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**derive, v.**

**Pronunciation:** /dɪˈræɪv/

**Forms:** ME dir-, diryve, dyryve, ME–15 deryve, 15 deryfe.

**Frequency (in current use):**

**Etymology:** < French dériver (12th cent. in Littré = Provençal derivar, Spanish derivar...)

**I. Transitive senses.**

†1.

**a.** To conduct (a stream of water or other fluid) *from* a source, reservoir, main stream, etc. *to* or *into* a channel, place, or destination; to lead, draw, convey down a course or through a channel. *Obsolete or arch.*

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1483 *Cath. Angl.* 96 To deryue, deriuare.

1530 *J. Palsgrave* *Lesclarsissement* 513/1 I deryve, or bringe one thynge out of another, as water is brought whan it is brought from the spring, je deriue.

a1552 *J. Leland* *Itinerary* (1711) V. 77 The Pittes be so set abowte with Canales that the Salte Water is facily derivid to every Mannes Howse.

1555 *W. Waterman* tr. J. Boemus *Fardle of Facions* Pref. 10 From them [springes] thei deriued into cities and Tounes, the pure freshe waters a greate distaunce of.

?a1560 *L. Digges* *Geom. Pract.: Pantometria* (1571) I. xvii. sig. Eiv Ye may conclude that this water may be deriued thither.

1606 *N. Baxter* *Man Created* in E. Farr *Sel. Poetry Reign James I* (1848) 238 And so through conduits, secretly contriu'd, Is blood to euerie humane part deriu'd.

1632 *R. Sanderson* *12 Serm.* 24 Little trenches, whereby..husbandmen used to derive water from some fountain or cistern to the several parts of their gardens.

1697 *S. Patrick* *Comm. Exod.* (vii. 19) 122 Water..derived by Pipes from the River, into Cisterns.

1805 *W. Saunders* *Treat. Mineral Waters* (ed. 2) 197 Mineral springs..Externeally used, either by immersing the whole body, or by derivinge a stream to some particular part.

†b. with various constructions, and adverbial complements.

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1548 *R. Huttens* tr. J. Spangenberg *Sum of Diuinitie* sig. Lviij Thy fountaynes shall be deriued, & the ryuers shall runne to the streetes.

1594 *2nd Rep. Dr. Faustus* v. sig. C4 Danuby is deriued in two armes, which..meete at length againe in the same Channell.
1633 BP. J. HALL *Plaine Explic. Hard Texts* II. 411 Cyrus..drained the channell of Euphrates, and derived the streams the other way.

1650 T. FULLER *Pisgah-sight of Palestine* IV. iii. 48 The pillar conducting them such by-ways, in levels or declivity of vales..where the water had a conveniency to be derived after them.

a1723 SIR C. WREN in L. Phillimore *Family & Times* (1881) App. iii. 343 They deriv’d the River when it rose, all over the Flat of the Delta.

1800 E. DARWIN *Phytologia* XV. iii. 417 In some parts..where rice is cultivated, they are said not to derive the water on it, till it is in flower.

†c. reflexive. To flow (in, into, through channels). (Chiefly fig.)

*Obsolete.*

a1631 J. DONNE *Serm.* (1953) VI. 153 From all eternity he derived himselfe into three persons.

a1652 J. SMITH *Select Disc.* (1821) IX. iv. 430 When God made the world, he did not..leave it alone to subsist by itself..but he derived himself through the whole creation.

a1661 T. FULLER *Worthies* (1662) Bristol 37 The stream of her Charity..found other channels therein to derive it self.

†2. To cause (water, etc.) to flow away; to draw off, carry off, divert the course of; spec. in Medicine, cf. DERIVATION n. 1c. *Obsolete.*

1598 J. STOW *Suruay of London* 26 Intending to haue deriued the riuer of Thames, to haue flowed aboute it.

1601 P. HOLLAND tr. Pliny *Hist. World* I. 544 To water them, or to deriue & diuert water from them.

1601 P. HOLLAND tr. Pliny *Hist. World* II. 469 To lade out the water that riseth vpon the workemen, for feare it choke vp the pits; for to preuent which inconuenience, they deriue it by other drains.

1656 J. SMITH *Compl. Pract. Physick* 17 The matter must be derived and voided from the head.

1693 J. RAY *Three Physico-theol. Disc.* (ed. 2) I. iii. 38 Water, (which to derive and rid away).

1771 T. PERCIVAL *Ess. Med. & Exper.* (1777) I. 220 They derive the febrile matter from the brain, and assist..the other discharges.

