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car·bon  (kär bən)

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n.

1. **Symbol C** An abundant nonmetallic element that occurs in many inorganic and in all organic compounds, exists freely in amorphous, graphite, and diamond forms and as a constituent of coal, limestone, and petroleum, and is capable of chemical self-bonding to form an enormous number of chemically, biologically, and commercially important molecules. Other significant allotropes include fullerenes and nanotubes. Atomic number 6; atomic weight 12.011; sublimation point 3,825°C; triple point 4,489°C; specific gravity of amorphous carbon 1.8 to 2.1, of diamond 3.15 to 3.53, of graphite 1.9 to 2.3; valence 2, 3, 4. See [Periodic Table](#).

2. A carbon-containing gas, notably carbon dioxide, or a collection of such gases, especially when considered as a contributor to the greenhouse effect: *plans for capturing and sequestering carbon produced by power plants.*

3.

a. A sheet of carbon paper.

b. A carbon copy.

4. **Electricity**

a. Either of two rods through which current flows to form an arc, as in lighting or welding.

b. A carbonaceous electrode in an electric cell.

[French *carbone*, from Latin *carbō*, *carbōn-*, a coal, charcoal; see **ker-**³ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

car bon·ous (-bə-nəs) *adj.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

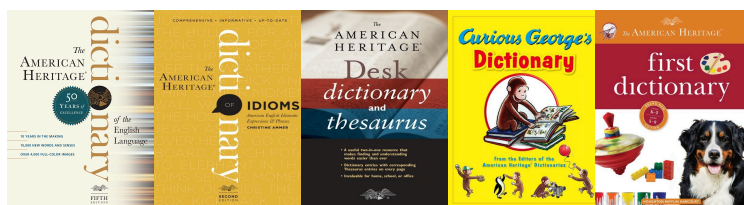
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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European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

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