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barb¹  (bärb)

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n.

1. A sharp point projecting in reverse direction to the main point of a weapon or tool, as on an arrow or fishhook.
 2. A cutting remark.
 3. *Zoology* A small, sharp point projecting in reverse direction from the tip, as on a porcupine quill or a bee sting.
 4. *Zoology* One of the parallel filaments projecting from the main shaft of a feather.
 5. *Botany* A short, sharp, reflexed bristle or hairlike projection.
 6. See [barbel](#)¹.
 7. Any of various Old World freshwater fishes of the genera *Barbus*, *Puntius*, and related genera of the family Cyprinidae.
 8. A linen covering for a woman's head, throat, and chin worn in medieval times.
- tr.v.* **barbed**, **barb·ing**, **barbs**
To provide or furnish with a barb.

[Middle English *barbe*, from Old French, beard, from Latin *barba*; see **bhardh-ā-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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barb²  (bärb)

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n.

1. A horse of a breed introduced by the Moors into Spain from northern Africa that has high withers and an arched neck and is known for its speed and endurance.
2. Any of a breed of domestic pigeon that has prominent wattles around the eyes.

[French *barbe*, from Italian *barbero*, Berber, from Vulgar Latin **Barbaria*, Barbary States, from Latin *barbarus*, barbarous; see [BARBAROUS](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

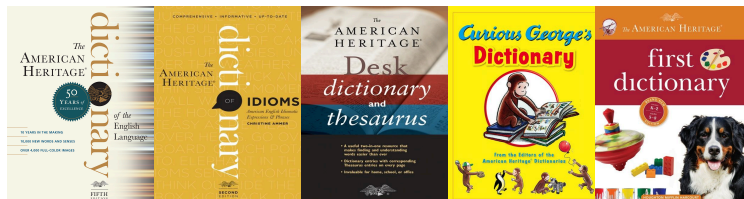
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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