

Slang. A word I first came into contact with when I was 6 or 7, due in no small part to my parents allowing me to watch Robin Williams: An Evening At the Met and Eddie Murphy's "Delirious" and "Raw" with them.

I had so many questions.

Read Wiki definition of Slang

During my research for this episode I ran across a number of definitions of slang, but the one thing continuously, and humorously repeated IN these definitions is that there isn't really one, solid and agreed upon definition. What every one of the learned scholars (or bored wikipedophiles) which tackled the subject agreed upon, however, was that it "lowers the 'register' or 'formality/respectability' of speech" and is designed to highlight one's belonging to or NOT belonging to a given sub-culture or minority group.

Read Encyclopedia Britannica racist snobby bit

I found this highfalutin snobbery sus AF. Sure, when Scholastics hid knowledge behind a dead-esque language for centuries (I refer of course to "the language of scholarship" being latin until fairly recently), it was merely the privilege of the intelligentsia, but when minority groups and sub-cultures exclude THEM, it's a lowbrow mockery of linguistics.

Clearly, I have opinions.

On the other hand, if someone was trying to write a Ph.D. dissertation on possible alcoholic allergic responses to different types of hard liquor, and after 15 pages of mind numbing academic droning came out with a sentence like "By that time those fools were krunk AF!"...well...I kinda get what the scholastics are talking about.

Slang, much like academic prose, serves to reinforce the "In-Group/Out-Group Bias" inherent in all human interaction, and as such should be used only as a means to draw in like minded folk.

Put another way: Know yer role and stay in your lane.

Slang does do two things EXCEPTIONALLY, however:

1) It highlights that human language is an ever evolving, fluid construct which benefits from both its more rigid, straight-laced users and its more artistic, freestyle users.

Read the bit about Serendipity, spurious, and strenuous

Read the bit about "Gig" and "Lit"

2) It reminds us that "cultural appropriation" does not exist in language. In the arts? Certainly a possibility (Elvis, I'm lookin' at you). But, in language the only way to stay

relevant is to add your cultural and linguistic uniqueness to the collective. Resistance is futile.

Indeed, if history has taught us anything, it is that the more we offer up of ourselves and mix together, the stronger and more beautiful we become.

But, enough about the academic, thinky side of this shit...let's explore and mock slang of the past and present!

1: 1920s Slang Terms

1. **23 skiddoo** -- to get going; move along; leave; or scam
2. **The cat's pajamas** -- the best; the height of excellence
3. **Gams** -- legs
4. **The real McCoy** -- sincere; genuine; the real thing
5. **Hotsy-totsy** -- perfect
6. **Moll** -- a female companion of a gangster
7. **Speakeasy** -- a place where alcohol was illegally sold and drunk during Prohibition
8. **The bee's knees** -- excellent; outstanding

2: 1930s Slang Terms

1. **I'll be a monkey's uncle** -- sign of disbelief; I don't believe it!
2. **Gig** -- a job
3. **Girl Friday** -- a secretary or female assistant
4. **Juke joint** -- a casual and inexpensive establishment with drinking, dancing, and blues music, typically in the southeastern United States
5. **Skivvies** -- men's underwear

3: 1940s Slang Terms

1. **Blockbuster** -- a huge success
2. **Keeping up with the Joneses** -- competing to have a lifestyle or socioeconomic status comparable to one's neighbors
3. **Cool** -- excellent; clever; sophisticated; fashionable; or enjoyable
4. **Sitting in the hot seat** -- in a highly uncomfortable or embarrassing situation
5. **Smooch** -- kiss

4: 1950s Slang Terms

1. **Big brother is watching you** -- someone of authority is monitoring your actions
2. **Boo-boo** -- a mistake; a wound
3. **Hi-fi** -- high fidelity; a record player or turntable
4. **Hipster** -- an innovative and trendy person

5: 1960s Slang Terms

1. **Daddy-o** -- a man; used to address a hipster or beatnik
2. **Groovy** -- cool; hip; excellent
3. **Hippie** -- derived from hipster; a young adult who rebelled against established institutions, criticized middle-class values, opposed the Vietnam War, and promoted sexual freedom
4. **The Man** -- a person of authority; a group in power

6: 1970s Slang Terms

1. **Catch you on the flip side** -- see you later
2. **Dig it** -- to like or understand something
3. **Get down/Boogie** -- dance
4. **Mind-blowing** -- unbelievable; originally an expression for the effects of hallucinogenic drugs
5. **Pump iron** -- lift weights
6. **Workaholic** -- a person who works too much or is addicted to his or her job