†3.

a. To carry, lead, extend (a watercourse, canal, or channel of any kind). *Obsolete.*

?c1550 tr. P. Vergil *Three Bks. Eng. Hist.* (1844) 20 After~ward, deriving a trenche from fort to fort, he environed the towne, and..beganne to annoy the same.

1600 J. PORY tr. J. Leo Africanus *Geogr. Hist. Afr.* II. 113 So soone as the said water-conduct was derived unto the towne, he caused it to be divided, and sent into sundry places.
1623   J. BINGHAM tr. Xenophon Hist. 16   Media, where the Channels begin, that are deriued out of the Riuier Tygris.
1777   R. WATSON Hist. Reign Philip II I. XIII. 413   From this stream..an infinity of canals are derived.

†b. To extend by branches or ramifications; to divide by branching.
lit. and fig.

a1612   J. HARINGTON Treat. Playe in Nugæ Antiquæ (1775) II. 5   Yt may be deriued into three kindes.
a1631   J. DONNE Serm. (1955) II. 62   Rooted in some one beloved sin, but derived into infinite branches of tentation.
1646   SIR T. BROWNE Pseudodoxia Epidemica III. xxv. 174   At the other end, by two branches [it] deriveth it selfe into the Lunges.
a1676   M. HALE Primitive Originat. Mankind (1677) I. ii. 65   Other ramifications of this nervus intercostalis are derived into the Chest and Diaphragma. [Cf. 1760 at sense 4a.]

†4. transf. and fig.

a. To convey from one (treated as a source) to another, as by transmission, descent, etc.; to transmit, impart, communicate, pass on, hand on. Const. to, into, unto, rarely upon the recipient. Obsolete or arch. (rare after 1750).

a1530   W. BONDE Pylgrimage of Perfeccyon (1531) III. f. CCxxvi This power of byndyng & losyng of synne, is deriuyed from the apostles to y’ mynystres of Christes chirche.
1547   J. HOOPER Declar. Christe i, in Early Writings (1843) 15   The sin of Adam..was derived into all his posterity.
1564   Briefe Exam. B iv The maner of prophesying..was deryued out of the Sinagoges, into our Churches.
1593   T. BILSON Perpetual Gouv. Christes Church 6   From him God lineally derived it unto Abraham.
1607   T. DEKKER & J. WEBSTER Famous Hist. Thomas Wyat sig. A2   I will Deriue the Crowne vnto your Daughters head.
1651–3   BP. J. TAYLOR Serm. for Year Ep. Ded. That this Book is derived upon your Lordship almost in the nature of a legacy from her.
a1661   T. FULLER Worthies (1662) Bucks. 136   Parents..rich enough to derive unto him the hereditary infirmity of the gout.
1686   J. SCOTT Christian Life: Pt. II II. vii. 678   Jesus..when he ascended..derived that divine Spirit upon his Apostles.
1699   BP. G. BURNET Expos. 39 Articles (1700) xxxii. 356   The High-Priest..was to marry, and he derived to his descendents that Sacred Office.
1702 Clarendon’s Hist. Rebellion I. V. 549 His Name would be derived to Posterity, as the Preserver of his Country.

1760 W. LAW Spirit of Prayer I. 38 The life of the vine must be really derived into the branches.

1835 Paul Antiq. Greece I. ii. xi. §2 A festival first instituted at Athens, and from thence derived to the rest of the Ionians.

1848 R. D. Hampden Bampton Lect. (ed. 3) 184 The definition of Predestination, as given in the Scholastic writers, and from them derived to modern Theology.

†b. To hand down (esp. by descent). Obsolete.

1561 T. Norton & T. Sackville Gorboduc 86 What their fathers..Have with great fame derived down to them.

1646 J. Gregory Posthuma (1649) 268 The Turkish Histories are not so completely derived down to us as to Describe the Territories by Longitude, or Latitude.

1681–6 J. Scott Christian Life (1747) III. 402 Another evident Instance of the Apostles deriving down their Apostolick Authority.

1828 R. Southey in Q. Rev. 37 208 The hatred of popery..which has..been derived down from father to son.

†c. reflexive. To pass by descent or transmission.

1600 Shakespeare Henry IV, Pt. 2 IV. iii. 174 This imperiall Crowne, Which as immediate from thy place and blood, Deriues it selfe to me.

