

Need another word that means the same as “tense”? Find 51 synonyms and 30 related words for “tense” in this overview.

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**The synonyms of “Tense” are: taut, stretched tight, tight, rigid, stretched, strained, stiff, anxious, nervous, edgy, stressed, under a strain, under pressure, agitated, ill at ease, unrelaxed, in a state of nerves, in a state of agitation, fretful, uneasy, restless, worked up, keyed up, overwrought, wrought up, strung out, jumpy, fidgety, worried, apprehensive, upset, disturbed, panicky, nerve-racking, stressful, worrying, concerning, fraught, charged, nail-biting, worrisome, difficult, uncomfortable, strain, tense up, tighten, tauten, flex, contract, brace, stiffen**

## Tense as a Verb

### Definitions of "Tense" as a verb

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

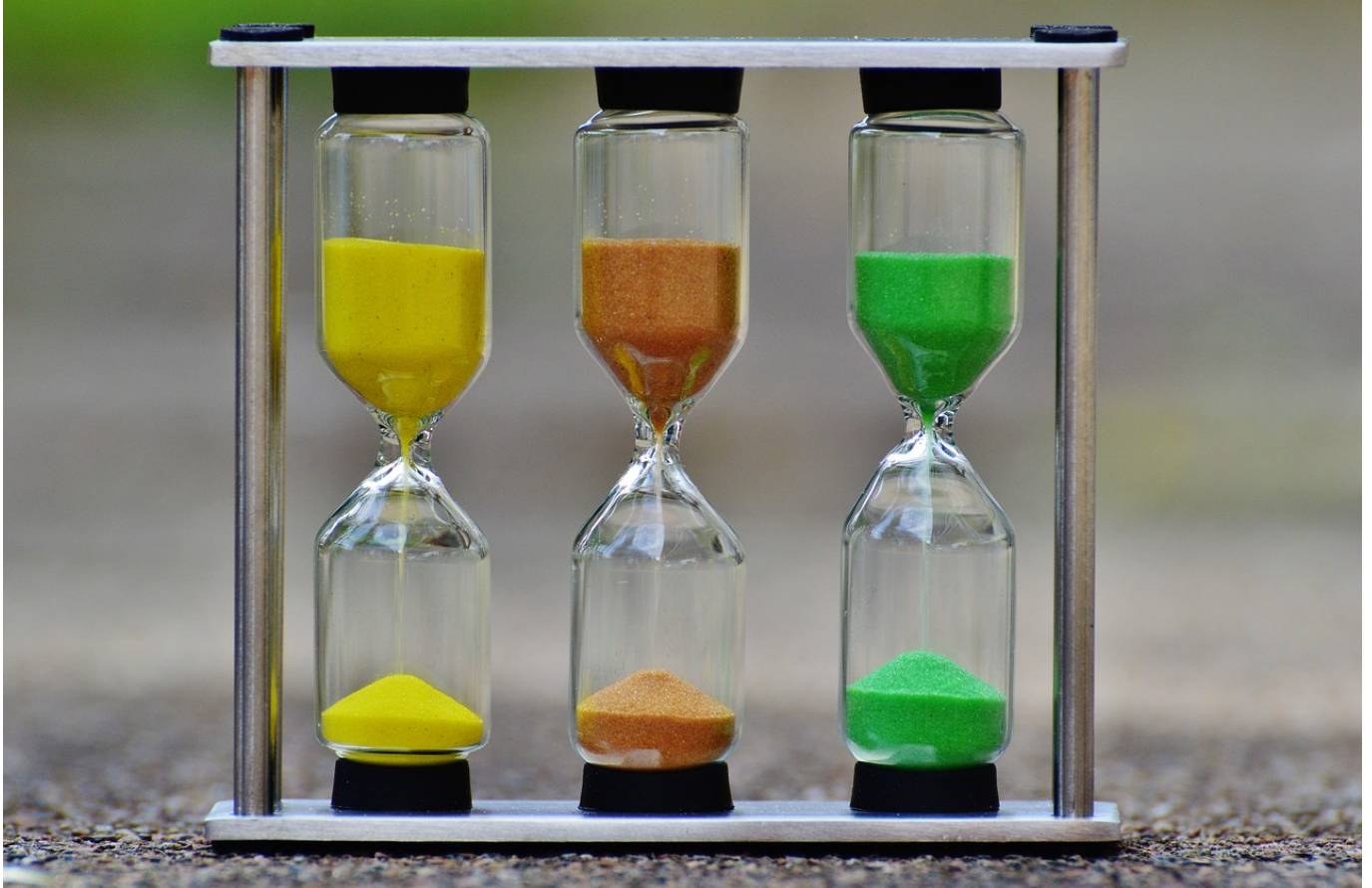
- *Become tense, typically through anxiety or nervousness.*
- *Make (a muscle or one's body) tight or rigid.*
- *Cause to be tense and uneasy or nervous or anxious.*
- *Increase the tension on.*
- *Become tense, nervous, or uneasy.*
- *Become stretched or tense or taut.*



