

Merriam-Webster adds 690 new words to an already long book

Written by gallupsun

Friday, 06 October 2023 19:30

The folks at Merriam-Webster have been hard at work, keeping the dictionary relevant for a new generation of vibrant verbophiles. The new class of 690 words promises to keep M-W a real page-turner.

As you can see, the English language is alive and well, as its words, phrases and meanings continue to evolve. Allow me to introduce to you a few words from the class of 2023.

Doomscroll: to spend endless time scrolling on your phone. I'm an expert doomscroller, seamlessly switching between Instagram, Facebook and Reddit. While the youngsters prefer TikTok, I prefer to watch reposted TikTok videos on Instagram.

Beast mode: in sports, going "beast mode" is to take over a competition with an aggressive fervor. The term was popularized by sports commentators referring to Seattle Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch, as he took over games by seemingly "leveling up" and smashing through opposing defenses.

Doggo: a dog. My doggo, Socks, is a one-year-old Cockapoo who likes stealing food from my one-year-old son.

GOATED: G.O.A.T. stands for “greatest of all time,” and the phrase “GOATED” (in all caps) has evolved to encompass anything that is clearly superior to other things in its category. Depending on your perspective, Michael Jordan is the GOAT of basketball, while others consider LeBron James to be the GOAT.

TTYL: an abbreviation for “talk to you later.” Note here that “TTYL” is an initialism, not an acronym. Acronyms are pronounced as words (e.g., NASA), while initialisms are spelled out (e.g., NFL) when spoken aloud. TTYL comes from AOL Instant Messenger days of yore, back when I used our family’s dial-up modem to interrupt my older sister’s phone calls.

Jorts: jean shorts. There’s nothing inherently wrong with jorts, but they have come to be associated with men over the age of forty. The best place I’ve found to see the most jorts per capita is at the Indy 500. Whether they’re cutoffs or born that way, jorts are a mainstay among American motorsport fans.

Tiny house: a house or mobile home under 500 square feet. A tiny house is not to be confused with a Hobbit-hole, which is usually home to a short fictional character with hairy feet. Tiny houses are often intentionally chosen by inhabitants who want to live a more simple lifestyle.

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Thirst trap: a photo posted on social media intended to evoke strong desire from its viewers. Although thirst traps are often sexual in nature, social media content creators can post “thirst traps” of other objects intended to make their followers jealous (or “jelly,” as the kids would say). For instance, I would post a thirst trap of my collection of Carl Sandburg first edition poetry books.

While some may scoff at the slang terms and online lexicon added to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, new words keep a language fresh and exciting. I, for one, think the English language is really bussin’ (extremely good).

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