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quick  (kwĭk)

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adj. **quick·er, quick·est**

1. Moving or functioning rapidly and energetically; speedy: *an animal that is quick enough to escape most predators.*
2. Learning, thinking, or understanding with speed and dexterity; bright: *a quick mind.*

3.

a. Perceiving or responding with speed and sensitivity; keen: *quick reflexes.*

b. Reacting immediately and sharply: *a quick temper.*

4.

a. Occurring, achieved, or acquired in a relatively brief period of time: *a quick rise through the ranks; a quick profit.*

b. Done or occurring immediately: *a quick inspection.* See Synonyms at [fast](#)¹.

5. Tending to react hastily: *quick to find fault.*

6. *Archaic*

a. Alive.

b. Pregnant.

n.

1. Sensitive or raw exposed flesh, as under the fingernails.

2. The most personal and sensitive aspect of the emotions: *The remark cut her to the quick.*

3. The living: *the quick and the dead.*

4. The vital core; the essence: *got to the quick of the matter.*

adv. **quicker, quickest**

Quickly; promptly.

[Middle English, alive, lively, quick, from Old English *cwicu*, alive; see **g^wei-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

quick **ly** *adv.*

quick **ness** *n.*

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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:

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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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