

both·er¹

S1 W3

/'bɒðə \$ 'bɑːðər/

verb

1 | make an effort [intransitive, transitive usually in questions and negatives]

DO SOMETHING/TAKE ACTION to make the effort to do something:

(not) bother to do something

He didn't bother to answer the question.

not bother about/with

He didn't bother with a reply.

(not) bother doing something

Many young people didn't bother voting.

don't/didn't/won't etc bother

'Do you want me to wait for you?' 'No, don't bother.'

Why bother to go abroad, when there are so many nice places here?

2 | worry [intransitive and transitive] WORRIED to make someone feel slightly worried, upset, or concerned:

Being in a crowd really bothers me.

It was very noisy, but that didn't bother me.

bother about (especially BrE):

I try not to bother about what other people think.

bother somebody that

It really bothered me that he'd forgotten my birthday.

3 | annoy [intransitive and transitive] DISTURB to annoy someone, especially by interrupting them when they are trying to do something:

Danny, don't bother Ellen while she's reading.

Would it bother you if I put on some music?

bother somebody about/with something

It didn't seem worth bothering the doctor about.

4 **somebody can't/couldn't be bothered (to do something)** (*especially BrE*) NOT DO SOMETHING

used to say that you do not want to make the effort to do something, or that you are not interested in doing something:

It was so hot I couldn't be bothered to cook.

I should be revising, but I just can't be bothered.

5 **bother** [transitive] CAUSE PAIN if a part of your body bothers you, it is slightly painful or uncomfortable:

My back's been bothering me.

6 **sorry to bother you** (*spoken*) ATTENTION

used as a very polite way of interrupting someone when you want their attention:

Sorry to bother you, but Mr. Grey is on the line.

7 **frighten** [transitive] HURT/CAUSE PAIN to upset or frighten someone by talking to them when they do not want to talk to you, trying to hurt them, touch them sexually etc:

Don't worry – my dog won't bother you.

If he starts bothering you, let me know.

8 **not bother yourself/not bother your head** NOT DO SOMETHING

to not spend time or effort on something, either because it is not important or because it is too difficult:

bother with/about

Cliff didn't want to bother himself with details.

9 **bother it/them etc** ANNOY (*BrE*) (*spoken old-fashioned*)

used to express a sudden feeling of annoyance about something:

Oh bother it! The thread's broken again!

Word origin

Date: 1600–1700

Origin: Perhaps from Irish Gaelic *bodhar* 'deaf, bothered'

bother²
noun

1 [uncountable] (*especially BrE*)^{PROBLEM} trouble or difficulty that has been caused by small problems and that usually only continues for a short time

SYN trouble

It's an old car, but it's never caused me any bother.

bother with

Joe's been having a bit of bother with his back again.

'Thanks for your help.' **'It was no bother'** (= used to emphasize that you were happy to help someone) *at all.'*

*My mother hardly ever went to **the bother of*** (= the effort of) *making cakes.*

*Are you sure the station is on your way? I don't want to **give** you any extra **bother**.*

*I should have phoned the shop first and **saved** myself **the bother of** going there.*

something is more bother than it's worth (= it is too difficult to be worth doing)

2 a bother (*especially BrE*)^{ANNOY}

a person or job that slightly annoys you by causing trouble or problems:

I hate to be a bother, but could you show me how the copier works?

bother³

interjection

(*BrE*) (informal)

^{ANNOY} used when you are slightly annoyed:

Oh bother! I forgot to phone Jean.

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