

Need another word that means the same as “rub”? Find 36 synonyms and 30 related words for “rub” in this overview.

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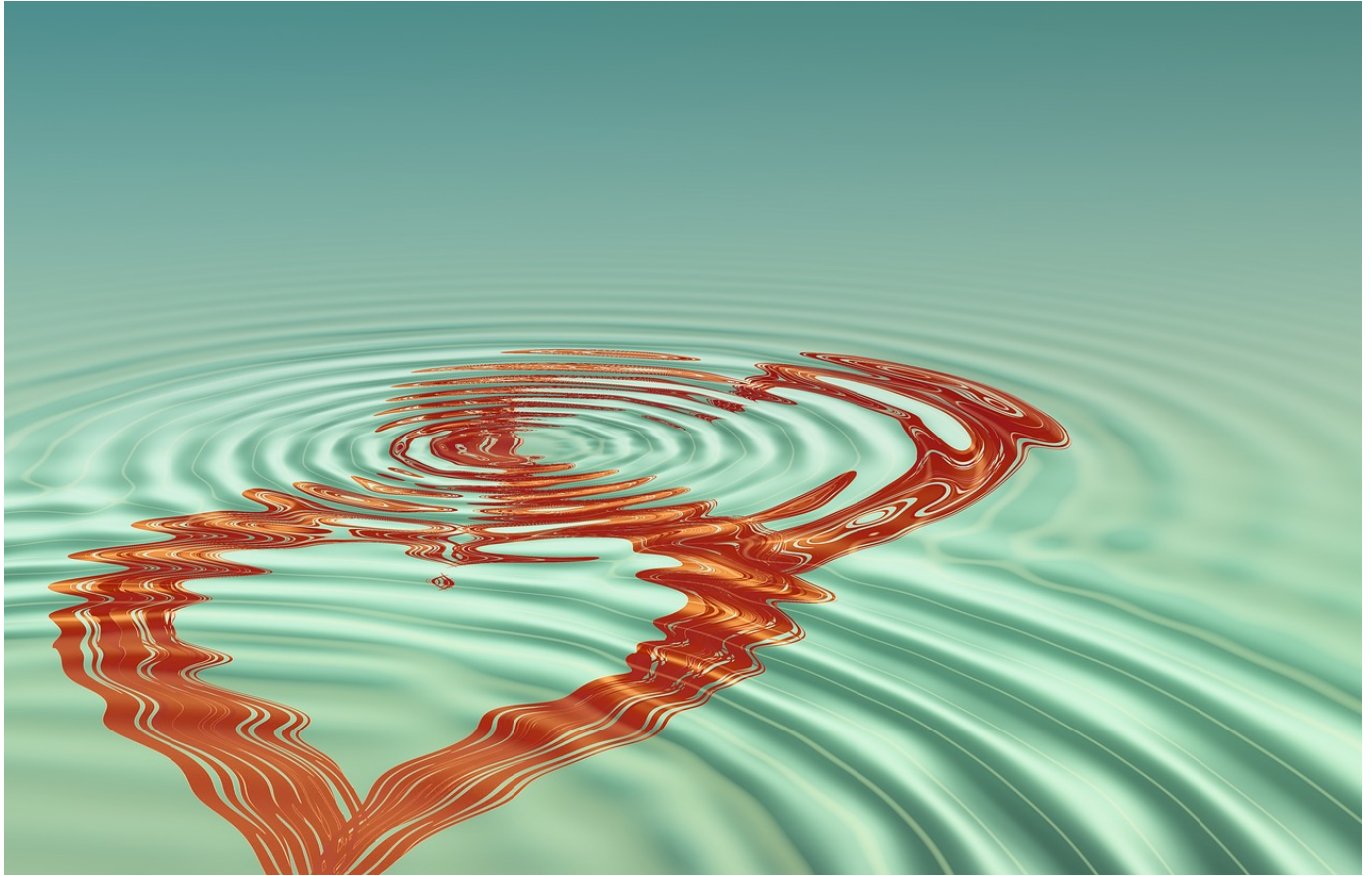
**The synonyms of “Rub” are: chafe, fray, fret, scratch, itch, massage, knead, apply, put on, smear, smooth, spread, work in, cream in, clean, mop, sponge, swab, pinch, scrape, abrade, hang-up, hitch, snag, wipe, polish, buffing, problem, difficulty, trouble, drawback, hindrance, obstacle, obstruction, impediment**

