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the·ca  (thē kə)

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n. pl. the·cae (-sē', -kē')

A case, covering, or sheath, such as the covering of the pollen sacs of an anther or the thick cell wall of certain dinoflagellates.

[Latin *thēca*, case, receptacle, from Greek *thēkē*; see **dhē-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

the cal (-kəl) *adj.*

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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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