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Crime & Law Vocabulary

Victim /'vɪktɪm/ (N) - Someone who has suffered because of the actions of someone or something.

Example: She claimed to be a victim of domestic abuse, and her partner has a history of domestic violence.

Sentence /'sentəns/ (N) - The punishment given by a judge when someone is found guilty of a crime.

Example: Murder carries a minimum sentence of 20 years in prison, and some countries still have the death penalty.

Capital punishment /'kæpɪtl 'pʌnɪʃmənt/ (N) - Punishment by death.

Example: Many countries still use capital punishment for a crime such as murder.

Criminal /'krɪmɪnl/ (N) - A person who breaks the law.

Example: He became a criminal at a very young age when he became a gang member.

Fine /faɪn/ (N) - An amount of money to be paid for breaking a rule or law.

Example: The driver was fined \$200 for not stopping at a red light and warned that if it happened again, he would face prison.

Evidence /'eɪdəns/ (N) - Reasons for believing something is true or not true.

Example: At the end of the investigation, the police dropped the case due to lack of evidence.

Verdict /'vɜːdɪkt/ (N) - The decision made after considering all the facts in a trial.

Example: After 2 days, the jury reached a verdict of not guilty.

Convict /'kɒnvɪkt/ (N) - Someone who is in prison for committing a crime.

Example: He found it very difficult to find a job because he was an ex-convict.

Parole /pə'reʊl/ (N) - Giving permission for a prisoner to be released from prison before their sentence is finished.

Example: She was released from prison on parole for good behavior and placed on probation.

Re-offending /'riː-ə'fendɪŋ/ (Adj) - To commit a crime again and again.

Example: The re-offending rates for ex-convicts is very high.

Crime & Law: Idioms

Keep one's nose clean - To stay out of trouble (usually with the law).

Example: When he was released from prison, he kept his nose clean and didn't get involved in criminal activity.



Daylight robbery - When you feel something is over-priced or too expensive.

Example: The new model of the smart phone costs \$550. That's daylight robbery, I'll never pay that price!

Lay down the law - To forcefully remind or inform someone about the rules.

Example: After he got in trouble with the police again, the judge laid down the law and told him that next time he would go to prison.



Cop - Slang term for police officer.

Example: The cops arrived at the scene of the accident shortly after the emergency call.

Banged up - To be in jail or prison.

Example: The witness was terrified and refused to testify until he was banged up .

