

## UPRISING

---

**civil war   counterinsurgency  
insurgency   insurrection  
rebellion   revolt   revolution**

These nouns all denote some kind of effort to defy or overthrow a government or other form of authority. **Uprising**, the broadest term, may be substituted in a general way for any of the other nouns. Specifically, it may refer to a minor or unsuccessful act of popular resistance: an abortive *uprising* of the slaves on a Georgia plantation. It can also apply to those localized signs of unrest and discontent that indicate the imminence of widespread conflict: the first *uprisings* in Germany and Austria, which led to the Peasants' War of 1524–6. **Rebellion** is an armed resistance or *uprising* against a government, often on a large scale and frequently doomed to failure. If successful, however, a *rebellion* may become a **revolution**, which involves overthrow and replacement of a government or political system by the people governed. In a wider sense, *revolution* can denote any extensive or drastic change in economic institutions, in ideas, or in mores: the Industrial *Revolution*, which began in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century; the *revolution* in manners and morals that followed the First World War.

**Insurrection** points to an organized effort to seize power, especially political power, while **revolt** emphasizes protest against oppression or other intolerable conditions. An *insurrection*, *revolt* has the extended meaning of any refusal to go on tolerating an allegiance or a powerful authority: a *revolt* within an established church.

**Insurgency** has almost the same meaning as *insurrection*, but it usually designates a better organized kind of *revolt*, and is often used today to refer to revolutionary activity that is aided by foreign powers. **Counterinsurgency**, a word most common in current news and propaganda media, is any measure designed to combat revolutionary activity or guerrilla warfare.

If an *uprising*, *insurrection*, or *insurgency* continues for a long time without being effectively countered, the country of its origin may be said to be in a state of **civil war**. *Civil war* denotes armed conflict openly carried on between parties or sections of the same country, whether or not both parties involved are legally recognized as belligerents. In the usual sense of the term, *civil war* involves factions (generally two), each trying to gain control of the existing government. In this way, a *civil war* differs from a *revolution* in that the emphasis is not on overthrowing a regime. [The *Civil War* ended after the decisive defeat of the Royalists at the Battle of Naseby and the subsequent surrender of Charles I, who was delivered into the custody of Parliament.] See CONSPIRACY, CRIME, INTRIGUE, LAWLESSNESS.

**rebellion.** Rebellion, revolution, uprising, revolt, insurrection, mutiny, Putsch come into comparison only when they denote a war or a warlike outbreak against a government or against powers in authority. **Rebellion** in this narrow sense implies open, organized, and usually armed, resistance to constituted authority or to the government in power: the term is usually applied (only after the event) to an instance of such resistance as has failed to overthrow the powers that be; as, Jack Straw's *Rebellion*; the Jacobite *rebellions* of 1715 and 1745. **Revolution**, on the other hand, applies strictly to a rebellion that has been successful to the extent that the old government is overthrown and a new one substituted; as, the French *Revolution*; the American *Revolution*. The term, however, does not invariably imply a war or a warlike outbreak or even a change in government; as, the industrial *revolution* of the nineteenth century; to effect a bloodless *revolution* by a coup d'état. The words are often applied to the same event according to the point of view of the user or sometimes according to the time in which it is used; thus, the American Civil War of 1861-1865 was called the "War of the *Rebellion*" by Northerners, not only during its progress but for a long time after; a *revolution* is often called a *rebellion* by the overthrown government or its supporters until bitterness has faded; thus, the English Civil War (1642-1652) was, after the Restoration (1660), and still sometimes is, called the Great *Rebellion*. **Uprising** is a somewhat general term applicable to any act of violence that indicates a popular desire to defy or overthrow the government: it is often used in reference to a small and ineffective movement among an insurgent class or section of the people but it is applicable also to the first signs of a general or widespread rebellion; as, there was fear of *uprisings* in different parts of the country; "Whenever the whole nation should join together in one sudden and vigorous *uprising*" (*Freeman*). **Revolt** and **insurrection** in strict

use apply to an armed uprising which does not attain the extent of a rebellion, either because it is quickly put down or is immediately effective. *Revolt*, however, carries a stronger suggestion of a refusal to accept conditions or continue in allegiance than does *insurrection*, which often suggests a seditious act such as an attempt to seize the governing power or to gain control for one's party. "The Reformation... was no sudden *revolt*, but the culmination of a long agitation for national independence in religious matters" (*Inge*). "Baltazar's tyranny grew little by little, and the Ácoma people were sometimes at the point of *revolt*" (*Cather*). "*Insurrections* of base people are more furious in their beginnings" (*Bacon*). "Excess of obedience is... as bad as *insurrection*" (*Meredith*). **Mutiny** applies chiefly to an insurrection against military or, especially, maritime or naval authority; as, the ship's master feared *mutiny* long before it occurred; the *mutiny* of a regiment made the situation desperate for the invaders. **Putsch**, a Swiss-German term in some use in English, applies to a small popular uprising; as, the Kapp *Putsch* in Germany in 1920; the Munich beer hall *Putsch* of Hitler's supporters in 1923.

**Ana.** \*Sedition, treason: resistance, opposition, combat-ing, withstanding (see corresponding verbs at **OPPOSE**). **rebellious.** \*Insubordinate, mutinous, seditious, factious, contumacious.

**Ana.** Recalcitrant, refractory, intractable, \*unruly, un-governable: estranged, alienated, disaffected (see **ESTRANGE**).

**Ant.** Acquiescent, resigned: submissive.