

**LES'SOR**, *n.* [from *lease*.] One who leases; the person who lets to farm, or gives a lease. *Blackstone.*

**LEST**, *con.* [from the Sax. *leas*, Goth. *laus*, loose, separate. In Saxon it was preceded by *the*, *the leas*, that less, that not, *ne forte*. Hence it denotes a *loosing* or separation, and hence it comes to express prevention.] That not; for fear that.

Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, *lest* ye die. Gen. iii.

The phrase may be thus explained. Ye shall not touch it; that separated or dismissed, ye die. *That* here refers to the preceding command or sentence; that being removed or not observed, the fact being not so, ye will die.

Sin no more, *lest* a worse thing come to thee. John v.

Sin no more; that fact not taking place, a worse thing will happen to thee.

**LET**, *v. t.* pret. and pp. *let*. *Letted* is obsolete. [Sax. *letan*, *letan*, Goth. *letan*, to permit, to hinder, to dismiss or send away, to let go, to leave, to admit, to think or suppose, to dissemble, to retard, to be late or slow, to dally or trifle, to lease or let out; *letan aweg*, to let away, to throw; W. *luz*, hinderance; *luziaw*, to hinder; D. *laaten*, to permit, to suffer, to give, to leave, to loose, to put, to stow; G. *lassen*, to let, to permit, grant, allow, suffer; *verlassen*, to forsake; *unterlassen*, to cease, to forbear; Sw. *lata*, to permit; Dan. *lader*, to let, permit, allow, grant, suffer, give leave. But in the four latter dialects, there is another verb, which corresponds with *let* in some of its significations; D. *lyden*, G. *leiden*, Sw. *lida*, Dan. *liden*, to suffer, endure, undergo, to permit. With this verb corresponds the English *late*, D. *laat*, Sw. *lat*, Dan. *lat*, slothful, lazy; and the G. *lass*, feeble, lazy, coincides with *lassen*, supra, and this may be the Eng. *lazy*. To let out, like L. *elocare*, is to lease, Fr. *laisser*. *Let* is the Fr. *laisser*, in a different dialect. By the German and Welsh it appears that the last radical may have originally been *th*, *ts* or *tz*, or other compound. See Class Ld. No. 2. 15. 19. 23. 32. and Class Ls. No. 30.]

1. To permit; to allow; to suffer; to give leave or power by a positive act, or negatively, to withhold restraint; not to prevent. A leaky ship *lets* water enter into the hold. *Let* is followed by the infinitive without the sign *to*.

Pharaoh said, I will *let* you go. Ex. viii.

When the ship was caught and could not bear up into the wind, we *let* her drive. Acts xxvii.

2. To lease; to grant possession and use for a compensation; as, to *let* to farm; to *let* an estate for a year; to *let* a room to lodgers; often followed by *out*, as, to *let out* a farm; but the use of *out* is unnecessary.

3. To suffer; to permit; with the usual sign of the infinitive.

There's a letter for you, Sir, if your name be Horatio, as I am *let* to know it is. [Not used.] *Shak.*

4. In the *imperative mode*, *let* has the following uses. Followed by the first and third persons, it expresses desire or wish; hence it is used in prayer and entreaty to superiors, and to those who have us in

their power; as, *let me* not wander from thy commandments. Ps. exix.

Followed by the first person plural, *let* expresses exhortation or entreaty; as, rise, *let us* go.

Followed by the third person, it implies permission or command addressed to an inferior. *Let him* go, *let them* remain, are commands addressed to the second person. *Let thou*, or *let ye*, that is, do thou or you permit him to go.

Sometimes *let* is used to express a command or injunction to a third person. When the signal is given to engage, *let every man* do his duty.

When applied to things not rational, it implies allowance or concession.

O'er golden sands *let* rich Pactolus flow.

*Pope.*

5. To retard; to hinder; to impede; to interpose obstructions. 2 Thess. 2.

[This sense is now obsolete, or nearly so.]

To *let alone*, to leave; to suffer to remain without intermeddling; as, *let alone* this idle project; *let me alone*.

To *let down*, to permit to sink or fall; to lower.

She *let them down* by a cord through the window. Josh. ii.

To *let loose*, to free from restraint; to permit to wander at large.

To *let in* or *into*, to permit or suffer to enter; to admit. Open the door, *let in* my friend. We are not *let into* the secrets of the cabinet.

To *let blood*, to open a vein and suffer the blood to flow out.