## Synonyms of "Tense" as a verb (8 Words)

- brace** Support or hold steady and make steadfast with or as if with a brace.  
*He stood with legs **braced**.*
- contract** Enter into a contractual arrangement.  
*Plans to encourage people to **contract** out of the pension scheme.*
- flex** Exhibit the strength of.  
*The talks were seen as a way for Merkel to **flex** her well known diplomatic prowess.*
- stiffen** Become stiff or stiffer.  
*The regime's resistance **stiffened**.*
- strain** Rub through a strainer or process in an electric blender.  
*She **strained** the infant to her bosom again.*
- tauten** Become taut or tauter.  
***Tauten** a rope.*
- tense up** Become stretched or tense or taut.

**tighten** Become tight or tighter.  
The rope **tightened**.



### Usage Examples of "Tense" as a verb

- *He got a phone call from his lawyer that tensed him up.*
- *Alternately relax and tense your calf muscle.*
- *The bodybuilder's neck muscles tensed.*
- *Her body tensed up.*
- *Tense the rope manually before tensing the spring.*
- *He tensed up when he saw his opponent enter the room.*
- *Carefully stretch and then tense your muscles.*



## Tense as an Adjective

### Definitions of "Tense" as an adjective

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

- *In or of a state of physical or nervous tension.*
- *Pronounced with relatively tense tongue muscles (e.g., the vowel sound in `beat.*
- *Taut or rigid; stretched tight.*
- *(of a speech sound, especially a vowel) pronounced with the vocal muscles stretched tight.*
- *(especially of a muscle) stretched tight or rigid.*
- *Causing or characterized by anxiety and nervousness.*
- *Unable to relax because of nervousness, anxiety, or stimulation.*



## Synonyms of "Tense" as an adjective (43 Words)

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>agitated</b>            | Physically disturbed or set in motion.<br><i>The <b>agitated</b> mixture foamed and bubbled.</i>   |
| <b>anxious</b>             | (of a situation or period of time) causing or characterized by worry or nervousness.<br><i>Spent an <b>anxious</b> night waiting for the test results.</i> |
| <b><u>apprehensive</u></b> | In fear or dread of possible evil or harm.<br><i><b>Apprehensive</b> for one's life.</i>   |
| <b>charged</b>             | Of a particle or body or system; having a net amount of positive or negative electric charge.<br><i>The highly <b>charged</b> issue of abortion.</i>       |
| <b><u>concerning</u></b>   | Causing anxiety; worrying.<br><i>A <b>concerning</b> breach of security.</i>   |
| <b>difficult</b>           | (of a person) not easy to please or satisfy; awkward.<br><i>Nesting places on the cliffs are <b>difficult</b> of access.</i>                               |

