

Need another word that means the same as “severe”? Find 126 synonyms and 30 related words for “severe” in this overview.

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**The synonyms of “Severe” are: spartan, austere, stark, stern, terrible, wicked, hard, knockout, dangerous, grave, grievous, life-threatening, serious, acute, very bad, critical, dire, drastic, extreme, dreadful, awful, frightful, appalling, sore, fierce, violent, strong, wild, powerful, forceful, intense, excruciating, agonizing, unbearable, intolerable, unendurable, very difficult, demanding, tough, arduous, formidable, taxing, exacting, rigorous, punishing, onerous, gruelling, burdensome, heavy, harsh, bitter, cold, bleak, freezing, icy, arctic, polar, siberian, nasty, scathing, sharp, ferocious, stringent, savage, blistering, searing, stinging, scorching, devastating, mordant, trenchant, caustic, biting, cutting, withering, unsparing, extortionate, excessive, unreasonable, inordinate, outrageous, stiff, strict, inflexible, uncompromising, inexorable, implacable, rigid, unbending, relentless, unrelenting, unyielding, merciless, pitiless, ruthless, draconian, oppressive, repressive, punitive, rough, dour, grim, forbidding, disapproving, unsmiling, unfriendly, sombre, sober, flinty, stony, steely, glowering, frowning, plain, simple, restrained, unadorned, undecorated, unembellished, unornamented, chaste, spare, unfussy, ascetic, monastic, puritanical**

## Severe as an Adjective

### Definitions of "Severe" as an adjective

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

- *Causing fear or anxiety by threatening great harm.*
- *Unsparing and uncompromising in discipline or judgment.*

- *Unsparring and uncompromising in discipline or judgment- H.G.Wells.*
- *(of a person) formal and unsmiling.*
- *Very strong or vigorous.*
- *Demanding great ability, skill, or resilience.*
- *(of something bad or undesirable) very great; intense.*
- *Intensely or extremely bad or unpleasant in degree or quality.*
- *(of punishment of a person) strict or harsh.*
- *Severely simple.*
- *Very bad in degree or extent.*
- *Very plain in style or appearance.*



## Synonyms of "Severe" as an adjective (126 Words)

### acute

Denoting or designed for patients with an acute form of a disease.  
An **acute** or critical lack of research funds.

<b><u>agonizing</u></b>	Extremely painful. <i>There is an <b>agonizing</b> choice to make.</i>
<b><u>appalling</u></b>	Causing shock or dismay; horrific. <i><b>Appalling</b> conditions.</i>
<b>arctic</b>	Extremely cold. <i>An <b>arctic</b> climate.</i>
<b><u>arduous</u></b>	Taxing to the utmost; testing powers of endurance- F.D.Roosevelt. <i>The <b>arduous</b> work of preparing a dictionary.</i>
<b>ascetic</b>	Pertaining to or characteristic of an ascetic or the practice of rigorous self discipline. <i><b>Ascetic</b> practices.</i>
<b><u>austere</u></b>	Of a stern or strict bearing or demeanor; forbidding in aspect. <i>An <b>austere</b> expression.</i>
<b>awful</b>	Extreme in degree or extent or amount or impact. <i>You look <b>awful</b> you should go and lie down.</i>
<b>biting</b>	(of insects and certain other animals) able to wound the skin with a sting or fangs. <i>His <b>biting</b> satire on corruption and power.</i>
<b><u>bitter</u></b>	Painful or unpleasant to accept or contemplate. <i>A <b>bitter</b> five year legal battle.</i>
<b><u>bleak</u></b>	(of the weather) cold and miserable. <i>He paints a <b>bleak</b> picture of a company that has lost its way.</i>
<b>blistering</b>	Harsh or corrosive in tone. <i>The <b>blistering</b> heat of the desert.</i>
<b>burdensome</b>	Not easily borne; wearing. <i>The <b>burdensome</b> task of preparing the income tax return.</i>
<b><u>caustic</u></b>	Harsh or corrosive in tone. <i>The players were making <b>caustic</b> comments about the refereeing.</i>
<b><u>chaste</u></b>	Pure and simple in design or style. <i>A <b>chaste</b> consoling embrace.</i>
<b>cold</b>	Of a person feeling uncomfortably cold. <i>A <b>cold</b> impersonal manner.</i>
<b>critical</b>	(of a text) incorporating a detailed and scholarly analysis and commentary. <i>A <b>critical</b> element of the plan.</i>
<b>cutting</b>	Capable of cutting something. <i>A <b>cutting</b> remark.</i>

