



The
AMERICAN
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the
English
Language



HOW TO USE THE DICTIONARY

To look up an entry in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, use the search window above. For best results, after typing in the word, click on the “Search” button instead of using the “enter” key.

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.

[guide to the dictionary](#)



THE USAGE PANEL

The Usage Panel is a group of nearly 200 prominent scholars, creative writers, journalists, diplomats, and others in occupations requiring mastery of language. Annual surveys have gauged the acceptability of particular usages and grammatical constructions.

[The Panelists](#)



AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY APP

The new American Heritage Dictionary app is now available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#).



THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY BLOG

The articles in our [blog](#) examine new words, revised definitions, interesting images from the fifth edition, discussions of usage, and more.

THE 100 WORDS®

See word lists from the best-selling 100 Words Series!

[Find out more!](#)



INTERESTED IN DICTIONARIES?

Check out the Dictionary Society of North America at <http://www.dictionariesociety.com>

know  (nō)

Share: [Tweet](#)

v. **knew**(n , ny), **known**(nōn), **know·ing**, **knows**

v. *tr.*

1. To perceive directly; grasp in the mind with clarity or certainty.
2. To regard as true beyond doubt: *I know she won't fail.*
3. To have a practical understanding of, as through experience; be skilled in: *knows how to cook.*
4. To have fixed in the mind: *knows her Latin verbs.*
5. To have experience of: “*a black stubble that had known no razor*” (William Faulkner).
6.
 - a. To perceive as familiar; recognize: *I know that face.*
 - b. To be acquainted with: *He doesn't know his neighbors.*
7. To be able to distinguish; recognize as distinct: *knows right from wrong.*
8. To discern the character or nature of: *knew him for a liar.*
9. *Archaic* To have sexual intercourse with.

v. *intr.*

1. To possess knowledge, understanding, or information.
2. To be cognizant or aware.

Idioms:

in the know *Informal*

Possessing special or secret information.

know full well

To have complete knowledge of; understand completely: *You know full well you're supposed to take off your shoes when you come inside.*

know (someone) in the biblical sense

To have sexual relations with (someone).

you know *Informal*

Used parenthetically in conversation, as to fill pauses or elicit the listener's agreement or sympathy: *Please try to be, you know, a little quieter. How were we supposed to make camp in a storm like that, you know?*

[Middle English *knouen*, from Old English *cnāwan*; see **gnō-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

know a·ble *adj.*

know er *n.*

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition copyright ©2022 by HarperCollins Publishers. All rights reserved.

Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

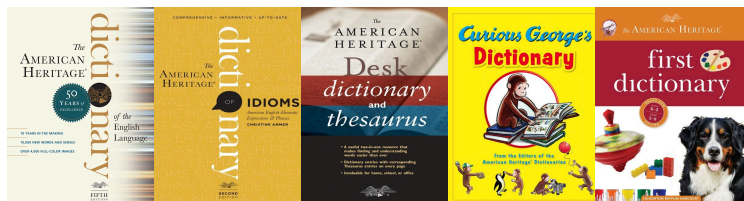
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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](#).

American Heritage Dictionary Products



[The American Heritage Dictionary, 5th Edition](#)
[The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms](#)
[The American Heritage Roget's Thesaurus](#)

[Curious George's Dictionary](#)
[The American Heritage Children's Dictionary](#)

- **CONTACT US**
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Make Me An Author](#)
- [Ebooks Help with Glose Reader](#)
- **ABOUT US**
- [Company Profile](#)
- [Leadership Team](#)
- [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
- [HarperCollins Careers](#)
- [HarperCollins Imprints](#)
- [HarperGreen](#)
- [Social Media Directory](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- **FOR READERS**
- [Browse Reading Guides](#)
- **FOR AUTHORS**
- [Submit a Manuscript](#)
- [Report Piracy](#)
- [Agent Portal](#)
- **MEDIA**

- [Publicity Contacts](#)
- [Press Room](#)
- **SERVICES**
- [HarperCollins Speakers Bureau](#)
- [Library Services](#)
- [Academic Services](#)
- [Desk & Exam Copies](#)
- [Review Copies](#)
- [OpenBook API](#)
- [Marketing Partnerships](#)
- **COVID-19 RESOURCES & PERMISSIONS**
- [Permissions for Adult Online Readings](#)
- [Permissions for Kids Online Readings](#)
- **SALES & RIGHTS**
- [Booksellers & Retailer Ordering](#)
- [HarperCollins Catalogs](#)
- [Permissions](#)
- [Subsidiary Rights](#)

- [Media Rights and Content Development](#)
- **GLOSE APP**
- [iPhone](#)
- [Android](#)
-
-
-
-
- **GLOBAL DIVISIONS**
- [HarperCollins US](#)
- [HarperCollins Canada](#)
- [HarperCollins Christian](#)
- [HarperCollins Australia](#)
- [HarperCollins India](#)
- [HarperCollins UK](#)
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-



*This website is best viewed in Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge, or Safari. Some characters in pronunciations and etymologies cannot be displayed properly in Internet Explorer.