

# as·sume

S2 W1 AC

/ə'sju:m \$ ə'su:m/

verb [transitive]

- 1 THINK SO/NOT BE SURE to think that something is true, although you do not have definite proof

**SYN** presume:

**assume (that)**

*I didn't see your car, so I assumed you'd gone out.*

**it is/seems reasonable to assume (that)**

*It seems reasonable to assume that the book was written around 70 AD.*

*I think **we can safely assume** (= it is almost certain) **that** interest rates will go up again soon.*

**let us/let's assume (that)** (= used when thinking about a possible event or situation and its possible results)

*Let us assume for a moment that we could indeed fire her. Should we?*

*When it got to midnight and Paul was still not back, I began to **assume the worst** (= think that the worst possible thing had happened).*

- 2 START SOMETHING/MAKE SOMETHING START **assume control/responsibility etc** (formal)

to start to have control, responsibility etc or to start in a particular position or job:

*Whoever they appoint will **assume responsibility for all** financial matters.*

*He **assumed power** in a bloody coup in 1990.*

*Jim Paton will **assume the role of** managing director.*

**3 assume a manner/air/expression etc** (formal) PRETEND

to behave in a way that does not show how you really feel, especially in order to seem more confident, happy etc than you are

**SYN** put on

*Andy assumed an air of indifference whenever her name was mentioned.*

**4 DEVELOP** to start to have a particular quality or appearance

**SYN** take on

*These relationships **assume** great **importance** in times of crisis.*

*The problem is beginning to **assume** massive **proportions**.*

**5 DEPEND/IT DEPENDS** to be based on the idea that something else is correct

**SYN** presuppose:

**assume (that)**

*The theory assumes that both labour and capital are mobile.  
Coen's economic forecast assumes a 3.5% growth rate.*

→ ASSUMING

**Word origin**

**Date:** 1500–1600

**Language:** Latin

**Origin:** *assumere*, from *ad-* 'to' + *sumere* 'to take'