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antic



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an·tic | \ 'an-tik  \

Definition of *antic*

(Entry 1 of 2)

1 : an attention-drawing, often wildly playful or funny act or action : [caper](#) — usually plural childish antics
2 archaic : a performer of a grotesque or ludicrous part : [buffoon](#)

antic

[adjective](#)

Definition of *antic* (Entry 2 of 2)

1a : characterized by clownish extravagance or absurdity an antic farce
b : whimsically lighthearted : [frolicsome](#) Gelbart's intelligence is antic and playful.— Lloyd Rose
2 archaic : [grotesque](#), [bizarre](#)

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Other Words from *antic*

Adjective

antically \ 'an-ti-k(ə-)lē  \ adverb

Synonyms & Antonyms for *antic*

Synonyms: Noun

- [caper](#),
- [capriccio](#),
- [dido](#),
- [escapade](#),
- [frolic](#),
- [gag](#),
- [jest](#),
- [knavery](#),
- [monkeyshine\(s\)](#),
- [practical joke](#),
- [prank](#),

- [rag](#)
- [chiefly British],
- [roguery](#),
- [shavie](#)
- [Scottish],
- [shine\(s\)](#),
- [trick](#),
- [waggery](#)

Synonyms: Adjective

- [chucklesome](#),
- [comedic](#),
- [comic](#),
- [comical](#),
- [droll](#),
- [farcical](#),
- [funny](#),
- [hilarious](#),
- [humoristic](#),
- [humorous](#),
- [hysterical](#)
- (also [hysteric](#)),
- [killing](#),
- [laughable](#),
- [ludicrous](#),
- [ridiculous](#),
- [riotous](#),
- [risible](#),
- [screaming](#),
- [sidesplitting](#),
- [uproarious](#)

Antonyms: Adjective

- [humorless](#),
- [lame](#),
- [unamusing](#),
- [uncomic](#),
- [unfunny](#),
- [unhumorous](#),
- [unhysterical](#)

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Did You Know?

Adjective

When Renaissance Italians began exploring the ancient Roman ruins around them, they discovered fantastic mural paintings that they called *grottesca* (which means "grotesques," a name given to the paintings because they were found in caves, or *grotte*). Because they were so old, the murals were also called *antichi*, or "ancient things." English speakers adopted *antichi*, modifying it to *antike* or *anticke*, and eventually any behavior or

dress reminiscent of the kind depicted in the Roman murals became known as an *antic*. Within 20 years of its earliest recorded uses as a noun, *antic* began appearing as an English adjective. Originally, it meant "grotesque" or "bizarre" (a sense now considered archaic), but today it means "playful, funny, or absurd" and the noun means "an often wildly playful or funny act."

Examples of *antic* in a Sentence

Noun we'll have no more of your *antics*, so just settle down

Recent Examples on the Web: Noun By the looks of things, the ladies — Jane Fonda's Grace and Lily Tomlin's Frankie — are up to their usual *antics* this season. — [Ruth Kinane, EW.com, "Grace and Frankie," 10 Dec. 2019](#)

In a 35-7 non-playoff win over Winthrop, the senior quarterback was up to his usual dual-threat *antics*, passing for 288 yards to go along with four touchdowns and rushing for 159 yards and another score. — [BostonGlobe.com, "Brendan Cassamajor, BC High," 4 Nov. 2019](#)

These example sentences are selected automatically from various online news sources to reflect current usage of the word 'antic.' Views expressed in the examples do not represent the opinion of Merriam-Webster or its editors. [Send us feedback](#).

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First Known Use of *antic*

Noun

1529, in the meaning defined at [sense 1](#)

Adjective

1548, in the meaning defined at [sense 2](#)

History and Etymology for *antic*

Noun and Adjective

Italian *antico* ancient thing or person, from *antico* ancient, from Latin *antiquus* — more at [antique](#)

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Time Traveler for *antic*



The first known use of *antic* was in 1529

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26 Dec 2019

Look-up Popularity

Top 30% of words

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More Definitions for *antic*

antic

[adjective](#)

English Language Learners Definition of *antic*

: very playful, funny, or silly

[See the full definition for *antic* in the English Language Learners Dictionary](#)

antic

[noun](#)

an·tic | \ 'an-tik  \

Kids Definition of *antic*

: a wildly playful or funny act or action We laughed at the kitten's *antics*.

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WORD OF THE DAY

agrarian 

of or relating to farms and farming

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- Someone who pretends to be sick in order to avoid work is a:

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[fabricationist](#)

[Duke-of-the-nether-willies](#)

[port-hound](#)

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WORDS AT PLAY

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Forgotten Games: Or, What We Did Before The Internet

People had to pass the time somehow.

•

The Good, The Bad, & The Semantically Imprecise -

1/3/20

Words from the week of 1/3/2020

•

The History of 'Nuclear Family'

Getting at the core of it.

- **Putting 'Edible' and 'Eatable'
on the Table**

Giving you something to chew on.

ASK THE EDITORS

- **2019 Word of the Year:
Behind the Scenes**

How we chose 'they'

- **Is It 'Hanger' or 'Hangar'?**

How to remember which is which

- **Literally**

How to use a word that (literally)
drives some people nuts.

- ## Is Singular 'They' a Better Choice?

The awkward case of 'his or her'

WORD GAMES

- ## Liar, Liar Quiz

Test your knowledge of words for lies, liars, and those being lied to. In other words, everyone.

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