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circum·fer·ence  (sər-kŭm fər-əns)

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n.

1. The boundary line of a circle.
2.
 - a. The boundary line of an area or object.
 - b. *Abbr. c or circ.* The length of such a line.
3. The margin or area surrounding something.

[Middle English, from Old French *circonference*, from Latin *circumferentia*, from *circumferēns*, *circumferent-*, present participle of *circumferre*, to carry around : *circum-*, *circum-* + *ferre*, to carry; see **bher-**¹ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

circum·fer·en tial (-fə-rĕn shəl) *adj.*

Synonyms: circumference, circuit, compass, perimeter, periphery

These nouns refer to a boundary or area around the outer edge of something: *drove around the circumference of the city; followed the circuit around the park; stayed within the compass of the schoolyard; walked the perimeter of the estate; fenced the periphery of the property.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

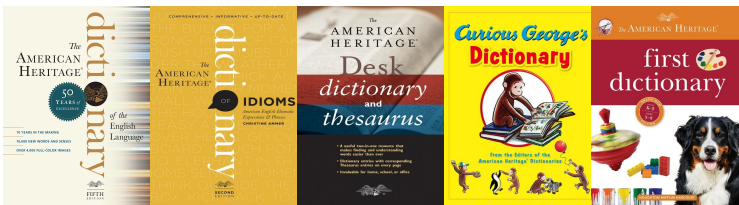
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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