

brief<sup>1</sup>

S2 W2 AC

/brɪf/

adjective

**1** TIMESHORT TIME continuing for a short time → **brevity:***We stopped by Alice's house for a brief visit.**Let's keep this conversation brief; I have a plane to catch.***a brief period/moment/spell etc***Greene spent a brief time at Cambridge.***2** SPEECH/LETTERSHORT/NOT LONG using very few words or including few details→ **brevity:***The president read a brief statement to reporters before boarding his plane.**a brief description of the film***3 be brief** SHORT/NOT LONG

to say or write something using only a few words, especially because there is little time:

*I'll be brief; a lot of changes are going to happen.***4** CLOTHESHORT/NOT LONG clothes that are brief are short and cover only a small area of your body:*a very brief bikini***COLLOCATIONS** Sense 1**nouns**a brief period/ time *He lived there all his life, apart from a brief period during the war.*a brief spell (= time) *For a brief spell in early summer it is the most beautiful of all the trees.*a brief moment *The old lady's gaze rested on her for a brief moment.*a brief visit *The President flew to Argentina for a brief visit.*a brief look *He gave her a brief look.*

a brief glimpse (= a sight of something that lasts for a short time) *From the train I had a brief glimpse of the city.*

a brief pause *There was a brief pause before he replied.*

a brief silence *After a brief silence, she made another suggestion.*

a brief appearance *He made a brief appearance before reporters outside his Manhattan townhouse.*

### Word origin

**Date:** 1200–1300

**Language:** Old French

**Origin:** Latin *brevis*

## brief<sup>2</sup> AC

noun [countable]

**1** INSTRUCTIONS [usually singular] official instructions that explain what someone's job is, what their duties are etc:

*The architect's brief is to design an extension that is modern but blends with the rest of the building.*

**2** (law) a short spoken or written statement giving facts about a law case:

*The ACLU filed a brief (= gave one to the court) opposing the decision.*

**3** (BrE) (law) a law case that a lawyer will argue in a court

**4** a short report about something

**5 in brief**

**a)** SHORT/NOT LONG

in as few words as possible:

*We should, in brief, invest heavily in digital systems.*

**b)** SHORT/NOT LONG

without any details:

*Here again are today's headlines in brief.*

**6 briefs** [plural]

men's or women's underwear worn on the lower part of the body

**brief**<sup>3</sup> AC  
verb [transitive]

TELL to give someone all the information about a situation that they will need

→ **briefing:**

**brief somebody on something**

*The president has been fully briefed on the current situation in Haiti.*

→ DEBRIEF

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