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dictionary

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Language



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cleft  (klĕft)

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v.

A past tense and a past participle of [cleave](#)¹.

adj.

1. Divided; split.
2. *Botany* Having indentations that extend about halfway to the center, as in certain leaves.

n.

1. A crack, crevice, or split.
2. A split or indentation between two parts, as of the chin.

[Middle English, past participle of *cleven*, to split; see [CLEAVE](#)¹. N., from Middle English, alteration (influenced by *cleft*) of *clift*, from Old English *geclyft*; see **gleubh-** [in the Appendix of 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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