

Sensory Words

Sensory words are words that describe how humans experience the world by sight, sound, touch, taste, smell and emotions. Using sensory language will help authors enhance their writing and immerse their readers into the scene.

Words related to sight/visual words indicate colors, shape, size, or appearance.

Words related to hearing describe sounds made by humans, animals, things, and the environment.

Words related to touch/tactile words describe textures, but they can also be used to describe feelings, abstract concepts, human sensations such as pain, and temperature.

Words that describe taste or smell are closely related. Most taste and smell words are easy substitutes for bland words like good, nice, or bad. For instance, words such as sweet, stinky, or stale, would be a better description of an item.

Words that describe emotions bring a person or story to life and impact the reader’s impression.

SIGHT				
Adaptable	Angular	Ashen	Awesome	Blazing
Bleary	Blotched	Brazen	Blurred	Bright
Brilliant	Broad	Bubbling	Bulky	Bumpy
Bushy	Calm	Cascading	Chunky	Circular
Clear	Cluttered	Coarse	Colossal	Colorless
Congested	Crimped	Crinkled	Crooked	Crowded
Curved	Cylindrical	Dainty	Dappled	Dark
Dazzling	Decorated	Dim	Ding	Dismal
Distinct	Dotty	Downy	Drab	Drenched
Dripping	Dull	Dusty	Elegant	Erect
Exotic	Feathery	Faded	Faint	Fiery
Flat	Flashy	Flared	Fleshy	Flowery
Fluffy	Flushed	Foamy	Foggy	Frilled
Fuzzy	Furrowed	Gaudy	Gigantic	Glamorous
Glance	Glassy	Gleaming	Glimpse	Glimmering
Glistening	Glittering	Glossy	Glowing	Grim
Graceful	Hairy	Hardy	Hazy	Hideous
Immense	Immeasurable	Imposing	Indistinct	Irregular
Jutting	Jeweled	King-size	Knobbed	Lacy
Lavish	Lean	Leathery	Lopsided	Lumpy
Lustrous	Massive	Matted	Meaty	Messy
Metallic	Misty	Muddy	Mushy	Minute

SIGHT				
Muscular	Narrow	Neat	Ornate	Overgrown
Opaque	Oval	Padded	Pale	Patterned
Paunchy	Petite	Peer	Pointed	Portly
Powdered	Prickly	Pulpy	Radiant	Regal
Roly Poly	Rotund	Ruffled	Rubbery	Scalloped
Scummy	Sensational	Shadowy	Shaggy	Sheer
Shimmering	Shiny	Shining	Silky	Skinny
Sleek	Smudged	Sparkling	Speckled	Spiky
Splintered	Split	Spotted	Spotty	Spongy
Steamy	Stocky	Streaked	Striped	Stubby
Stunning	Sunlit	Swollen	Tactile	Tangled
Tantalizing	Tapering	Tarnished	Tawny	Tidy
Top-heavy	Translucent	Transparent	Tubular	Turbulent
Twinkling	Twiggy	Unstained	Untidy	Vibrant
Wavy	Whirling	Winged	Wiry	Wrinkled

SOUND				
Atonal	Banging	Barking	Bawling	Beating
Belching	Bellowing	Blaring	Blasting	Bleating
Boisterous	Booming	Blustering	Brash	Bumpy
Burping	Bursting	Buzzing	Cackle	Cacophony
Chatter	Cheer	Chiming	Chirping	Clamoring
Clanging	Clapping	Clicking	Clinking	Commotion
Cooing	Coughing	Crackling	Crashing	Creak
Croaking	Croup	Crunching	Curt	Crying
Deadened	Deafening	Drawl	Dripping	Discord
Diminished	Droning	Dulcet	Dull	Ear-splitting
Euphonious	Exploding	Faint	Faltering	Fizzing
Gagging	Gasping	Giggling	Grating	Gravelly
Growling	Gruff	Grumble	Grunting	Guffaw
Gurgling	Gushing	Guttural	Harmonic	Harsh
Head-splitting	Hissing	Honking	Howling	Hubbub
Humming	Hushing	Husky	Inaudible	Jabber
Jagged	Jangling	Jarring	Jingling	Lamenting
Laughing	Lyrical	Mellow	Melodious	Moaning
Mooing	Mumbling	Murmur	Musical	Muttering
Muted	Noisy	Off-key	Outcry	Out of tune
Pandemonium	Patter	Peaceful	Pealing	Piercing
Pinging	Placid	Plopping	Popping	Prickly

SOUND

Quacking	Racket	Rant	Rapping	Rasping
Rattling	Raucous	Rave	Rhythmic	Ringing
Ripping	Roar	Rough	Rowdy	Rumbling
Rustle	Scratch	Scream	Screech	Serene
Shriek	Shrill	Shout	Sing	Silent
Sizzle	Slam	Splash	Snap	Snarl
Snort	Squawk	Squeal	Stormy	Stutter
Stomp	Stamp	Splat	Splash	Speechless
Swish	Tapping	Tearing	Tinkling	Throaty
Thudding	Thumping	Thundering	Thwack	Ticking
Tranquil	Tumult	Tuneful	Tuneless	Twittering
Unmusical	Uproar	Wailing	Warbling	Wheezing
Whimpering	Whining	Whispering	Whirring	Whizzing
Whooping	Whistling	Yell	Yelp	

