

1920s Slang

Ab-so-lute-ly – affirmative

All Wet – describes an erroneous idea or individual, as in, "he's all wet."

And How – I strongly agree!

Applesauce– an expletive same as horsefeathers, As in "Ah applesauce!"

Attaboy – well done!; also Attagirl!

Baby – sweetheart. Also denotes something of high value or respect.

Balled Up – confused, messed up

Baloney – nonsense!

Bank's Closed – no kissing or making out – i.e. – "Sorry, Mac, the bank's closed."

Bearcat – a hot-blooded or fiery girl

Beat it – scam or get lost

Beat one's gums – idle chatter

Bee's Knees – An extraordinary person, thing, idea; the ultimate

Beef – a complaint or to complain

Beeswax – business, i.e. None of your beeswax."

Bell bottom – a sailor

Berries – That which is attractive or pleasing; similar to bee's knees, As in "It's the berries."

Bible Belt – Area in the South and Midwest where Fundamentalism flourishes

Big Cheese – The most important or influential person; boss. Same as big shot

1920s Slang

Big six – a strong man; from auto advertising, for the new and powerful; six cylinder engines

Bimbo – a tough guy

Bird – general term for a man or woman, sometimes meaning "odd," i.e. "What a funny old bird."

Blind Date – going out with someone you do not know

Bluenose – An excessively puritanical person, a prude, Creator of "the Blue Nozzle Curse."

Bootleg – illegal liquor

Breezer – an convertible car

Bronx Cheer – A loud spluttering noise, used to indicate disapproval. Same as raspberry

Bull – (1) a policeman or law-enforcement officer including FBI (2) nonsense (3) to chat idly, to exaggerate

Bull Session – Male talkfest, gossip, stories of sexual exploits

Bum's rush – ejection by force from an establishment

Bump Off – To murder, To kill

Butt me – I'll take a cigarette

Caper – a criminal act or robbery

Carry a Torch – To have a crush on someone

Cash – a kiss

Cash or check? – Do you kiss now or later?

Cat's Meow – Something splendid or stylish; similar to bee's knees; The best or greatest, wonderful.

Cat's Pajamas – Same as cat's meow

Chassis – the female body

1920s Slang

Cheaters – Eyeglasses

Check – kiss me later

Ciggy – cigarette

Clam – a dollar

Copacetic – Wonderful, fine, all right

Crush – An infatuation

Daddy – a young woman's boyfriend or lover, especially if he's rich

Dame – a female

Dapper – a Flapper's dad

Darb – An excellent person or thing (as in "the Darb" – a person with money who can be relied on to pay the check)

Dead soldier – an empty beer bottle

Deb – an debutant

Dick – a private investigator

Dogs – feet

Doll – an attractive woman

Dolled up – dressed up

Don't know from nothing – don't have any information

Don't take any wooden nickels – Don't do anything stupid

Double-cross – to cheat, stab in the back

Dough – money

Drugstore Cowboy – a guy that hangs around on a street corner trying to pick up girl

1920s Slang

Dry up – shut up, get lost

Ducky – very good

Dumb Dora – a stupid female

Earful – enough

Edge – intoxication, a buzz. i.e. "I've got an edge."

Egg – a person who lives the big life

Fall Guy – Victim of a frame

Fire extinguisher – a chaperone

Fish –(1) a college freshman
(2) a first timer in prison

Flat Tire – A dull witted, insipid, disappointing date. Same as pill, pickle, drag, rag, oilcan

Flivver – a Model T; after 1928, could mean any old broken down car

Flapper – A stylish, brash, hedonistic young woman with short skirts & shorter hair

Fly boy – a glamorous term for an aviator

Frame – To give false evidence , to set up someone

Gams – A woman's legs

Get a wiggle on – get a move on, get going

Giggle Water – An intoxicating beverage; alcohol

Gin Mill – An establishment where hard liquor is sold; bar

Glad rags – "going out on the town" clothes

Gold Digger – A woman who associates with or marries a man for his wealth

1920s Slang

Goofy – in love

Hair of the Dog – a shot of alcohol

Handcuff – an engagement ring

Hard Boiled – a tough, strong guy

Hayburner – (1) a gas guzzling car (2) a horse one loses money on

Heebie-Jeebies – The jitters

High-Hat – To snub

Hit on all sixes – to perform 100 per cent; as "hitting on all six cylinders"

Hooch – Bootleg liquor

Hood – hoodlum

Hoofer – Dancer

Horsefeathers – an expletive ; same usage as applesauce

Hotsy – Totsy – Pleasing

It – Sex appeal

Iron – a motorcycle

Jack – money

Jake – OK, as in , "Everything is Jake."

Jalopy – Old car

Jane – any female

Java – coffee

Jitney – a car employed as a private bus. Fare was usually five cents; also called a "nickel"

1920s Slang

Joe – coffee

John – a toilet

Joint – an establishment

Juice Joint – a speakeasy

Joint – A club, usually selling alcohol

Keen – Attractive or appealing

Kisser – Mouth

Left holding the bag – (1) to be cheated out of one's fair share (2) to be blamed for something

Level with me – be honest

Line – Insincere flattery

Live wire – a lively person

Middle Aisle – To marry

Mrs. Grundy – A priggish or extremely tight-laced person

Moll – A gangster's girl

Neck – Kissing with passion

Nifty – great, excellent

"Now you're on the trolley!" – Now you've got it, now you're right!

Nobody Home – Describes some one who is dumb

On the lam – fleeing from police

On the level – legitimate, honest

On the up and up – on the level

Orchid – an expensive item

1920s Slang

Ossified – a drunk person

Owl – a person who's out late

Palooka (1) a below-average or average boxer (2) a social outsider, from the comic strip character Joe Palooka

Pet – Same as neck, but more so

Piker – (1) a cheapskate (2) a coward

Pill – (1) a teacher (2) an unlikable person

Pinch – To arrest

Pipe down – stop talking

Pushover – A person easily convinced or seduced

Putting on the Ritz – after the Ritz hotel in Paris; doing something in high style

Rag-a-muffin – a dirty or disheveled individual

Razz- to make fun of

Real McCoy – The genuine article

Ritzy – Elegant (from the hotel)

Rubes – money or dollars

Sap – a fool

Says you – a reaction of disbelief

Scram – Ask someone to leave immediately

Sheba – A woman with sex appeal (from the movie Queen of Sheba) or (e.g. Clara Bow)

Sheik – A man with sex appeal (from the Valentino movies)

Shiv – a knife

1920s Slang

Sinker – a doughnut

Speakeasy – An illicit bar selling bootleg liquor

Spifflicated – Drunk. The same as canned, corked, tanked, primed, scrooched, jazzed, zozzled, plastered, owled, embalmed, lit, potted, ossified or fried to the hat

Spiffy – An elegant appearance

Spoon – to neck, or at least talk of love

Struggle Buggy – the backseat of a car. A parent's worst nightmare

Stuck On – Having a crush on

Swanky – Ritzy

Swell – Wonderful. Also: a rich man

Take for a Ride – To drive off with someone in order to bump them off

Tin Pan Alley – the music industry in New York, located between 48th and 52nd street

Tomato – a female

Torpedo – A hired gun

Upchuck – To vomit when one has drunk too much

Wet Blanket – a solemn person, a killjoy

What's eating you? – What's wrong

Whoopee – To have a good time

You slay me – that's funny Ab-so-lute-ly – affirmative