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beam  (bēm)

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n.

1. A squared-off log or a large, oblong piece of timber, metal, or stone used especially as a horizontal support in construction.

2. *Nautical*

a. A transverse structural member of a ship's frame, used to support a deck and to brace the sides against stress.

b. The breadth of a ship at the widest point.

c. The side of a ship: *sighted land off the starboard beam.*

3. *Informal* The widest part of a person's hips: *broad in the beam.*

4. A steel tube or wooden roller on which the warp is wound in a loom.

5. An oscillating lever connected to an engine piston rod and used to transmit power to the crankshaft.

6.

a. The bar of a balance from which weighing pans are suspended.

b. *Sports* A balance beam.

7. The main horizontal bar on a plow to which the share, coulter, and handles are attached.

8. One of the main stems of a deer's antlers.

9.

a. A ray or shaft of light.

b. A concentrated stream of particles or a similar propagation of waves: *a beam of protons; a beam of light.*

10. A radio beam.

v. **beamed, beam·ing, beams**

v.intr.

1. To radiate light; shine.

2. To smile expansively.

v.tr.

1. To emit or transmit: *beam a message via satellite.*

2. To express by means of a radiant smile: *He beamed his approval of the new idea.*

Idiom:

on the beam

1. Following a radio beam. Used of aircraft.

2. On the right track; operating correctly.

[Middle English *bem*, from Old English *bēam*; see **bheu-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

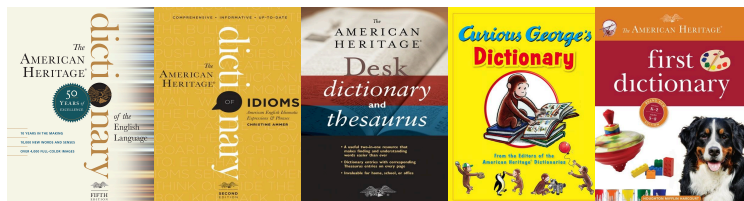
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