## Rub as a Noun

### Definitions of "Rub" as a noun

According to the [Oxford Dictionary of English](#), “rub” as a noun can have the following definitions:

- *The act of rubbing or wiping.*
- *A mixture of spices and other seasonings that is applied to the surface of meat or fish before cooking.*
- *The central problem or difficulty in a situation.*
- *(in bowling) an uneven patch of ground that impedes or diverts a bowl.*
- *An unforeseen obstacle.*
- *An act of rubbing.*
- *An ointment designed to be rubbed on the skin to ease pain.*



## Synonyms of "Rub" as a noun (15 Words)

### buffing

An implement consisting of soft material mounted on a block; used for polishing (as in manicuring).

### difficulty

A condition or state of affairs almost beyond one's ability to deal with and requiring great effort to bear or overcome.

*Had **difficulty** walking.*

### drawback

A feature that renders something less acceptable; a disadvantage or problem.

*They had been complaining of difficulties in getting quick reimbursement of duty **drawback**.*

### hang-up

An unforeseen obstacle.

### hindrance

Any obstruction that impedes or is burdensome.

*A **hindrance** to the development process.*

### hitch

An act of hitch hiking.

*Everything went without a **hitch**.*

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b><u>impediment</u></b>  | Something immaterial that interferes with or delays action or progress.<br><i>A serious <b>impediment</b> to scientific progress.</i>   |
| <b><u>massage</u></b>     | The rubbing and kneading of muscles and joints of the body with the hands, especially to relieve tension or pain.<br><i><b>Massage</b> can ease tiredness.</i>  |
| <b>obstacle</b>           | Something immaterial that stands in the way and must be circumvented or surmounted.<br><i>The poverty of a district is an <b>obstacle</b> to good education.</i>  |
| <b><u>obstruction</u></b> | The physical condition of blocking or filling a passage with an obstruction.<br><i>Walkers could proceed with the minimum of <b>obstruction</b>.</i>  |
| <b>polish</b>             | A preparation used in polishing.<br><i>They performed with great <b>polish</b>.</i>   |
| <b>problem</b>            | An inquiry starting from given conditions to investigate or demonstrate a fact, result, or law.<br><i>Motivation of staff can also be a <b>problem</b>.</i>   |
| <b>snag</b>               | A rent or tear in fabric caused by a snag.<br><i>Keep an emery board handy in case of nail <b>snags</b>.</i>  |
| <b>trouble</b>            | A source of difficulty.<br><i>The kid had been no <b>trouble</b> up to now.</i>   |
| <b>wipe</b>               | A cinematographic effect in which an existing picture seems to be wiped out by a new one as the boundary between them moves across the screen.<br><i>Bert was giving the machine a final <b>wipe</b> over with an oily rag.</i> |



### Usage Examples of "Rub" as a noun

- *She pulled out a towel and gave her head a quick rub.*
- *He will be using coffee in a rub for a rack of lamb.*
- *A muscle rub.*
- *He gave the hood a quick rub.*
- *That was the rub—she had not cared enough.*





# Rub as a Verb

## Definitions of "Rub" as a verb

According to the [Oxford Dictionary of English](#), "rub" as a verb can have the following definitions:

