

bar·ri·er W3

/ˈbæriə \$ -ər/

noun [countable]

- 1** PROBLEM a rule, problem etc that prevents people from doing something, or limits what they can do:

He advocated the removal of trade barriers.

barrier to

Problems with childcare remain the biggest barrier to women succeeding at work.

barrier between

barriers between doctors and patients

- 2** PREVENT a type of fence or gate that prevents people from moving in a particular direction:

Crowds burst through the barriers and ran onto the pitch.

- 3** SEPARATE a physical object that keeps two areas, people etc apart:

barrier between

*The mountains form a **natural barrier** between the two countries.*

- 4 the 10-second/40% etc barrier**

a level or amount of 10 seconds, 40% etc that is seen as a limit which it is difficult to get beyond:

I'm hoping to crash the 20-second barrier in the final and get a bronze.

→ SOUND BARRIER,
CRASH BARRIER

COLLOCATIONS Sense 1

ADJECTIVES/NOUN + barrier

trade barriers (= things such as taxes that make trade between

countries difficult) *The aim was to remove trade barriers and open up free markets.*

the language barrier (= the problem of understanding people who do not speak the same language.) *Living in China was hard for me at first because of the language barrier.*

cultural/ racial/ class barriers *Sport is a sure way to break down racial barriers.*

social barriers *The Internet allows people of all ages to interact without the usual social barriers.*

technical/ legal/ political barriers *Most of the technical barriers have been solved.*

artificial barriers *They were committed to breaking down the artificial barriers to women's achievement.*

regulatory barriers *Regulatory barriers have been an obstacle to international co-operation between police forces.*

bureaucratic barriers *This is one of many bureaucratic barriers preventing the unemployed from claiming benefit.*

institutional/ organizational barriers *Institutional barriers limit what can be achieved.*

verbs

break/ tear down barriers *Most companies have broken down the old barriers of status among the workers.*

cross/ transcend barriers (= avoid barriers that usually exist) *Music has the great advantage of crossing cultural barriers.*

remove/ eliminate/ lift barriers *Will this remove the barriers to change?*

overcome barriers *There are still many more barriers that need to be overcome.*

reduce/ lower barriers *We should be reducing barriers to imports from poor countries.*

erect/ build/ put up barriers *Some kids have erected emotional barriers that stop them from learning.*

create barriers *Uniforms are one of the things that create barriers.*

Word origin

Date: 1300–1400

Language: Old French

Origin: *barriere*, from *barre*; → [BAR](#) ¹

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