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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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ell ¹ (ěł)

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n.

1. A subsidiary wing of a building, usually oriented at right angles to the main structure.
2. A right-angled bend in a pipe or conduit; an elbow.

[From its resemblance to the shape of the capital letter L, or short for [ELBOW](#).]

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ell ² (ěł)

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n.

Any of several historical units of measure, originally based on the length of the arm or forearm but later standardized at other lengths, such as the English ell of 45 inches (114 centimeters).

[Middle English, from Old English *eln*, the length from the elbow to the middle finger's tip, ell; see **el-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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ell ³ (ěł)

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n.

Variant of [el](#)¹.

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ELL

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abbr.

English language learner

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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:

[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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