B. FRANKLIN *Let.* 19 May in *Papers* (1996) XXXII. 398 All well-bred People...forcibly restrain the Efforts of Nature to discharge that Wind.


- 1861 *Jrnl. Hort.* 30 July 345/2 Much might...be done by planting in pots to restrain growth.

- 1912 J. W. WHITE *Flora of Bristol* 645 The great importance of the Marram as a means of restraining drifting sands may be recognized among the sand-hills near Berrow and Brean.

- 1975 R. GRAVES *Coll. Poems* vi. 132 The room lay open to a visiting sea Which no door could restrain.

- 2004 P. B. BEDIENT et al. in J. Norwine et al. *Water for Texas* viii. 120/1 Previous efforts...were...ineffective in their attempts to restrain the floods.

b. To check, repress, or keep back (a desire, emotion, etc.).
c1405  (•c1390)  CHAUCER Melibeeus (Ellesmere) (1872) §2282 If ye wole werken wikkednesse and your wif restrayneth thilke wikked purpos..youre wyf oghte..to be preised.

?a1425 Mandeville’s Trav. (Egerton) (1889) 116 He sendez his oste þider to restreyne þe malice of his enmys.

a1500  (•c1340)  R. ROLLE Psalter (Univ. Oxf. 64) (1884) xvii. 43 All my vile desires þou restreynde with vertu of luf.

1542 N. UDALL tr. Erasmus Apophtheigmes f. 295 He grauely restreigned and staied the heddie vndiscretenesse of the oratours.

1560 J. DAUS tr. J. Sleidane Commentaries f. cxxxiiij Yet hathe God hetherto restrayned the force and violence of Sathan.

1638 T. HERBERT Some Yeares Trav. (rev. ed.) 91 Ganges..a whiles forbad them, restrayning eithers fury.

1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil Georgics III, in tr. Virgil Wks. 108 Nor Bits nor Bridles can his Rage restrain .

1725 D. DEFOE New Voy. round World II. 110 It would have been impossible for me to have restrained my Curiosity.

1743 W. PITT in J. Almon Anecd. Life W. Pitt (1792) I. v. 124 The ardour of our British troops was restrained by the cowardice of the Hanoverian.


1848 ‘N. SHUTE’ No Highway x. 257 He with difficulty restrained a crazy impulse to turn and kiss her in the doorway.

1984 J. FRAME Angel at my Table (1987) xiv. 102 And although Dad treasured his flowers.., he restrained his anger each time Siggy scratched among the dahlias.

2002 D. LUNDY Way of Ship (2003) v. 185 He looked forward down the length of the deck and barely restrained his fear.

5. transitive.

a. To withhold or keep back (something) from someone. Also with from, †of. Also intransitive. Now rare.

• a1393  GOWER Confessio Amantis (Fairf.) II. 1168 (MED) Alle othre thinges sche restreigneth, That a word more sche no tolde.

1433 Rolls of Parl.: Henry VI (Electronic ed.) Parl. July 1433 §12. m. 17 Dat the tresorer..have power and auctorite..to restreigne of alle maner of assignementz..to the somme of .mm. libras.

1439–40 Rolls of Parl.: Henry VI (Electronic ed.) Parl. Nov. 1439 §19. m. 13 Yef the saide surplus be not emploied to þe kings houshold..then it be leefull to þe said feffes, to restreyne þe said warantz.

1480 in S. Tymms Wills & Inventories Bury St. Edmunds (1850) 59 [I] charge myne executourez that they..kepe and restrayn from hym or them there legatis and byquestis.
1525  Coventry Leet Bk. 417  The Master of the Trinite Gilde shall restrene of the fee of evry suche meire to þe valowe of all suche mercymentes beyng vnpunysshed in his fawt.

1538  T. STARKEY  Dial. Pole & Lupset (1989) 69  Bettur hyt ys..to restreyne from the pryncye such hye authoryte.

1594  W. WEST  Symbolæogr.: 2nd Pt. II. Chancerie §144  The rents, issues, and profites therof [they] have wrongfully restreyned, perceyved, and taken to their owne use.


1860  H. ANGUS  Serm. (1861) v. 82  For his [sc. Christ's] completing of that work..may not the Spirit have been restrained from him..to the extent of making him feel as if his former prop had been removed.

1909  J. R. HARRIS tr. Odes & Psalms Solomon 113  Do not remove thy word from me! Neither for the sake of their works do thou restrain from me thy perfection!

b. To save or keep free from. Now rare.

