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HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language

  


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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.

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## THE USAGE PANEL

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**re·prise**  (rĭ-prēz )

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*n.*

1. *Music*

a. A repetition of a phrase or verse.

b. A repetition of a song performed earlier, as in a musical, often in abbreviated form and sometimes with slightly different lyrics.

c. A return to an original theme.

2. (*often* rĭ-prīz ) A recurrence or resumption of an action.

*tr.v.* **re·prised**, **re·pris·ing**, **re·pris·es**

To repeat or resume an action; make a reprise of.

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[Middle English, act of taking back, from Old French , from feminine past participle of *reprendre*, to take back; see [REPRIEVE](#).]

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**Usage Note:** In its musical sense meaning “a repetition of a phrase or verse” or “a return to an original theme,” *reprise* is usually pronounced (rĭ-prēz ), with its last syllable rhyming with *freeze*. This reflects the influence of French when the musical use of the word was adopted in the 1700s. In this musical context, 58 percent of the Usage Panel disapproved of the (rĭ-prīz ) pronunciation in our 2017 survey (up from a 45 percent disapproval rate in 2001). In contrast, when the sense “a recurrence or resumption of an action” is used in legal context, the pronunciation (rĭ-prīz ), with the last syllable rhyming with *cries*, is acceptable, reflecting the older history of the word, going back to the Middle Ages. In this legal context, only 28 percent disapproved of (rĭ-prīz ). This pronunciation likely arose either as a spelling pronunciation or by influence of the related word *reprisal*, which is pronounced with (ī).

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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](#)

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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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