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Most commonly used words in english conversation

Image: Shutterstock How well did you do in English class? Are you a grammar nazi? Does the internet drive you nuts with the prevalence of misused words? Same here! Let's find out if you can ace this quiz.We're on the fence about whether or not we approve of all of the new words that are included in the dictionary each year... ok, that's not entirely true. We don't always agree, but nobody asked us. You might be on our side, and rather that many of these words not have been included in a permanent recording of usable words in the English language, but there they are, regardless. In addition to the words that make it into each revised edition of the dictionary, some words are used every day that just aren't words. Let's go over a few of them.If you are a card-carrying member of the grammar police, you're going to know these words already, but even if you pride yourself on your ability to communicate correctly in English, some of these words are so commonly misused that you may have been abusing them all along and not realize it. We'll forgive you, but please check yourself next time you find yourself uttering one of these travesties.Let's get started. TRIVIA How Good Are You at Spelling, Really? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can You Read the Word If We Give It to You Upside Down? 7 Minute Quiz 7 Min TRIVIA If We Give You One Definition for a Word, Can You Give Us Its Second Meaning? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA EASY Can You Pick The Word That Rhymes? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Do You Know the Definition of These 3-Letter Words? 5 Minute Quiz 5 Min TRIVIA Do You Know Enough to Complete All of These Common Phrases? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can You Get More Than Half Right on This Tricky SAT Vocab Test? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can You Tell If These Commonly Misused Words Are Being Used Correctly? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can You Get More Than 11 Right on This SAT Words Test? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min How much do you know about dinosaurs? What is an octane rating? And how do you use a proper noun? Lucky for you, HowStuffWorks Play is here to help. Our award-winning website offers reliable, easy-to-understand explanations about how the world works. From fun quizzes that bring joy to your day, to compelling photography and fascinating lists, HowStuffWorks Play offers something for everyone. Sometimes we explain how stuff works, other times, we ask you, but we're always exploring in the name of fun! Because learning is fun, so stick with us! Playing quizzes is free! We send trivia questions and personality tests every week to your inbox. By clicking "Sign Up" you are agreeing to our privacy policy and confirming that you are 13 years old or over. Copyright © 2021 InfoSpace Holdings, LLC, a System1 Company Photo Courtesy: Patrick Fore / Unsplash The English language includes some of the most eloquent and beautiful words in the world. This article largely isn't about them. Instead, let's turn to some of the most delightfully bizarre words that slipped from common usage before their time. They say newer is better, but there are some lost English words that really need to come back in style. Back in the 1500s, a story was told about an illiterate priest that couldn't read the words in front of him. When he arrived at the word sumpsimus — a Latin word used to describe the action of picking up or consuming — he mistakenly said mumpsimus and refused to be corrected. Photo Courtesy: Vera Arsic / Pexels That's how the word picked up speed back then, and that's why the word is now used to describe someone who refuses to correct their own mistake. It's very fitting considering the story it originated from. Groak was a word with more than one meaning, depending on who you asked. According to Joseph Wright, the man behind the English Dialect Dictionary, the verb was used to describe the act of looking at someone with suspicion or crying and whimpering a lot. Photo Courtesy: Free Stocks Org / Pexels The author P.W. Joyce used the word in his novel English as We Speak It in Ireland to describe someone who watches someone else while they eat to see if they'll share their food — much as your dog would do while waiting for scraps. Long before the words drunk and hungover were used, crapulous was used to describe the state of having overindulged in alcohol, causing a person to become ill. The word originated from the Latin word crapula, which meant intoxication. Photo Courtesy: Mauricio Mascaro / Pexels Crapulence in its modern form and usage began around the 1650s. Although it sounds like a bad word, it was never considered profane