

bit·ter<sup>1</sup>

S3 W3

/'bitə \$ -ər/

adjective

- 1** ANGRY/UPSET **ANGRY** feeling angry, jealous, and upset because you think you have been treated unfairly → **bitterly**:

**bitter about**

*I **feel** very **bitter** about it.*

*a **bitter** old man*

- 2** CAUSING UNHAPPINESS [only before noun] **UNPLEASANT** making you feel very unhappy and upset → **bitterly**:

**a bitter disappointment/blow**

*If he failed, it would be a **bitter** disappointment to his parents.*

*His photo stirred up **bitter** memories.*

**from bitter experience** (= because of your own very unpleasant experiences)

*She **knew from bitter experience** that it would be impossible to talk it over with Julian.*

- 3** FULL OF HATRED **HATE** a bitter argument, battle etc is one in which people oppose or criticize each other with strong feelings of hate and anger:

**bitter dispute/battle/struggle etc**

*The couple are locked in a **bitter** battle for custody of the children.*

*The government faces **bitter opposition** to these policies.*

*The countries are still **bitter enemies**.*

- 4** TASTE having a strong sharp taste, like black coffee without sugar  
→ **sour, sweet**:

*Enjoy the beer's **bitter taste** as you slowly drink it.  
bitter chocolate*

**5** COLDCOLD unpleasantly cold → **bitterly**:

*a bitter wind*

*the **bitter cold** of the Midwestern winters*

**6 to the bitter end** FINISH/COME TO AN END

continuing until the end, even though this is difficult:

*Employees have vowed to **fight** the closure **to the bitter end**.*

**7 a bitter pill (to swallow)** UNPLEASANT

something very unpleasant that you must accept:

*The knowledge that his friends no longer trusted him was a bitter pill to swallow.*

— **bitterness** noun [uncountable]

## COLLOCATIONS – Meaning 3

### nouns

a bitter battle/ dispute *There was a bitter battle over the building of the new airport.*

a bitter fight/ struggle *The law was passed after a bitter fight that lasted nearly a decade.*

a bitter conflict *The stage is set for a bitter conflict with trade unions.*

a bitter debate/ argument *The country now faces a bitter debate over the issue.*

bitter disagreement *There were reports of bitter disagreement between the European Communities.*

bitter opposition *The new tax aroused bitter opposition.*

a bitter rival/ enemy (= a rival/enemy who you have strong feelings of dislike or anger about) *The two men are bitter rivals for the party leadership.*

## THESAURUS

**bitter** having a strong sharp taste that is not sweet, like black coffee without sugar - used especially about chocolate, medicine etc: *The dessert is made with a slightly bitter chocolate.* | *Hops give beer its distinctive bitter taste.* | *The medicine tasted bitter.* | *As the lettuce gets older, the leaves become more bitter.*

**sharp** having a taste that makes your tongue sting slightly: *Rhubarb has quite a sharp taste.* | *The cheese has a pleasing colour and a pleasantly sharp flavour.*

**SOUR** having a usually unpleasant sharp acid taste, like the taste of a lemon, or a fruit that is not ready to be eaten – used especially about fruit, or about liquids that have gone bad: *Some people say that the purpose of the lemon's sour taste is to stop the fruit being eaten by animals.* | *Rachel sampled the wine. It was sour.*

**acidic** very sour – used especially about liquids or things made with fruits such as oranges, lemons, or grapes: *Some fruit juices taste a bit acidic.*

**tangy** having a taste that is pleasantly strong or sharp, and that often tastes a little sweet as well: *The ribs are cooked in a tangy barbecue sauce.*

**tart** having a taste that lacks sweetness – used especially about fruit such as apples, which you need to add sugar to: *The pudding had rather a tart flavour.* | *The trees were covered with tart wild plums.*

## bitter<sup>2</sup>

noun

<sup>1</sup> [uncountable and countable] (**BrE**) a type of dark beer that is popular in Britain, or a glass of this:

*A pint of bitter, please.*

**2** **bitters** [uncountable]

a strong bitter liquid made from plants that is added to alcoholic drinks

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