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AMERICAN
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the
English
Language



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her·i·tage  (hěŕ ĭ-tĭj)

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n.

1. Property that is or can be inherited; an inheritance.
2. Something that is passed down from preceding generations; a tradition.
3. The status acquired by a person through birth; a birthright: *a heritage of affluence and social position.*
4. A domesticated animal or a crop of a traditional breed, usually not widely produced for commercial purposes.

[Middle English, from Old French, from *eritier*, heir, from Medieval Latin *hērēditārius*, from Latin, inherited; see [HEREDITARY](#).]

Synonyms: *heritage, inheritance, legacy, tradition*

These nouns denote something immaterial, such as a practice or custom, that is passed from one generation to another: *a heritage of volunteerism; a rich inheritance of storytelling; a legacy of philosophical thought; the family tradition of going for a walk on Thanksgiving.*

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