

Meaning of **switch** in English



# switch

*noun*

US  /swɪtʃ/ UK  /swɪtʃ/

**switch** *noun* (DEVICE)

Add to word list 

B1 [ C ]

**a small device, usually pushed up or down with your finger, that controls and turns on or off an electric current:**

- *a light switch*
- *Can you flip the switch?*



artpartner-images/The Image  
Bank/GettyImages

▶ **switches** [ plural ] US (mainly UK **points**)



- *The train rattled as it went over the switches.*



Dinodia Photo/Corbis NX/GettyImages

### — Fewer examples

- *You turn the television on by flipping the switch at the side.*
- *Mysteriously, the light came on, although no one was near the switch.*
- *An additional power switch for the radio is handily located next to the steering wheel.*
- *She flicked the on-off switch.*
- *All these machines operate at the flick of a switch.*

### + SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases

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#### switch *noun* (CHANGE)



[ C ]

**a sudden or complete change, especially of one person or thing for another:**

- *When did the writer **make** the switch **from** fiction **to** non-fiction?*
- *The switch **to** new accounting software greatly improved the organization's bookkeeping.*

### + SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases

# switch

**verb** [ T, I usually + adv/prep ]



## switch verb [T, I usually + adv/prep] (DEVICE)

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B1

**to use a switch to change a device from one state or type of operation to another:**

- *switch the TV **off/on***

**+ More examples**

**+ SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases**

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## switch verb [T, I usually + adv/prep] (CHANGE)

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B2

**to change suddenly or completely, especially from one thing to another, or to exchange by replacing one person or thing with another:**

- *She started as an English major, but switched **to** History in her junior year.*
- *In 1971, Britain switched **over** (= changed completely) **to** a decimal currency.*
- *After the bank robbery, the gang switched cars (= left one car and got into another).*

**+ Thesaurus: synonyms, antonyms, and examples**



## + SMART Vocabulary: related words and phrases

### Phrasal verbs

[switch off](#)

[switch something on](#)

[switch out something](#)

[switch up](#)

[switch something up](#)

(Definition of **switch** from the [Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus](#) © Cambridge University Press)

**switch** | INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH

# switch

*noun* [ C ]

US  /swɪtʃ/

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## switch *noun* [C] (DEVICE)

Add to word list 

**a device that controls an electric current and turns it on or off:**

- *Flip a switch and the coffee makes itself.*

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## switch *noun* [C] (STICK)

+ 

**a thin stick that bends easily and is used esp. for hitting animals**

---

## switch *noun* [C] (CHANGE)

+ 

**a sudden or complete change from one thing to another, or an exchange of one person or thing for another:**

- *The team made a switch to a smaller, quicker lineup.*



# switch

**verb** [ I/T ]

US  /swɪtʃ/

**switch verb** [I/T] (CHANGE)



**to change suddenly or completely from one thing to another, or to exchange one person or thing with another:**

- [ T ] *Jeff decided to switch his major from engineering to medicine.*
- [ I ] *I used to have tapes, but I switched to CDs.*

## Idiom

switch gears

## Phrasal verbs

switch on/off something

switch over

(Definition of **switch** from the Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary © Cambridge University Press)

**switch** | BUSINESS ENGLISH

# switch



**a complete change of one thing for another:**

- **a switch from/to sth** *The switch to a flat rate of tax could boost spending.*
- *Banks are encouraging customers to **make the switch** from paper to electronic statements.*

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 + 

COMMUNICATIONS, IT

**a piece of equipment in a network that receives electronic data and sends it to the right place**

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 + 

**a small part or object that you move or press to make a light come on, make a machine start working, etc.:**

- *press/flick the switch*

**See also**

[bait-and-switch](#)

verb

UK  /swɪtʃ/ US 



[ I or T ]

**to change from one thing, system, etc. to another, or make something do this:**

- **switch to sth** *Internet users should consider switching to a web-based bank.*
- **switch from sth to sth** *The charity has switched from TV advertising to direct mail.*
- **switch provider(s)/supplier(s)** *You could save money by switching energy suppliers.*
- *The report found that only about 6% of current account customers switch banks each year.*
- **switch brand/mortgage/service**

See also

[packet switching](#)

### Phrasal verb

[switch sth off/on](#)

(Definition of **switch** from the [Cambridge Business English Dictionary](#) © Cambridge University Press)

EXAMPLES of **switch**

# switch

You can't *switch* over to a new social network, though, unless your friends do so as well.

