

Where Do Words Come From?

English has well over 450,000 words. That is more than any other language. The language with the next highest number of words is German, and it has less than 200,000 words. New words are added to the language all the time. Where do they come from? Many words are borrowed from other languages. English has borrowed words from over 100 different languages!

Here just a few of the languages English borrowed words from.

<i>Arabic</i>	spoken in the Middle East	<i>Italian</i>	spoken in Italy
<i>Dutch</i>	spoken in the Netherlands and Belgium in Europe	<i>Norse</i>	an extinct language of the Vikings
<i>Egyptian</i>	an extinct language in ancient Egypt	<i>Sanskrit</i>	an ancient language from northern India
<i>Gaelic</i>	spoken in Scotland	<i>Welsh</i>	spoken in Wales

Can guess which of these languages the words below came from?

alarm	grumble
anger	gum
ballot	knife
brat	odd
candy	orange
cartoon	penguin
coffee	paper
cotton	pet
cookie	pickle
crowd	sheriff
desk	stove
dirt	sugar

If you enjoy learning the sources of English words, you might enjoy these websites:

<http://www.krysstal.com/borrow.html>

<http://www.wordorigins.org/homepage.htm>

Answers to "Where Do Words Come From?"

<i>alarm</i>	Italian	<i>grumble</i>	Dutch
<i>anger</i>	Norse	<i>gum</i>	Egyptian
<i>ballot</i>	Italian	<i>knife</i>	Norse
<i>brat</i>	Gaelic	<i>odd</i>	Norse
<i>candy</i>	Sanskrit	<i>orange</i>	Sanskrit
<i>cartoon</i>	Italian	<i>penguin</i>	Welsh
<i>coffee</i>	Arabic	<i>paper</i>	Egyptian
<i>cotton</i>	Arabic	<i>pet</i>	Gaelic
<i>cookie</i>	Dutch	<i>pickle</i>	Dutch
<i>crowd</i>	Welsh	<i>sheriff</i>	Arabaic
<i>desk</i>	Italian	<i>stove</i>	Dutch
<i>dirt</i>	Norse	<i>sugar</i>	Sanskrit