7: 1980s Slang Terms

1. **Bodacious** -- beautiful
2. **Chillin'** -- relaxing
3. **Dweeb** -- a nerd; someone who is not cool
4. **Fly** -- cool; very hip
5. **Gag me with a spoon** -- disgusting
6. **Gnarly** -- exceptional; very cool
7. **Preppy** -- one who dresses in designer clothing and has a neat, clean-cut appearance
8. **Wicked** -- excellent; great
9. **Yuppie** -- Young Urban Professional; a college-educated person with a well-paying job who lives near a big city; often associated with a materialistic and superficial personality

8: 1990s Slang Terms

1. **Diss** -- show disrespect
2. **Get jiggy** -- dance; flirt
3. **Homey/Homeboy** -- a friend or buddy
4. **My bad** -- my mistake
5. **Phat** -- cool or hip; highly attractive; hot
6. **Wassup?** -- What's up?; How are you?
7. **Word** -- yes; I agree

9: 2000s Slang Terms

1. **Barney Bag** -- a gigantic purse
2. **Newbie** -- a newcomer; someone who is inexperienced
3. **Peeps** -- friends; people
4. **Rents** -- parents
5. **Sweet** -- beyond cool
6. **Hipster** -- a douche bag who thinks brown penny loafers with no socks, pink skinny jeans, a blue He-Man t-shirt, a brown suede vest, and be-feathered fedoras equal cool or respectable fashion statements, and veganism or vegetarianism equals moral superiority

1

Catfish

You can thank **Nev Schulman** for this 2010s slang term. While *catfish* was originally just a type of fish, it gained [a new meaning](#)—someone creating a false personal profile online to dupe someone else—after the documentary *Catfish* was released in 2010. The film, which highlighted Schulman's experience with a woman who used social media to pretend to be another woman entirely, spawned a long-running TV show of the same name, and eventually the word's new definition.

2

Bromance

Bromance was one of the earliest slang terms to arrive in the 2010s. Blending the terms "bro" and "romance," [this slang word](#) marks a close, nonsexual friendship between men.

7

Earworm

8

Helicopter parent

Kali Coleman

October 8, 2020 · 25 min read

The [English language](#) is constantly evolving, and the last 10 years have been no exception. Throughout the 2010s, we've seen a slew of new [slang words](#) that you might say are *on fleek*. We're not trying to *mansplain* the last decade of slang to any *wordies* out there, but if you're still confused about what the kids are saying these days, have no fear. We're breaking down 2010s slang with 100 words that were added to the Oxford English Dictionary or Merriam-Webster in the last decade. And for some throwback phrases you might recognize, check out the [100 Slang Terms From the 20th Century No One Uses Anymore](#).

1

Catfish

someone catfishing someone with messages online

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2

Bromance

creative New Years resolutions

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3

Instagram

woman posting photo on instagram

Instagram [launched as a platform](#) in October 2010, and it quickly became a part of our everyday vocabulary. To *Instagram* something [simply describes the act](#) of posting a photo on the app. Then there's the adjective *Instagrammable*, which means something is picture-perfect enough to share with the masses. And for more useful information delivered straight to your inbox, [sign up for our daily newsletter](#).

4

Cougar

older cougar woman drinking alone at bar checking her phone for message

While *cougar* has existed as a word for a breed of large cat for ages, it's now also a way of identifying a person. The [new meaning](#), which describes a "middle-aged woman seeking a romantic relationship with a younger man," was added to Merriam-Webster in 2011.

5

Sexting

woman's hand types on smartphone in bed, early signs of alzheimer's

Sexting is a term that blends the words "sex" and "texting," as a way to refer to the act of sending sexually explicit messages or images by cell phone. The slang term has been around since the beginning of the 21st century, but wasn't [recognized by the Oxford English Dictionary](#) until 2011.

6

Heart

i heart new york t shirt on a hanger outside

The [Oxford English Dictionary](#) added a new meaning to the term *heart* in 2011. To say "I *heart* something" has become synonymous with saying you love it, thanks to the rising use of the heart emoji. And for more words that have changed meanings, check out these [25 Everyday Words That Used to Have Different Meanings](#).