1654 E. Wolley tr. ‘G. de Scudéry’ Curia Politiæ 126 Which Conditions did not (with his succession) derive themselves on me.

1655 T. Fuller Church-hist. Brit. VII. 407 The Womens discords derived themselves into their Husbands hearts.

1677 J. Phillips tr. J.-B. Tavernier Persian Trav. v. iv. 206 in tr. J.-B. Tavernier Six Voy. (1678) The jealousie of the Kings of Persia..derives itself to all his Subjects, who will not permit their women to be seen.

†5. transitive. To cause to come; to draw, bring, turn, direct; to bring down. Obsolete.

a. Const. to, unto, into.

1550 tr. P. Vergil Eng. Hist. (1846) I. 102 Then Honorius, retaininge the Brittishe armie, did againe derive and traine the Ilande to the empire.

1616 Shakespeare All’s Well that ends Well (1623) V. iii. 267 Things which would deriue mee ill will to speake of.

1623 Shakespeare & J. Fletcher Henry VIII II. iv. 30 What Friend of mine, That had to him deri’d your Anger, did I Continue in my Liking.

1678 T. Hobbes Decameron Physiologicum vii. 75 The force of the Sun-beams is derived almost to a point by a Burning-glass.
1702  *Clarendon’s Hist. Rebellion* I. iv. 270  Men. looked upon him, as one, who could derive the King’s Pleasure to them.

1772  J. W. Fletcher *Appeal Matter of Fact* III. 96  Those who...derive putrefaction into their bones, for the momentary gratification of a shameful appetite.

1774  T. Jefferson *Autobiogr.* App., in *Wks.* (1859) I. 144  To undergo the great inconvenience that will be derived to them from stopping all imports whatever from Great Britain.

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**b. Const. on, upon.**

1611  J. Speed *Hist. Great Brit.* IX. xvi. 665/2  Hereby he derived upon his enemie all the enui of the people.

1671  J. Davies *Sibyls* II. ii. 87  The first Persecution was raised by Nero, to derive upon the innocent Christians the Indignation of the Romanes.

1705  G. Stanhope *Paraphr.* III. 65  Such Apostacy derives a double Dishonour upon Religion.

1741  S. Richardson *Pamela* III. ix. 41  Such an Example, as will derive upon you the Ill-will and Censure of other Ladies.

1808  W. Taylor in *Monthly Mag.* 26 224  They would derive on themselves a solid glory.

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**6.**

**a.** To draw, fetch, get, gain, obtain (a thing from a source). Const. *from*, rarely †*out of*.  

1561  T. Hoby tr. B. Castiglione *Courtyer* I. sig. F.iii”  Deriuing them [sc. new words] featly from the Latins, as the Latins in olde tyme, deriued from the [Greeks].

1581  G. Pettie tr. S. Guazzo *Ciuile Conuersat.* (1586) Pref. sig. A vij  If one chance to derive anie word from the Latine, which is insolent to their eares..they forthwith make a jest at it, and terme it an Inkhorne terme.

1600  Shakespeare *Merchant of Venice* II. ix. 41  O that estates, degrees, and offices, were not deriu’d corruptly.

1601  B. Jonson *Every Man in his Humor* II. ii. sig. E”  Signior, let me deriue a small peece of siluer from you.

1665  T. Herbert *Some Years Trav.* (new ed.) 140  The Romans..led Horses in honour of the Sun, a custome derived from the Persians.

1667  Milton *Paradise Lost* IX. 837  Sciential sap, deriv’d From Nectar, drink of Gods.

1751  J. Harris *Hermes* III. iv. 400  If all Minds have them [sc. their ideas] derived, they must be derived from something, which is itself not Mind.

1781  Gibbon *Decline & Fall* II. 32  The power of the præfect of Italy was not confined to the country from whence he derived his title.

1822  ‘B. Cornwall’ *Headland Bay Panama* in *Misc. Poems*  And Cheops hath derived eternal fame Because he made his tomb a place of pride.

1856  J. A. Froude *Hist. Eng.* (1858) I. iii. 219  The archbishop..derived no personal advantage from his courts.
1878 T. H. HUXLEY *Physiogr.* (ed. 2) 181 The solid matter derived from the waste of the land.

