polysemy

***noun*** [[ U ]](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/help/codes.html)

**UK**

 /pəˈlɪs.ɪ.mi/ **US**

 /ˈpɑː.lɪ.siː.mi/

**Add to word list**

**the [fact](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fact" \o "fact) of having more than one [meaning](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/meaning" \o "meaning):**

*Polysemy [occurs](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/occur" \o "occurs) when a word [form](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/form" \o "form)*[*carries*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/carry)*more than one [meaning](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/meaning" \o "meaning).*

[*English*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/english)*has a very*[*large*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/large)[*stock*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/stock)*of word [forms](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/form" \o "forms), so [its](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/its" \o "its) [lexicon](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lexicon" \o "lexicon) is [relatively](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/relatively" \o "relatively)*[*free*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/free)*of polysemy [compared](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/compare" \o "compared) with many [languages](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/language" \o "languages).*

https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/polysemy