7

Earworm

man with his hands on his head

Ever had a [catchy song](#) or melody repeat over and over in your mind? That's known as an *earworm*. This meaning of the word was [added to the Oxford Dictionary](#) in 2011, but *earworm* also at one point described a "counselor who gives advice in secret." And for some more words you might not be familiar with, check out the [30 Superb Synonyms for Everyday Words That Will Make You Sound Like a Genius](#).

8

Helicopter parent

Parent lies

In the age of social media, it's no surprise that the urge to become a *helicopter parent* is more prevalent than ever. The idea of a parent who is a little *too* involved in the life of their child has been around for a long time, but [Merriam-Webster put a name](#) to this strict, over-involved parenting in 2011.

12

First World problem

Ever had a *First World problem*? This concept of a relatively trivial or minor problem—in contrast to the very serious problems experienced by those in developing countries

13

Deets

Want the *deets*? This shorthand form of the word "details" became common slang among the younger generation in the 2010s, and it was added to the Oxford English Dictionary in 2012.

14

Inspo

The *inspo* for this slang term is quite simple: It's the shortened form of the word "inspiration." *Inspo* was first used in 2012, according to [Merriam-Webster](#). It's often used in the context of inspiration for fashion, i.e. *fashion inspo*, but it has also been [stretched to mean](#) "inspirational."

15

Vom

No need to *vom* when you hear this slang term. Teens in the 2010s are all about shortening their words, and this abbreviation for "vomit" is no exception. Its usage became so common in the beginning of the decade that the [Oxford English Dictionary added it](#) in 2012.

16

Humblebrag

It's almost too easy to *humblebrag* these days when we post online. The term, created by the late [Harris Wittels](#) and added to the dictionary by [Merriam-Webster](#), is the act of posting something online that seems "modest, self-critical, or casual" but is really meant to draw attention to a person's achievements or impressive qualities.

17

Side-eye

Someone might throw you a little *side-eye* if you don't recognize this popular 2010s slang term. If someone is giving you *side-eye*, [it means](#) they're looking at you with a sidelong glance that typically expresses "scorn, suspicion, disapproval, or veiled curiosity."

18

Dad dancing

If [your dad](#) dances poorly, don't worry, you're not alone. This concept of hilarious, uncoordinated dancing done by dads became so common in the last decade that the [Oxford English Dictionary](#) [recognized](#) the slang term *dad dancing* in 2013.

22

Upcycle

A push for increased [eco-friendly efforts](#) became more commonplace in the last decade. The idea of *upcycling*, which means reusing materials to create a "product of higher value or quality," was just one of these efforts, and the [Oxford English Dictionary](#) recognized the word in 2014.

23

Jeggings

As the fight for skinnier and skinnier jeans became all the rage in the early 2010s, *jeggings* were born. These skin-tight pants were dubbed *jeggings* because they combined the look of jeans with the tightness of leggings,

27

Freegan

For better or worse, specialized diets have become more recognizable and widespread with the help of the internet. Added to the [Oxford English Dictionary in 2015](#), the *freegan* diet, which combines the terms "free" and "vegan," refers to a person who eats "discarded food, typically collected from the refuse of shops or restaurants for ethical or ecological reasons."

29

Ship

Ship in 2010s doesn't just refer to a boat out at sea. Short for the word "relationship," *ship* was also recognized by the Oxford English Dictionary in 2015. It means "discussing, portraying, or advocating a romantic pairing" between two people, mostly in terms of characters in a fictional work.

31

FOMO

Slang [acronyms](#) have also found their way into the official dictionaries. *FOMO*, otherwise known as the "fear of missing out," has been a favorite term of the younger generation over the past decade

32

ICYMI

That same year, Merriam-Webster also added *ICYMI*, meaning "in case you missed it." It's usually used when someone reposts something online in case certain people didn't see it when it was posted the first time around.

33

Dox

To *dox* someone means you are identifying or publishing private information about them publicly online, most often as a form of revenge.

40

Slay

When [Merriam-Webster added](#) the slang term *slay* to the dictionary in 2017, it had nothing to do with knights and swords. Instead, it was a verb that meant "to strongly impress or overwhelm someone," most often used by drag queens or in reference to stars like Beyoncé by their dedicated fan-base.

41

Dabbing

You could call this the decade of *dabbing*, which is a slang term Merriam-Webster also recognized in 2017. This dance craze, which had people posing with their nose in the crook of their bent elbow in a celebratory fashion, was done across the world by teens and adults alike.

