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AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language


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**fourth**  (fôth)

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*n.*

1. The ordinal number matching the number four in a series.
2. One of four equal parts.
3. *Music*
  - a. A tone four degrees above or below a given tone in a diatonic scale.
  - b. The interval between two such tones.
  - c. The harmonic combination of these tones.
  - d. The subdominant of a scale or key.
4. The transmission gear or gear ratio used to produce forward speeds next higher to those of third in a motor vehicle.
5. **Fourth** The Fourth of July; Independence Day. Used with *the*: *went to a parade on the Fourth*.

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[Middle English *fourthe*, from Old English *fēortha*; see **k<sup>w</sup>etwer-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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**fourth** *adv. & adj.*

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## 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:

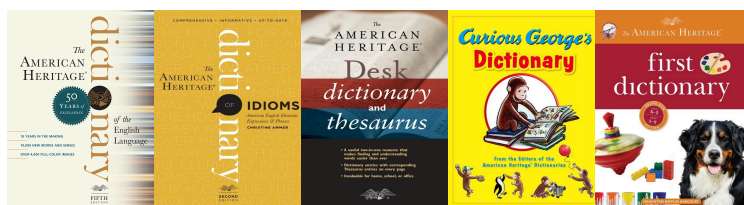
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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European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

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