

American Slang

American Cultural Slang

(To) ace (v.) (a test, exam, etc.): To pass a test, exam, etc. really easily. ex: "Robert aced his physics exam."

All-ears: When someone says "I'm all ears", they are telling you that they are listening to you; that they are giving you their undivided attention.

All-nighter (n.): A period of work or study that lasts all night. Most often used with the verb "pull" (To pull an all-nighter) - ex: "We pulled an all-nighter in order to finish the project."

Around-the-clock: 24/7, all day and night, non-stop; ex: "The house was being watched around the clock."

B.O.: Short for "body odor" - the foul smell one secretes from one's armpits, especially when one doesn't shower/wash. ex: "The woman sitting beside me had really bad B.O."

Blow or Bomb: To fail or to be unsuccessful.

Blue or Have the Blues: To feel depressed or sad.

Buck: One dollar.

By the skin of your teeth: Just barely.

Cash (n.): Money. ex: "You got any cash on you?"

Catfishing (v): a deceptive activity involving a person creating a fake social media presence in order to mislead someone else.

Cheesy (adj.): Cheap, tacky. ex: "A cheesy pick-up line", "A cheesy song", etc.

Chick (n.): Young woman, girl, etc. *this term is considered derogatory (offensive) by some, so if you're not sure - don't use it.

Cool (adj.): Nice, great, impressive ex: "a cool dress", "a cool guy", "a cool bar".

Cop (n.): Police officer. ex: "My brother is a cop."

Creep (n.): An unpleasantly weird/strange person. ex: "I don't like Tom. He seems like a creep."

Couch Potato: A lazy person, one who sits on and watches TV.

Cram: To study feverishly before an exam.

Crash: To go to sleep; or to show up without invitation ex: "Can I crash here tonight?"²

Dead: Empty; quiet (said about restaurants.) ex: "It's really dead in here tonight" (It's empty in here tonight/there are very few people here tonight).

Drama queen: Someone who gets overly emotional/sentimental about things. Someone who thrives on the dramatic. ex: "Betty is such a drama queen!"

Down to earth: Practical; simple.

Drive up the wall: To irritate; "He is driving me up the wall."

Dude: young man, boy, etc. ex: "That dude and I have the same shirt."

Dutch or go Dutch: Each person pays for his/her own meal.

Gonna: Short for "going to". ex: "I'm gonna call you tomorrow."

Gotta: Short for "have got to" or "have to". ex: "I gotta go."

Gotcha: Short for "I got you" meaning to understand one's point.

Get under one's skin: To bother.

Give the cold shoulder: To ignore.

Hyped (adj.): Really excited. ex: "We're all hyped about the concert next weekend."

Hang out: To gather in a casual; and social manner.

Hit the books: To study.

Hold your horses: Be calm!

In no time: Very soon. ex: "Don't worry - We'll be there in no time."

Jock: An athlete.

Later: Short for "See you later."

Lighten up (v.): To relax; to not take things too seriously. ex: "You gotta learn to lighten up a bit!"

Munchies (n.pl): Chips and other types of junk food. ex: "I picked up some munchies on my way home from work."

No way: 1) Phrase used to say that something is definitely not going to happen. ex: "P1: Are you going to see her again? P2: No way!"; 2) Phrase of awe/disbelief. ex: "She gave you her phone number? No way!"

Over: "Over" is often used to emphasize location. ex: "I live over on Orange Street." (I live on Orange Street).

(To) overstep (v.): To be out of line. To say/do something that's inappropriate to a situation. ex: "I'm sorry; I overstepped. I shouldn't have said those things to your parents."

Once in a blue moon: Infrequent.

Oops: Often said after a small mistake.

Piece of cake: Easy or effortless.

Pig out: To overeat.

Pop quiz: An exam that is not announced.

Ride shotgun (v.): To ride in the front passenger seat of a car. ex: "I wanna ride shotgun!"

Rip-off: Overcharge or steal.

R.S.V.P.: The formal reply to an invitation, by phone, email, or mail.

Screw up (v.): To make a mistake, do something badly/wrong ex: "I really screwed up my audition."

Sweet (adj.): Very nice. ex: "That is a sweet car."

Shoot the breeze: To talk.

Spill the beans: To reveal a secret.

Take off (v.): To leave, to get going, to be on one's way. ex: "We have to take off. See you soon!"

That hit the spot: (When talking about food/drinks) That was really good; That's just what I needed.

Trash (v.): To destroy. "The band trashed the hotel room."

Turn-off (n.): Something that makes you lose your interest. ex: "The fact that she smoked so much was a real turn-off."

24/7 (Twenty-four seven): Non-stop, around the clock. ex: "That place is open 24/7. It never closes."

Take a rain-check: To do at another time.

Watch your back: Be careful; Watch out *this is often meant as a threat or warning*

Weirdo (n.): Strange person. *fairly negative*

Wimp (n.): Weak, cowardly person.

Work up the courage (to do something): To build up enough confidence (to do something); not concrete; ex: "She finally worked up the courage to ask him out."

Wrap (something) up (v.): To finish (something); To bring something to a close. ex: "OK, let's wrap things up for today."

What's up: An informal greeting which implies "How are you?" or "What are you doing?" It is not a question about things that are above you like the sky or the ceiling.

You bet: 1) Of course. ex: "P1: Hey you wanna come to the beach with us? P2: You bet!"; 2) No problem. ex: "P1: Thanks for all your help! P2: You bet!"

"You can say that again!": Phrase meaning "I agree with you completely."

"You're telling me!": Phrase meaning "I know exactly what you mean"; Similar to "Don't I know it!"; ex: "P1: My son's in Iraq. I miss him so much! P2: You're telling me! I've got two sons over there!"