42

Front

The word *front* took on new meaning in 2017 when Merriam-Webster added a new definition. Over the last decade, the [slang term was popularized](#) as a verb meaning "to assume a fake or false personality to conceal one's true identity and character."

43

Salty

While *salty* once just referred to how some people like their food, it now describes a person who shows resentment toward another person or situation, synonymous with the word "bitter." [Merriam-Webster](#) notes that this usage became extremely popular in 2017.

50

Extra

Extra has become a widely used internet phrase to refer to someone on social media—or even offline nowadays—who is overly dramatic. The [Oxford English Dictionary](#) recognized the word in 2018.

51

Wordie

We've got groupies and foodies, but in 2018, Merriam-Webster gave us the term *wordie*. If you're someone who thinks of themselves as a word lover—for example, you're loving this post—you would be a *wordie*.

53

Rando

Also recognized by Merriam-Webster in 2018 was the slang term for "random." However, *rando* is specifically [used to describe](#) a random person who is "not known or recognizable," most typically in a negative or unwelcome manner.

54

Hate-watch

With the rise of streaming content online, some consumers have begun to participate in *hate-watching*. This concept of watching content you dislike just to laugh at it was officially recognized by [Merriam-Webster in 2018](#).

56

Snowflake

While winter *snowflakes* may be pretty, the term has taken on a negative connotation over the last decade. The Oxford English Dictionary added a new meaning to the word in 2018: It's now used as an insult to characterize someone as "overly sensitive or easily offended." It probably comes from the novel and film *Fight Club*, which contain the phrase, "You are not special, you are not a beautiful and unique snowflake."

57

Swag

A new meaning to the word *swag* was also added to the Oxford English Dictionary in 2018. Derived from the word "swagger," this word means someone who is bold or self-assured in both their style and manner. The definition now also includes the "walk" of someone who has *swag*.

59

Bechdel test

The *Bechdel test*, which was originally coined by cartoonist Alison Bechdel, is an informal way to evaluate whether a piece of work portrays women in a sexist or stereotypical way. Also recognized by Merriam-Webster in 2018, the term says that a work must include at least two named women that talk to each other about something other than a man.

60

Ace

Ace became a fixture of the [LGBTQIA+](#) community this last decade; the term is an informal way to describe someone who identifies as asexual, meaning they do not experience sexual feelings or desires. The Oxford English Dictionary added the word in 2018.

65

Hot take

[Merriam-Webster added the term](#) *hot take* in 2018 to describe a "published reaction or analysis of a recent news event that, often because of its time-sensitive nature, doesn't offer much in the way of deep reflection." The slang phrase combines the definition of "hot" that means "immediate interest" and "take" as "a distinct point of view."

67

Nonplussed

Previously, *nonplussed* meant being unsure about what to do in a situation, but it's quickly [gained a new meaning](#) in the last decade. Because so many people were using it to describe someone who is "not bothered, surprised, or impressed by something," that's now one of its official meanings.

68

Dumpster fire

In 2018, [Merriam-Webster added](#) the slang phrase *dumpster fire*. A more interesting way to describe something as disastrous, its official definition refers to "an utterly calamitous or mismanaged situation or occurrence."

69

TL;DR

Here's the *TL;DR*—[Merriam-Webster added this phrase](#) in 2018. Short for "too long; didn't read," it's commonly used online to get a short summary of a story that someone might find too long to get through.

70

Hangry

No one wants to encounter a *hangry* person. The word, which is a combination of the words "hungry" and "angry," [describes someone](#) who is irritable just because they are hungry. It was added to [Merriam-Webster in September 2018](#).

71

Bougie

Bougie was derived from the word "bourgeois" (a person of middle class stature), and was recognized by [Merriam-Webster in 2018](#). In slang terms, it refers to a "concern for wealth, possessions, and respectability." So if someone is *bougie*, you could say they enjoy the finer things in life.

72

Glamping

The younger generation knows that not everyone is a fan of the less-than-luxurious experience of camping, which is how *glamping* came to be. Added to [Merriam-Webster in 2018](#), the slang term refers to outdoor camping with luxurious amenities and comforts like beds, electricity, and access to indoor plumbing.

73

Subtweet

There are plenty of ways to tweet, and one of the most thrilling is *subtweeting*. The word, which was recognized by [Merriam-Webster in 2018](#), describes that act of responding to someone or referencing someone through a tweet, but without directly linking to their account or mentioning them by name.

