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gen·er·al  (jĕn ər-əl)

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adj.

1. Concerned with, applicable to, or affecting the whole or every member of a class or category: *"subduing all her impressions as a woman, to something more general"* ([Virginia Woolf](#)).
2. Affecting or characteristic of the majority of those involved; prevalent: *general discontent*.
3. Of or affecting the entire body: *general paralysis*.
4. Being usually the case; true or applicable in most instances but not all: *the general correctness of her decisions*.
5.
 - a. Not limited in scope, area, or application: *as a general rule*.
 - b. Not limited to or dealing with one class of things; diversified: *general studies*.
6. Involving only the main features rather than precise details: *a general grasp of the subject*.
7. Highest or superior in rank: *the general manager*.

n.

1.
 - a. A commissioned rank in the US Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps that is above lieutenant general.
 - b. One who holds this rank or a similar rank in another military organization.
2. A general officer.
3. A statement, principle, or fact that embraces or is applicable to the whole.
4. General anesthesia.
5. *Archaic* The public.

Idiom:

in general

Generally.

[Middle English, from Latin *generālis*, from *genus*, *gener-*, kind; see **genə-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

gen er·al·ness *n.*

Synonyms: general, common, universal

These adjectives mean belonging to, relating to, or affecting the whole: *the general welfare; a common enemy; universal military conscription*.

Antonym: [particular](#)

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

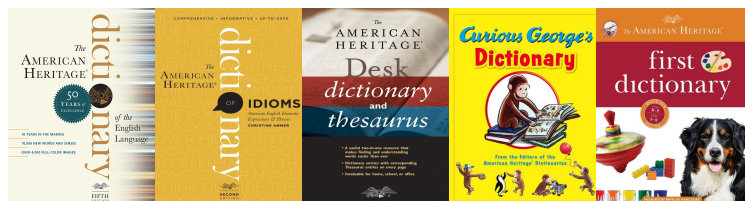
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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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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