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dictionary

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English  
Language


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**ef·fect**  (ĭ-fěkt )

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*n.*

1. Something brought about by a cause or agent; a result.
2. The power to produce an outcome or achieve a result: *The government's action had little effect on the trade imbalance.*
3. Advantage; avail: *used her words to great effect in influencing the jury.*
4. The condition of being in full force or execution; operativeness: *a new regulation that goes into effect tomorrow.*
5.
  - a. Something that produces a specific impression or supports a general design or intention: *The lighting effects emphasized the harsh atmosphere of the drama.*
  - b. A particular impression: *large windows that gave an effect of spaciousness.*
  - c. Production of a desired impression: *spent lavishly on dinner just for effect.*
6. The basic or general meaning; import: *He said he was greatly worried, or words to that effect.*
7. **effects** Movable belongings; goods.

*tr.v.* **ef·fect·ed**, **ef·fect·ing**, **ef·fects**

To bring about; make happen; cause or accomplish: *effect a cure for a disease; effect a change in policy.* See Usage

Note at [affect](#)<sup>1</sup>.

**Idioms:**

**in effect**

In essence; to all purposes: *testimony that in effect contradicted her earlier statement.*

**to the effect that**

With the general meaning that: *He said something to the effect that he was sorry.*

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[Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *effectus*, from past participle of *efficere*, to accomplish : *ex-*, *ex-* + *facere*, to make; see [dhē-](#) [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.](#)]

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**ef·fect** *er n.*

**ef·fect** *i·ble adj.*

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**Synonyms:** effect, consequence, result, outcome, upshot

These nouns denote an occurrence, situation, or condition that is produced by a cause or agent. *Effect* stresses the idea of influence or alteration: *a drug whose main effect is to lower hypertension; increased erosion that was the effect of deforestation.*

A *consequence* follows naturally or logically from its cause: *a broken wrist that was the consequence of a fall; a reduction in crime that was the consequence of better policing.*

A *result* is viewed as the end product of the operation of the cause: *improved his grades as a result of better study habits; an experiment with an unexpected result.*

An *outcome* more strongly implies finality and may suggest the resolution of a complex or lengthy process: *The trial's outcome might have changed if the defendant had testified.*

An *upshot* is a decisive result, often of the nature of a climax: *"The upshot of the matter ... was that she showed both of them the door"* (Robert Louis Stevenson).

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# Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

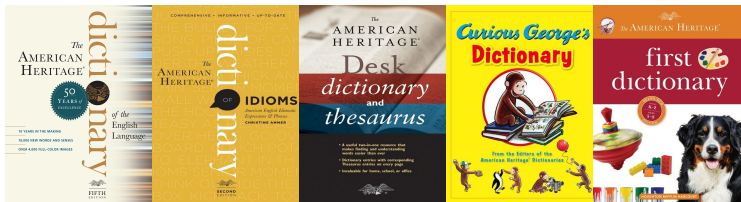
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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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