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case ¹  (kās)

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n.

1. An instance or occurrence of a particular kind or category: *a case of mistaken identity*. See Synonyms at [example](#).

2. An occurrence of a disease or disorder: *a mild case of flu*.

3. A set of circumstances or a state of affairs; a situation: *It may rain, in which case the hike will be canceled*.

4. Actual fact; reality: *We suspected the walls were hollow, and this proved to be the case*.

5. A question or problem; a matter: *It is simply a case of honor*.

6. A situation that requires investigation, especially by a formal or official body.

7. *Law*

a. An action or a suit or just grounds for an action.

b. The facts or evidence offered in support of a claim.

8. A set of reasons or supporting facts; an argument: *presented a good case for changing the law*.

9. A person being assisted, treated, or studied, as by a physician, lawyer, or social worker.

10. *Informal* A peculiar or eccentric person; a character.

11. *Linguistics*

a. In traditional grammar, a distinct form of a noun, pronoun, or modifier that is used to express one or more particular syntactic relationships to other words in a sentence.

b. **Case** In some varieties of generative grammar, the thematic or semantic role of a noun phrase as represented abstractly but not necessarily indicated overtly in surface structure. In such frameworks, nouns in English have Case even in the absence of inflectional case endings.

Idioms:

in any case

Regardless of what has occurred or will occur.

in case

1. If it happens that; if: *In case she dies without heirs, her money will go to charity*.

2. To be prepared for the possibility that: *bring the charger in case the battery runs low*.

3. As a precaution: *took along an umbrella, just in case*.

in case of

If there should happen to be: *a number to call in case of emergency*.

off (someone's) case

No longer nagging or urging someone to do something.

on (someone's) case

Persistently nagging or urging someone to do something.

[Middle English *cas*, from Old French, from Latin *cāsus*, from past participle of *cadere*, to fall; see **kad-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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case ²  (kās)

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n.

1. A container; a receptacle: *a jewelry case; meat-filled cases of dough.*
 2. A container with its contents.
 3. A decorative or protective covering or cover.
 4. A set or pair: *a case of pistols.*
 5. The frame or framework of a window, door, or stairway.
 6. The surface or outer layer of a metal alloy.
 7. *Printing*
 - a. A shallow compartmented tray for storing type or type matrices.
 - b. The form of a written, printed, or keyed letter that distinguishes it as being lowercase or uppercase: *typed the password using the wrong case.*
- tr.v. cased, cas-ing, cas-es*
1. To put into or cover with a case; encase.
 2. *Slang* To examine carefully, as in planning a crime: *cased the bank before robbing it.*

[Middle English, from Norman French *casse*, from Latin *capsa*.]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

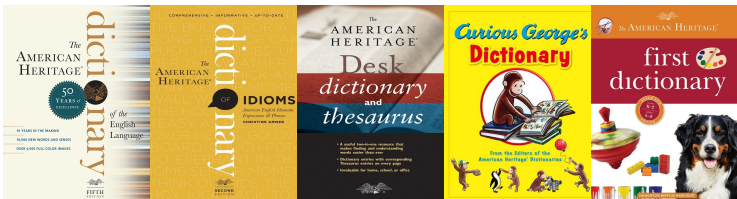
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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