

Popular American Slang Words and Phrases

Ace – to succeed or do well

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

Cool – agreeable; okay

Cop – a police officer

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

Down to earth – practical; simple

Drive up the wall – to irritate; “He is driving me up the wall.”

Dutch or go Dutch – each person pays for his/her own meal

Get under one’s skin – bother

Give the cold shoulder – ignore

Give a ring – to telephone

Hang out – to gather in a casual; and social manner

Hang-over – the physical effects of heavy drinking (headache)

Hit the books – study

Hit the road – to leave

Hold your horses – be calm!

Jock – an athlete

The Late Mr. Smith – a term used when the person is dead

Lemon – a bad buy or purchase

Once in a blue moon – infrequent

Oops! – said after a small mistake

Pass the buck – transfer responsibility to someone else

Piece of cake – easy or effortless

Pig out – to overeat

Pop quiz – an exam that is not announced

Rip-off – overcharge or steal

R.S.V.P. – the formal reply to an invitation, by phone or mail

Shoot the breeze – talk

Spill the beans – reveal a secret

Take a rain-check – do at another time

Take for granted – to assume

What’s up – How are you?