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gen·tle  (jěn təl)

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adj. **gen·tler**, **gen·tlest**

1. Considerate or kindly in disposition; amiable and tender.
2. Not harsh or severe; mild and soft: *a gentle scolding; a gentle tapping at the window.*
3. Easily managed or handled; docile: *a gentle horse.*
4. Not steep or sudden; gradual: *a gentle incline.*
5.
 - a. Of good family; wellborn: *a child of gentle birth.*
 - b. Suited to one of good breeding; refined and polite: *a gentle greeting to a stranger.*
6. *Archaic* Noble; chivalrous: *a gentle knight.*

n.

Archaic

One of good birth or relatively high station.

tr.v. **gen·tled**, **gen·tling**, **gen·tles**

1. To make less severe or intense: *The peaceful sunset gentled her dreadful mood.*
2. To soothe, as by stroking; pacify.
3. To tame or break (a horse).
4. *Obsolete* To raise to the status of a noble.

[Middle English *gentil*, courteous, noble, from Old French, from Latin *gentilis*, of the same clan, from *gēns*, *gent-*, clan; see **gena-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

gen tle·ness *n.*

gen tly *adv.*

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[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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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