- *Work an ingredient into (a mixture) by breaking and blending it with firm movements of one's fingers.*
- *Move (one's hand, a cloth, or another object) back and forth against a surface.*
- *Cause friction.*
- *Make dry, clean, or smooth by rubbing.*
- *(of a bowl) be slowed or diverted by the unevenness of the ground.*
- *Reproduce the design of (a sepulchral brass or a stone) by rubbing paper laid on it with coloured wax, pencil, or chalk, etc.*
- *Apply firm pressure to the surface of (something), using a repeated back and forth motion.*
- *Scrape or rub as if to relieve itching.*
- *Move over something with pressure.*
- *Apply (ointment, polish, or a similar substance) with a back and forth motion.*
- *(of shoes or other hard items in contact with the skin) cause pain through friction.*
- *(with reference to two things) move or cause to move to and fro against each other with a certain amount of friction.*



## Synonyms of "Rub" as a verb (21 Words)

- abrade** Rub hard or scrub.  
*It was a landscape slowly **abraded** by a fine stinging dust.*
- apply** Apply oneself to.  
*Please **apply** yourself to your homework.*
- chafe** Cause annoyance in; disturb, especially by minor irritations.  
*Her arms **chafed** where the rope bit into them.*
- clean** Be cleanable.  
*The boys **cleaned** the sandwich platters.*
- cream in** Put on cream, as on one's face or body.
- fray** (of a male deer) rub (a bush or small tree) with the head in order to remove the velvet from newly formed antlers, or to mark territory during the rut.  
*The friction **frayed** the sleeve.*
- fret** Provide a musical instrument with frets.  
*She **fretted** about the cost of groceries.*



