

Need another word that means the same as “insidious”? Find 20 synonyms and 30 related words for “insidious” in this overview.

Table Of Contents:

- [Insidious as an Adjective](#)
- [Definitions of "Insidious" as an adjective](#)
- [Synonyms of "Insidious" as an adjective \(20 Words\)](#)
- [Usage Examples of "Insidious" as an adjective](#)
- [Associations of "Insidious" \(30 Words\)](#)

The synonyms of “Insidious” are: pernicious, subtle, stealthy, surreptitious, sneaking, cunning, crafty, machiavellian, artful, guileful, sly, wily, tricky, slick, deceitful, deceptive, dishonest, underhand, backhanded, indirect

Insidious as an Adjective

Definitions of "Insidious" as an adjective

According to the [Oxford Dictionary of English](#), “insidious” as an adjective can have the following definitions:

- *Proceeding in a gradual, subtle way, but with very harmful effects.*
- *Working or spreading in a hidden and usually injurious way.*
- *Intended to entrap.*
- *Beguiling but harmful.*



Synonyms of "Insidious" as an adjective (20 Words)

- artful** Clever or skilful, especially in a crafty or cunning way.
*An **artful** choice of metaphors.*
- backhanded** Made with the back of the hand facing in the direction of movement.
*Coming from me teasing is a **backhanded** compliment.*
- crafty** Marked by skill in deception.
*A **crafty** crook faked an injury to escape from prison.*
- cunning** Attractive especially by means of smallness or prettiness or quaintness.
***Cunning** kittens.*
- deceitful** Intended to deceive.
*A **deceitful** politician.*

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| <u>deceptive</u> | Designed to deceive or mislead either deliberately or inadvertently. <i>The deceptive calm in the eye of the storm.</i> |
| dishonest | Deceptive or fraudulent; disposed to cheat or defraud or deceive. <i>Dishonest politicians.</i> |
| guileful | Having or showing sly or cunning intelligence. <i>A supremely guileful and deceptive politician.</i> |
| <u>indirect</u> | Not as a direct effect or consequence. <i>Known as a shady indirect fellow.</i> |
| machiavellian | Of or relating to Machiavelli or the principles of conduct he recommended. |
| <u>pernicious</u> | Exceedingly harmful. <i>The pernicious influences of the mass media.</i> |
| <u>slick</u> | Made slick by e.g. ice or grease. <i>A slick commercial.</i> |
| <u>sly</u> | Marked by skill in deception. <i>A sly sip of water.</i> |
| sneaking | Not openly expressed. <i>A sneaking suspicion.</i> |
| <u>stealthy</u> | Behaving or done in a cautious and surreptitious manner, so as not to be seen or heard. <i>Stealthy footsteps.</i> |
| <u>subtle</u> | Crafty; cunning. <i>The subtle fiend dissembled.</i> |
| surreptitious | Marked by quiet and caution and secrecy; taking pains to avoid being observed. <i>A surreptitious glance at his watch.</i> |
| <u>tricky</u> | (of a task, problem, etc.) requiring care and skill because difficult or awkward. <i>Applying eyeliner can be a tricky business.</i> |
| underhand | Acting or done in a secret or dishonest way. <i>Underhand dealings.</i> |
| wily | Skilled at gaining an advantage, especially deceitfully. <i>His wily opponents.</i> |



Usage Examples of "Insidious" as an adjective

- *Insidious pleasures.*
- *Sexual harassment is a serious and insidious problem.*
- *Glaucoma is an insidious disease.*



Associations of "Insidious" (30 Words)

ambush

Hunt quarry by stalking and ambushing.
*Seven members of a patrol were killed in an **ambush**.*

colonist

A person who settles in a new colony or moves into new country.

confiscate

Surrendered as a penalty.
*The guards **confiscated** his camera.*

creep

Move slowly; in the case of people or animals with the body near the ground.
*The fog was **creeping** up from the marsh.*

deprive

Prevent (a person or place) from having or using something.
*The city was **deprived** of its water supplies.*

despoil

Steal goods; take as spoils.
*The church was **despoiled** of its marble wall covering.*

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| encroachment | Any entry into an area not previously occupied. <i>Urban encroachment of habitat.</i> |
| furtive | Suggestive of guilty nervousness. <i>A furtive manner.</i> |
| incursion | The mistake of incurring liability or blame. <i>The incursion of television into the American living room.</i> |
| intrusion | A body of igneous rock which has intruded the surrounding strata. <i>Villagers say the noise is an intrusion on their lives.</i> |
| invasion | An unwelcome intrusion into another's domain. <i>In 1546 England had to be defended from invasion.</i> |
| kingship | The state or position of being a king. <i>Upon his succession to the kingship David retained his English estates.</i> |
| loot | Steal (goods) in a war, riot, etc. <i>Ten thousand quid is a lot of loot.</i> |
| lurk | A profitable stratagem; a dodge or scheme. <i>A ruthless killer still lurked in the darkness.</i> |
| piracy | A practice similar to piracy but in other contexts especially hijacking. <i>Air piracy.</i> |
| pretend | Represent fictitiously as in a play or pretend to be or act like. <i>I cannot pretend to say that you are wrong.</i> |
| puritan | A member of a group of English Protestants of the late 16th and 17th centuries who regarded the Reformation of the Church under Elizabeth I as incomplete and sought to simplify and regulate forms of worship. <i>Don't be such a puritan.</i> |
| purloin | Make off with belongings of others. <i>He must have managed to purloin a copy of the key.</i> |
| raid | Conduct a raid on. <i>An early morning raid on a bank.</i> |
| rapine | The violent seizure of someone's property. <i>Industrial rapine.</i> |
| shy | Short. <i>The shares are 29p shy of their flotation price.</i> |
| sneak | Someone who prowls or sneaks about usually with unlawful intentions. <i>Sneak a cigarette.</i> |
| steal | Steal a base. <i>At 59.95 it's an absolute steal.</i> |

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| <u>stealthy</u> | Behaving or done in a cautious and surreptitious manner, so as not to be seen or heard. <i>Stealthy footsteps.</i> |
| <u>subtle</u> | Arranged in an ingenious and elaborate way. <i>A subtle difference.</i> |
| trespass | Entry to a person's land or property without permission. <i>A man who had trespassed against Judaic law.</i> |
| unsafe | Not safe; dangerous. <i>Drinking water in some areas may be unsafe.</i> |
| usurpation | Wrongfully seizing and holding (an office or powers) by force (especially the seizure of a throne or supreme authority). <i>A succession of generals who ruled by usurpation.</i> |
| waylay | Stop or interrupt (someone) and detain them in conversation or trouble them in some other way. <i>He waylaid me on the stairs.</i> |