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THE USAGE PANEL

The Usage Panel is a group of nearly 200 prominent scholars, creative writers, journalists, diplomats, and others in occupations requiring mastery of language. Annual surveys have gauged the acceptability of particular usages and grammatical constructions.

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bore¹  (bôr)

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v. bored, bor-ing, bores

v.tr.

1. To make a hole in or through, with or as if with a drill.
2. To form (a tunnel, for example) by drilling, digging, or burrowing.

v.intr.

1. To make a hole in or through something with or as if with a drill: *"three types of protein that enable the cells to bore in and out of blood vessels" (Elisabeth Rosenthal).*
2. To proceed or advance steadily or laboriously: *a destroyer boring through heavy seas.*

n.

1. A hole or passage made by or as if by use of a drill.
2. A hollow, usually cylindrical chamber or barrel, as of a firearm.
3. The interior diameter of a hole, tube, or cylinder.
4. The caliber of a firearm.
5. A drilling tool.

[Middle English *boren*, from Old English *borian*.]

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bore²  (bôr)

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tr.v. bored, bor-ing, bores

To make weary by being dull, repetitive, or tedious: *The movie bored us.*

n.

One that is wearily dull, repetitive, or tedious.

[Origin unknown.]

Usage Note: If an activity or experience starts to bore you, are you bored *by* it, bored *of* it, or bored *with* it? All three constructions are common in informal writing and speech, but they enjoy different degrees of acceptance. The most widely approved wordings are *bored with* and *bored by*. In our 2012 survey, the sentences *I'm getting bored with this lecture series* and *I'm getting bored by this lecture series* were accepted by 93 percent and 88 percent of our Usage Panel, respectively. By contrast, only 24 percent of the Panelists found *I'm getting bored of this lecture series* at least somewhat acceptable. Why is the *bored of* construction so widely condemned, when *tired of*, on which it is presumably modeled, is universally accepted? Probably because *tired of* was grandfathered into our language, as a relic of the once-common use of *of* in passive-voice constructions (in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, for instance, Benedict describes himself as being "loved of all ladies"—that is, loved *by* them). By the time *bore* came into English in the late 1800s, the use of *of* to indicate the agent in passive constructions was uncommon. People have kept using such pre-existent familiar phrasings as *tired of* and *frightened of*, but otherwise the passive-agent use of *of* is mostly defunct, so the phrasing *bored of* is likely to seem like an error to many readers.

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bore³  (bôr)

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n.
See **tidal bore**.

[Middle English *bare*, wave, from Old Norse *bāra*; see **bher**-¹ in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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bore⁴  (bôr)

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v.
Past tense of [bear](#)¹.

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

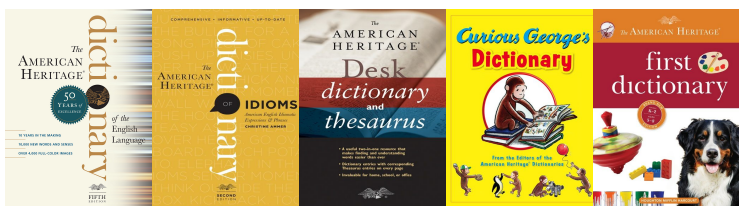
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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