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Language



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de·cent  (dē sənt)

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- adj.*
1.
 - a. Characterized by conformity to recognized standards of propriety or morality: *a respected citizen who led a decent life; children brought up in decent homes.*
 - b. Morally upright; moral or respectable: "*the corruption that allows the unscrupulous to grow rich while decent people labor to earn an honest wage*" ([Amitav Ghosh](#)).
 - c. Kind or obliging: *very decent of them to lend you money.*
 - d. Showing thoughtfulness or consideration: *let a decent interval go by before calling.*
 2. Free from indelicacy or obscenity; clean: *decent television programming for children.*
 3. Fairly good; acceptable; satisfactory: *finally got a decent night's sleep; made decent wages in the new job.*
 4.
 - a. Suitable; fitting: *had nothing decent to wear to the reception.*
 - b. *Informal* Properly or modestly dressed: *The guests are here—are you decent?*

[Latin *decēns*, *decent-*, present participle of *decēre*, to be fitting; see **dek-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

de cent·ly *adv.*

de cent·ness *n.*

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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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