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Language



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birr¹  (bûr)

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n.

1. A whirring sound.
2. Strong forward momentum; driving force.

intr.v. **birred**, **birr·ing**, **birrs**

To make a whirring sound.

[Middle English *bir*, favorable wind, from Old Norse *byrr*; see **bher**-¹ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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birr²  (bîr)

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n. pl. **birr** or **birrs**

See Table at [currency](#).

[Amharic *bərr*, silver, silver taler bearing the portrait of Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa (used as currency throughout East Africa and the Indian Ocean region until recent times), *birr*; see **brr** [in the Appendix of Semitic roots](#).]

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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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