

an·swer¹

S1 W1

/ˈɑːnsə \$ ˈænsər/

noun

1 **reply** REPLY [uncountable and countable] ANSWER/REPLY something you say when you reply to a question that someone has asked you

SYN response

*You don't have to **give them an answer** now.*

*Every time I ask him about it, I **get a different answer**.*

answer to

These are important questions, and we want answers to them.

*She's still **waiting for an answer** from the school.*

*The **honest answer** was that I didn't know.*

*He was never able to get a **straight answer** about why it happened.*

*It's impossible for me to give you a **definite answer** at this time.*

*The **short answer** is that it can't be done.*

*In **answer to your question**, yes, you can go.*

*If it's money you want, **the answer is no!***

2 **test/competition etc** [countable] ANSWER/RESULT TEST/COMPETITION ETC something that you write or say in reply to a question in a test or competition:

answer to

*What was the **answer to question 4**?*

the right/wrong/correct/incorrect answer

*Score two points for each **correct answer**.*

3 **invitation/letter etc** [countable] ANSWER/REPLY INVITATION/LETTER ETC a written reply

to a letter, invitation, advertisement etc:

answer to

Did you ever get an answer to your letter?

4 | problem DEAL WITH PROBLEM [countable] a way of dealing with a problem

SYN solution:

simple/easy/obvious answer

There is no simple answer.

answer to

The police do not have an answer to rising crime.

Some people think cars should be banned from the city, but I don't think that's the answer.

be the answer to somebody's problems/worries etc

If he could get a job it'd be the answer to all his worries.

5 | on the phone [singular, uncountable usually in negative] if you get an answer when you call someone on the phone, they pick up the phone and talk to you:

I tried calling him all day but couldn't get an answer.

6 | at the door [singular, uncountable usually in negative] if you get an answer when you knock on a door, someone opens it and talks to you:

*I tried knocking on her door, but there was **no answer**.*

7 have/know all the answers (informal)

to be very sure that you know everything about a situation, especially when you do not:

He acts like he has all the answers.

8 somebody's answer to something (written) EQUAL

someone or something that is considered to be just as good as a more famous person or thing:

The Space Needle is Seattle's answer to the Eiffel Tower.

COLLOCATIONS – Meaning 1

adjectives

an honest/straight answer *The honest answer is that I don't know.*

a definite answer (= that says yes or no definitely) *Can you give me a definite answer tomorrow?*

a satisfactory answer *I didn't get a satisfactory answer from the company.*

verbs

give somebody an answer *I'll give you an answer tomorrow.*

get/receive an answer *She wrote to him but she never got an answer.*

wait for an answer *Kate was looking at me, waiting for an answer.*

think of an answer *She couldn't think of a suitable answer to his question.*

phrases

the short answer is... (= used when giving a simple, honest, or direct answer to a difficult question) *'How does homeopathy work?' 'The short answer to this question is that we do not know how homeopathic remedies work.'*

COLLOCATIONS – Meaning 2

adjectives

the right/wrong answer *Do you know the right answer to this question?*

the correct/incorrect answer *You get 5 points for each correct answer.*

verbs

know the answer *Put up your hand if you know the answer.*

guess the answer *If you don't know the answer, try guessing it.*

write the answer *Do we write the answers in the exercise book, Sir?*

COLLOCATIONS – Meaning 3

adjectives

the simple/ easy answer *There are a lot of problems and no simple answers.*

the obvious answer *The obvious answer is to raise taxes, but that would be unpopular.*

the perfect answer *I think I have the perfect answer to the problem.*

the complete answer *A loan, however, is not the complete answer to the company's problems.*

the long-term answer *He believes hydrogen is the long-term answer to our growing energy crisis.*

a short-term answer *Employing overseas nurses is only a short-term answer to the shortage.*

verbs

have an answer *Doctors are supposed to have all the answers.*

find an answer *The aim is to find a long-term answer to poverty.*

come up with an answer (= find a way of dealing with a problem) *The government is struggling to come up with answers to our economic problems.*

THESAURUS

answer something you say when someone asks you a question or speaks to you: *I asked if he wanted to come, but I didn't get an answer. | If you're asking me for money, the answer's no!*

reply an answer. Used especially in written English to report what someone said: *She asked how he felt, and received the reply, 'Awful!' | 'Finished now?' 'No,' came the reply.*

response an answer that clearly shows your reaction to a question, suggestion etc: *Wagner's responses showed that he had thought carefully about the issues.* | 'Sure. Why not?' was his response to most of Billie's suggestions.

retort (written) an angry answer given when someone has annoyed you or criticized you: *Isabelle began an angry retort and then stopped herself.*

comeback a quick answer that is clever, funny, or rude: *He walked out before I could think of a snappy comeback.*

riposte (formal) a quick and clever answer: *Anna produced the perfect riposte.*

rejoinder (formal) a quick answer, especially a clever or rude one: *If he confronts them, he'll run the risk of a sharp rejoinder.*

Word origin

Language: Old English

Origin: *andswaru*