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<sup>1</sup>in·stinct *noun* \ˈin-ˌstɪŋ(k)t\

: a way of behaving, thinking, or feeling that is not learned : a natural desire or tendency that makes you want to act in a particular way

: something you know without learning it or thinking about it

: a natural ability

Full Definition of **INSTINCT**

Like

**1** : a natural or inherent aptitude, impulse, or capacity <had an *instinct* for the right word>

**2 a** : a largely inheritable and unalterable tendency of an organism to make a complex and specific response to environmental stimuli without involving reason

**b** : behavior that is mediated by reactions below the conscious level

— *in·stinc·tu·al* *adjective*

— *in·stinc·tu·al·ly* *adverb*

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Examples of **INSTINCT**

Our first *instinct* was to run.

Cats possess a natural hunting *instinct*.

Seeing the baby aroused all her maternal *instincts*.

He has been guided throughout his career by his political *instincts*.

Mere *instinct* alerted her to the danger.

He knew *by instinct* what not to say.

She seemed to know *by instinct* that something was wrong.

He has a strong survival *instinct*.

an athlete with good *instincts*

Origin of **INSTINCT**

Middle English, from Latin *instinctus* impulse, from *instinguere* to incite; akin to Latin *instigare* to instigate

First Known Use: 15th century

Other Psychology Terms

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<sup>2</sup>**in·stinct** *adjective* \in-'stɪŋ(k)t, 'in-,\

**Definition of INSTINCT**

- 1 *obsolete* : impelled by an inner or animating or exciting agency
- 2 : profoundly imbued : **INFUSED** <my mood, *instinct* with romance — S. J. Perelman>

**First Known Use of INSTINCT**

1667

**in·stinct** *noun* \in-'stɪŋ(k)t\ (*Medical Dictionary*)

**Medical Definition of INSTINCT**

- 1 : a largely inheritable and unalterable tendency of an organism to make a complex and specific response to environmental stimuli without involving reason
- 2 : behavior that is mediated by reactions below the conscious level

**instinct** *noun* (*Concise Encyclopedia*)

Involuntary response by an animal, resulting in a predictable and relatively fixed behaviour pattern. Instinctive behaviour is an inherited mechanism that serves to promote the survival of an animal or species. It is most apparent in fighting and sexual activity. The simplest form is the **REFLEX**. All animals have instinct, but, in general, the higher the animal form, the more flexible the behaviour. Among mammals, learned behaviour often prevails over instinctive behaviour.

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 **Michelle Masson Paschke** · Teacher - 2nd Grade at Roosevelt School District #66  
I was just wondering if instincts came without having to be learned (its just in their DNA) then how did they come about. How are they transfixed into the animals DNA? (Just off the top of my head)  
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 **Lydia Gomez** · Universidad del Turabo  
I looked up T.D. Jake's message theme: "Transformational Instinct" (in YouTube) and wanted specific definitions of the word "instinct" (in its various grammatical forms.  
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woman,men relation ship, of the JESUS... ♥  
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