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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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pro·fane  (prō-fān , prə-)

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adj.

1. Marked by contempt or irreverence for what is sacred.
2. Nonreligious in subject matter, form, or use; secular: *sacred and profane music*.
3. Not admitted into a body of secret knowledge or ritual; uninitiated.
4. Vulgar; coarse.

tr.v. **pro·fane**d, **pro·fan**-ing, **pro·fane**s

1. To treat with irreverence: *profane the name of God*.
2. To put to an improper, unworthy, or degrading use; abuse.

[Middle English *prophane*, from Old French, from Latin *profānus*, from *prō fānō*, in front of the temple : *prō-*, before, outside; see [PRO-](#)¹ + *fānō*, ablative of *fānum*, temple; see [dhēs-](#) [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

pro·fan **a·to'ry** (prō-fān ə-tôr'ē, prə-) *adj.*

pro·fane **ly** *adv.*

pro·fan **er** *n.*

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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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