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| <b>disturbed</b>               | Having or resulting from emotional and mental problems.<br><i>The treatment of <b>disturbed</b> children.</i>                     |
| <b>edgy</b>                    | (of a musical performance or piece of writing) having an intense or sharp quality.<br><i>He became <b>edgy</b> and defensive.</i> |
| <b>fidgety</b>                 | Nervous and unable to relax.<br><i>I get nervous and <b>fidgety</b> at the dentist.</i>   |
| <b>fraught</b>                 | Causing or affected by anxiety or stress.<br><i>Words <b>fraught</b> with meaning.</i>  |
| <b>fretful</b>                 | Habitually complaining.<br><i>The baby was crying with a <b>fretful</b> whimper.</i>  |
| <b>ill at ease</b>             | Resulting in suffering or adversity.  |
| <b>in a state of agitation</b> | Currently fashionable.  |
| <b>in a state of nerves</b>    | Holding office.   |
| <b>jumpy</b>                   | Being in a tense state.<br><i>A <b>jumpy</b> pulse.</i>   |
| <b>keyed up</b>                | Serving as an essential component.  |
| <b>nail-biting</b>             | Characterized by or causing suspense.   |
| <b>nerve-racking</b>           | Extremely irritating to the nerves.   |
| <b>nervous</b>                 | Of or relating to the nervous system.<br><i>Staying in the house on her own made her <b>nervous</b>.</i>                          |
| <b>overwrought</b>             | In a state of nervous excitement or anxiety.<br><i>A pseudo Gothic church far too <b>overwrought</b> for such a small town.</i>   |
| <b>panicky</b>                 | Thrown into a state of intense fear or desperation.<br><i>I started to feel <b>panicky</b> and breathless.</i>                    |
| <b>restless</b>                | Worried and uneasy.<br><i>A <b>restless</b> night.</i>  |
| <b>rigid</b>                   | Incapable of adapting or changing to meet circumstances.<br><i><b>Rigid</b> bureaucratic controls.</i>                            |
| <b>stiff</b>                   | Powerful.<br><i>A <b>stiff</b> measure of brandy.</i>   |
| <b>strained</b>                | Of a mainly liquid substance having been strained to separate out any solid matter.<br><i>A <b>strained</b> smile.</i>            |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>stressed</b>             | Strengthened by the application of stress during manufacture prestressed.<br><i>An iambic foot consists of an <b>unstressed</b> syllable followed by a <b>stressed</b> syllable as in delay.</i> |
| <b><u>stressful</u></b>     | Causing mental or emotional stress.<br><i>Corporate finance work can be <b>stressful</b>.</i>  |
| <b>stretched</b>            | Extended or spread over a wide area or distance.<br><i>Broad fields lay <b>stretched</b> on both sides of us.</i>  |
| <b>stretched tight</b>      | Extended or spread over a wide area or distance.   |
| <b>strung out</b>           | That is on a string.   |
| <b>taut</b>                 | Stretched or pulled tight; not slack.<br><i>The fabric stays <b>taut</b> without adhesive.</i>   |
| <b>tight</b>                | Of a community or other group of people having close relations tight knit.<br><i>It was a <b>tight</b> squeeze in the tiny vestibule.</i>  |
| <b><u>uncomfortable</u></b> | Providing or experiencing physical discomfort.<br><i>An <b>uncomfortable</b> way of surprising me just when I felt surest.</i>   |
| <b>under a strain</b>       | Lower in rank, power, or authority.  |
| <b>under pressure</b>       | Located below or beneath something else.   |
| <b><u>uneasy</u></b>        | Causing or feeling anxiety; troubled or uncomfortable.<br><i>An <b>uneasy</b> silence fell on the group.</i>   |
| <b>unrelaxed</b>            | Tense.<br><i>His life was drawing to a close in baffled zeal and <b>unrelaxed</b> strain.</i>  |
| <b>upset</b>                | Thrown into a state of disarray or confusion.<br><i>An <b>upset</b> stomach.</i>   |
| <b>worked up</b>            | Open.  |
| <b>worried</b>              | Anxious or troubled about actual or potential problems.<br><i>Not used to a city and <b>worried</b> about small things.</i>  |
| <b>worrisome</b>            | Causing distress or worry or anxiety.<br><i>In a particularly <b>worrisome</b> predicament.</i>  |
| <b>worrying</b>             | Causing anxiety about actual or potential problems; alarming.<br><i>A <b>worrying</b> time.</i>  |
| <b>wrought up</b>           | Shaped to fit by or as if by altering the contours of a pliable mass (as by work or effort).   |



