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syc·o·phant  (sīk ə-fənt, sī kə-)

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n.

A person who attempts to gain advantage by flattering influential people or behaving in a servile manner.

[Latin *sȳcophanta*, informer, slanderer, from Greek *sūkophantēs*, informer, from *sūkon phainein*, to show a fig (perhaps originally said of denouncers of theft or exportation of figs or of persons making a lascivious gesture resembling a fig) : *sūkon*, fig; see [FIG](#)¹ + *phainein*, to show; see [bhā](#)⁻¹ in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

syc'ō·phan tic (-făn tīk), **syc'ō·phan ti·cal** (-tī-kəl) *adj.*

syc'ō·phan ti·cal·ly *adv.*

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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