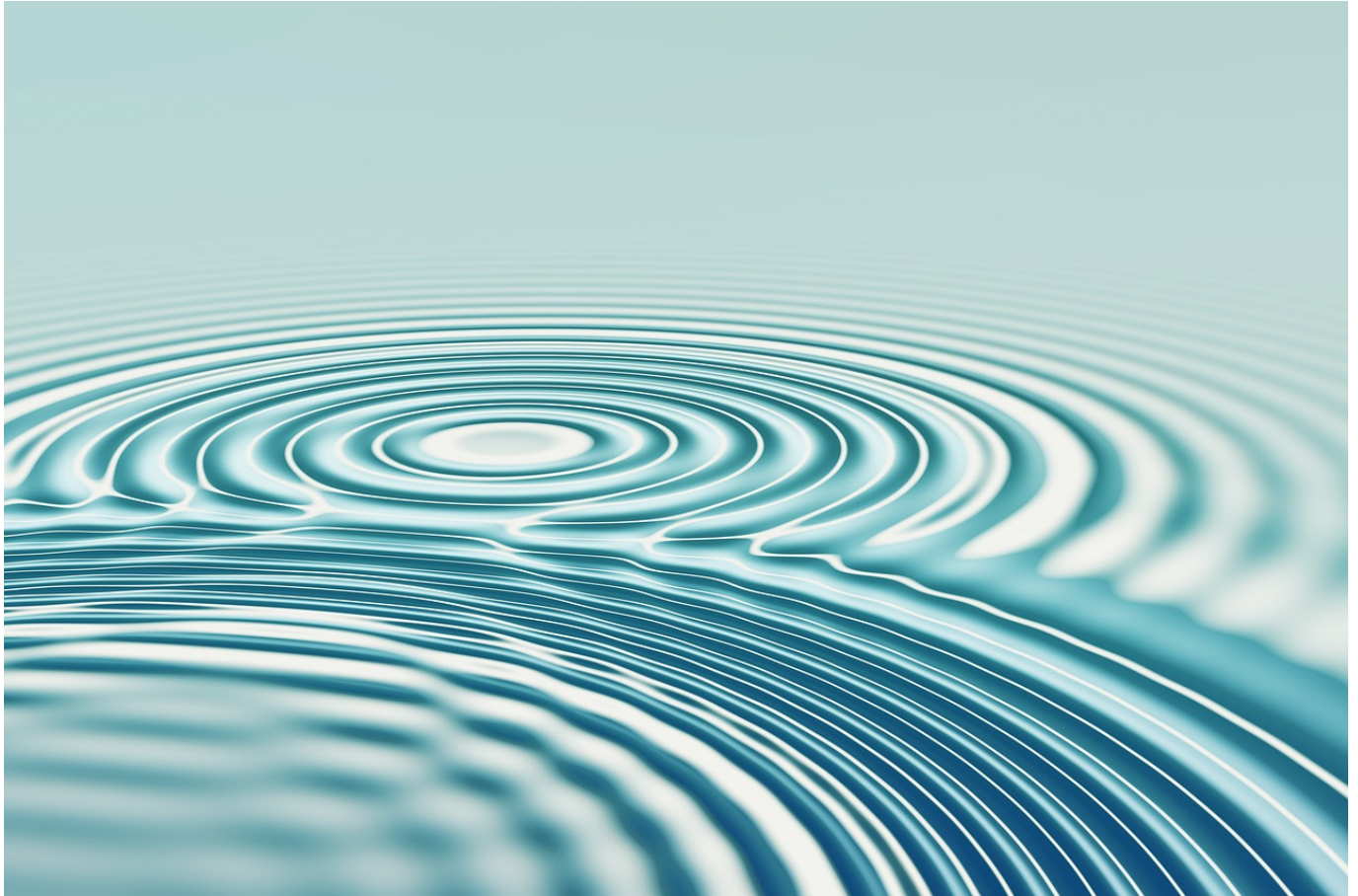
|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>itch</b>    | Cause to perceive an itch.<br><i>Paul was <b>itching</b> to get outside.</i>  |
| <b>knead</b>   | Make bread or pottery by kneading flour or clay.<br><i>She <b>kneaded</b> his back.</i>   |
| <b>massage</b> | Give a massage to.<br><i>The accounts had been <b>massaged</b> to suit the government.</i>  |
| <b>mop</b>     | To wash or wipe with or as if with a mop.<br><i>She <b>mopped</b> the floor and cleaned out two cupboards.</i>  |
| <b>pinch</b>   | Make ridges into by pinching together.<br><i>If I scraped and <b>pinched</b> a bit I might manage.</i>  |
| <b>put on</b>  | Attribute or give.  |
| <b>scrape</b>  | Bend the knees and bow in a servile manner.<br><i>For some years he <b>scraped</b> a living as a tutor.</i>   |
| <b>scratch</b> | Play a record using the scratch technique.<br><i>Banks seem prepared to <b>scratch</b> stabilization charges.</i>   |
| <b>smear</b>   | Stain by smearing or daubing with a dirty substance.<br><i><b>Smear</b> the wall with paint.</i>  |
| <b>smooth</b>  | Make smooth or smoother as if by rubbing.<br><i>A conference would be held to <b>smooth</b> the way for the establishment of the provisional government.</i>            |
| <b>sponge</b>  | Give a decorative effect to a painted surface by applying a different shade of paint with a sponge.<br><i>I ll go and <b>sponge</b> this orange juice off my dress.</i> |
| <b>spread</b>  | Cover by spreading something over.<br><i>The Marines <b>spread</b> out across the docks.</i>  |
| <b>swab</b>    | Wash with a swab or a mop.<br><i>The crew were <b>swabbing</b> down the decks.</i>  |
| <b>work in</b> | Exert oneself by doing mental or physical work for a purpose or out of necessity.   |





## Usage Examples of "Rub" as a verb

- *Sift the flour into a bowl and rub in the fat.*
- *He was rubbing an old brass.*
- *I rubbed myself dry.*
- *She took out her sun cream and rubbed some on her nose.*
- *He rubbed at the earth on his jeans.*
- *He rubbed a finger round the rim of his mug.*
- *Badly fitting shoes can rub painfully.*
- *She rubbed her arm, where she had a large bruise.*
- *Many insects make noises by rubbing parts of their bodies together.*
- *She found a towel and began rubbing her hair.*
- *Rub my hands.*
- *The ice breaks into small floes that rub against each other.*
- *Rub oil into her skin.*



## Associations of "Rub" (30 Words)

### caress

Touch or stroke lightly in a loving or endearing manner.

