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pre·cept  (prē sĕpt')

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n.

1. A rule or principle prescribing a particular course of action or conduct.
2. *Law* A direction or order issued by an authority; a writ, command, or process.

[Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *praeceptum*, from neuter past participle of *praecipere*, to advise, teach : *prae-*, *pre-* + *capere*, to take; see **kap-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

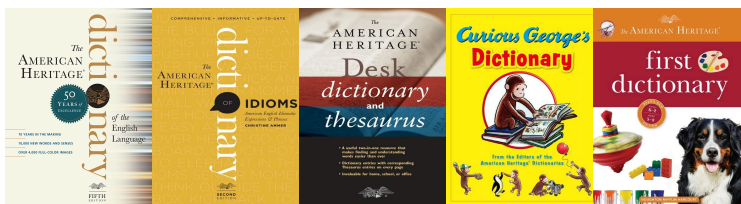
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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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