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%22%20%5Co%20%22fact) of having more than one [meaning](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/meaning%22%20%5Co%20%22meaning):**

*Polysemy [occurs](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/occur%22%20%5Co%20%22occurs) when a word [form](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/form%22%20%5Co%20%22form)*[*carries*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/carry)*more than one [meaning](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/meaning%22%20%5Co%20%22meaning).*

[*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%22%20%5Co%20%22forms), so [its](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/its%22%20%5Co%20%22its) [lexicon](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lexicon%22%20%5Co%20%22lexicon) is [relatively](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/relatively%22%20%5Co%20%22relatively)*[*free*](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/free)*of polysemy [compared](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/compare%22%20%5Co%20%22compared) with many [languages](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/language%22%20%5Co%20%22languages).*

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