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n.

- 1. A flat surface on which money is counted, business is transacted, or food is prepared or served.
- 2. Games A piece, as of wood or ivory, used for keeping a count or a place.

3.

- a. An imitation coin; a token.
- **b.** A piece of money.

#### Idioms:

#### over the counter

- 1. Without being listed or available on an officially recognized stock exchange but in trade by direct negotiation between buyers and sellers: bought stocks over the counter.
- 2. Without a doctor's prescription being legally required: cold medicine that is available over the counter.

#### under the counter

In an illegal or surreptitious manner; illicitly: arrested for selling prescription drugs under the counter.

[Middle English countour, from Anglo-Norman counteour, from Medieval Latin computātōrium, countinghouse, from Latin computāre, to calculate; see count<sup>1</sup>.]

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#### counter-

pref.

- 1. Contrary; opposite; opposing: counterclaim.
- 2. Corresponding; complementary: counterfoil.

[Middle English countre-, from Old French contre-, from Latin contrā; see kom in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.

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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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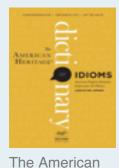
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