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in·cest  (in sĕst')

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n.

1. Sexual relations between persons who are so closely related that their marriage is illegal or forbidden by custom.
2. The crime of sexual relations with a person defined by statute as too closely related.

[Middle English, from Latin *incestum*, from neuter of *incestus*, impure, unchaste : *in-*, not; see [IN](#)¹ + *castus*, pure, chaste; see **kes-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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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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