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AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language

  


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Some compound words (like *bus rapid transit*, *dog whistle*, or *identity theft*) don’t appear on the drop-down list when you type them in the search bar. For best results with compound words, place a quotation mark before the compound word in the search window.

[guide to the dictionary](#)



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**quire**<sup>1</sup>  (kwīr)

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*n.*

1. A set of 24 or sometimes 25 sheets of paper of the same size and stock; one twentieth of a ream.
2. A collection of leaves of parchment or paper, folded one within the other, in a manuscript or book.

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[Middle English *quayer*, four double sheets of paper, from Old French *quaer*, from Vulgar Latin *\*quaternus*, from Latin *quaternī*, set of four, four each, from *quater*, four times; see **k<sup>w</sup>etwer-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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**quire**<sup>2</sup>  (kwīr)

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*n. & v.*

*Archaic*

Variant of [choir](#).

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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:

[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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