<b>dangerous</b>	Able or likely to cause harm or injury. <i>A <b>dangerous</b> criminal.</i>
<b>demanding</b>	Requiring more than usually expected or thought due; especially great patience and effort and skill. <i>A baby can be so <b>demanding</b>.</i>
<u>devastating</u>	Physically or spiritually devastating often used in combination. <i>The news came as a <b>devastating</b> blow.</i>
<u>dire</u>	Causing fear or dread or terror. <i>Misuse of drugs can have <b>dire</b> consequences.</i>
<u>disapproving</u>	Expressing an unfavourable opinion. <i>He shot a <b>disapproving</b> glance at her.</i>
<b>dour</b>	Harshly uninviting or formidable in manner or appearance. <i>A <b>dour</b> self sacrificing life.</i>
<b>draconian</b>	(of laws or their application) excessively harsh and severe. <i>The Nazis destroyed the independence of the press by a series of <b>draconian</b> laws.</i>
<u>drastic</u>	Likely to have a strong or far-reaching effect; radical and extreme. <i>A <b>drastic</b> reduction of staffing levels.</i>
<u>dreadful</u>	Causing fear or dread or terror. <i>A <b>dreadful</b> storm.</i>
<b>exacting</b>	Making great demands on one's skill, attention, or other resources. <i>An <b>exacting</b> instructor.</i>
<b>excessive</b>	Beyond normal limits. <i>He was drinking <b>excessive</b> amounts of brandy.</i>
<u>excruciating</u>	Very embarrassing, awkward, or tedious. <i>He explained the procedure in <b>excruciating</b> detail.</i>
<b>extortionate</b>	Using or given to extortion. <i>2 700 for that guitar is <b>extortionate</b>.</i>
<b>extreme</b>	Of the greatest possible degree or extent or intensity. <i>The <b>extreme</b> north west of Scotland.</i>
<u>ferocious</u>	Marked by extreme and violent energy. <i>A <b>ferocious</b> battle.</i>
<u>fierce</u>	Fashionable or attractive in a bold or striking way. <i><b>Fierce</b> storms lashed the country.</i>
<b>flinty</b>	(of a person or their expression) very hard and unyielding. <i>His <b>flinty</b> gaze.</i>

<b>forbidding</b>	Unfriendly or threatening in appearance. <i><b>Forbidding</b> thunderclouds.</i>
<b>forceful</b>	Forceful and definite in expression or action. <i>A <b>forceful</b> speaker.</i>
<b><u>formidable</u></b>	Inspiring fear or respect through being impressively large, powerful, intense, or capable. <i>The challenge was <b>formidable</b>.</i>
<b>freezing</b>	(used hyperbolically) very cold. <i>He was <b>freezing</b> and miserable.</i>
<b>frightful</b>	Very unpleasant, serious, or shocking. <i>A <b>frightful</b> mistake.</i>
<b>frowning</b>	Forming an expression of disapproval, displeasure, or concentration by frowning one's brows. <i>The young writer pitched his screenplay to a <b>frowning</b> producer.</i>
<b>glowering</b>	Showing a brooding ill humor.
<b><u>grave</u></b>	Causing fear or anxiety by threatening great harm. <i>A <b>grave</b> God fearing man.</i>
<b>grievous</b>	Causing fear or anxiety by threatening great harm. <i>A <b>grievous</b> cry.</i>
<b><u>grim</u></b>	(especially of a place) unattractive or forbidding. <i><b>Grim</b> laughter.</i>
<b>gruelling</b>	Characterized by effort to the point of exhaustion; especially physical effort. <i>A <b>gruelling</b> schedule.</i>
<b>hard</b>	Unfortunate or hard to bear. <i>The <b>hard</b> light of morning.</i>
<b>harsh</b>	Unpleasantly stern. <i>The <b>harsh</b> white light makes you screw up your eyes.</i>
<b>heavy</b>	Large and powerful especially designed for heavy loads or rough work. <i>A <b>heavy</b> heart.</i>
<b>icy</b>	Devoid of warmth and cordiality; expressive of unfriendliness or disdain. <i>Her voice was <b>icy</b>.</i>
<b>implacable</b>	Incapable of being placated. <i>He was an <b>implacable</b> enemy of Ted s.</i>
<b>inexorable</b>	Impossible to stop or prevent. <i>The doctors were <b>inexorable</b> and there was nothing to be done.</i>

