

blame¹

S2 W3

/bleɪm/

verb [transitive]

1 **BLAME** to say or think that someone or something is responsible for something bad:

Don't blame me – it's not my fault.

I blame his mother. She does everything for him.

blame somebody/something for something

Marie still blames herself for Patrick's death.

The report blames poor safety standards for the accident.

*The decision to increase interest rates was **widely blamed** (= blamed by many people) for the crisis.*

blame something on somebody/something

One of the computers is broken and she's blaming it on me.

The crash was blamed on pilot error.

2 somebody/something is to blame (for something)

used to say that someone or something is responsible for something bad:

Officials believe that more than one person may be to blame for the fire.

partly/largely/entirely etc to blame

Television is partly to blame.

In everyday English, people usually say something **is** someone's **fault**, rather than saying they **are to blame**:

He was to blame for the accident.

→ The accident **was his fault**.

3 I don't blame you/you can hardly blame him etc (spoken) **CRITICIZE#**

used to say that you think it was right or reasonable for someone to do what they did:

'She's left her husband.' 'I don't blame her, after the way he

treated her.'

You can hardly blame him for not waiting.

4 **don't blame me** (spoken) NOT DO SOMETHING

used when you are advising someone not to do something but you think that they will do it in spite of your advice:

Buy it then, but don't blame me when it breaks down.

5 **somebody only has himself/herself to blame** (spoken)

FAULT/BE SOMEBODY'S FAULT

used to say that someone's problems are their own fault:

If he fails his exams, he'll only have himself to blame.

THESAURUS

blame **verb** [transitive] to say or think that someone or something is responsible for something bad that has happened: *Democrats have blamed Republicans for the failure to reach an agreement. | Police blamed bad weather for a series of accidents on the roads. | For many years I blamed myself for her death. | They blamed the failure of the business on the economic downturn.*

put/place/lay the blame on somebody/something to say who or what you think is responsible for something bad that has happened, often unfairly or wrongly: *Don't try to put the blame on me! | Subsequent investigations placed the blame squarely on city officials. | Farmers have laid the blame for their problems entirely on EU policies.*

say it's somebody's fault (especially spoken) to say that someone is responsible for something bad that has happened: *Are you saying it's my fault that we lost the game?*

hold somebody responsible to say that someone is responsible for something bad that has happened, because it was their duty to prevent it from happening: *He was held personally responsible for the failure of the project.*

take the rap (informal) (also **carry the can** (BrE) (informal)) to be blamed and punished for something that you did not do, or that someone else is also responsible for: *He expects his wife to take the rap for him. | Alan's colleagues decided to let him carry the can.*

Word origin**Date:** 1100–1200**Language:** Old French**Origin:** *blamer*, from Late Latin *blasphemare*; → BLASPHEME**blame**²

noun

[uncountable]

BLAME responsibility for a mistake or for something bad:

blame for*Do you accept any blame for what happened?**I always **get the blame** (= am blamed) for his mistakes!**She stole the money but she's trying to **put the blame on** (= blame) me.***COLLOCATIONS****verbs**get the blame (= be blamed) *Sam knew that if something went wrong, he'd get the blame.*take/accept/shoulder the blame (= say that something is your fault) *No one was prepared to take the blame for the disaster. | Parents must shoulder the blame if their kids behave badly.*put/pin the blame on somebody (*also* lay/place the blame on somebody (**written**)) (= blame someone, especially when it is not their fault) *Don't try to put the blame on me. |**Everyone laid the blame for the crisis on the government.*shift the blame (onto somebody) (= blame someone else for something you did) *She always tried to shift the blame onto her brother.*apportion/assign blame (**formal**) (= find someone to blame for something) *He seemed to want to apportion blame for her death.*share the blame *He admitted he shared the blame for their World Cup defeat.*

the blame lies with somebody (= used to say that someone is responsible for something bad) *In this case, the blame lay with the police.*

phrases

place the blame squarely/firmly on somebody (= blame someone in a very definite way) *A military investigation placed the blame squarely on city officials.*

point the finger of blame at somebody (= say that someone is responsible for something bad) *I couldn't believe it when they started pointing the finger of blame at me.*