

# Difference Between Vicious and Ferocious

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## Key Difference – Vicious vs Ferocious

Both vicious and ferocious come under the category of [adjectives](#) in the English language. They can be used to describe violent behavior or nature. Though at an initial glance they appear similar in their meanings and can be used as [synonyms](#) in several occasions, they demonstrate slight differences considering their manner of usage. The key difference between vicious and ferocious is that **‘Vicious’ is primarily marked by immorality and malice whereas ‘Ferocious’ is primarily used to describe something of extreme and intense nature and also something aggressive and cruel.** Hence vicious has a more long-term negative impact in its consequences whereas the negative impact of ‘ferocious’ is not that severe as ‘vicious.’

## What Does Vicious Mean?

The adjective Vicious basically indicates something which is malicious, violent and [evil](#) in nature. Vicious is usually used to describe immoral behavior or conduct. According to the definitions provided by Merriam Webster dictionary Vicious can be used to describe ‘brutal, savagery or violent behavior, having the nature or quality of vice or [immorality](#)’ etc.

*He was the bitten by the vicious dog that lived on the other lane.*

The Cambridge Dictionary describes ‘vicious’ based on two main definitions as; “vicious people or action showing an intention or wish to hurt someone or something very badly” and as “used to describe an object, condition or remark that causes great physical and emotional pain”. However, all these definitions fundamentally emphasize the fact that ‘vicious’ is related to the intentions of evil and malice in its cause of action.

*Everyone was afraid of the vicious gang that terrorized the neighborhood.*

*The new tax system which increased the tax payments of the lower class, introduced by the new ruler is another manifestation of his vicious ruling.*



**Fig 1. The new tax system which increased the tax payments of the lower class, introduced by the new ruler is another manifestation of his vicious ruling.**

The term ‘vicious circle’ is commonly used with the adjective ‘vicious’. As explained in Oxford dictionary, this basically means a “sequence of a reciprocal cause and effect in which two or more elements intensify and aggravate each other, leading inexorably to a worsening of the situation”.

*The internal corruptions resulting to the growing inflation of the economy only aggravates the continuing situation of this existing vicious circle.*

## **What Does Ferocious Mean?**

Unlike Vicious, Ferocious is mainly used to explain extreme or intense brutal behavior usually associated with the consequences of anger or annoyance. Thus it is generally used to describe something possessing or happening in a more savagery nature. Merriam Webster defines the word ‘ferocious’ as “exhibiting or given to extreme fierceness and unrestrained violence and brutality”. Refer the given examples,

*The ferocious lion hunted two buffaloes in one go.*

*The ferocious weather resulted in massive destructions to both human lives and infrastructure*

Merriam Webster also defines ‘ferocious’ as “something extremely intense”. Here it can be used in a both context which provides both a negative [connotation](#) and also sometimes to give a positive connotation. Refer the given example,

*The competitor was ferociously determined to get the best out of his talents.*



**Fig 2.** The competitor was ferociously determined to get the best out of his talents.

## What is the difference between Vicious and Ferocious?

Vicious vs Ferocious	
Vicious refers addicted to or characterized by vice or readily disposed to evil.	Ferocious refers to savagely fierce or extreme/intense.
Usage	
Vicious is used both to describe more violent, aggressive behavior and something having a nature or quality of vice or immorality.	Ferocious is used to describe more violent, brutal behavior or quality of something with an intense and extreme nature.
Impact	
Vicious mostly denotes something which concerns the immoral conduct of humans. This usually implies negative connotations.	Ferocious mostly denotes something either with a violent and savagery nature. But it can also be used to describe positive consequences as well.

## Summary – Vicious vs Ferocious

Both adjectives vicious and ferocious share similar grammatical rules. Oftentimes, even though both these adjectives vicious and ferocious are used as synonyms, in the context of their usage they can be distinguished pertaining to their contextual and literal meanings. Moreover when ferocious can also be used to create a positive impact of the situation vicious can only be used to provide a negative impact as the consequence of the particular situation. Thus, this is the difference between vicious and ferocious.

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