74

Mansplain

To *mansplain* is to explain something to someone in a "condescending way that assumes [they have] no knowledge about the topic," specifically when it's a man explaining something to a woman. While the word comes from **Rebecca Solnit's** 2008 essay "Men Explain Things to Me," it wasn't officially [added by Merriam-Webster](#) until March 2018.

76

Receipts

When [Merriam-Webster added](#) a new meaning to the word *receipts* in 2019, they weren't talking about the kind you get from the grocery store. In the 2010s, we used *receipts* to mean the collection of proof or evidence, and we can probably thank [Whitney Houston](#) for that.

77

EGOT

Few people get to have the coveted title of *EGOT*. This slang term, which was added by Merriam-Webster in 2019, is used to describe anybody who has won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony Award. Stars that have accomplished this include **Audrey Hepburn**, **Whoopi Goldberg**, and **John Legend**.

78

Unplug

Back in the day, *unplug* simply meant you were unplugging an electronic device, but now humans can *unplug*. The new meaning added by Merriam-Webster in 2019 refers to the act of temporarily withdrawing from the stressors of everyday life by refraining from using electronics.

80

Gucci

If you're calling something *gucci*, it's a good thing. Meaning "great or excellent," [Merriam-Webster](#) says its earliest usage was in a September 1999 issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, where **Lenny Kravitz** described his stylish bedroom as very "*Gucci*."

81

Clapback

You don't want to be on the receiving end of a *clapback*. In contrast to the standard comeback, this slang term describes a response to criticism that is especially quick, sharp, and effective.

82

Purple state

As younger generations have started to grow up and become more involved in politics, they've added new terms into the mix as well. One of these is *purple state*—metaphorically referring to the blend of red Republicans and blue Democrats in geographical areas where voters are split

83

Peak

Instead of simply referring to a physical point on something, it's been expanded to describe the possible "height of popularity, use, or attention" of something or someone. If you use a lot of the slang on this list, someone might call you *peak millennial*.

84

Clock

Clock has gained a newer meaning over the past few years. Instead of just referring to a device that tells time, the definition of *clock* was broadened by [Merriam-Webster in 2019](#): It's now also a verb that means "noticing" or "realizing" something.

85

Stan

To describe an overly enthusiastic fan, Merriam-Webster added this [new word in 2019](#). The slang term comes from the [2000 Eminem song "Stan."](#) in which the title character is dangerously obsessed with the rapper.

87

Flex

through the rise of social media, the definition was [broadened to refer to](#) figurative acts of *flexing* in order to show off to an online audience. And if your bragging feels especially misguided, you might get hit with a ["weird flex, but OK."](#)

88

Swole

Swole is another exercise-oriented word that got a [new meaning in 2019](#). Years ago, had someone said you were *swole*, it might have made you worry that you were swelling up. Nowadays, however, it's used to [describe an extremely muscular person](#). The phrase "get swole" means you're trying to achieve that physique.

89

Debbie Downer

The phrase *Debbie Downer* came from a [Saturday Night Live sketch](#) of the same name in 2004. The term has only gained [popularity as a phrase](#) over the past decade, describing any relentlessly negative person.

90

Shook

If you were "shaken up" by something in the 2010s, you would say you're *shook*. The [slang term came](#) about in the mid-2010s as a way to describe someone who is either "upset or agitated" or "filled with excitement or dismay." And if you're YouTuber **Christine Sydelko**, you might even be *shooketh*.

92

Adulting

While it's been a word for decades, *adult* as a verb just gained popularity (and [Merriam-Webster's approval](#)) over the last decade. *Adulting* means you are behaving like an adult by doing responsible, grown-up things—or at least trying.

93

Thirsty

The kind of *thirsty* we're talking about in 2019 is not something water can fix. According to [Merriam-Webster](#), this new meaning of the word reflects a strong, avid desire for something—or, more often, *someone*.

94

Cancel

Back in the day, *cancel* in the entertainment world simply meant your favorite show wasn't being renewed for a new season. Since 2018, however, the word has [taken on a new meaning](#): Public figures are canceled—as in, fans stop supporting them—on the basis of problematic or abusive behavior, or objectionable opinions.

95

Ghost

No, we're not talking about the paranormal here—although some would consider it just as scary. *Ghost* is now also a verb that means cutting off all contact with someone else (typically a romantic partner) without any prior warning or explanation. Spooky!