

least1. [li:st] *n*

минимальное количество; минимальная степень; самое меньшее

at least - а) минимально; at least five hours - по меньшей мере /как минимум/ пять часов; б) во всяком /в крайнем/ случае

you might at least say you are sorry - вы могли бы, по крайней мере, извиниться

the least said the better - чем меньше сказано, тем лучше; (об этом) лучше не говорить

not in the least - ни в малейшей степени, ничуть, нисколько

I'm not in the least tired - я совсем не устал

would you mind holding this box? - Not in the least - вам не трудно подержать эту коробку? - Нисколько /≅ С удовольствием/

the least he could do is to pay for the damage - он мог бы по крайней мере возместить ущерб

it doesn't matter in the least - а) это совершенно неважно; б) пожалуйста, не беспокойтесь (*ответ на извинение*)

nobody would worry in the least - никто ни капельки не испугается /не будет волноваться/

to say the least (of it) - говоря без преувеличений; по меньшей мере

it's a lie, to say the least - это, мягко говоря /по меньшей мере/, ложь

◇ (the) least said (the) soonest mended - *посл.* ≅ словами делу не поможешь; разговорами можно только испортить дело

2. [li:st] *a*

1. *superl om* little II

2. наименьший, малейший

the least chance - малейший шанс

least radius - наименьший радиус (*поворота и т. п.*)

the least distance - кратчайшее расстояние

not the least mercy - ни капельки жалости

not the least wind - ни малейшего ветерка

least in number - наименьший по количеству

at the least estimate - по самой скромной оценке, минимально

least possible trouble - с наименьшими хлопотами; с наименьшей затратой сил

it is the least successful of his plays - это наименее удачная из его пьес

it is the least of my anxieties - об этом я волнуюсь меньше всего

3. малый (*в зоологич. названиях*)

4. *арх.* нижайший по положению; слабейший; наихудший

3. [li:st] *adv*

1. *superl om* little III

2. менее всего, в наименьшей степени

least of all - менее всего, в наименьшей степени

least of all would I want to hurt your feelings - я меньше всего хочу задеть /оскорбить/ ваши чувства

nobody can complain, you least of all - никто не может жаловаться, а вы и подавно

not least - не в самую последнюю очередь (*по важности*)

trade has been bad, not least because of import barriers - торговля шла плохо, что в значительной степени объясняется

ограничениями на импорт

3. для образования *превосх. ст.* прилагательных и наречий со значением менее всего:

least beautiful [intelligent, dangerous] - самый некрасивый [глупый, менее всего опасный]

least

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 8th Ed.

least determiner, pronoun, adverb *BrE* [liːst] ^m *NAmE* [liːst] ^m

determiner, pronoun (*usually* **the least**)

smallest in size, amount, degree, etc

- He's the best teacher, even though he has the least experience.
- She never had the least idea what to do about it.
- He gave (the) least of all towards the wedding present.
- How others see me is **the least of** my worries (= I have more important things to worry about) .
- It's **the least I can do** to help (= I feel I should do more) .

more at to say the least **at** ↑say *v.*

Word Origin:

Old English læːst, læːsest, of Germanic origin; related to ↑less.

Idioms: ↑at least ▪ ↑at the least ▪ ↑not in the least ▪ ↑not least

adverb

to the smallest degree

- He always turns up just when you least expect him.
- She chose the least expensive of the hotels.
- I never hid the truth, **least of all** from you.

more at last but not least **at** ↑last *adv.*, (choose, follow, take, etc.) the line of least resistance **at** ↑line *n.*, least said the soonest

mended the less/least said the better **at** ↑say *v.*

Word Origin:

[**least**] Old English læːst, læːsest, of Germanic origin; related to ↑less.

least

I. **least**¹ **S1 W1** /liːst *BrE* ^ˈ *AmE* ^ˈ *determiner, pronoun*

1. at least

a) not less than a particular number or amount:

- ˈ It will take you at least 20 minutes to get there.
- ˈ He had at least £100,000 in savings.

at the (very) least (=not less than and probably much more than)

- ˈ It would cost \$1 million at the very least.

b) even if something better is not true or is not done:

- ˈ At least he didn't lie to me.
- ˈ I don't expect you to pay me, but you could at least cover my expenses.
- ˈ The house still needed a lot of work, but at least the kitchen was finished.

c) used when you are correcting or changing something that you have just said:

- ˈ They all knew I was on their side. At least, that's what they said.
- ˈ I made everything perfectly clear – or at least I thought I did.

2. **at the (very) least** used when mentioning the least extreme thing that happens, is needed etc:

- ˈ Computer viruses are at the very least annoying and often actually destructive.

3. the least

a) the smallest amount:

- ˈ Women work in those sectors of the job market which pay the least.
- ˈ Which method causes the least damage to the environment?

b) used to emphasize how small something is, especially when it hardly exists at all:

- ˈ I haven't the least idea what you are talking about.
- ˈ He used to wake at the least noise.

c) used when you are saying what someone should do in a situation, and suggesting that they should really do more:

- ˈ The least you could do is give me her phone number.
- ˈ The least they could have given her is some money towards the rent.

4. **not the least/not in the least/not the least bit** none at all, or not at all:

- ˈ I tried to convince them, but they weren't the least interested.
- ˈ I'm not in the least afraid of you any more.
- ˈ His voice was alert, not the least bit sleepy.

5. **to say the least** used to show that something is worse or more serious than you are actually saying:

- ˈ His teaching methods were strange, to say the least.

6. **the least of sb's worries/problems/troubles/concerns** something that someone is not worried about because there are other more important problems:

- ˈ What I looked like was the least of my problems.

7. **it's the least I can do** *spoken* used to say that you are very willing to do something or to reply to someone's thanks:

- ˈ I'll look after them – it's the least I can do.

⇒ **last but not least** at ↑last²(3)

II. **least**² *BrE* ^ˈ *AmE* ^ˈ *adverb*

1. less than anything or anyone else **OPP most**

- ˈ The journey would impose extra expense on those least able to afford it.
- ˈ It is quite amazing what turns up when you are least expecting it.
- ˈ He's my least favourite member of staff.

2. **least of all** especially not a particular person or thing:

- ˈ She hardly ever lost her temper – least of all with Anne.

3. **not least** *formal* used to emphasize that something is important:

- ˈ My mother was upset about his appearance here, not least because she felt it was invading her privacy.

least

12500 **283**^{MCW}

15000 **131**^{COCA}

RANGE: **1k LESS** ²⁹³⁵⁴⁴

less ¹⁵²²⁸⁸

lessen ¹³³³

lessened ⁶⁴⁶

lessening ⁴⁸⁰

lesser ⁴⁷⁸⁹

least ¹³⁴⁰⁰⁸

COCA 500k Unlemmatized

62803 **341**¹¹⁵⁵⁰⁸ *rr22*

6882 **4906**⁷⁸⁶⁰ *rrt*

5078 **6056**⁶⁰⁶⁸ *rgt*

4020 **7590**⁴⁵²² *dat*

29 **144377**²⁹ *nn1*

21 **171397**²¹ *jj*