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cat·tle 🗣️ (kăt l)

Share:

- pl.n.*
- a.** Ruminant mammals of the genus *Bos* that have been domesticated and are often raised for meat and dairy products. Cows, steers, bulls, and oxen are cattle.

b. Similar wild or domesticated bovine animals, such as anoas or gaurs.
 - 2.** Humans, especially when viewed contemptuously or as a mob.

[Middle English *catel*, property, livestock, from Old North French, from Old Provençal *capdal*, from Medieval Latin *capitāle*, holdings, funds, from neuter of Latin *capitālis*, principal, original, from *caput*, head; see **kaput-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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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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