TOUCH

Abrasive	Balmy	Biting	Blustery	Blunt
Bristly	Bubbly	Bulky	Bumpy	Burning
Bushy	Chalky	Chilly	Chopped	Clammy
Coarse	Cold	Cool	Corrosive	Cottony
Corrugated	Crawley	Creepy	Crinkly	Crisp
Crumbling	Crumbly	Crushed	Cuddly	Damp
Delicate	Downy	Drenched	Dripping	Dry
Dusty	Feathery	Feverish	Fine	Firm
Fluffy	Foamy	Freezing	Furry	Fuzzy
Frigid	Glassy	Gluey	Gnarled	Grainy
Granular	Greasy	Gritty	Ground	Gushy
Hairy	Hard	Harsh	Hashed	Hairy
Hot	Humid	Icy	Jagged	Knobbed
Knotted	Lacy	Leathery	Limp	Loose
Lukewarm	Lumpy	Matted	Metallic	Melted
Minced	Moist	Mushy	Numbing	Oily
Piercing	Plastic	Pointed	Polished	Powdery
Prickly	Pulpy	Rocky	Rough	Rubbery
Rugged	Sandy	Scalding	Scorching	Scaly
Scratchy	Scummy	Shaggy	Sharp	Shivery
Shredded	Silky	Slick	Slimy	Slippery
Slit	Sloppy	Smooth	Smothering	Soapy

TASTE				
Acidic	Appetizing	Bitter	Bland	Briny
Burnt	Buttery	Creamy	Crisp	Delectable
Delicious	Delightful	Fatty	Fiery	Finger-licking
Fishy	Flavorful	Flavorless	Flowery	Foul
Fragrant	Fresh	Fruity	Gamy	Garlicky
Gingery	Hot	Honeyed	Lemony	Medicinal
Minty	Moist	Moldy	Musty	Mushy
Nauseating	Noxious	Oily	Overripe	Oversweet
Palatable	Peachy	Peppery	Piquant	Pickled
Piney	Plastic	Pleasing	Poignant	Pungent
Rancid	Rank	Raw	Repugnant	Refreshing
Rich	Ripe	Rotten	Rubbery	Salty
Savory	Seasoned	Sharp	Sour	Spicy
Spoiled	Stale	Succulent	Sugary	Sweet
Tangy	Tart	Tasteless	Tasty	Unappetizing
Unpleasant	Unripe	Vile	Vinegary	Zesty

SMELL				
Acrid	Aromatic	Appetizing	Burnt	Buttery
Crisp	Citrus	Clean	Delectable	Delicious
Earthy	Fetid	Flavorful	Flowery	Foul
Fragrant	Fresh	Fruity	Garlicky	Heady
Heavenly	Minty	Moldy	Musty	Nidorous
Odoriferous	Odor	Odorless	Old	Peppery
Perfumed	Pungent	Putrid	Rancid	Rank
Reeking	Ripe	Savory	Scent	Smoky
Spicy	Stink	Sweet	Whiff	

Words describing an emotional state				
Abashed	Aggravated	Agitated	Alarmed	Ambivalent
Angry	Annoyed	Anxious	Apathetic	Appeased
Apprehensive	Aroused	Baffled	Betrayed	Bewildered
Bothered	Calm	Cocky	Collected	Composed
Concerned	Confident	Confused	Crazed	Deceived
Decided	Dubious	Dejected	Delighted	Delirious
Deluded	Dependent	Depressed	Despondent	Determined
Disappointed	Discontented	Discouraged	Dissatisfied	Disturbed
Doubtful	Downhearted	Drained	Drowsy	Eager
Ecstatic	Edgy	Embarrassed	Engrossed	Enraged

Words describing an emotional state

Envious	Exasperated	Excited	Exhausted	Fatigued
Fervent	Firm	Flustered	Frantic	Frenzied
Fretful	Frustrated	Fuming	Furious	Gloomy
Grave	Grim	Groggy	Helpless	Hesitant
Hopeless	Horrified	Hysterical	Impassioned	Impatient
Impulsive	Indifferent	Indignant	Inflamed	Irate
Jealous	Lost	Misled	Mournful	Nervous
Oblivious	Overjoyed	Pacified	Panicked	Peaceful
Pensive	Petrified	Placated	Pleased	Preoccupied
Proud	Provoked	Puzzled	Reflective	Refreshed
Relaxed	Reliant	Reluctant	Resolute	Restless
Scared	Self-reliant	Serious	Smug	Solemn
Somber	Soothed	Startled	Stunned	Sullen
Sure	Surprised	Suspicious	Tense	Terrified
Thoughtful	Thrilled	Tranquil	Tricked	Uncertain
Undecided	Uneasy	Unsettled	Unsure	Worried