<b>inflexible</b>	Resistant to being bent. <i>An <b>inflexible</b> law.</i>
<b><u>inordinate</u></b>	Unusually or disproportionately large; excessive. <i>The case had taken up an <b>inordinate</b> amount of time.</i>
<b>intense</b>	Extremely sharp or intense. <i><b>Intense</b> itching and burning.</i>
<b>intolerable</b>	Incapable of being tolerated or endured. <i>An <b>intolerable</b> degree of sentimentality.</i>
<b>knockout</b>	Very strong or vigorous. <i>A <b>knockout</b> punch.</i>
<b>life-threatening</b>	Causing fear or anxiety by threatening great harm.
<b><u>merciless</u></b>	Showing no mercy. <i>A <b>merciless</b> attack with a blunt instrument.</i>
<b>monastic</b>	Resembling or suggestive of monks or their way of life, especially in being austere, solitary, or celibate. <i>She set her things round the <b>monastic</b> student bedroom.</i>
<b>mordant</b>	Of a substance, especially a strong acid; capable of destroying or eating away by chemical action. <i>Fun ranging from slapstick clowning to savage <b>mordant</b> wit.</i>
<b><u>nasty</u></b>	Very bad or unpleasant. <i>It s a <b>nasty</b> old night.</i>
<b>onerous</b>	Not easily borne; wearing. <i>My duties weren t <b>onerous</b> I only had to greet the guests.</i>
<b><u>oppressive</u></b>	Weighing heavily on the senses or spirit. <i><b>Oppressive</b> sorrows.</i>
<b><u>outrageous</u></b>	Wildly exaggerated or improbable. <i>Spends an <b>outrageous</b> amount on entertainment.</i>
<b>pitiless</b>	(especially of weather) unrelentingly harsh or severe. <i>A night of <b>pitiless</b> rain.</i>
<b>plain</b>	Lacking in physical beauty or proportion. <i>A <b>plain</b> girl with a freckled face.</i>
<b>polar</b>	Having electrical or magnetic polarity. <i>Extreme and indefensible <b>polar</b> positions.</i>
<b>powerful</b>	Possessing physical strength and weight rugged and powerful. <i>The most <b>powerful</b> government in western Europe.</i>
<b><u>punishing</u></b>	Severe and debilitating. <i>The band s <b>punishing</b> tour schedule.</i>

<b>punitive</b>	(of a tax or other charge) extremely high. <i>He called for <b>punitive</b> measures against the Eastern bloc.</i>
<b>puritanical</b>	Having or displaying a very strict or censorious moral attitude towards self-indulgence or sex. <i>His <b>puritanical</b> parents saw any kind of pleasure as the road to damnation.</i>
<b>relentless</b>	Not to be placated or appeased or moved by entreaty. <i><b>Relentless</b> persecution.</i>
<b>repressive</b>	Inhibiting or preventing the expression or awareness of thoughts or desires. <i>A <b>repressive</b> moral code.</i>
<b>restrained</b>	Under restraint. <i>His <b>restrained</b> gentlemanly voice.</i>
<b>rigid</b>	Fixed and unmoving- Connor Cruise O'Brien. <i>A face <b>rigid</b> with pain.</i>
<b>rigorous</b>	Extremely thorough and careful. <i>The <b>rigorous</b> testing of consumer products.</i>
<b>rough</b>	(of an area or occasion) characterized by violent behaviour. <i>A <b>rough</b> answer.</i>
<b>ruthless</b>	Having or showing no pity or compassion for others. <i>A <b>ruthless</b> manipulator.</i>
<b>savage</b>	(of a person or group) primitive and uncivilized. <i>A <b>savage</b> race.</i>
<b>scathing</b>	Witheringly scornful; severely critical. <i>She launched a <b>scathing</b> attack on the Prime Minister.</i>
<b>scorching</b>	Hot and dry enough to burn or parch a surface. <i><b>Scorching</b> heat.</i>
<b>searing</b>	Having lost all moisture. <i>A <b>searing</b> indictment of the government s performance.</i>
<b>serious</b>	(of music, literature, or other art forms) requiring or meriting deep reflection. <i>The plan has a <b>serious</b> flaw.</i>
<b>sharp</b>	Keenly and painfully felt as if caused by a sharp edge or point. <i>C <b>sharp</b>.</i>
<b>siberian</b>	Of speech sounds produced by forcing air through a constricted passage (as `f', `s', `z', or `th' in both `thin' and `then.