## Usage Examples of "Tense" as an adjective

- *Tense piano strings.*
- *He was tense with excitement.*
- *She tried to relax her tense muscles.*
- *Relations between the two neighbouring states were tense.*
- *They waited in tense silence.*





## Associations of "Tense" (30 Words)

- apprehensive** Relating to perception or understanding.  
*Apprehensive about her job.*
- aroused** Emotionally aroused.  
*The aroused opposition.*
- complaining** Expressing pain or dissatisfaction or resentment.  
*A complaining boss.*
- constrained** Lacking spontaneity; not natural.  
*A constrained smile.*
- constricted** Especially tense; especially in some dialects.  
*Constricted air passages.*
- cranky** (of a machine) working erratically.  
*He was cranky after eight hours of working.*

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>defuse</b>       | Make (a situation) less tense or dangerous.<br><i>A scheme that teaches officers how to <b>defuse</b> potentially explosive situations.</i>   |
| <b>excitability</b> | Excessive sensitivity of an organ or body part.   |
| <b>fractious</b>    | Unpredictably difficult in operation; likely to be troublesome.<br><i><b>Fractious</b> components of a communication system.</i>              |
| <b>fret</b>         | Provide a musical instrument with frets.<br><i>His absence during her times awake began to <b>fret</b> her.</i>                               |
| <b>fretful</b>      | Feeling or expressing distress or irritation.<br><i>The baby was crying with a <b>fretful</b> whimper.</i>                                    |
| <b>harassment</b>   | A feeling of intense annoyance caused by being tormented.<br><i>They face daily <b>harassment</b> and assault on the streets.</i>             |
| <b>harried</b>      | Feeling strained as a result of having demands persistently made on one; harassed.<br><i><b>Harried</b> detectives answer ringing phones.</i> |
| <b>irritability</b> | An irritable petulant feeling.<br><i>Symptoms include insomnia and <b>irritability</b>.</i>   |
| <b>jittery</b>      | Nervous or unable to relax.<br><i>Caffeine makes me <b>jittery</b>.</i>   |
| <b>nervous</b>      | Of or relating to the nervous system.<br><i><b>Nervous</b> disease.</i>   |
| <b>nervously</b>    | With nervous excitement.<br><i>Kevin <b>nervously</b> glanced at his watch.</i>   |
| <b>nervy</b>        | Characterized or produced by apprehension or uncertainty.<br><i>The <b>nervy</b> feats of mountaineers.</i>                                   |
| <b>peevish</b>      | Easily irritated or annoyed.<br><i>A thin <b>peevish</b> voice.</i>   |
| <b>petulance</b>    | An irritable petulant feeling.<br><i>A slight degree of <b>petulance</b> had crept into his voice.</i>  |
| <b>petulant</b>     | (of a person or their manner) childishly sulky or bad-tempered.<br><i>A <b>petulant</b> shake of the head.</i>                                |
| <b>querulous</b>    | Complaining in a rather petulant or whining manner.<br><i>She became <b>querulous</b> and demanding.</i>                                      |
| <b>sensitize</b>    | Make sensitive to a drug or allergen.<br><i>The kit <b>sensitizes</b> any 35 mm film in hours.</i>  |
| <b>skittish</b>     | (of a person) playfully frivolous or unpredictable.<br><i>A <b>skittish</b> chestnut mare.</i>  |

- strained** Of a mainly liquid substance having been strained to separate out any solid matter.  
*A **constrained** smile.*
- testy** Easily irritated or annoyed.  
*His **testy** disapproving father.*
- troubled** Characterized by unrest or disorder or insubordination.  
***Troubled** areas.*
- uneasy** Lacking a sense of security or affording no ease or reassurance.  
*Gave an **uneasy** laugh.*
- uptight** Anxious or angry in a tense and overly controlled way.  
*He is so **uptight** about everything.*