1425  (•a1349)  R. ROLLE  Commandm. of Love (Rawl.) in C. Horstmann Yorkshire Writers (1895) I. 64 (MED)  Restreyne þi wille a while fro al lust and likyng of synne.

1475  (•a1449)  LYDGATE  Minor Poems (1911) i. 311 (MED)  O Welle of swetnesse..That all mankynde preseruyd hast from dethe, And all oure ioy fro langour dydest restreyne At thy Natiuite.

1484  CAXTON tr. G. de la Tour-Landry  Bk. Knight of Tower (1971) ix. 23  Fastyng..restreyneth the flesshe from euylle desyres.

1500  (•a1450)  Partonope of Blois (BL Add.) (1912) 5549 (MED)  Pus shall I my body pyne, Fro myrthe and Ioye my hert restreyne [v.r. resstrayne].

1530  J. EVANS  Sacrifice Contrite Heart 7  O soules sole cleanser, Sauior deare, our hearts from sinne restraine.

1662  C. BONDE  Salmasius 50  What Puritan, Independent, Anabaptist, Presbyterian, Quaker, &c. Or Red-coat as bad, though not worse than any of them, can restrain his Adamantine heart from grief?

1790  Constantia II. i, in A. Hughes Moral Drama's 138  Should I restrain my heart from tenderness.

1868  J. M. CRAMP  Baptist Hist. iii. 73  To relinquish the world, to restrain the flesh from concupiscence.

1974  M. A. SHERIF  Ghazili's Theory of Virtue (1975) ii. 54  Avicenna regards it [sc. humility] as a subdivision of wisdom which restrains the soul from arrogance.

†c. To hold back (a person) from something desired. Obsolete.

1611  Bible (King James) Gen. xvi. 2  Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing.

1715  Gentleman's Libr. 305  We may..keep up to all the Offices and Commands of Obedience impos'd, yet not be restrain'd from any Pleasures innocent.
6. **intransitive.** To refrain or hold back (*from* something; also with *to*).

- **6. transitive.** To hold tightly; to pull or draw upon (esp. a rein or bridle). Now **rare** (in later use only in figurative contexts).

**6. intransitive.**

- E. Inchbald, *Simple Story* I. i. 8: He still restrained him from all authority.

**7. transitive.**

- a. To hold tightly; to pull or draw upon (esp. a rein or bridle). Now **rare** (in later use only in figurative contexts).

  - a1425  (*?a1400*) Chaucer, *Romant Rose* (Hunterian) (1891) l. 4955: Eelde gan ageyn restreyne From sich foly and refreyne And sette men..In good Reule.
  - 1578 R. Robinson tr. *Dyall of Dayly Contemplacion* sig. N.i: Should not man than restraine from all peruersitie?
  - 1598 A. M. tr. J. Guillemeau, *Frenche Chirurg.* VII. vi. f. 39/2: We muste suffer it to bleede..till it of it selfe restraygneth & stoppeth.
  - 1623 P. Massinger, *Duke of Millaine* V. ii. sig. L4: Thrice his desperat hand was on his sword To haue killd 'em both, but he restrayn'd.
  - 1640 *Petit. Lond.* in J. Rushworth, *Hist. Coll.: Third Pt.* (1692) I. 94: Hence it is that the Prelates here in England..have restrained to pray for the Conversion of our Soveraign Lady the Queen.
  - 1736 Bp. J. Butler, *Analogy of Relig.* (ed. 2) I. iii. 73: The natural Fear..which restrains from such Crimes, is a Declaration of Nature against them.
  - 1848 Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* lx. 541: It was impossible to restrain from laughter.
  - 1866 A. Hort, *Hena* II. ix. 200: He restrained to even reproach her by a look.
  - 1890 D. Bingham, *Recoll. Paris* II. ii. 41: Here were the most disreputable-looking scamps in the midst of boundless riches..and they restrained from pilage.
  - 1913 ‘V. Nikto’, *Mere Woman* xxxv. 168: Each time I felt his fat red lips..I could not restrain from a nervous shudder.
  - 1990 Times 8 Nov. 25/7: Kevin Hull’s film commendably restrained from any commentary.
  - 2007 C. Strube, *Planet Reese* 255: He managed to restrain from raving at the air conditioner repairman about the need for renewable alternative energies.
There are statements in the [Vedic] tradition such as: ‘Restraining the reins of the senses’.

b. To hold, bind, or secure (something). rare before 19th cent.

1475 Bk. Quinte Essence 7 (MED) Pe philosophe seip pat wiyn hath also pe propirtee to restreyne in it pe influence and vertues of gold.

