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# assurance, n.

Text size: A AView as: Outline | [Full entry](#)Quotations: Show all | [Hide all](#) Keywords: On | [Off](#)**Pronunciation:** /ə'ʃʊərəns/**Forms:** Also ME **asseurance**, **assouerans**, ME–15 **assuraunce**, ME–15 **assurans**.  
*aphet.* **SURANCE** *n.* ... ([Show More](#))**Etymology:** < Old French *asseurance* (modern *assurance*), < *asseürer* to **ASSURE** *v.* ...  
([Show More](#))**I.** The action of assuring.  
\* *Of making certain.***1.****a.** A promise or engagement making a thing certain; a formal engagement, pledge, or guarantee. [Thesaurus »](#)c1386 CHAUCER *Man of Law's Tale* 243 Wol ye maken assuraunce. As I schal say, assentyng to my lore?1490 CAXTON tr. *Eneydos* xxvii. 99 He is departed wyth thyn assuraunce.a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Twelfth Night* (1623) I. v. 173 Plight me the full assurance of your faith.1623 J. BINGHAM tr. Xenophon *Hist.* 78 The Macrons asked..whether they would giue assurance of that they said; Who answered, they were readie to giue, & take assurance.1853 F. W. ROBERTSON *Serm.* 3rd Ser. viii. 110 A symbol and assurance of the Divine pardon. [\(Hide quotations\)](#)**b.** *esp.* An engagement guaranteeing peace and safety; terms of peace. *Obs. exc. Hist.* [Thesaurus »](#)  
[Categories »](#)1577 R. HOLINSHED *Chron.* III. 1214/1 [They] came in to the lord lieutenant, submitting themselves to him, and were receiued into assurance.c1600 *Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents* (1833) 277 Thair was assurance and trewis tane betuix the Inglis and Scottismen.1653 H. HOLCROFT tr. Procopius *Gothick Warre* III. 110 in tr. Procopius *Hist. Warres Justinian* The rest of the Army..took assurances and yeilded to Totilas.1870 J. H. BURTON *Hist. Scotl. to 1688* VI. lxx. 493 Hamilton was angry that assurances should have been given to the Covenanters. [\(Hide quotations\)](#)**†2.** A marriage engagement, betrothal. *Obs.* [Thesaurus »](#)a1513 R. FABYAN *New Cronycles Eng. & Fraunce* (1516) II. f. cxxvii<sup>v</sup>. The Flemynges..had constrayned theyr Erle to be assured by bonde of assuraunce vnto y<sup>e</sup> daughter of kyng Edward.1579 S. GOSSON *Schoole of Abuse* f. 13, Woing allowed by assurance of wedding.**This entry has not yet been fully updated (first published 1885).**[Publication history](#)  
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- 1601 P. HOLLAND tr. Pliny *Hist. World* I. 550 In knitting vp of marriages, and assurance making.
- 1641 *Life Wolsey* in *Harl. Misc.* (1793) 105 The Lord Piercys assurance to Mrs. Anne Bullen.

(Hide quotations)

### 3. A positive declaration intended to give confidence.

Thesaurus »

- 1609 S. ROWLANDS *Knaue of Clubbes* 36 This assurance take, Some satisfaction I in part will make.
- 1719 D. DEFOE *Life Robinson Crusoe* 303 He gave me all the Assurances that the Invention and Faith of Man could devise.
- 1880 J. McCARTHY *Hist. our Own Times* III. xl. 202 He was probably quite sincere in the assurances he repeatedly gave.

(Hide quotations)

\*\* *Of making secure.*

### 4. Law. The securing of a title to property; the conveyance of lands or tenements by deed; a legal evidence of the conveyance of property.

Thesaurus »

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- 1583 P. STUBBES *Second Pt. Anat. Abuses* sig. E7<sup>v</sup>, In times past when men dealt vprightly..sixe or seuen lines was sufficient for the assurance of any peece of land whatsoever.
- 1648 SHEPPARD (*title*) The Touchstone of Common Assurances and Conveyances.
- 1768 W. BLACKSTONE *Comm. Laws Eng.* II. ii. xix. 294 The legal evidences of this translation of property are called the common assurances of the Kingdom; whereby every man's estate is assured to him.
- 1768 W. BLACKSTONE *Comm. Laws Eng.* II. ii. xix. 367 Copyhold estate..cannot possibly be transferred by any other assurance.

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### 5. The action of insuring or securing the value of property in the event of its being lost, or of securing the payment of a specified sum in the event of a person's death; insurance.

Thesaurus »

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Technically, the present usage is to differentiate life-*assurance*, and fire- and marine-*insurance*; though, as will be seen from the quotations, *assurance* was the original term in reference to marine risks.

