Slow

Exceptional Expressions For Everyday Events

Like its opposite, fast, slow is most often used as an adjective to describe an aspect of speed, in this case, low speed. A sore muscle caused the jogger to run at a slow pace. The day was warm and sunny, so the couple took a slow stroll through the park. The slow traffic was the result of an accident on the highway. A public bus is usually a slower mode of transportation than a car. The word slow often appears in combinations such as “a slow-moving train” or “slowpoke” (a person who moves slowly).

The verb slow means to decelerate or to reduce progress. The heavy snow slowed the hikers’ climb up the mountain. The broken computer slowed the student’s progress on her report. As an adverb, slowly means in a slow manner and usually takes the form slowly. A leopard might creep slowly toward its prey. A grandmother might wake slowly from her nap.

Follow-Ups

- In many games, being fast or finishing first is how players win. What are some games where the last person to reach the end wins?
- Being a fast reader is a great skill, but when would reading slowly be more appropriate?
- When we are eager for something to happen, like recess or summer break, we want time to fly. When might someone want time to move slowly?
- What does it mean for a clock to be slow?

The Spanish Connection

Slow comes from an Old English word, slaw, meaning “slow-witted, sluggish,” and deriving from an Old High German word for “blunt, or dull.” Over time, slow developed to also mean “to move at a low speed.” The Spanish word for slow (moving at a low speed) is lento.

Word Changes

- The original meaning for slow, having to do with intelligence or ability to learn, is still common today. Often it is used as an indirect or less harsh way to refer to a person, instead of calling him dim, unperceptive, or even stupid. However, referring to someone as slow is very often considered an insult.
- Some idioms and common phrases retain that aspect of mental dullness. For instance, someone who is “slow on the draw” or “slow on the uptake” would be someone who catches on later than others, perhaps the last person to understand the punchline of a joke.
Slow

Slow as in to hold something/them back
- to delay
- to retard
- to block
- to hinder
- to detain
- to stall
- to hold up
- to hold back
- to stonewall

Slow as in to decelerate
- decelerate
- brake
- lag

Slow as in to complete a task with deliberation
- measured
- deliberate
- cautious
- careful
- methodical

Slow as in to take it easy
- relax
- rest
- chill
- calm

Slow as in to move at a low speed
- dawdle
- sluggish
- unhurried
- leisurely

COMMON PHRASES
- Slow poke
- Slow mo/motion
- Slow down
- Slow as molasses
- Slow down
- Slow pitch
- Slow lane
- Bogged down
- Slow going

IDIOMS
- At a snail’s pace
- Slowly but surely
- Slow going
- Slow on the draw/uptake
- Slow off the mark
- Take it slow
- A slow burn
- Take it easy

THE SPANISH CONNECTION
- to decelerate / decelerar
- gradual / gradual
- methodical / metodico(a)
Slow
Slow

Inflected Endings
- slows\textsuperscript{v}
- slowed\textsuperscript{v}
- slowing\textsuperscript{v}
- slowly\textsuperscript{adv}
- slower\textsuperscript{adv}
- slowest\textsuperscript{adv}

Derivational Suffix
- slowness\textsuperscript{adv}

Compound Words
Slow used as an adverb
- slow pitch
- slow down
- slow cooker
- slow dancing
- slow pitch
- slow lane
- slow poke

Morphological Family for Slow

\textsuperscript{adv} Slow used as an adverb
\textsuperscript{v} Slow used as a verb