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grab¹ (grăb)

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v. grabbed, grab·bing, grabs

v.tr.

1. To take or grasp suddenly: *grabbed the letter from me.*
2. To capture or restrain; arrest.
3. To obtain or appropriate unscrupulously or forcibly: *grab public funds; grab power.*
4. To take hurriedly: *grabbed my coat and hat and left.*
5. *Slang* To capture the attention of: *a plot that grabs the reader.*

v.intr.

To make a grasping or snatching motion: *We grabbed for the life raft.*

n.

1.

- a. A sudden attempt to grasp or hold something: *made a grab for the railing.*
 - b. A sudden, often unscrupulous taking control or ownership of something: *"The imminence of death is reflected in every last power-stroke and grab of the great money bosses" (Dylan Thomas).*
2. A mechanical device for gripping an object.

adj.

Relating or being an object or device that is grabbed or gripped for support or balance: *installed a grab bar in the shower.*

Idiom:

up for grabs *Slang*

Available for anyone to take or win: *"The reputation of the ... king is still up for grabs" (William Zinsser).*

[Obsolete Dutch or Low German *graben*, from Middle Dutch or Middle Low German; see **ghrebh**-¹ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

grab **ba·ble** *adj.*

grab **ber** *n.*

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grab² (grăb)

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n.

A usually two-masted, sharp-prowed coastal vessel of the Indian Ocean.

[Arabic *ḡurāb*, raven, swift galley; see **ḡrb** in Semitic roots.]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

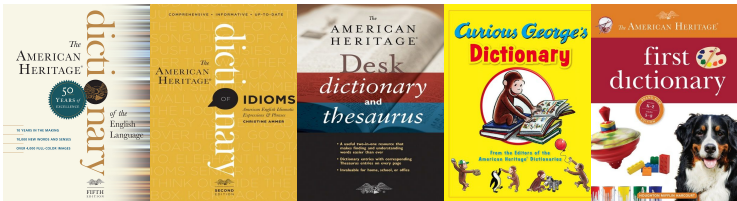
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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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