

Brief Guide to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED)

Click on the symbols to see a phonetic pronunciation, or click the blue "play" arrow to hear it said aloud

The letters and numbers give you an idea of when the various forms of the word were in use; e.g.:

OE = Old English

ME 16 = Middle English between 1600-1699

Rest the mouse over the linked words in the etymology to see the brief definition of the root words

Cross Reference

† [gare, n.](#)¹
A spear or javelin.

Clicking on the linked word will take you to the full entry for the root word

You can trace the history of the word through quotations showing its use; for example, the first known use of the word garlic was c1000 (the "c" = circa, which means "approximately")

Click on the linked title included with the quotation to learn more about the quotation's source

Want to know what the symbols and abbreviations mean? Click on **Help**. In the "Welcome" section click on **Other Resources** to see their *Key to symbols and other conventions...* and *Abbreviations...* lists

The screenshot shows the OED website interface. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation links. The main entry for 'garlic, n.' is displayed, including pronunciation, forms, etymology, and a list of related words. A red banner indicates the entry has not been fully updated since 1898. A 'Cross Reference' box is overlaid on the 'gare, n.' link in the etymology. A 'Don't forget...' box points to the 'Flowering Great' link in the quotations section.

This close-up shows a specific quotation: '...to scroll down to see if your word has other definitions'. Below it, the definition for 'Flowering Great' is shown: '†2. The name of a popular jig or farce of the early part of the seventeenth century. Obs.' followed by two examples from historical texts.

Brief Guide to the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, continued

You can print, save or email the definition to yourself for later use

You can search for a new word without going back to the home screen

The *OED* offers a suggested citation for this dictionary entry; use the drop down menu to chose MLA style

Preview citation in MLA ▼
 "garlic, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2014. Web. 7 October 2014.

This trio of links allows you to explore the *OED* publication history of the word

Click on one of these terms (or scroll down) to see your main entry used in compound words/phrases/etc.

If you were browsing the *OED* as a print book, these are the entries you would see before and after *garlic*; you can click on another entry to change words

The screenshot shows the OED website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links. The main content area displays the entry for 'garlic, n.', including pronunciation, forms, etymology, and a list of related terms. A 'Thesaurus' pop-up window is visible in the bottom left, showing suggested synonyms. A 'Jump to' table lists related entries with their dates. A 'Publication history' table is also visible, showing the entry's first published date in 1898.

Thesaurus

Go to Historical Thesaurus »

the external world » the living world » plant » particular plants » particular cultivated or valued plants » particular food plant or plant product » particular vegetables » [noun] » onion, leek, or garlic » garlic

garlic (c1000)

poor man's treacle (1611)

countryman's treacle (1745-7)

Go to Historical Thesaurus »

Clicking on **Thesaurus** will give you suggested synonyms. The *OED*'s Historical Thesaurus offers another way to explore words by grouping them into categories and by time period. Click on the category headings or **Go to Historical Thesaurus** link for another perspective on your word