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dictionary

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ba·nal  (bə-năl , bə-nāl , bā nəl)

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adj.
Drearily commonplace and often predictable; trite: “*Blunt language cannot hide a banal conception*” (James Wolcott).

[French, from Old French, shared by tenants in a feudal jurisdiction, from *ban*, summons to military service, of Germanic origin; see **bhā**-² in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

ba·nal *ize*’ *v.*
ba·nal *ly* *adv.*

Usage Note: In our 2017 survey, three-quarters of the Usage Panel preferred to pronounce *banal* with a stress on the second syllable, as (bə-năl) or (bə-nāl), rhyming roughly with *canal* and *in all*, respectively. Even though 25 percent of the Panel prefers a pronunciation with stress on the first syllable (bā nəl), it's important to note that half of the Panel found this pronunciation unacceptable.

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

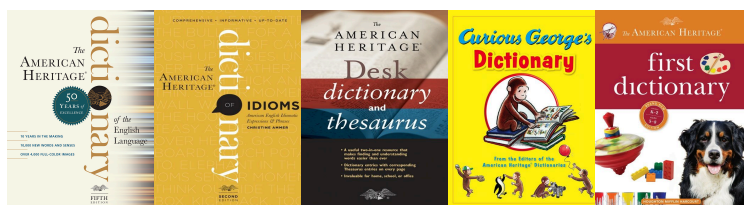
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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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