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Language



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ben·e·fit  (běn ə-ſīt)

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n.

1.

a. Something that promotes or enhances well-being; an advantage: *The nurse explained the benefits of regular exercise.*

b. Help; aid: *The field trip was of great benefit to the students.*

2.

a. A payment made by a government agency or insurance company to qualifying persons in time of need: *an increase in welfare benefits.*

b. A form of compensation, such as paid vacation time, subsidized health insurance, or a pension, provided to employees in addition to wages or salary as part of an employment arrangement. Also called *fringe benefit*.

3. A public entertainment, performance, or social event held to raise funds for a person or cause.

4. *Archaic* A kindly deed.

v. **ben·e·fit·ed**, **ben·e·fit·ing**, **ben·e·fits** also **ben·e·fit·ted** or **ben·e·fit·ting**

v.tr.

To be helpful or useful to.

v.intr.

To derive benefit: *You will benefit from her good example.*

Idiom:

benefit of the doubt

A favorable judgment granted in the absence of full evidence.

[Middle English, from Old French *bienfait*, good deed, from Latin *benefactum*, from *benefacere*, to do a service; see [BENEFACTION](#).]

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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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