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for·te¹  (fôr tã', fôrt)

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n.

1. Something in which a person excels: “His *forte* was in defusing negative rumors before they ever exploded into news accounts” (Jane Mayer).
2. The strong part of a sword blade, between the middle and the hilt.

[French *fort*, from Old French, strong, from Latin *fortis*; see [FORT](#).]

Usage Note: *Forte*, meaning “something in which a person excels,” can be pronounced with one syllable, like the French word from which it is derived. It can also be pronounced with two syllables (fôr tã'), which is the more common pronunciation in American English and was the choice of 74 percent of the Usage Panel in both our 1996 and 2016 surveys. Some of those who dislike the two-syllable pronunciation argue it should only be used for the music term *forte*, which is derived from Italian.

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for·te²  (fôr tã') *Music*

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adv. & adj. Abbr. f

In a loud, forceful manner. Used chiefly as a direction.

n.

A note, passage, or chord played forte.

[Italian, strong, forte, from Latin *fortis*; see **bhergh**-² [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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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:

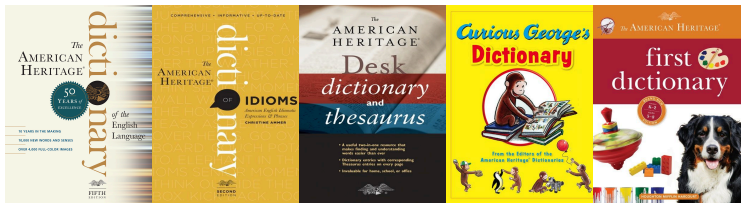
[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

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

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