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AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language


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**hearth** 🔊 (häarth)

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*n.*

**1.**

**a.** The floor of a fireplace, usually extending into a room and paved with brick, flagstone, or cement.

**b.** A fireplace: *a blazing fire in the hearth.*

**2.** Family life; the home.

**3.** *Metallurgy*

**a.** The lowest part of a blast furnace or cupola, from which the molten metal flows.

**b.** The bottom of a reverberatory furnace, where ore is exposed to the flame.

**4.** The fireplace or brazier of a blacksmith's forge.

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[Middle English *herth*, from Old English *heorth*; see **ker-**<sup>3</sup> [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]



(click for a larger image)

**hearth**

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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:

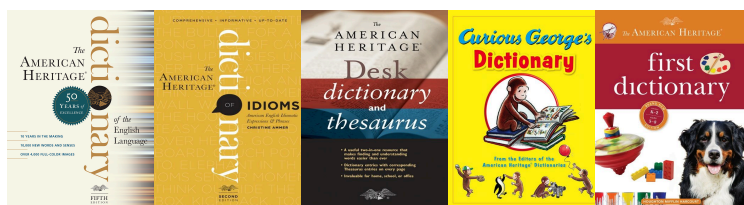
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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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