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wheel  (wēl, hwēl)

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n.

1. A solid disk or a rigid circular ring connected by spokes to a hub, designed to turn around an axle passed through the center.
2. Something that rotates like a wheel or has a wheel as its principal part or characteristic, as:
 - a. The steering device on a vehicle.
 - b. A potter's wheel.
 - c. A water wheel.
 - d. A spinning wheel.
 - e. *Games* A device used in roulette and other games of chance.
 - f. A firework that rotates while burning.
 - g. *Informal* A bicycle.
3. A large, roughly circular block of cheese.
4. A wheel-shaped instrument on which victims were bound for torture and execution in medieval and early modern Europe.
5. **wheels** Forces that provide energy, movement, or direction: *the wheels of commerce*.
6. The act or process of turning; revolution or rotation.
7. A military maneuver executed in order to change the direction of movement of a formation, as of troops or ships, in which the formation is maintained while the outer unit describes an arc and the inner or center unit remains stationary as a pivot.
8. **wheels** *Slang* A motor vehicle or access thereto: *Do you have wheels tonight?*
9. *Slang* A person with a great deal of power or influence: *a wheel in state government*.

v. **wheeled, wheel-ing, wheels**

v.tr.

1. To roll, move, or transport on wheels or a wheel.
2. To cause to turn around or as if around a central axis; revolve or rotate.
3. To provide with wheels or a wheel.

v.intr.

1. To turn around or as if around a central axis; revolve or rotate.
2. To roll or move on or as if on wheels or a wheel.
3. To fly in a curving or circular course: *A flock of gulls wheeled just above the dock.*
4. To turn or whirl around in place; pivot: *"The boy wheeled and the fried eggs leaped from his tray" (Ivan Gold).*
5. To reverse one's opinion or practice: *Don't be surprised if the boss wheels about on that idea.*

Idioms:

at/behind the wheel

1. Operating the steering mechanism of a vehicle; driving.
2. Directing or controlling; in charge.

wheel and deal *Informal*

To engage in the advancement of one's own interests, especially in a canny, aggressive, or unscrupulous way.

[Middle English, from Old English *hwēol*; see **k^wel-**¹ in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

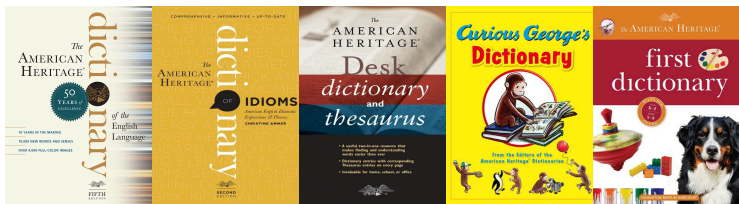
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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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