<b>simple</b>	Denoting a group that has no proper normal subgroup. <b>Simple</b> mechanisms.
<b>sober</b>	Muted in colour. As <b>sober</b> as a judge.
<b>sombre</b>	Dark or dull in colour or tone. The night skies were <b>sombre</b> and starless.
<b>sore</b>	Severe; urgent. It was a <b>sore</b> trial to him.
<b>spare</b>	Kept in reserve especially for emergency use. He tried to write poetry in his <b>spare</b> time.
<b>spartan</b>	Practicing great self-denial- William James. A <b>spartan</b> existence.
<b>stark</b>	Severely simple. A <b>stark</b> interior.
<b>steely</b>	Resembling steel as in hardness. There was a <b>steely</b> edge to his questions.
<b>stern</b>	Of a stern or strict bearing or demeanor forbidding in aspect. The past year has been a <b>stern</b> test of the ability of British industry.
<b>stiff</b>	Incapable of or resistant to bending. She was scared <b>stiff</b> .
<b>stinging</b>	Having a sting; capable of wounding or piercing with a sting. A swarm of <b>stinging</b> insects.
<b>stony</b>	Hard as granite. Lucenzo s hard <b>stony</b> eyes.
<b>strict</b>	Characterized by strictness severity or restraint. My father was very <b>strict</b> .
<b>stringent</b>	(of regulations, requirements, or conditions) strict, precise, and exacting. <b>Stringent</b> safety measures.
<b>strong</b>	Relating to or denoting the strongest of the known kinds of force between particles which acts between nucleons and other hadrons when closer than about 10 cm so binding protons in a nucleus despite the repulsion due to their charge and which conserves strangeness parity and isospin. A cup of <b>strong</b> coffee.
<b>taxing</b>	Not easily borne; wearing. A <b>taxing</b> schedule.



<b>terrible</b>	Used to emphasize the extent of something unpleasant or bad. <i>The weather was <b>terrible</b>.</i>
<b><u>tough</u></b>	Physically toughened. <i>A <b>tough</b> break.</i>
<b><u>trenchant</u></b>	Having keenness and forcefulness and penetration in thought, expression, or intellect. <i>A <b>trenchant</b> argument.</i>
<b>unadorned</b>	Not decorated with something to increase its beauty or distinction. <i>The <b>unadorned</b> truth.</i>
<b><u>unbearable</u></b>	Incapable of being tolerated or endured. <i>The heat was getting <b>unbearable</b>.</i>
<b>unbending</b>	Reserved, formal, or strict in one's behaviour or attitudes; austere and inflexible. <i>An <b>unbending</b> will to dominate.</i>
<b><u>uncompromising</u></b>	Not making concessions. <i><b>Uncompromising</b> honesty.</i>
<b>undecorated</b>	Not adorned or decorated. <i>The walls were completely <b>undecorated</b>.</i>
<b>unembellished</b>	Lacking embellishment or ornamentation. <i>The <b>unembellished</b> truth.</i>
<b>unendurable</b>	Not able to be tolerated or endured. <i>Cries of <b>unendurable</b> suffering.</i>
<b><u>unfriendly</u></b>	Not friendly. <i>She shot him an <b>unfriendly</b> glance.</i>
<b>unfussy</b>	Not fussy. <i>A simple <b>unfussy</b> design.</i>
<b>unornamented</b>	Lacking embellishment or ornamentation. <i>An <b>unornamented</b> two storey building.</i>
<b><u>unreasonable</u></b>	Not guided by or based on good sense. <i><b>Unreasonable</b> demands.</i>
<b><u>unrelenting</u></b>	Punishingly harsh. <i>The heat was <b>unrelenting</b>.</i>
<b>unsmiling</b>	(of a person or their manner or expression) serious or unfriendly; not smiling. <i>A large <b>unsmiling</b> woman.</i>
<b>unsparing</b>	Very generous. <i>An <b>unsparing</b> critic.</i>

<b>unyielding</b>	Stubbornly unyielding. <i>The Atlantic hurled its waves at the <b>unyielding</b> rocks.</i>
<b>very bad</b>	Being the exact same one; not any other.
<b>very difficult</b>	Being the exact same one; not any other.
<b>violent</b>	Marked by extreme intensity of emotions or convictions inclined to react violently fervid. <i>A <b>violent</b> death.</i>
<b>wicked</b>	Having committed unrighteous acts. <i>Despite the sun the wind outside was <b>wicked</b>.</i>
<b>wild</b>	Produced from wild animals or plants without cultivation. <i>The <b>wild</b> coastline of Cape Wrath.</i>
<b>withering</b>	(of heat) intense; scorching. <i>To compliments inflated I ve a <b>withering</b> reply.</i>



