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ret·ro·grade  (rĕt rə-grād') Share: [Tweet](#)

adj.

1. Moving or tending backward: *a retrograde flow.*
2. Opposite to the usual order; inverted or reversed: *the retrograde form of the melody.*
3. Reverting to an earlier or inferior condition: *a retrograde way of thinking.*
4. *Astronomy*
 - a. Of or relating to the orbital revolution or axial rotation of a planetary or other celestial body that moves clockwise from east to west, in the direction opposite to most celestial bodies.
 - b. Of or relating to the brief, regularly occurring, apparently backward movement of a planetary body in its orbit as viewed against the fixed stars, caused by the differing orbital velocities of Earth and the body observed.
 - c. Of or relating to orbital motion in the direction opposite that of the predominant motion in an orbital system.

intr.v. **ret·ro·grad·ed**, **ret·ro·grad·ing**, **ret·ro·grades**

1. *Astronomy* To have retrograde motion.
2. To decline to an inferior state; degenerate.
3. *Archaic* To move or seem to move backward.

[Middle English, from Latin *retrōgradus*, from *retrōgradī*, to go back : *retrō-*, retro- + *-gradus*, walking (from *gradī*, to go; see **ghredh-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#)).]

ret'ro·gra·da tion (-rō-grā-dā shən) *n.*

ret ro·grade'ly *adv.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

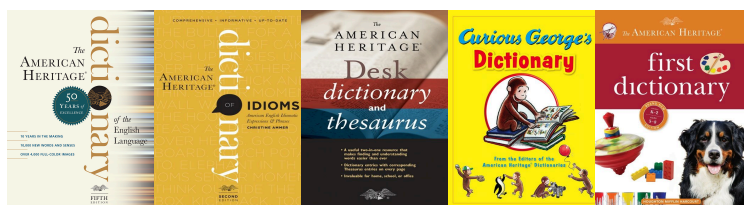
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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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