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re·frain ¹  (rĭ-frān)

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intr.v.

To hold oneself back; forbear from doing something: *refrained from swearing.*

[Middle English *refreinen*, from Old French *refrener*, to restrain, from Latin *refrēnāre* : *re-*, *re-* + *frēnāre*, to restrain (from *frēnum*, bridle, from *frendere*, to grind; see **ghrendh-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#)).]

re·frain *er n.*

re·frain *ment n.*

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re·frain ²  (rĭ-frān)

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n.

1.

a. A phrase, verse, or group of verses repeated at intervals throughout a song or poem, especially at the end of each stanza.

b. Music for the refrain of a song.

2. A song or melody.

3. A repeated utterance or theme.

[Middle English *refrein*, from Old French *refrain*, alteration of *refrait*, past participle of *refraindre*, to break off, repeat, from Vulgar Latin **refrangere*, to break off, alteration of Latin *refringere*; see [REFRACT](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

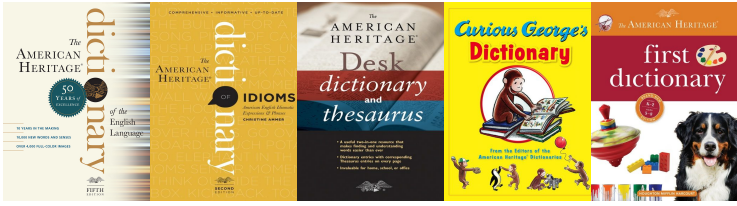
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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 in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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