## Usage Examples of "Severe" as an adjective

- *A severe attack of asthma.*
- *A severe worldwide depression.*
- *A severe case of pneumonia.*
- *A hefty six-footer with a rather severe mien.*
- *A severe case of flu.*
- *Severe pain.*
- *The charges would have warranted a severe sentence.*
- *The damage is not too severe.*
- *She wore another severe suit, grey this time.*
- *The house suffered severe damage.*
- *A parent severe to the pitch of hostility.*
- *A severe blow.*
- *A severe shortage of technicians.*
- *A severe test of stamina.*



## Associations of "Severe" (30 Words)

<b>acute</b>	Denoting or designed for patients with an acute form of a disease. <i>The <b>acute</b> phase of the illness.</i>
<b>ascetic</b>	A person who follows an ascetic life. <i><b>Ascetic</b> practices.</i>
<b>asperity</b>	Harsh qualities or conditions. <i>The <b>asperity</b> of northern winters.</i>
<b>austere</b>	Severely simple. <i>He was an <b>austere</b> man with a rigidly puritanical outlook.</i>
<b>biting</b>	Causing a sharply painful or stinging sensation; used especially of cold. <i>His <b>biting</b> satire on corruption and power.</i>
<b>demanding</b>	Requiring more than usually expected or thought due; especially great patience and effort and skill. <i>He was a <b>demanding</b> baby and rarely slept through the night.</i>
<b>draconian</b>	(of laws or their application) excessively harsh and severe. <i>The Nazis destroyed the independence of the press by a series of <b>draconian</b> laws.</i>
<b>exacting</b>	Making great demands on one's skill, attention, or other resources. <i>Certain highly specialized xerophytes are extremely <b>exacting</b> in their requirements.</i>
<b>extreme</b>	The highest or most extreme degree of something. <i><b>Extreme</b> danger.</i>
<b>grave</b>	Carve, cut, or etch into a material or surface. <i>A <b>grave</b> situation.</i>
<b>grievous</b>	Of great gravity or crucial import; requiring serious thought. <i>A <b>grievous</b> crime.</i>
<b>harsh</b>	Disagreeable to the senses. <i>Drenched in a <b>harsh</b> white neon light.</i>
<b>inflexible</b>	Not able to be changed or adapted to particular circumstances. <i>An <b>inflexible</b> knife blade.</i>
<b>intense</b>	Extremely sharp or intense. <i>The heat was <b>intense</b>.</i>
<b>martinet</b>	A person who demands complete obedience; a strict disciplinarian. <i>The woman in charge was a <b>martinet</b> who treated all those beneath her like children.</i>

<b>pitiless</b>	Without mercy or pity. <i>A night of <b>pitiless</b> rain.</i>
<b>pungent</b>	(of comment, criticism, or humour) having a sharp and caustic quality. <i>The <b>pungent</b> taste of radishes.</i>
<b>rigorous</b>	Rigidly accurate; allowing no deviation from a standard. <i><b>Rigorous</b> discipline.</i>
<b>rushing</b>	(of a player) advancing rapidly towards an opposing player, especially the quarterback. <i>Responders attempted to shut off the <b>rushing</b> water.</i>
<b>serious</b>	Requiring effort or concentration; complex and not easy to answer or solve. <i>A <b>serious</b> attempt to learn to ski.</i>
<b>seriousness</b>	The trait of being serious- Robert Rice. <i>He learned the <b>seriousness</b> of his illness.</i>
<b>severity</b>	Something hard to endure. <i>Sentences should reflect the <b>severity</b> of the crime.</i>
<b>spartan</b>	Practicing great self-denial. <i><b>Spartan</b> courage.</i>
<b>stoutly</b>	In a resolute manner. <i>The houses are built <b>stoutly</b> of granite.</i>
<b>stringency</b>	A state occasioned by scarcity of money and a shortage of credit.
<b>stringent</b>	Demanding strict attention to rules and procedures. <i><b>Stringent</b> guidelines on air pollution.</i>
<b>stringently</b>	In a stringent manner. <i><b>Stringently</b> controlled.</i>
<b>ultimate</b>	Denoting the maximum possible strength or resistance beyond which an object breaks. <i>One's <b>ultimate</b> goal in life.</i>
<b>unkind</b>	Inconsiderate and harsh to others. <i>You were terribly <b>unkind</b> to her.</i>
<b>unrelenting</b>	Harsh. <i>The heat was <b>unrelenting</b>.</i>

