

burst¹ W3

/bɜːst \$ bɜːrst/

verb

(*past tense and past participle burst*)

1 BREAK OPEN **break open** [intransitive and transitive] BREAK if something bursts, or if you burst it, it breaks open or apart suddenly and violently so that its contents come out:

The pipes had burst and the house was under two feet of water.

2 be bursting with something FULL

to have a lot of something or be filled with something:

John was bursting with ideas and good humour.

The shops are bursting with food.

be bursting with pride/energy/excitement etc

Your mum's bursting with pride for you.

3 MOVE SUDDENLY **move suddenly** [intransitive always + adverb/preposition] FAST/QUICK to move somewhere suddenly or quickly, especially into or out of a place:

burst into/through/in etc

Jo burst into the room.

4 burst open SUDDENLY

to open suddenly:

The door burst open and Tom ran into the room.

5 be bursting to do something (*informal*) WANT

to want to do something very much:

Zach was bursting to tell them something.

6 be bursting

a) (*BrE*) (*informal*)

to need to go to the toilet very soon

b) (*also be bursting at the seams*)

to be so full that nothing else can fit inside

7 burst somebody's bubble (*informal*)

to make someone suddenly realize that something is not as good as they thought it was:

Steve was so happy I couldn't bear to burst his bubble.

8 burst its banks

if a river bursts its banks, water from it goes onto the land

→ **full (up) to bursting** AT FULL¹ (1),

→ **burst the bubble** AT BUBBLE¹ (6),

→ **the bubble bursts** AT BUBBLE¹ (5)

burst in on/ upon somebody/ something

phrasal verb

INTERRUPT to interrupt someone or something by entering a room, in a way that embarrasses you or other people:

I'm sorry to burst in on you like this.

burst into something

phrasal verb

1 START DOING SOMETHING to suddenly begin to make a sound, especially to start singing, crying, or laughing:

*Claire looked as if she were about to **burst into tears**.*

*Suddenly, the group **burst into laughter**.*

*Lydia **burst into song**.*

2 burst into flames/flame

BURN

to suddenly start to burn very strongly:

*Their car crashed and **burst into flames**.*

burst onto/ upon/ on something

phrasal verb

to suddenly appear and become very successful:

*The band **burst onto the music scene** in 1997.*

burst out

phrasal verb

1 burst out laughing/crying/singing etc START DOING SOMETHING

to suddenly start to laugh, cry etc:

Everyone burst out laughing.

2 SAY/STATE to suddenly say something in a forceful way:

'I don't believe it!' she burst out angrily.

→ OUTBURST ⁽¹⁾

Word origin

Language: Old English

Origin: *berstan*

burst²

noun

[countable]

1 BREAK the act of something bursting or the place where it has burst:

a burst in the water pipe

2
a) INCREASE IN ACTIVITY, FEELINGS ETC

a short sudden effort or increase in activity:

burst of

The van gave a sudden burst of speed.

b) SOUND

a short sudden and usually loud sound:

burst of

sharp bursts of machine gun fire

c) ANGRY

a sudden strong feeling or emotion:

burst of anger/enthusiasm/temper etc

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

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