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dictionary

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English
Language



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ge·ner·ic  (jə-něĭk)

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adj.

1.

a. Relating to or descriptive of an entire group or class: *Cancer is a generic term for a group of diseases in which cells proliferate wildly.*

b. Lacking specificity; general: *made some generic remarks about how to save for retirement.*

2. *Biology* Of or relating to a genus.

3.

a. Relating to or being a product that is sold or distributed without any brand name or without a widely known brand name, especially as a discount alternative to a name-brand product: *generic soap.*

b. Relating to or being the official nonproprietary name of a drug, under which it is licensed and identified by the manufacturer.

4. *Grammar* Specifying neither masculine nor feminine gender: *generic nouns like waitperson and executive.*

n.

1. A product or substance sold under or identified by a generic name.

2. A wine that is a blend of several grape varieties and does not carry the name of any specific grape.

[From Latin *genus*, *gener-*, kind; see **gena-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

ge·ner i·cal·ly *adv.*

gen'e-ric i·ty (jěn'ə-rĭs ĭ-tē), **ge·ner·ic·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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