

## बसना *to dwell*

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This intransitive verb has many different senses relating to the fundamental sense of ‘dwelling’, and is often used metaphorically and/or poetically. (It has to be distinguished from its homonym बसना *to be fragrant*, together with associated words such as बास m. fragrance.) Here is OHED’s definition of बसना *to reside* —

बसना *basnā* [*vasati*], v.i. 1. to dwell, to reside. 2. to be settled, populated. 3. to be cultivated (land). 4. to settle, to lodge; to camp; to roost. बसा हुआ, adj. situated (in or on, में or पर). 5. to be set up (a household). उसका घर बस गया है, he is married, settled down. 6. to prosper (as a household).

Here are some examples of usage (mostly news headlines) from the internet:

हर दिल में तिरंगा बसता है

In every heart dwells a tricolor [the Indian flag]

असली भारत गांवों में बसता है

The real India lives in the villages

एक शहर जो हर साल बसता है

A city that forms every year [the Glastonbury pop festival’s tent city, UK]

इस हंसी में बसते हैं परमात्मा

In this laugh dwells the supreme spirit

हुई है शाम तो आँखों में बस गया फिर तू

Evening has come and you have settled in my eyes once more. [from a ghazal by Ahmad Faraz]

ये शहर जो उजड़ गया तो फिर से बस जाएगा

A city that’s been ruined will be established again. [from a song]

मंगल पर बसना चाहते हैं हजारों भारतीय

Thousands of Indians want to settle on Mars

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The common idiom चस बसना means ‘to part for another life’, a euphemism for ‘to die’:

जवान पोते की मौत का एक बुजुर्ग को इतना गहरा सदमा लगा कि वे भी चल बसे ।

The death of an elderly man’s young grandson was such a shock that he too died

ब्रिटेन दश की एक पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री चल बसीं ।

A former prime minister of Britain [has] passed away

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Watch out for 'false friends'! The stem बस- has four completed unconnected homonyms:

- <sup>1</sup> बस- to be fragrant, to smell;
- <sup>2</sup> बस adj., adv. & interj. *enough* etc.) — from Persian;
- <sup>3</sup> बस m. *power, control* etc. — from Sanskrit वश;
- <sup>4</sup> बस f. *bus* — from English (an abbreviation from Latin *omnibus*, 'for all', dative plural of *omnis* 'all')

See OHED for the many usages and idioms based on the first two of these.

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**बसाना**, the transitive equivalent of बसना, has a *causative* sense: to cause to dwell, etc. Its usage is less common than that of बसना, and again, may be metaphorical and/or poetic.

अब वैज्ञानिक तरीके से बसाया जाएगा केदारनाथ  
Kedarnath [valley] will now be settled scientifically.

सोनाघाटी की सरकारी जमीन पर पारदियों को बसाया जाएगा  
Pardhis will be settled on government land in Sonaghati [in MP; पारदी — a nomadic tribe].

डूब क्षेत्र में बसाई जा रही अवैध कालोनियां  
Illegal colonies being settled in flood-plain.

दूर-दराज क्षेत्र में नहीं बसाए जाएंगे गरीब  
The poor will not be settled in a remote area.

कश्मीरी पंडितों को एक स्थान पर बसाया जाए  
Kashmiri Pandits should be settled in a single location.

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The Hindi verb बसना derives from the Sanskrit verb वसति (root वस् ). Though this does not immediately resemble any European equivalents, there is actually a very significant cognate in the past-tense verb 'was' in English. (See the शब्दार्थ feature on होना.) Both वसति and 'was' derive from a PIE root *wes*, 'which in other Indo-European languages usually has the sense 'to remain, to stay (the night)' (OED). Another possible cognate is the name 'Vesta', the Roman goddess of hearth and home, to whom were dedicated the famous 'vestal virgins'.

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Common Sanskritic words deriving from this same root, and with related meanings, include:

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| आदिवासी | adj. & m. aboriginal, indigenous; original inhabitant              |
| आप्रवास | m. immigration   |
| आवास    | m. 'residence', also common in compounds such as दूतावास 'embassy' |
| उपवास   | m. fast, fasting (lit. 'abiding')                                  |

एकांत-वास	m. seclusion
कारावास	m. solitary confinement
छात्रावास	m. student hostel
देशवासी	m. citizen, resident
निवास	m. residence (common in house-names, such as मित्तल-निवास)
पुनर्वास	m. resettlement
प्रवास	m. residence abroad, exile; प्रवासी adj. & m. migrant, exile
बनवास, वनवास	m. (Rāma's) forest exile
सहवास	m. co-habitation; sexual intercourse
स्वर्गवास	m. 'residence in heaven', i.e. demise; स्वर्गवासी 'deceased; the late...'

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सब से हिलिये सब से मिलिये, सब से लीजिये नाम ।  
हाँ जी हाँ जी सब से कहिये, **बसिये** अपने गाम ॥ (attrib. Kabir)

*Meet with all, fall in with all, take the Name from all;  
agree heartily with all, [but] **dw**ell in your own abode!*

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