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con·fess  (kən-fěs)

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v. con·fessed, con·fess·ing, con·fess·es

v.tr.

1. To disclose (something damaging or inconvenient to oneself); admit. See Synonyms at [acknowledge](#).

2. To acknowledge belief or faith in; profess: *confess one's religion*.

3.

a. To make known (one's sins) to God or to a priest.

b. To hear the confession of (a penitent).

v.intr.

1. To admit or acknowledge something damaging or inconvenient to oneself: *The suspect confessed to the crime*.

2. To disclose one's sins to a priest.

[Middle English *confessen*, from Old French *confesser*, from Vulgar Latin **cōnfessāre*, from Latin *cōnfītērī*, *cōnfess-* : *com-*, intensive pref.; see [COM-](#) + *fatērī*, to admit; see *bhā*-² [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

con·fess a·ble *adj.*

con·fess ed·ly (-ĭd-lē) *adv.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

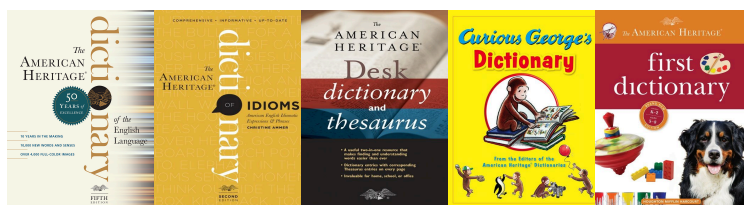
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

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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