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dictionary

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n.

1. A person who inherits or is entitled by law or by the terms of a will to inherit the estate of another.
2. A person who succeeds or is in line to succeed to a hereditary rank, title, or office.
3. One who receives or is expected to receive a heritage, as of ideas, from a predecessor.

[Middle English, from Anglo-Norman, from Latin *hērēs*; see **ghē-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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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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