1598 A. M. tr. J. Guillemeau Frenche Chirurg. II. iii. f. 10/1 Those vaynes..which..there doe restandrayne that membrane fast vnto the sculle.

1871 J. Moody Sci. of Evil ii. 34 There is a good illustration of human freedom in the flying of the kite... You restrain it with a string and it soars aloft.

1900 J. Haynes tr. M. von Kaisenberg Mem. Baroness de Courtot xxiii. 219 The balloon must inevitably have flown up into the sky had it not been restrained with ropes held by at least a hundred people.

1969 Jane’s Freight Containers 1968–9 10/1 The freight container should be restrained horizontally.

1986 A. Limon in A. Limon et al. Home Owner Man. (ed. 2) i. iii. 61 The bottom of the frame is restrained by being screwed to the wall at about 1 m centres.

2006 W. H. Smith Crossbow Hunting i. 3 All that remains are the drilling of a hole and the use of a pin to restrain the string.

c. Of a seat belt or other safety restraint: to hold (a person or part of the body) in place in a vehicle seat in case of an accident, emergency stop, etc.

1933 Aviation Engin. June 17/2 In many light planes the pilot is separated from the passenger cockpit by perhaps just a diagonal tube brace... Crash impact can be reduced if the body is restrained from its inertia movement.

1946 Science 29 Nov. 513/2 Studies of controlled aircraft crashes have shown the duration of deceleration of dummies restrained with the restraining harness to vary from 55 to 90 milliseconds.

1976 National Observer (U.S.) 5 June 9/1 The study recommended that children be restrained by a seat belt.

1980 Know about your Car (A.A.) 232/1 All front seats on cars made after June 30 1964 must be equipped with seat belts which restrain the upper part of the body.

1990 Times 9 Feb. 33 Drivers must ensure that children aged under 14 travelling in the rear seat are restrained where seatbelts are available.

1991 Motor Boat & Yachting Jan. 121/1 In addition to safety canopies, the UIM wants to see all multihull crew members seated and restrained by harnesses.

†8. transitive. To compel or force (to do something). Obsolete.
Lydgate  

_Troyes Bk._ (Augustus A.iv) I. l. 2382 (MED) I thanke ȝow. Whom þat þe may hooLY. To liue or dye, at ȝour lust restreyne.

_Alphabet of Tales_ (1904) I. 253 (MED) Vnnethis his felowes myght restren hym to spare it.

Tr. _Secreta Secret._ (Marmaduke, Ashm. 59) (1977) 221 Do þou þy peyne to with-drawe al þy reaume frome alle thing in-honeste, and þat þou resteine [perh. read restreine] hem offt for to swere.

J. Frith  _Disput. Purgatorye_ I. sig. b8 If thou objecte þ' god were then restreyned and compelled, I answere naye.

H. Elsyng  _Notes Deb. House of Lords_ (1870) 103 The Subjecte is restreyned by _praemunire_ to receive, though the Kinge be not restreyned to gyve.

T. Fuller  _Church-hist. Brit._ IX. 185 By antient custome no Vestal Virgin or Flamen of Jupiter was restrained to swear.

W. Bohun  _Law of Tithes_ v. 172 It was lawful for every Man to dispose of his Tithes to any Church he pleased, and he was not restrained to pay them to any one Parish or Parson in particular.

T. Wedge  _Gen. View Agric. Chester_ 53 The tenant shall be confined to pursue a scheme of husbandry..by which he is restrained to fallow one third part of the tillage.

_Galaxy_ Feb. 203 Living under a ban, which forbids converse on politics and religion, the society of Rome is restrained to be musical, or literary, or artistic.

9. transitive. _Photography._ To slow (the action of a developer) by the addition of a restrainer (RESTRAINER n. 2a); to inhibit the formation of fog on a negative or film by using a restrainer. Also intransitive.

1855  _Jrnl. Photogr. Soc. London_ 217/2 The action of pyrogallic acid mixed with acetic acid is so energetic, that there is scarcely time to restrain the development of the image.

1889  _Internat. Ann. Anthomys Photogr. Bull._ 417 If too long an exposure is found to have been given, restrain with..potassium bromide.

1901  _Pharmaceut. Jrnl._ 46 (Suppl.) 15/1 Borax restrains this developer better than KBr.

1969  _Focal Encycl. Photogr._ (rev. ed.) 1286/1 Anti-fogging agents..do not..restrain the activity of the developer to the same extent as potassium bromide.

2000  R. E. Jacobson et al. _Man. Photogr._ (ed. 9) xvii. 227/2 Organic restrainers are capable of restraining fog without affecting film speed.

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

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