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tow ¹ (tō)

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tr.v. **towed**, **tow·ing**, **tows**

To draw or pull behind by a chain or line: *a tugboat towing a barge*. See Synonyms at [pull](#).

n.

1. The act or an instance of towing: *Can you give my car a tow?*

2.

a. Something, such as a tugboat, that tows.

b. Something, such as a barge or car, that is towed.

3. A rope or cable used in towing.

Idiom:

in tow

1. In a condition of being towed: *a car with a trailer in tow*.

2. Under close guidance; in one's charge: *The new student was taken in tow by a peer counselor*.

3. As a companion or follower: *came to dinner with a friend in tow*.

[Middle English *towen*, from Old English *togian*; see **deuk-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

tow **a·ble** *adj.*

tow **er** *n.*

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tow ² (tō)

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n.

1. Coarse broken flax or hemp fiber.

2. A continuous untwisted bundle of manufactured fibers.

[Middle English, possibly from Old English *tow-*, spinning (in *towcraft*, spinning craft, spinning).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

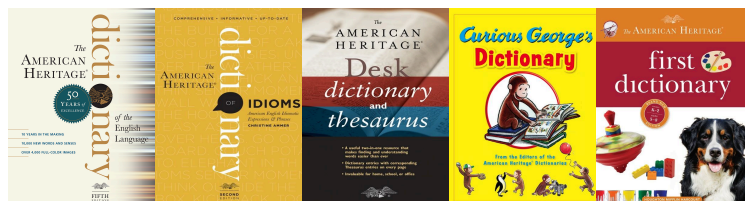
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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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