while in use. We're sure people will understand that if you tell them you're suffering from serious crapulence. A famous literary hero can be thanked for the history of the word quixotism. The book Don Quixote de la Mancha by Cervantes came out in the 1600s and told the story of a wannabe-hero in the Spanish countryside. In the novel, Quixote tries to become a savior but in practice becomes sort of a bandit. Photo Courtesy: Donations Are Appreciated / Pixabay The adjective was used to describe people who held the same ideals and personality traits as the literary character, such as foolishness and impracticality. It also describes a person who is overly chivalrous and romantic. Jargogle isn't just fun to say — it also describes exactly what happens when you use the word jargogle in a sentence today. This verb means to confuse, jumble or mix up. It's a great word to try out at your next party just to jargogle your party guests. Photo Courtesy: Daniel Mingook / Unsplash The word first originated in the late 1600s when the author John Locke used it in his writing, "I fear, that the jumbling of those good and plausible Words in your Head ... might a little jargogle your thoughts." Apricity is one of those words that just rolls off the tongue. It has a great sound and describes something genuinely unique — the warmth of the sun on a snowy day in the middle of winter. It takes an entire sentence and packages it all up in a poetic-sounding way. Photo Courtesy: Tobi / Pexels It's rumored that the word was invented by Henry Cockeram for his own version of the English Dictionary in the 1600s. Unfortunately, apricity slowly died out, even though it could be considered one of the prettiest words in the English language, and certainly on this list. If you find yourself in a situation where the person you're with just will not stop talking, possibly preventing you from being productive, you may be in the presence of someone who twattles. It means to talk idly. Photo Courtesy: Jessica Da Rosa / Unsplash The word came about in the 1700s, but its popularity dwindled by the 1900s. It's also used to describe silly, trivial or nonsensical conversation, usually in a chat between one person who is stuck listening and the other who does all the talking. Gorgonize might sound like a word that you wouldn't want associated with you, but it's not necessarily a bad thing. It means to have a paralyzing or mesmerizing effect on someone, so you could hypothetically gorgonize someone with your beauty. Photo Courtesy: Night Owl / Pixabay That said, your ability to gorgonize could also mean you're terrifying. The word originated from the greek gorgon, the name for a kind of female monster, especially Medusa, who had such a terrifying and intimidating visage that anyone who looked at them was turned into stone. Monkeyshine is one of those words that should never have left common usage. It's not only fun to say, but it's also associated with the fun act of pranking. The word is defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "mischievous or playful activity." Photo Courtesy: Alexas Fotos / Pixabay It was first used in the early 1800s to describe people who were too playful and made a mockery of serious situations. Now in the age of the internet where pranks run rampant and everybody loves good innocent mischief, monkeyshine needs to make a comeback. When your pants get a little too tight from holiday meals and snacks, you may be able to refer to yourself as a jollux. In the 1800s, the word meant a person who was overweight. Unlike fat, it's specifically a noun. Photo Courtesy: I Yunmai / Unsplash Although you wouldn't want to use the word in a negative way towards anyone, it's a much more fun-sounding word than fat. Just be sure to use it in good fun with friends and not to insult someone. Fat-shaming isn't cool in this day and age, no matter what word you use. The word brabble is used to describe an argument, two people bickering or an all-out brawl. It's fairly diverse in its meaning, but it's so much more fun than to use than just calling something a fight. Photo Courtesy: Ryan McGuire / Pixabay The noun originated as early as 1568. It's also used as a verb to describe two people "quarreling noisily over trifles." The next time someone tries to start something with you, you can tell them you're not going to participate in a pointless brabble. The adjective beef-witted came about as early as 1700 and was used to describe someone "having the wit of an ox; dull in intellect; heavy-headed; stupid." The simplicity of the term and the comparison to food gives it some zing when used to insult someone's intelligence. Photo Courtesy: Alexas Fotos / Pixabay The word was often used in literature during the 1700s, such as in Austin and His Friends by Frederic H. Balfour. Beef-witted may have fallen off the radar, but it makes for