

Dictionary Definitions of Bias (noun)

Descriptive versus Evaluative

Here are 14 dictionaries that use two separate entries for bias (one for evaluative, the other for descriptive) or that include 'usually' or 'especially' to introduce the evaluative entry.

Merriam Webster:

- a an inclination of temperament or outlook *especially* a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment: prejudice
- b an instance of such prejudice
- c bent, tendency
- d 1: deviation of the expected value of a statistical estimate from the quantity it estimates
2: systematic error introduced into sampling or testing by selecting or encouraging one outcome or answer over others

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bias>

Harper-Collins

British English 1. mental tendency or inclination, *esp* an irrational preference or prejudice

American English:

1. an oblique or diagonal line of direction, *esp.* across a woven fabric
2. a particular tendency or inclination, *esp.* one that prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question; prejudice
3. Statistics: a systematic as opposed to a random distortion of a statistic as a result of sampling procedure

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/bias>

Britannica Dictionary

1. a tendency to believe that some people, ideas, etc., are better than others that *usually* results in treating some people unfairly
2. a strong interest in something or ability to do something

<https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/bias>

Macmillan

1. an attitude that you have that makes you treat someone in a way that is unfair or different from the way you treat other people
- 1a. A special interest or ability in a particular thing, or a particular tendency

https://www.macmillandictionary.com/us/dictionary/american/bias_1

Dictionary.com

1. a particular tendency, trend, inclination, feeling, or opinion, *especially* one that is preconceived or unreasoned: illegal bias against older job applicants; the magazine's bias toward art rather than photography; our strong bias in favor of the idea.
2. unreasonably hostile feelings or opinions about a social group; prejudice: accusations of racial bias.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/bias>

Cambridge Dictionary

the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment

the fact of preferring a particular subject or thing:

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/bias>

Oxford English Dictionary (US)

1. Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, *usually* in a way considered to be unfair.

1.1 A concentration on or interest in one particular area or subject.

<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/bias>

Vocabulary.com

a preference for one thing over another, *especially* an unfair one.

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/bias>

American Heritage Dictionary

1. A line going diagonally across the grain of fabric: Cut the cloth on the bias.
2. a. A preference or an inclination, *especially* one that inhibits impartial judgment.
b. An unfair act or policy stemming from prejudice.

<https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=bias>

Oxford Learners Dictionary

a strong feeling in favour of or against one group of people, or one side in an argument, often not based on fair judgement.

an interest in one thing more than others; a special ability

https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/bias_1

Wikipedia

a disproportionate weight *in favor of* or *against* an idea or thing, *usually* in a way that is closed-minded, prejudicial, or unfair.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bias>

The Free Dictionary

1. A line going diagonally across the grain of fabric: Cut the cloth on the bias.
2. a. preference or an inclination, especially one that inhibits impartial judgment.
b. An unfair act or policy stemming from prejudice.

<https://www.thefreedictionary.com/bias>

Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English

1 an opinion about whether a person, group, or idea is good or bad that influences how you deal with it.

2 a natural skill or interest in one type of thing. Lydia has a strong artistic bias.

<https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/bias>

APA Dictionary of Psychology

1. partiality: an inclination or predisposition for or against something. See also prejudice.
2. any tendency or preference, such as a response bias or test bias.

<https://dictionary.apa.org/bias>

Here is one dictionary that presents only an evaluative meaning:

Sociology Dictionary

A tendency (either known or unknown) to prefer one thing over another that prevents objectivity, that influences understanding or outcomes in some way

Usage notes: The terms bias and prejudice are often used interchangeably. However, prejudice is an extreme type of bias that is typically preconceived, intentional, and negative such as homophobia, racism, or sexism.

<https://sociologydictionary.org/bias/>

Miscellaneous

Note: This summary excludes definitions involving fabric (to cut across the bias) or electronics.

For more on specific kinds of bias, see

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bias_\(disambiguation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bias_(disambiguation)), <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/bias> or <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/bias.asp>