**b.** Const. with *from* and *to* rare.

1771 O. GOLDSMITH *Hist. Eng.* I. 204 A king, from the weakness of whose title they might derive power to themselves.

1785 W. PALEY *Moral & Polit. Philos.* (1818) II. 404 The chief advantage which can be derived to population from the interference of law.

1806 J. LINGARD *Antiq. Anglo-Saxon Church* I. iv. 167 From his labours, the most valuable benefits were derived to his countrymen.

**c. to derive** (ancestry, origin, pedigree, etc.); also reflexive.

1599 H. BUTTES *Dyets Dry Dinner* sig. B8 For Malum (an apple) deriveth his line of Ancestry from the Greeke Melon, of great antiquity.

1612 J. SEDLEN in M. Drayton *Poly-olbion* xi. Illustr. 183 Prester Iohns, sometimes deriuing himselfe very neere from the loines of Salomon.

1634 T. HERBERT *Relation Some Yeares Trauail* 10 The Mountaines of the Moone..whence seuen-mouthed Nyle, deriues his Origen.

1662 J. EVELYN *Sculptura* ii. 11 Sculpture may derive its Pedegree from the infancy of the World.

**d. absol. or intransitive.**

1632 F. QUARLES *Divine Fancies* Ded. That like the painful Bee, I may derive From sundry Flow'rs to store my slender Hive.

1649 G. LANGBAINE *Answer Vniv. Oxford* 33 Erected by the Citty and those who derive from their Title.

1796 E. BURKE *Let. to Noble Lord* in *Wks.* (1815) VIII. 39 The grantee whom he derives from.

**e. Chemistry.** To obtain (a compound) from another, as by partial replacement.

1868 H. WATTS *Dict. Chem.* V. 554 This compound, derived from ethylsulphurous acid by substitution of Cl for HO.

7. To obtain by some process of reasoning, inference or deduction; to gather, deduce.

1509 S. HAWES *Pastime of Pleasure* 75 Loke what ye saye; loke it be deryfyde Frome perfyt reason well exemplyfyde.
1624 N. DE LAWNE tr. P. Du Moulin *Elements Logick* 89 Rules to live well, derived from nature.

1690 J. LOCKE *Ess. Humane Understanding* II. xiv. 83 Men derive their Ideas of Duration, from their Reflection on the train of the Ideas, they observe to succeed one another in their own Understandings.

1752 JOHNSON *Rambler* No. 203. †7 In age, we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow.

1874 J. R. GREEN *Short Hist. Eng. People* vii. §7. 426 It is difficult to derive any knowledge of Shakspere's inner history from the Sonnets.

1875 B. JOWETT in tr. Plato *Dialogues* (ed. 2) IV. 269 The higher truths of philosophy and religion are derived from experience.

8. reflexive. To arise, spring, come from something as its source; to take its origin from.

1662 E. STILLINGFLEET *Origines Sacræ* II. ii. §9 Sem from whom he derived himself, was one of the persons who escaped it in the Ark.

1665 T. HERBERT *Some Years Trav.* (new ed.) 127 Sheraz then probably derives itself from Sherab, which in the Persian Tongue signifies a Grape.

1690 J. LOCKE *Ess. Humane Understanding* II. i. 37 Experience: In that, all our Knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself.

1735 tr. C. Rollin *Anc. Hist.* V. 85 Hence comedy derives itself.

1833 C. LAMB *Pop. Fallacies* v, in *Last Ess. Elia* 232 If the abstinence from evil is to derive itself from no higher principle.

9.

a. passive. To be drawn or descended; to take its origin or source; to spring, come from (rarely †of, †out of).

1386 CHAUCER *Knight’s Tale* (Ellesm. & Camb. MSS.) 2180 Conuertynge al vn to his propre welle from which it is dirryued sooth to telle.

1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 513/1 His lynage is deryved out of the house of Melysyn.

1610 J. GUILLIM *Display of Heraldrie* II. vi. 58 A Couple-close is a subordinate charge derived from a Cheuron.

1701 D. DEFOE *True-born Englishman* i. 11 A Race uncertain and unev'n, Deriv'd from all the Nations under Heav'n.

1737 W. WHISTON tr. Josephus *Jewish Antiq.* XIII. xiii. §5, in tr. Josephus *Genuine Wks.* They also reviled him, as derived from a captive.

1892 S. R. GARDINER *Student’s Hist. Eng.* 6 No European population now existing which is not derived from many races.

b. spec. Of a word: To arise or be formed by some process of word-formation from (some more primitive or earlier word).
1567 J. MAPLET *Greene Forest* f. 60 Arundo, sayth he, is derived out of the Adiectiue *Aridum*, for that it so spedyly drieth and withereth.

