

27 American slang **lessons**

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Slang terms have long played a vital role in the English language. As a matter of fact, the use of slangs is so common among natives that understanding these words is important for successful communication whether in listening or speaking with them.

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As you know there are too many countries in the world using different languages. For example, Japanese, Arabic, Spanish, French, English and so on. But a few of them are main and important languages. One of the most important languages is English. So, come on! Learn English and open a new sight to the world.

This is a self-help book. If you use it frequently you will help yourself expand your informal word knowledge. The words you will study and learn, in this book, are vital in that they are known and used by illiterate and also educated people in informal situations or in friendly meetings and conversations. You will hear and use these words in the street, in a party, at home, in the movies, in university among your classmates and even in the conversation of people you meet every day.

Studying this book will help you, while you find yourself in a real situation of spoken English in countries where English language is their first language, like the United States, Canada and so on, not to run into problem with informal or slang words, and you could understand native speakers like native listeners and feel their informal words in their informal conversations the same as your first language.

27 American Slang lessons is divided into 27 lessons, each containing 10 slang words with its pronunciation and part of speech and a dialog. Those words are presented to you in two sample sentences related to the meaning of the word. Each lesson contains exercises that make you as a learner, to have a challenge with exercises and with what you have learned.

The most important features of 27 American Slang lessons:

- 1- Slang words are repeated throughout this book, in various examples, to give you a fat chance to get familiar with them.
- 2- This book includes seven Word Review sections; each section contains challenging exercises to test your mastery of slang words.

What is “informal English”?

No living language is simply one set of words which can be used the same way in all situations. The nature of language is such that there are in infinitive different ways to arrange its elements. What this mean is that there are many ways to say the same thing, depending on where you are, who you are talking to, and how you feel. You are all advanced enough in your study of English to realize that you don't talk to a roommate the same way. You don't talk to a bartender the same way you would talk to a judge. You don't refuse a panhandler with the same words you would use to refuse a second helping of mashed potatoes at a formal dinner. One of the main factors which determine which words and structures are appropriate is the degree of formality of the situation in which you are using the language. In CELOP and in academic in general, we use a relatively formal set of words and structures. In this course, we will be examining the specific vocabulary and structures used in less formal situations.

What are “informal situations”?

When and where is informal English appropriate? There are many situations in everyday life when informal English is allowed, even preferred. Some examples include while playing sports, while studying with friends, at a bar or informal restaurant, at a party or reunion, while watching a sporting event with close family members, with friends while shopping, studying or hanging out, at work (depending on your job), on a date, at the movies, while listening to popular music, on public transportation, when accosted on the street by people you don't know, in email, in notes, on the telephone with friends.

What is slang?

Slang is a subset of a language used by one particular group. It consists of words and expressions used in informal situations, so it is not appropriate in formal situations.

Who uses slang?

Slang is used by all kinds of groups of people who share situations or interests. The group which uses these words is always in the minority, and often uses slang to set themselves apart or make it difficult for ordinary people to understand them. When a particular new expression is known and used by a large majority of population, it is no longer slang, but part of the regular language or usage.

Note: slang and informal English are not the same. Some slang can be used in formal situations, and some of the words that can only be used in informal situations are not slang. Can you think of any examples?

Why does slang exist?

Slang fulfills at least two different functions, depending on whose point of view you take. For the groups that use slang, it is a way to set them apart, to express them in a distinct and individual way, and sometimes to keep secrets from being known by others. But for the society in general and the development of the language, slang performs another role. For the language, slang is like a linguistic laboratory, where new words and forms can be tested out, applied to a variety of situations, and then either abandoned or incorporated into the regular language. It is like a trial period for new words. If they allow people to say something that can't be said using traditional language, and a majority of people accept them, then these words and expressions join their regular language.