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bul·ly¹  (b l ē)

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n. pl. bul·lies

1. A person who is habitually cruel or overbearing, especially to smaller, weaker, less popular, or more vulnerable people.
2. A hired ruffian; a thug.
3. A pimp.
4. *Archaic* A fine person.
5. *Archaic* A sweetheart.

v. bul·lied, bul·ly·ing, bul·lies

v. tr.

1. To hurt or intimidate (someone) in the manner of a bully. See Synonyms at [intimidate](#).
2. To make (one's way) aggressively.

v. intr.

1. To behave like a bully.
2. To force one's way aggressively or by intimidation: “*They bully into line at the gas pump*” (*Martin Gottfried*).

adj.
Excellent; splendid: *did a bully job of persuading the members.*

interj.

Used to express approval: *Bully for you!*

[Possibly from Middle Dutch *boele*, sweetheart, probably alteration of *broeder*, brother; see **bhrāter-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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bul·ly²  (b l ē)

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n.

Canned or pickled beef. Also called *bully beef*.

[Perhaps French *bouilli*, boiled meat, label on canned beef, from past participle of *bouillir*, to boil, from Old French *boilir*; see [BOIL](#)¹.]

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