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## failure

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[Log In](#)fail·ure | \ 'fāl-yər  \

### Definition of *failure*

1a : omission of occurrence or performance specifically : a [failing](#) to perform a duty or expected action failure to pay the rent on time

b(1) : a state of inability to perform a normal function kidney failure— compare [heart failure](#)

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(2) : an abrupt cessation of normal functioning a power failure

c : a fracturing or giving way under stress structural failure

2a : lack of success

b : a failing in business : [bankruptcy](#) He was trying to rescue the company from failure.

3a : a falling short : [deficiency](#) a crop failure

b : [deterioration](#), [decay](#)

4 : one that has [failed](#) He felt like a failure when he wasn't accepted into law school.

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## Synonyms for failure

Synonyms

- [default](#),
- [delinquency](#),
- [dereliction](#),
- [misprision](#),
- [neglect](#),
- [negligence](#),
- [nonfeasance](#),
- [oversight](#)

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## Examples of failure in a Sentence

He became discouraged by his repeated *failures* in business. He was often crippled by his fear of *failure*. The accident was caused by engine *failure*. The patient was suffering from heart *failure*. The accident was caused by a *failure to use* proper procedures. She was criticized for *failure to follow* directions. The drought caused crop *failure*. He felt like a *failure* when he wasn't accepted into law school. The scheme was a complete *failure*.

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## First Known Use of *failure*

1643, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a](#)

## History and Etymology for *failure*

alteration of earlier *failer*, from Anglo-French, from Old French *faillir* to fail

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Time Traveler for *failure*



## The first known use of *failure* was in 1643

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[failure](#)

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[fain](#)

[fainaigue](#)

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More Definitions for *failure*

failure

[noun](#)



## English Language Learners Definition of *failure*

: a lack of success in some effort


: a situation or occurrence in which something does not work as it should

: an occurrence in which someone does not do something that should be done

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

failure

[noun](#)

fail·ure | \ 'fāl-yər  \

## Kids Definition of *failure*

1 : a lack of success The experiment resulted in *failure*.

2 : the act of neglecting or forgetting to do or perform I was disappointed by his *failure* to keep a promise.

3 : an instance of not working properly power *failure* a *failure* of memory

4 : a loss of the ability to work normally heart *failure*


5 : someone or something that has not succeeded The new show was a *failure*.

6 : an instance of falling short crop *failure*

7 : [bankruptcy](#)

failure

[noun](#)

fail·ure | \ 'fā(ə)l-yər  \

## Medical Definition of *failure*

: a state of inability to perform a vital function acute renal failure respiratory failure— see [heart failure](#)

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failure

[noun](#)

fail·ure

## Legal Definition of *failure*

1 : omission of occurrence or performance specifically : a failing to perform a duty or expected action a failure to mitigate damages failure to prosecute

2 : a lack of success or adequacy failure of a suit

3 : a failing in business

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**bowdlerize**

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