



traffic

1 of 2 noun

traf·fic 'tra-fik

often attributive

[Synonyms of traffic](#) >

1 a (1) : the vehicles, pedestrians, ships, or planes moving along a route

(2) : congestion of vehicles

stuck in *traffic*

(3) : the movement (as of vehicles or pedestrians) through an area or along a route

b : the information or signals transmitted over a communications system : **MESSAGES**

2 : the volume of customers visiting a business establishment

restaurant *traffic*

3 a : the passengers or cargo carried by a transportation system

b : the business of transporting passengers or freight

4 a : import and export trade

b : the business of bartering or buying and selling

c : illegal or disreputable usually commercial activity

the drug *traffic*

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noun **2** ▾

Synonyms

Synonym Chooser

Example Sentences

Word History

Phrase

a lively *traffic* in ideas

— F. L. Allen

6 : a concentration of participants or players and especially defensive players
force difficult shots in *traffic*

7 archaic : **WARES, GOODS**

traffic

2 of 2 verb

trafficked; trafficking

intransitive verb

1 : to carry on traffic

2 : to concentrate one's effort or interest

broadly : **ENGAGE, DEAL**

a writer who often *traffics* in hyperbole

transitive verb

1 a : to travel over

heavily *trafficked* highways

b : to visit as a customer

a highly *trafficked* bookstore

2 : **TRADE, BARTER**

noun

Phrases



noun 2 ▾ Synonyms Synonym Chooser Example Sentences Word History Phrase

Noun

business

commerce

marketplace

trade

Verb

deal

trade

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Choose the Right Synonym for *traffic*

BUSINESS, COMMERCE, TRADE, INDUSTRY, TRAFFIC mean activity concerned with the supplying and distribution of commodities.

BUSINESS may be an inclusive term but specifically designates the activities of those engaged in the purchase or sale of commodities or in related financial transactions.

COMMERCE and **TRADE** imply the exchange and transportation of commodities.

INDUSTRY applies to the producing of commodities, especially by manufacturing or processing, usually on a large scale.

TRAFFIC applies to the operation and functioning of public carriers of goods and persons



noun 2 Synonyms Synonym Chooser Example Sentences Word History Phrase

Noun

Let's leave early to avoid rush hour *traffic*.

Traffic is backed up to the bridge.

Barge *traffic* was halted because of flooding.

Airlines saw a decrease in passenger *traffic* this year.

Verb

arrested him for *trafficking* in drugs

Recent Examples on the Web

Noun

During Rock the Block, one lane east and one west will remain open to *traffic* on Mayfield Road.

— *cleveland*, 11 Aug. 2023

With one runway at Cape Cod Gateway Airport in Hyannis closed for maintenance work, most of the air *traffic* these days comes in over the Hyannis Park neighborhood.

— Beth Treffeisen, *BostonGlobe.com*, 11 Aug. 2023

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Etymology

Noun

Middle French *trafique*, from Old Italian *traffico*, from *trafficare* to trade in coastal waters

First Known Use

Noun

1511, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a](#)

Verb

1537, in the meaning defined at [intransitive sense 1](#)

Time Traveler

The first known use of *traffic* was in 1511

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Merriam-Webster's Words of the Week -...

Trafalgar, Cape

traffic

trafficability

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Style

MLA

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traf·fic ('traf-ik )

- 1 : the business of buying and selling : **COMMERCE**
- 2 : communication or dealings between persons or groups
had no *traffic* with the enemy
- 3 **a** : the movement (as of pedestrians or vehicles) through an area or along a route
heavy *traffic* in the kitchen before dinner
rush-hour *traffic*
b : the vehicles, pedestrians, ships, or planes moving along a route
c : a crowded mass of vehicles
stuck in *traffic*
- 4 **a** : the passengers or goods carried by train, boat, or airplane
b : the business of carrying passengers or goods

traffic 2 of 2 **verb**

trafficked; trafficking

: to carry on traffic : **TRADE, DEAL**

noun

traffic 1 of 2 **noun**

traf·fic



noun 2 Synonyms Synonym Chooser Example Sentences Word History Phrase

c : illegal or disreputable usually commercial activity
the drug *traffic*

2 a : the movement (as of vehicles or pedestrians) through an area or along a route

b : the vehicles, pedestrians, ships, or planes moving along a route

c : the information or signals transmitted over a communications system

3 a : the passengers or cargo carried by a transportation system

b : the business of transporting passengers or freight

traffic 2 of 2 verb

trafficked; trafficking

intransitive verb

: to carry on traffic

transitive verb

1 : to travel over

2 : to engage in the trading or bartering of

noun

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WORD OF THE DAY

quiescent

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