- 1622 G. DE MALYNES *Consuetudo* 159 To haue a regard what winde must serue, and the true season of the yeare, which maketh a difference in the price of assurance.
- 1642 T. FULLER *Holy State* II. i. 51 Some keep an Assurance-office in their chamber.
- 1692 *London Gaz.* No. 2747/4 Lost..a Police of Assurance made upon the Ship Olive-Branch.
- 1755 N. MAGENS *Ess. Insurances* II. 254 Assurance or Insurance is a just and faithful Compact, by which one, or more, in Consideration of the Payment of a Sum of Money agreed on, called the Insurance Premium, takes upon himself all the Dangers which may or shall happen to the Ship, Vessel, Effects, and Property of another.
- 1883 *Daily News* 18 Sept. 1/4 (*adv.*) The Employers' Liability Assurance Corporation.
- 1883 *Sc. Prov. Inst. Prospect.* Yearly payments for Assurance of £100 at death.

(Hide quotations)

## II. The state of being sure or assured.

†6. Objective certainty; = ASSUREDNESS *n.* 1. *Obs.*

Thesaurus »

c1485 *Digby Myst.* (1882) ii. 387, I can not beleve that thys ys of assurans.1509 S. HAWES *Pastime of Pleasure* xxxi. xvii, Wo worth the trust without assuraunce.1603 R. KNOLLES *Gen. Hist. Turkes* 538 New friends of more assurance.

(Hide quotations)

## 7. Security.

Thesaurus »

1559 W. BALDWIN et al. *Myrroure for Magistrates* York vii. 4 Liung hopeles of his liues assuraunce.1570 T. WILSON in tr. Demosthenes *3 Orations* 13 (*margin*) Things wrongfully gotten haue none assurance.1576 W. LAMBARDE *Perambulation of Kent* 127 To sende..vnto a place of most assuraunce all suche as hee had taken prysoners.1622 P. HEYLYN *Cosmogr.* (1682) i. 158 The Fortifications being weak, and of ill assurance.1839 T. KEIGHTLEY *Hist. Eng.* (new ed.) I. 427 The King's ascent to the crown and assurance therein.

(Hide quotations)

## 8.

## a. Subjective certainty; a being certain as to a fact, certitude; confidence, trust.

Thesaurus »

c1374 CHAUCER *Troilus & Criseyde* v. 1259 O trust, O feith, O depe asseuraunce!1487 ( a1380) J. BARBOUR *Bruce* (St. John's Cambr.) xl. 309 In his hye cheuelry Thai had assouerans [1489 *Adv.* Yai assoweryt], trast trewly.1601 W. CORNWALLIS *Ess.* II. xxix. sig. Q5, It is as naturall in men to purchase hope as assurance.a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* (1623) iv. i. 99 But yet Ile make assurance double sure, And take a Bond of Fate.1842 TENNYSON *Two Voices* in *Poems* (new ed.) II. 137 The doubt would rest, I dare not solve... Assurance only breeds resolve.1843 J. S. MILL *Syst. Logic* I. ii. vi. §3 We can have full assurance of particular results.

(Hide quotations)

b. in *Theol.* (See quot.)

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1651 C. CARTWRIGHT *Certamen Religiosum* i. 251 The Doctrine of Protestants concerning assurance of salvation..viz. that a man may have this assurance.1852 W. HAMILTON *Discuss.* 493 Assurance, personal assurance, (the feeling of certainty that God is propitious to me,—that my sins are forgiven).

(Hide quotations)

## 9. Self-confidence, self-reliance; confidence of manner, steadiness, intrepidity.

Thesaurus »

1594 T. BOWES tr. P. de la Primaudaye *French Acad.* II. 263 Assurance is a certaine perswasion..whereby wee are confirmed in danger against euilles that threaten vs.1603 R. KNOLLES *Gen. Hist. Turkes* 72 Iaques..with his Flemmings, receiued the charge with great assurance.

1738 tr. C. Rollin *Anc. Hist.* (ed. 2) II. 214 To inspire him with a noble and prudent assurance, so necessary for those that are born to command.

1751 JOHNSON *Rambler* No. 147. 8 The benefits of publick education, and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

(Hide quotations)

**10.** In a bad sense: Hardihood, audacity, presumption, impudence.

[Thesaurus »](#)

1699 R. BENTLEY *Diss. Epist. Phalaris* (new ed.) 281 They..quote Authors they had never read, with an Air of Assurance.

1709 SWIFT *Vindic. I. Bickerstaff* 8 Several of my Friends had the Assurance to ask me, Whether I were in Jest?

1771 in 'Junius' *Stat Nominis Umbra* (1772) II. lxiii. 294 The Barrister has not the assurance to deny it flatly.

1832 H. MARTINEAU *Hill & Valley* ii. 23, I should like to know where you picked up so much assurance.

(Hide quotations)

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