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SA slang

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South Africa's many cultures and languages have merged over the years, transforming the English language into a homegrown variety that's not only distinct, but also as colourful and humorous as the people who speak it.

Here are a couple of words and phrases, together with their meanings to ensure that you enjoy (and understand) the local lingo.

Babbelas - Afrikaans for hangover

Bergie - the homeless of Cape Town

Biltong - dried and seasoned meat - a national treasure

Boer - Afrikaans for farmer (considered offensive by Afrikaners if used to classify them)

Braai - a real barbecue. Braaiing is a national past time and the turning of the meat whilst holding a beer in the other hand is taken very seriously. Golden rule: don't mess with the firemaker's fire.

Broer / bru / bro - my brother or mate

Bucks - Refers to money, particularly, South African currency

Bunny chow - a half a loaf of bread that has its inner part scooped out and replaced with curry.

Chop - refers to an idiot.

Dop - an alcoholic beverage, 'Come over to the pub for a dop.'

Dorp - Afrikaans for town.

Doss - sleep, 'I took a doss on the couch for a while.'

Fundi - a clever person or an expert in isiXhosa.

Gatsby - a large chip roll with a variety of fillings including processed meats, cheese and sauce.

Hectic - a word used to describe the intensity of an event or happening. 'Wow the wind is hectic, man.'

Helluva - 'Hell of a' said very quickly and in a strong South African accent. Expresses 'a lot of'.

Hey - used at the end of the sentence to punctuate a question. 'How's the weather, hey?'

Howzit - meaning how are you? The expression doesn't need a direct answer, but is more a greeting that is followed by the proper question. As in, 'Howzit, man! How are you?'

Isit - said as a question in response to a statement. Meaning 'really'? or 'is that so?'

Ja - pronounced 'yah'. Means 'yes'.

Jol - a good time.

Just now (now, now) - means anytime within the next 50 years other than right this moment. 'I'll take the trash out just now.'

Kiff - a word used to describe the degree of awesomeness. 'That was a kiff wave, dude.'

Klap - Afrikaans for 'slap'. 'I'm going to klap you!'

Koppie - a small hill. Not a mountain.

Kuier - getting together with friends and having a friendly visit. The word kuier is associated with good times and braais.

Kos - food.

Laduma! - exclaimed at soccer matches for a goal. Means 'he scores!' or more literally, 'he thunders'.

Lapa - the thatched outdoor shelter used for shade from the African sun or to braai underneath when it's storming.

Larny - used to describe a rich or smart looking person. Mostly refers to a person, fashion and cars.

Lekker - awesome. 'That was a lekker braai.'

Muti - medicine.

Mzansi - the word South Africans use for 'south'. Meaning, the South of Africa. South Africa is often referred to as Mzansi.

Nogal - directly translated, 'even' but is used in exclamation as in 'after all that was said and done'.

O.B.S. - Old Brown Sherry - the national sherry...

Potjie - a three-legged cast iron pot that is used to cook stews over hot coals. Delicious.

Sarmies - those sandwiches packed for a day on the beach.

Shebeen - An informal bar that's open 24 hours.

Shot - meaning 'thanks'.

Skop - kick.

Stoep - the veranda in front of the house.

Tsotsi - someone who is up to no good. Often refers to a gangster.

Tune - to give someone attitude, as in 'Hey man, I'm tuning you.'

Yebo - yes.

Vuvuzela - a plastic trumpet that comes in all colours that is used at soccer matches. Makes a helluva noise.

Ja-nee - meaning 'Yes, that's very true!'.

Wena - you!