*The **caresses** of the breeze played over his face.*

### chafe

(with reference to a part of the body) make or become sore by rubbing against something.

*The collar **chafed** his neck.*

### **dab**

A brief application of a piece of absorbent material to a surface.

*Apply concealer with light **dabs**.*

### delete

Remove (a product, especially a recording) from the catalogue of those available for purchase.

*If one important gene is **deleted** from an animal's DNA other genes can stand in.*

### discomfort

A state of unease, worry, or embarrassment.

*His remarks caused her **discomfort**.*

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>efface</b>            | Remove completely from recognition or memory.<br><i>To <b>efface</b> oneself is not the easiest of duties which the teacher can undertake.</i>                             |
| <b>encourage</b>         | Spur on.<br><i>The intention is to <b>encourage</b> new writing talent.</i>  |
| <b>encouraged</b>        | Inspired with confidence.  |
| <b>eradicate</b>         | Kill in large numbers.<br><i>This disease has been <b>eradicated</b> from the world.</i>   |
| <b>erasable</b>          | Capable of being effaced.<br><i>A signal too loud to be <b>erasable</b> in a single pass through the erase head.</i>   |
| <u><b>erase</b></u>      | Remove from memory or existence.<br><i>The tape could be magnetically <b>erased</b> and reused.</i>  |
| <u><b>excise</b></u>     | Levy an excise tax on.<br><i>The surgeon <b>excised</b> the tumor.</i>   |
| <b>expulsion</b>         | The action or process of forcing someone to leave a place.<br><i>His <b>expulsion</b> from the union.</i>  |
| <u><b>expunge</b></u>    | Obliterate or remove completely (something unwanted or unpleasant).<br><i>The kind of man that could <b>expunge</b> an unsatisfactory incident from his memory.</i>        |
| <u><b>fray</b></u>       | A noisy fight.<br><i>As the temperature rose tempers <b>frayed</b>.</i>  |
| <b>friction</b>          | Effort expended in moving one object over another with pressure.<br><i>A considerable amount of <b>friction</b> between father and son.</i>                                |
| <b>fumble</b>            | An act of managing or dealing with something clumsily.<br><i>He <b>fumbled</b> about in the dark but could not find her.</i>   |
| <u><b>irritation</b></u> | An uncomfortable feeling of mental painfulness or distress.<br><i>The minor <b>irritations</b> of life.</i>  |
| <b>itch</b>              | Be the site of or cause an itch.<br><i>She is <b>itching</b> to start the project.</i>   |
| <b>itching</b>           | An irritating cutaneous sensation that produces a desire to scratch.   |
| <u><b>massage</b></u>    | Give a massage to.<br><i>She <b>massaged</b> his sore back.</i>  |
| <u><b>obliterate</b></u> | Make invisible or indistinct; conceal or cover.<br><i>The special stamp should be placed on the left hand side and not be used to <b>obliterate</b> the postage stamp.</i> |
| <b>pat</b>               | Pat or squeeze fondly or playfully especially under the chin.<br><i>He <b>patted</b> the bench beside him and I sat down.</i>  |



**rap**

Genre of African American music of the 1980s and 1990s in which rhyming lyrics are chanted to a musical accompaniment several forms of rap have emerged.

*Social services were smarting from an Ombudsman s **rap**.*

**scratch**

A mark or wound made by scratching.

*Tabitha wondered how long the woman had been **scratching** a living on the waterways.*

**strike**

A pitch that passes through the strike zone.

**Strike** a medal.

**tap**

Cut a female screw thread with a tap.

*The FBI was **tapping** the phone line of the suspected spy.*

**touch**

An act of touching someone or something.

*He **touched** back a cross field ball.*

**wipe**

Pass a swipe card over an electronic reader.

**Wipe** the blackboard.