1599 SPENSER *View State Ireland* 50 in J. Ware *Two Hist. Ireland* (1633) Stirrup..being derived of the old English word *Sty*, which is, to get up.

1676 *Port Royal Art of Speaking* 11 From one single Word many others are derived, as is obvious in the Dictionaries of such Languages as we know.

1751 J. WESLEY *Wks.* (1872) XIV. 48 A Participle is an Adjective derived of a Verb.

1791 *Gentleman's Mag.* Jan. 27/1 The word Tontine is only a cant word, derived from the name of an Italian projector.

1881 W. W. SKEAT *Etymol. Dict.* 150/2 From this O.F. dars is also derived the Breton *darz*, a dace.

10. **a. transitive.** To trace or show the derivation, origin, or pedigree of; to show (a thing) to proceed, issue, or come from; to trace the origination of (anything) from its source; also, more loosely, to declare, assert, or state a thing to be derived from.

1600 E. BLOUNT tr. G. F. di Conestaggio *Hist. Uniting Portagall to Castill* 4 Some derive the originall of this Count Henrie from Hungarie, others from Aragon, and from other places.

1604 *Meeting of Gallants* sig. A2 Bastard..Thou knowest I can derive thee.

1646 SIR T. BROWNE *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* VI. ix. 321 The observations of Albuquerque..derive this rednesse from the colour of the sand and argillous earth at the bottome.

1662 E. STILLINGFLEET *Origines Sacrae* III. iv. §13 Prometheus (from whom the Greeks derived themselves).

1683 *Britannie Speculum* 38 From whence Sir Edward Cook derives the Law of England at this day for burning those Women who kill their Husbands.

1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* VI. XVII. vii. 140 An Action which Malice itself could not have derived from an evil Motive.

1874 J. W. DAWSON *Nature & Bible* 202 These men derive all religion from myths.

**b. spec.** To trace the origin of (a word) from (†to) its etymological source; to establish or show the derivation of; also, less correctly, to offer a conjectural derivation for (a word).

1559 W. CUNINGHAM *Cosmogr. Glasse* 186 Africa..Festus saith it came of the qualitie of th'Aere..deriving it of Φρικη, as who should say, Αφρικη that is, without honour of coldenes.

1672 H. DODWELL *Two Lett. Advice* II. ix. 259 This..way of deriving unknown words to their primitive originals.

1755 JOHNSON *Dict. Eng. Lang.* Pref. That etymologist..who can seriously derive dream from drama, because life is a drama, and a drama is a dream.
II. Intransitive senses (arising out of reflexive uses in I.).

11. To flow, spring, issue, emanate, come, arise, originate, have its derivation from, rarely out of (a source). Frequently in modern use, probably at first as a gallicism.

1851 R. C. TRENCH *Study of Words* (ed. 13) vii. 264 He derives the name of the peacock from the peak or tuft of pointed feathers on its head.

1884 *Notes & Queries* 6th Ser. IX. 207 I should be much obliged if any of your readers could help me in deriving the name of the village of Allonby, in Cumberland.

12. To proceed, descend, pass on, come (to a receiver, receptacle, etc.).

1559 P. MORWYNG tr. C. Gesner *Treasure of Euonymus* Pref. The study of this Art. derived unto the Romains and Grekes somewhat late.

1647 BP. J. TAYLOR Θεολογία Ἐκλεκτική xv. 212 If the Church meddles with them when they do not derive into ill life.
13. Of a word: To originate, come as a derivative (from its root or primitive).

1794 H. L. PIOZZI Brit. Synonymy I. 90 Indignant meantime derives from a higher stock.
1804 W. TAYLOR in Ann. Rev. 2 632 Upholsterer is declared against as a corruption. Whence does it derive?
1866 J. B. ROSE tr. Virgil Eclogues & Georgics 154 The words Comus and Encomium derive thence.

DERIVATIVES

de' riving n.

1607 S. HIERON Old-man & New-man in Wks. (1620) I. 420 Whosoever is a man by the propagation of Adams nature, the same is also a sinner by the deriuing ouer of his corruption.
1626 BACON Sylva Sylvarum §176 (R.) For our experiments are onely such as do ever ascend a degree to the deriving of causes and extracting of axiomes.