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na·tive  (nā tĭv)

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adj.

1.

- a. Being such by birth or origin: *a native Scot*.
- b. Being a member of the original inhabitants of a particular place.
- c. Of, belonging to, or characteristic of such inhabitants: *native dress; the native diet of Polynesia*.
- d. Being one's own because of the place or circumstances of one's birth: *our native land*.
2. Originating, growing, or produced in a certain place or region; indigenous: *a plant native to Asia*.
3. Occurring in nature pure or uncombined with other substances: *native copper*.
4. Existing in or belonging to one by nature; innate: *her native intelligence*.
5. Natural, unaltered, or unadorned: *native beauty*.
6. *Biochemistry* Of or relating to the naturally occurring conformation of a macromolecule, such as a protein.
7. *Archaic* Closely related, as by birth or race.

n.

1.

- a. One born in or connected with a place by birth: *a native of Scotland now living in the United States*.
- b. One of the original inhabitants or lifelong residents of a place.
2. An animal or plant that originated in a particular place or region.

[Middle English, from Old French *natif*, from Latin *nātīvus*, from *nātus*, past participle of *nāscī*, to be born; see **gena-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

na tive·ly *adv.*

na tive·ness *n.*

Synonyms: [native](#), [indigenous](#), [autochthonous](#), [aboriginal](#)

These adjectives mean of, belonging to, or connected with a specific place or country by virtue of birth or origin. *Native* implies birth or origin in the specified place: *a native New Yorker; the native North American sugar maple*. *Indigenous* specifies that something or someone is native rather than coming or being brought in from elsewhere: *an indigenous crop; the Ainu, a people indigenous to the northernmost islands of Japan*. *Autochthonous* applies to what is native and unchanged by outside sources: *autochthonous folk melodies*. *Aboriginal* describes what has existed from the beginning; it is often applied to the earliest known inhabitants of a place: *the aboriginal population; aboriginal nature*.

Usage Note: When used in reference to a member of an indigenous people, the noun *native*, like its synonym *aborigine*, can evoke unwelcome stereotypes of primitiveness or cultural backwardness that many people seek to avoid. As is often the case with words that categorize people, the use of the noun is more problematic than the use of the corresponding adjective. Thus a phrase such as *the peoples native to northern Europe* or *the aboriginal inhabitants of the South Pacific* is preferable to *the natives of northern Europe* or *the aborigines of the South Pacific*. · Despite its potentially negative connotations, *native* is enjoying increasing popularity in ethnonyms such as *native Australian* and *Alaska Native*, perhaps due to the wide acceptance of *Native American* as a term of ethnic pride and respect. These compounds have the further benefit of being equally acceptable when used alone as nouns (*a native Australian*) or in an adjectival construction (*a member of a native Australian people*). Of terms formed on this model, those referring to

peoples indigenous to the United States generally capitalize *native*, as in *Alaska Native* (or the less common *Native Alaskan*) and *Native Hawaiian*, while others usually style it lowercase.

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

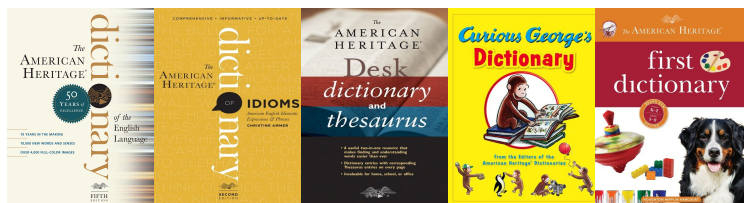
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[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](#).

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