



The  
AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language


## HOW TO USE THE DICTIONARY

To look up an entry in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, use the search window above. For best results, after typing in the word, click on the “Search” button instead of using the “enter” key.

Some compound words (like *bus rapid transit*, *dog whistle*, or *identity theft*) don’t appear on the drop-down list when you type them in the search bar. For best results with compound words, place a quotation mark before the compound word in the search window.

[guide to the dictionary](#)



## THE USAGE PANEL

The Usage Panel is a group of nearly 200 prominent scholars, creative writers, journalists, diplomats, and others in occupations requiring mastery of language. Annual surveys have gauged the acceptability of particular usages and grammatical constructions.

[The Panelists](#)



## AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY APP

The new American Heritage Dictionary app is now available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#).



## THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY BLOG

The articles in our [blog](#) examine new words, revised definitions, interesting images from the fifth edition, discussions of usage, and more.

**THE 100 WORDS®**

See word lists from the best-selling 100 Words Series!

[Find out more!](#)



## INTERESTED IN DICTIONARIES?

Check out the Dictionary Society of North America at <http://www.dictionariesociety.com>

**fib·u·la**  (fīb yə-lə)

Share: [Tweet](#)

*n. pl. fib·u·lae* (-lē') or *fib·u·las*

1.
  - a. The outer and narrower of two bones of the human lower leg, extending from the knee to the ankle.
  - b. The corresponding bone in the leg or hind limb of other vertebrates.
2. An often ornamented clasp or brooch used in ancient Greece and Rome to fasten clothes.

[Latin *fībula*, clasp, from *fīgere*, to fasten; see **dhīg<sup>w</sup>**- [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]



(click for a larger image)

### **fibula**

*top*: bones of a human leg

*bottom*: 7th-6th century bc bronze clasp



(click for a larger image)

### **fibula**

---

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition copyright ©2022 by HarperCollins Publishers. All rights reserved.

## Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

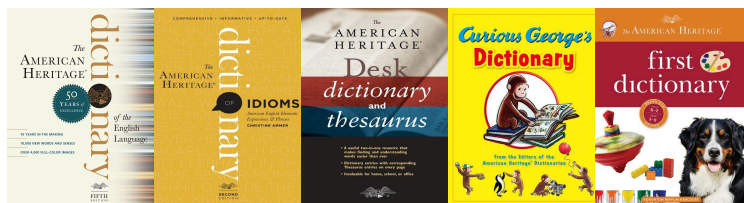
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

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](#).

## American Heritage Dictionary Products



[The American Heritage Dictionary, 5th Edition](#)   [The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms](#)   [The American Heritage Roget's Thesaurus](#)   [Curious George's Dictionary](#)   [The American Heritage Children's Dictionary](#)

- **CONTACT US**
  - [Customer Service](#)
  - [Make Me An Author](#)
  - [Ebooks Help with Glose Reader](#)
- **ABOUT US**
  - [Company Profile](#)
  - [Leadership Team](#)
  - [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
  - [HarperCollins Careers](#)
  - [HarperCollins Imprints](#)
  - [HarperGreen](#)
  - [Social Media Directory](#)
  - [Accessibility](#)
- **FOR READERS**
  - [Browse Reading Guides](#)
- **FOR AUTHORS**
  - [Submit a Manuscript](#)
  - [Report Piracy](#)
  - [Agent Portal](#)
- **MEDIA**
  - [Publicity Contacts](#)
  - [Press Room](#)
- **SERVICES**
  - [HarperCollins Speakers Bureau](#)
  - [Library Services](#)
  - [Academic Services](#)
  - [Desk & Exam Copies](#)
  - [Review Copies](#)
  - [OpenBook API](#)
  - [Marketing Partnerships](#)
- **COVID-19 RESOURCES & PERMISSIONS**
  - [Permissions for Adult Online Readings](#)
  - [Permissions for Kids Online Readings](#)
- **SALES & RIGHTS**
  - [Booksellers & Retailer Ordering](#)
  - [HarperCollins Catalogs](#)
  - [Permissions](#)
  - [Subsidiary Rights](#)
- [Media Rights and Content Development](#)
- **GLOSE APP**
  - [iPhone](#)
  - [Android](#)
  - 
  - 
  -
- **GLOBAL DIVISIONS**
  - [HarperCollins US](#)
  - [HarperCollins Canada](#)
  - [HarperCollins Christian](#)
  - [HarperCollins Australia](#)
  - [HarperCollins India](#)
  - [HarperCollins UK](#)
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -

 HarperCollins Publishers

News Corp

[Terms of Use](#) • [Terms of Sale](#) • [Your Ad Choices](#) • [Privacy Policy](#) • [California Privacy Policy](#) • [Do Not Sell My Personal Information](#)

Copyright 2022 HarperCollins Publishers All rights reserved.

\*This website is best viewed in Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge, or Safari. Some characters in pronunciations and etymologies cannot be displayed properly in Internet Explorer.