a much more vivid way to call someone idiot, so it deserves a comeback. Blatherskite is one of those words that's just fun to say. It has several meanings, but it's most recognized definitions include foolishness and gibberish, an overly animated talkative person, "a blustering, noisy, talkative fellow" and "one who talks nonsense in a blustering way." Photo Courtesy: Colton Duke / Unsplash The noun first originated as early as 1650 in Scotland and was derived from blather skate, which meant a contemptible person. Anyone who thinks blatherskite deserves retirement is surely a blather skate. Before there was Baby Got Back by Sir Mix-a-Lot, there were other ways to describe a good-looking derriere. One of the best yet least commonly used words to describe a fit and fancy behind today is callipygian. Photo Courtesy: Charles Deluvio / Unsplash The adjective came to fruition in the early 1800s and comes from the Greek word kallipygos, meaning buttocks. It sounds so much better than any of the alternatives around today. If you want to compliment your spouse on their fine assets, throw them off guard with the best ancient compliment. The obsolete yet wonderfully zany verb fuzzle used to describe the state of being either intoxicated or confused. The word originated in England but was a very close translation of the German word fuseln, which had the same meaning. Photo Courtesy: Omar Lopez / Unsplash Try saying that it loud 10 times in a row when you're on your way to being fuzzled in the pub with your friends, and they'll surely think you're indulging in stultiloquence. Speaking of which ... Stultiloquence is one heck of a Scrabble word that means defined as "senseless or silly talk," and comes from the Latin words for foolish and speak, stultus and loqui (present participle loquens). It can refer to speech without value or words that make no sense. Related words used today are ramble and drivel. Photo Courtesy: Alex Holyoake / Unsplash The next time someone is talking you in circles, you could use the opportunity to point out how stultiloquent or stultiloquential they are. If that doesn't make them pause, nothing will. It might sound like a crazy philosophical theory that died out during the 1800s, but resistentialism is actually a pretty cool way to describe malevolent household objects. It means "the apparently perverse or spiteful behavior of inanimate objects." Photo Courtesy: 41330 / Pixabay If that doesn't sound like a reference to a horror movie where the doll stalks an unsuspecting family, nothing does. The word originated in the 1940s and was intended to be a humorous take on lifeless things having their own hostility towards people. You probably won't hear it anytime soon, but if anybody calls you a slubberdegullion, it's safe to say that you can be heavily offended. The word is defined in different dictionaries as different things. On Dictionary.com, the word is defined as "a slovenly or worthless person." Photo Courtesy: Pezibear / Pixabay On the Merriam-Webster website, however, the word is defined as a person who is wretched, a scoundrel or a "dirty rascal." No matter which way you cut it, though, the word is definitely insulting, and no one would want to be on the receiving end of that diss. One of the oldest words on the list, soothfast originated as early as the 12th century and was used to describe someone who was truthful and honest at all times. The adjective was widely used and came from the Middle English word sothfast, meaning the same thing. Photo Courtesy: PD Pics / Pixabay Soothfast has been used in many literary works, including May-Day by Ralph Waldo Emerson. He wrote, "I care not if the pomps you show Be what they soothfast appear, Or if yon realms in sunset glow Be bubbles of the atmosphere." There's not much worse than seeing a spoiled child running rampant through a shop while you're just trying to pick up a few things in peace, but at least now you can have a fun way to complain about it. A mammothrept is a spoiled child. Photo Courtesy: Shitota Yuri / Unsplash It's derived from the Greek word mammothreptos, meaning a child brought up by their grandmother, but it morphed over time to have a more insulting and negative connotation. It might not be a word you'll throw around a lot, but it could come in handy at some point. For a more sinister look into the English language, consider the word Ganch. The definition as described by Merriam-Webster is "to execute or kill by impaling on stakes or hooks." It's easy to see why a word like this existed in the olden days when things like that happened on a regular basis. Photo Courtesy: Jason Leung / Unsplash It has its origins in the Turkish words kancalamak — to hook — and kanca — large hook. Now, though, the word ganch makes for a funny fact to share around the dinner table or a highly unorthodox way to threaten