



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>

cop·per¹  (kŏp ər)

Share:

n.

1. *Symbol Cu* A ductile, malleable, reddish-brown metallic element that is an excellent conductor of heat and electricity and is widely used for electrical wiring, water piping, and corrosion-resistant parts, either pure or in alloys such as brass and bronze. Atomic number 29; atomic weight 63.546; melting point 1,085°C; boiling point 2,562°C; specific gravity 8.96; valence 1, 2. See [Periodic Table](#).

2. A coin, usually of small denomination, made of copper or a copper alloy.

3. *Chiefly British* A large cooking pot made of copper or often of iron.

4. Any of various small butterflies of the subfamily Lycaeninae, having predominantly copper-colored wings.

5. A reddish brown.

tr.v. **cop·pered**, **cop·per·ing**, **cop·pers**

1. To coat or finish with a layer of copper.

2. *Slang* To bet against, as in faro.

[Middle English *coper*, from Old English, from Late Latin *cuprum*, from Latin *Cyprium* (*aes*), Cyprian (metal), from *Cyprius*, of Cyprus, from Greek *Kuprios*, from *Kupros*, Cyprus.]

cop per·y *adj.*

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

cop·per²  (kŏp ər)

Share: Post

n.

Slang

A police officer.

[From [cop](#)².]

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](#)

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](#).

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

50th Anniversary Edition

The American Heritage Desk Dictionary and Thesaurus

Curious George's Dictionary

The American Heritage First Dictionary

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms

The American Heritage Fifth Reader's Dictionary

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

- HarperCollins Publishers
News Corp.

Copyright 2022 HarperCollins Publishers All rights reserved.

*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.