From [Slate Magazine](#)



That is, just 10.3 percent of users have switched on geo-location for their tweets.

From [Huffington Post](#)



I had to cut my own switches from the woods.

From [Huffington Post](#)



Do this 10 times with your left arm before switching to your right.



He said that he both had switched colors.

From [Huffington Post](#)



No one before had asked his bosses to make that *switch*.

From [Dallas Morning News](#)



The device requires low voltage, without current, to *switch* it.

From [Phys.Org](#)



Getting those judges to *switch* to a risk-based model, he said, is going to require a serious culture change.

From [Slate Magazine](#)



But researchers found "no evidence of price shopping" in the first or second year after the *switch*.

From [TIME](#)



I switched to a pill with a lower dose of hormones about a year ago.

From [Huffington Post](#)



Making the *switch* would require collective action: we'd all have to make the *switch* together.

From [TIME](#)



He'll think she's crazy because it's just a light *switch*.

From [CNN](#)



Do you have any memories of code switching in your life?

From [NPR](#)



For small businesses just getting started in virtualization, switching hypervisors may not be all that difficult.

From [Ars Technica](#)



Then he'd *switch* hands or just disappear from sight.

From [New York Daily News](#)



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## These are words often used in combination with switch.

Click on a collocation to see more examples of it.

### **electronic switch**

- Electrical or electronic switch gear, amongst other vital uses, will continue to use f-gases in a contained environment.

From [Europarl Parallel Corpus - English](#)



### **ignition switch**

- I consider that siting the ignition switch on the right-hand side of the steering column, only about two or three inches in front of the driver's knee, is frightfully dangerous.

From the [Hansard archive](#)



### **mechanical switch**

- A wide variety of mechanical switch designs using slide switches, rocker switches, or side-mounted or end-mounted pushbuttons have been used in flashlights.

From [Wikipedia](#)



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[See all collocations with switch](#)

[What is the pronunciation of switch?](#)



## Translations of switch

in Chinese (Traditional)

[裝置, 開關, 改變...](#)

[See more](#)

in Chinese (Simplified)

[裝置, 开关, 改变...](#)

[See more](#)

in Spanish

[interruptor, cambio, apagar...](#)

[See more](#)

See more

in more languages



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### Translator tool

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Swiss chard

Swiss cheese

Swiss cheese plant

Swiss roll

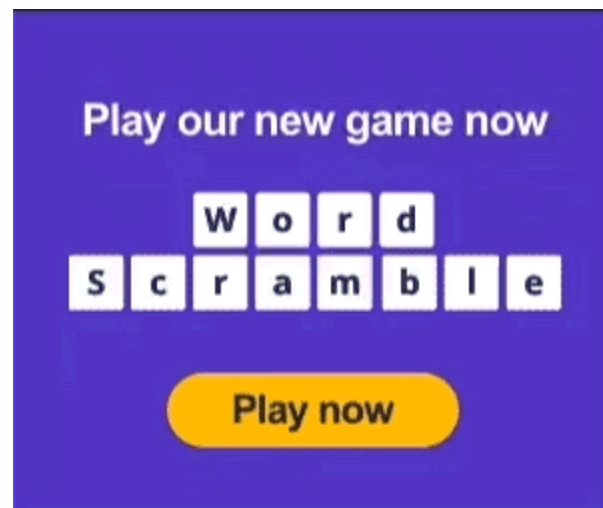
#### **switch**

switch gears *idiom*

switch off *phrasal verb*

switch on/off something *phrasal verb*

switch out something *phrasal verb*



## More meanings of *switch*

### — All

[code-switch](#)

[dip switch](#)

[kill switch](#)

[switch-hit](#)



[dimmer switch](#)

[See all meanings](#)

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WORD OF THE DAY

**courtroom**

uk  /'kɔ:t.ru:m/ us  /'kɔ:rt.ru:m/

a room where a law court meets

[About this](#)



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