someone. Another ancient word used to describe a violent act is whisternefet, which means a sharp slap. The word is actually so unused, it's barely featured in any of the main dictionaries anymore. It's a shame, since it rolls right off the tongue and really takes things up a notch. Photo Courtesy: Andrew Le / Unsplash The next time you're in a brabble, consider subjecting your powerful and precise whisternefet. They may not understand what you mean without a demonstration, however. That will take a mumpsimus or blatherskite by surprise! When you're in a dead-end relationship and have to have that dreaded talk, one of the most common things people say is that they want different things." Wouldn't it be great if there was a single word you could use to say all that instead? Photo Courtesy: Free Photos / Pixabay Well, there is. The word in question is diversivolent, which is defined as "desiring different things." The adjective comes from the Latin root words diversus and volentis. It may not take the sting out of a breakup, but at least it will speed things up. Another word that can be used during romance woes is lasslorn. The word is defined on Merriam-Webster as when a person is betrayed by their significant other, especially when the betrayer is a female. It was widely used as a literary term, especially by Shakespeare. Photo Courtesy: JJ Jordan / Pixabay The word was created by combining the word lass, meaning a girl, and forlorn, meaning abandoned or lonely. Although Shakespeare invented many words, it's not confirmed whether he invented lasslorn or just liked it enough to use it throughout his many works. The rare noun epicaricacy comes from the ancient Greek word epikhairekakia, meaning "joy upon evil." The word itself is defined as "rejoicing at or deriving pleasure from the misfortune of others," much like the German "schadenfreude." Photo Courtesy: Boudhayan Biswas / Unsplash It's not known how often or when the word was used, but some scholars suggest it was meant that big in the first place and only started making its mark when people rediscovered it in the 20th century. If you've ever been late to a meeting and had to rush away from your lunch date to get there, you have had to absquatulate. The verb originated in the 1800s and is derived from pseudo-Latin. The word was originally a slang term itself and then eventually landed proper word status. Photo Courtesy: Andrew Neel / Unsplash Today, the word is pretty much obsolete, but if you're the type of person that is always late and rushing, it's the perfect old word to add to your English language index because of how well it applies to you. Widdershins is one of those old words that just sound hilarious. The word itself has been associated with some pretty dark myths. The origin of the adverb came from the Middle Low German weddersins and means to do something "in a left-handed, wrong, or contrary direction." Photo Courtesy: Joao Vicente / Flikr Some legends state that demons had to approach Satan widdershins, which caused the word — and the counterclockwise direction — to become something of a bad omen. By the time the 1500s hit, the superstition was less prevalent, and it was used to simply describe the opposite direction. If you've ever snuck away from a restaurant with more than your share of dinner mints, you are able to condiddle. This verb is defined as "to make away with secretly," and the most common synonym today is to steal, although it's not a perfect synonym. Photo Courtesy: Bildagentur-online / Getty Images The word originated from British English, and it's unclear it first came into usage. Although it's not something most decent people participate in, if you have to be a sneak thief, you might as well describe it as condiddling to add some humor to the situation. When it's been a long week and all you want to do is get a little shut-eye, you may be aching for a good sloom. The word can be used as both a noun and a verb. The noun version means a light sleep, while the verb has two different meanings — "to become weak" or "to move or wander slowly or silently." Photo Courtesy: Zohre Nemati / Unsplash Sloom as sleep originated from Scotland and has been used in many literary works, including Gemma O'Connor's Walking on Water in 2001. The next time you get a little sleepy, you could sloom your way to some rest. Everybody is guilty of a little rizzle now and again, especially around the holidays. The verb is defined as relaxing after a large meal, and an old-timey word has never been so perfect. Rizzle is fun to say and also describes something that most people do at least once a week. Photo Courtesy: Life of Pix / Pixabay It came about in the 19th century in England, and even though it's not widely used, it definitely should be. After all, who doesn't like to get their rizzle on after stuffing their face with delicious food?