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ker·a·tin  (kĕr ə-tĭn)

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n.

1. Any of a class of filamentous proteins that are abundant in the cytoskeleton of vertebrate epithelial cells and are the main constituents of the outer layer of skin and tough epidermal structures such as hair, nails, hooves, feathers, and claws.
2. Material composed principally of keratin proteins.

[Greek *keras*, *kerāt-*, horn; see **ker**⁻¹ in the Appendix of Indo-European roots + [-IN](#).]

ke·rat i·nous (kə-răt n-əs) *adj.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

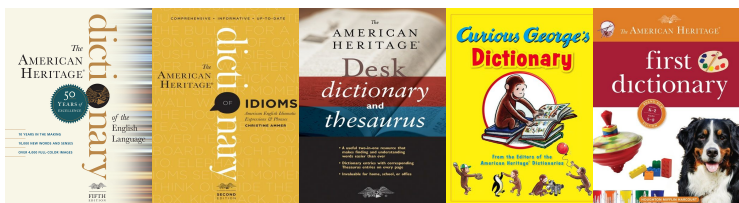
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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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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