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dictionary

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Language



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bur·nish  (bûr nîsh)

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tr.v. **bur·nished**, **bur·nish·ing**, **bur·nish·es**

1. To make smooth or glossy by rubbing; polish.
 2. To rub with a tool that serves especially to smooth or polish.
 3. To improve or make more impressive: *achievements that burnished her reputation.*
- n.*

A smooth glossy finish or appearance; luster.

[Middle English *burnishen*, from Old French *burnir*, *burniss-*, variant of *brunir*, from *brun*, shining, of Germanic origin; see **bher-**² [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

bur nish·er *n.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

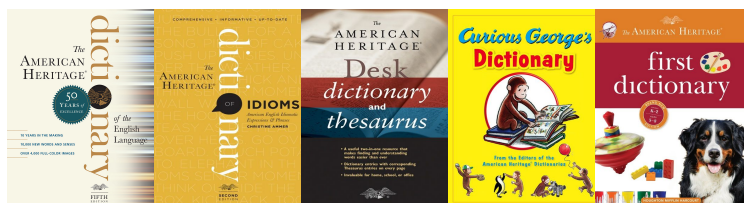
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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