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coy  (koi)

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adj. **coy·er, coy·est**

1.

a. Affectedly and often flirtatiously shy or modest: *"I pictured myself as some sylvan deity, and she a coy wood nymph of whom I was in pursuit"* (Washington Irving).

b. Characterized by or suggesting such shyness or modesty: *"How absurd I must have looked standing there before him ... a coy little simper on my foolish young face"* ([Jane Avrigh](#)).

2. Unwilling to make a commitment or divulge information: *"As a child, when I asked my mother her age she was coy and evasive"* (Lynne Sharon Schwartz).

3. Tending to avoid people and social situations; reserved: *"The children were staring up at him, too coy to question him and too curious not to stare"* ([Edwidge Danticat](#)).

[Middle English, from Old French *quei*, *coi*, quiet, still, from Vulgar Latin **quētus*, from Latin *quiētus*, past participle of *quiescere*, to rest; see **k^weiə-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

coy **ly** *adv.*

coy **ness** *n.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

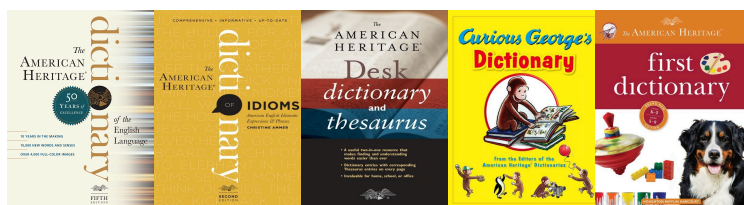
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