To *let out*, to suffer to escape; also, to lease or let to hire.

To *let off*, to discharge, to let fly, as an arrow; or cause to explode, as a gun.

**LET**, *v. i.* To forbear. *Obs.* *Bacon.*

**LET**, *n.* A retarding; hinderance; obstacle; impediment; delay. [Obsolete, unless in some technical phrases.]

**LET**, a termination of diminutives; as *hamlet*, a little house; *rivulet*, a small stream. [Sax. *lyt*, small, less, few. See *Little*.]

**LE'THAI**, *a.* [L. *lethalis*, mortal, from Gr. *λεθης*, oblivion.] Deadly; mortal; fatal.

*Richardson.*

**LETHALITY**, *n.* Mortality. *Akins.*

**LETHARGIC**, *a.* [L. *lethargicus*; Fr.

**LETHARGICAL**, *a.* *lethargique*.] Preternaturally inclined to sleep; drowsy; dull; heavy. *Arbutnot.*

**LETHARGICALLY**, *adv.* In a morbid sleepiness.

**LETHARGICALNESS**, *n.* Preternatural sleepiness or drowsiness. *More.*

**LETHARGIED**, *pp.* or *a.* Laid asleep; entranced. *Shak.*

**LETHARGY**, *n.* [L. *lethargia*; Gr. *λεθαργια*; *λεθη*, oblivion, and *αργος*, idle.]

1. Preternatural sleepiness; morbid drowsiness; continued or profound sleep, from which a person can scarcely be awaked, and if awaked, remains stupid.

2. Dullness; inaction; inattention.

Europe lay then under a deep *lethargy*.

*Atterbury.*

**LETHARGY**, *v. t.* To make lethargic or dull. *Churchill.*

**LE'THE**, *n.* *le'thee*. [Gr. *λεθη*, forgetfulness; *λεθω*, L. *luteo*, to be hid.] Oblivion; a draught of oblivion. *Milton.*

**LETHEAN**, *a.* Inducing forgetfulness or oblivion. *Lempriere.* *As. Res.*

**LETHIFEROUS**, *a.* [L. *lethum*, death, and *fero*, to bring.]

Deadly; mortal; bringing death or destruction. *Robinson.*

**LET'TER**, *n.* [from *let*.] One who permits.

2. One who retards or hinders.

3. One who gives vent; as a blood-letter.

**LET'TER**, *n.* [Fr. *lettre*; It. *lettera*; L. *littera*; W. *llythyr*.]

1. A mark or character, written, printed, engraved or painted; used as the representative of a sound, or of an articulation of the human organs of speech. By sounds, and articulations or closures of the organs, are formed syllables and words. Hence a letter is the first element of *written* language, as a simple sound is the first element of *spoken* language or speech. As *sounds* are audible and communicate ideas to others by the ear, so *letters* are visible representatives of sounds, and communicate the thoughts of others by means of the eye.

2. A written or printed message; an epistle; a communication made by visible characters from one person to another at a distance.

The style of *letters* ought to be free, easy and natural. *Walsh.*

3. The verbal expression; the literal meaning.

We must observe the *letter* of the law, without doing violence to the reason of the law, and the intentions of the lawgiver. *Taylor.*

4. Type; a character formed of metal or wood, usually of metal, and used in printing books.

5. *Letters*, in the plural, learning; erudition; as a man of *letters*.

*Dead letter*, a writing or precept, which is without authority or force. The best law may become a *dead letter*.

*Letter of attorney*, a writing by which one person authorizes another to act in his stead.

*Letter of marque*, a private ship commissioned or authorized by a government to make reprisals on the ships of another state. [See *Marque*.]

*Letters patent*, or *overt*, *open*, a writing executed and sealed, by which power and authority are granted to a person to do some act, or enjoy some right; as *letters patent* under the seal of England.

**LET'TER**, *v. t.* To impress or form letters on; as, to *letter* a book; a book gilt and *lettered*.

**LET'TER-CASE**, *n.* A case or book to put letters in.

**LET'TERED**, *pp.* Stamped with letters.

**LET'TERED**, *a.* Literate; educated; versed in literature or science. *Collier.*

**LET'TER-FOUNDER**, *n.* One who casts letters; a type-founder.

**LET'TERING**, *ppr.* Impressing or forming letters on; as *lettering* a book on the cover.

**LET'TERLESS**, *a.* Illiterate; unlettered; not learned. *Waterland.*