

Crime Vocabulary

Major Crimes

NOTE: The list of crimes are all nouns.

- **Abduction** = taking someone against their will (kidnapping)
- **Arson** = setting fire to a property
- **Assault** = a physical attack
- **Burglary** = illegal entry to a building with an intent to commit a crime
- **Child abuse** = maltreatment of a child
- **Drug trafficking** = importing illegal drugs
- **False imprisonment** = imprisoning a person against their will
- **Fraud** = deception for personal or financial gain
- **Hacking** = unauthorised access to data in a computer system
- **Hijacking** = illegally getting control of an aircraft or vehicle
- **Human trafficking** = illegally transporting people, usually for slave labour or commercial sexual exploitation
- **Murder (homicide USA)**
- **Premeditated murder** = murder that is intentional (planned before hand)
- **Unpremeditated murder** = murder that is not intentional (not planned)
- **Manslaughter** = unintentional murder (synonym for unpremeditated murder)
- **Attempted murder** = planning to kill another person.
- **Patricide** = killing one's own father
- **Genocide** = systematic killing of a race or religious group
- **Euthanasia** = killing someone for their benefit
- **Organised crime** = crime by an organised gang or organisation
- **Smuggling** = illegal import or export
- **Terrorism** = unlawful violence or threat with political aims
- **White colour crime** = financially motivated non-violent crime by a worker

Minor Crimes/Offences

- **Pick pocketing** = taking from another person's pockets
- **Shoplifting** = taking products from a shop without paying for them
- **Traffic offences** = breaking the rules the road and driving
- **Drunk driving** = driving whilst under the influence of alcohol
- **Jay walking** = crossing the road at an undersigned spot
- **Running a red light** = going through traffic lights when they are red
- **Speeding** = driving over the speed limit
- **Vandalism** = deliberate destruction or damage to a building

Vocabulary for Criminals

This list shows the person relating to the crime (the perpetrator of the crime).

- **Crime** = criminal
- **Murder** = murderer
- **Theft** = thief
- **Trafficking** = trafficker
- **Hijacking** = hijacker
- **Terrorism** = terrorist

- **Smuggling** = smuggler
- **Shoplifting** = shoplifter
- **Vandalism** = vandal
- **Teenage criminal/juvenile delinquent**

Types of Punishment Vocabulary

- **The death penalty (capital punishment)** = punishment of death
- **A prison sentence (imprisonment)** = imprisonment
 - Life imprisonment
 - 10 years
 - 6 months
- **A suspended sentence** = delaying of a sentence
- **Forfeiture** = property is taken away (confiscated)
- **Hospital order** = to confine someone to hospital under arrest
- **A fine** = to pay money as a punishment for an offence
- **House arrest** = imprisoned in one's own house rather than a prison
- **To suspend a license** = withholding a person's right to use their driving license for a period of time
- **To revoke a license** = to take away someone's driving license
- **Non-custodial sentence** = a sentence which is not done in prison
- **Community service** = punishment by doing community work

Other Types of Punishment

This refers to punishment commonly used by schools and parents.

- **Detention** = to stay in school after hours for punishment
- **To give lines** = punishment where a child must write the same sentence again and again
- **Isolation** = to be kept apart from others as a punishment
- **Grounding** = to be unable to go outside home as punishment
- **Scolding** = an angry reprimand
- **Corporal punishment** = physical punishment from a teacher or head teacher at school

Court Language

- **Judge** = the person who controls the court proceedings
- **Jury** = a group of independent people who decide whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty
- **Justice** = fairness or court law
- **Trial** = legal proceeding to judge whether someone is guilty of a crime
- **Court** = the place where the trial is held
- **Defendant** = the accused person the individual or group being accused in court of a crime
- **Prosecutor** = the lawyer against the accused person
- **Defence** = the lawyer protecting the accused person
- **Witness** = a person who sees an event happen
- **Evidence** – facts or information supporting the truth
- **Proof** = evidence supporting a claim
- **Hearsay** = rumour/unsubstantiated information
- **Guilty** = not innocent as judged by a court of law
- **Innocent** = found not guilty of a crime
- **To be found guilty** = the court decided that the person did commit the crime
- **Conviction/verdict** = formal sentence of a court
- **Circumstances of the crime** = a condition or situation relating to a crime

- **Extenuating circumstances** = a condition that makes the crime or mistake less serious and more understandable
- **Take into consideration** = should be thought about carefully
- **Circumstantial evidence** = something that connects a person indirectly to the crime (for example, a finger print at a crime scene but no actual hard evidence or witness)
- **Maximum/minimum sentence** = highest penalty/lowest penalty
- a harsh punishment are synonyms but penalty is often used for both minor offences and major crimes

Other Useful Crime & Punishment Vocabulary

- Crime is prevalent = there is a lot of crime
- Armed police = police who carry guns
- To deter (n= deterrent) = to put someone off from doing something
- Discrimination = unjust treatment
- To be soft on crime = not to have harsh or strict punishments
- Repeat offender = a person who has committed a crime or offence more than once
- Serial criminals = criminals who repeatedly commit the same crime
- Diminished responsibility = when someone is not in a state to be considered responsible for their own actions
- Rehabilitation = to restore someone through education or therapy
- Reintegrate back into society = help someone return into society
- Peer pressure = pressure from friends or colleagues
- Role models = people whose behaviour should be copied and respected
- Mimicking violent behaviour = to copy aggressive actions