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pre·cise  (prĭ-sīs)

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adj.

1. Clearly expressed or delineated; definite: *The victim gave a precise description of the suspect.*
2. Exact, as in performance, execution, or amount; accurate or correct: *a precise measurement; a precise instrument.*
3. Strictly distinguished from others; very: *at that precise moment.*
4. Distinct and correct in sound or meaning: *precise pronunciation; precise prose.*
5. Conforming strictly to rule or proper form: *"The setting up of this Maypole was a lamentable spectacle to the precise separatists that lived at New Plymouth" (Thomas Morton).*

[Middle English, exact, from Old French *precis*, condensed, precisely fixed, from Latin *praecīsus*, past participle of *praecidere*, to shorten : *prae-*, pre- + *caedere*, to cut; see **kaa-id-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

pre·cise 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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