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dictionary

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fra·ter·ni·ty (frə-tûr nĭ-tē)

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n. pl. fra·ter·ni·ties

1. A body of people associated for a common purpose or interest, such as a guild.
2. A group of people joined by similar backgrounds, occupations, interests, or tastes: *the fraternity of bird watchers*.
3. A social organization at a college or university, traditionally consisting of male students and designated by Greek letters.
4. *Roman Catholic Church* A sodality.
5. The quality or condition of being brothers; brotherliness.

[Middle English *fraternite*, from Old French, from Latin *frāternitās*, from *frāternus*, fraternal; see [FRATERNAL](#).]

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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:

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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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