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whenever, *adv.* and *conj.*

Pronunciation: /hwɛn'ɛvə(r)/

Forms: (In early use as two words.) Also *poet.* **whene'er**/hwɛn'ɛə(r)/.

Etymology: < WHEN *adv.*+ EVER *n.*(see below).

I. As relative adverb or conjunction: cf. WHEN *adv.* 4.

1. [EVER *adv.* 8e.] At any time when; every time that, as often as. In a qualifying (conditional) clause, the meaning becomes: At whatever time, no matter when. Also with the idea of time weakened or lost (cf. WHEN *adv.* 8): In any or every case in which. Also as *adv.* with loss of relative force: at whatever time (*colloq.*).

- c1380 WYCLIF *Sel. Wks.* III. 354 As þe popis clerkis feynen þat þei done miraclis whanne evere þei syngen, moo and more woundirful þan ever dide Crist or his apostlis.
- c1440 *Generydes* 1245 Ser, on to hir loggyng, When euer it please yow, I shall be your gyde.
- c1449 R. PECOCK *Repressor* (1860) 2 Whanne euer he takith vpon him for to..correpte his Cristen neiþbour.
- 1509 *Reg. Privy Seal Scot.* I. 293/2 Landis..that sall happin to cum in the Kingis hands..throu the said Henrys deceis quhenevir it sall happin.
- 1594 SHAKESPEARE *Titus Andronicus* IV. ii. 15 When euer you haue neede, You may be armed and appointed well.
- 1667 MILTON *Paradise Lost* x. 771 His doom is fair, That dust I am, and shall to dust returne: O welcom hour whenever!
- 1678 *Young Man's Calling* p. xiv, So might you welcom your death with pleasant smiles when ere it comes.
- 1766 O. GOLDSMITH *Vicar of Wakefield* II. xi. 179 You may at a minute's warning send them over England whenever your honour thinks fit.
- 1842 DICKENS *Amer. Notes* II. i. 11 Whenever an Englishman would cry 'All right!' an American cries 'Go ahead!'
- 1865 J. RUSKIN *Sesame & Lilies* I. 54 Roguery and lying..are instantly to be flogged out of the way whenever discovered.
- 1891 F. W. FARRAR *Darkness & Dawn* I. xiv. 116 She still had access to the Emperor whenever she desired.
- 1917 H. JAMES *Ivory Tower* in *Amer. Novels* III. v. 221, I said to myself..three weeks ago, or whenever, that it wasn't for that I was going to come over.
- 1921 *Oxf. Mag.* 28 Jan. 163/1 When the official story..is published, whenever that may be, minor details..will require correction.

1982 J. D. MACDONALD *Cinnamon Skin* xi. 107 Maybe we can leave it that you can come over to Lauderdale when~ever.

2. [EVER *adv.* 8c.] At the very time or moment when; as soon as.
(Now only in *Sc.* and *Irish* use.)

1655 tr. C. Sorel *Comical Hist. Francion* viii. 7 He gave me a good supper last night when ever I came within his doors.

1800 *Monthly Mag.* 9 323/2 We will go to our dinner whenever the clock strikes two.

1839 A. URE *Dict. Arts* 589 One-third of the mixture is introduced at first; whenever this is melted, the second third is thrown in.

1875 A. WILSON *Abode of Snow* xxxviii. 360 And whenever my tent was set up I went to sleep in spite of the wind.

II.

3. As interrogative adverb, an emphatic extension of *when*.
(Properly two words, and usually so written: see EVER *adv.* 8d) Now
colloq.

1713 J. ADDISON *Cato* I. i, When-e're did Juba, or did Portius, show A Virtue that has cast me at a Distance?

1923 *N.E.D.* at *Whenever*, *Mod.* When ever I did I say that? I waited and waited, and wondered when ever he would come.

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