# SLANG TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO ANIMALS

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*Abstract: Our article aims at focusing on words or phrases belonging to the slang linguistic compartment, which is a section less approached by linguists, precisely because of its moral character, since the slang expressions designate some intriguing aspects of language that might seem filthy or vulgar. Modern dictionaries based on slang have tried to eliminate this preconception and to highlight the argotic expressions, as slang is nothing but a phenomenon of speech, usually associated with a particular group. Slang words generally replace some unanimously accepted synonyms, in an attempt to emphasize social and contextual understanding. As regards the slang expressions related to animals, they are numberless, as for almost each and every animal we can find a deprecatory meaning that generates a slang phrase. We have arranged the expressions systematically, starting from a certain root word and giving all the slang expressions connected to it.*

*Keywords: animal, humorous, slang, synonyms, derivatives.*

In this article we will reveal to what extent the slang expressions and their derivatives related to animals have made their mark not only in the British English but also in the other Anglophone countries – The American English, the English spoken in Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa. The origin area of a certain slang word is given between brackets. The root words are all defined and arranged in alphabetical order.We have had as a reference book, among others, Volceanov's, Nicolae's and P. Volceanov's "*Dicţionar de argou englez- român*"[1]. Here are some examples:

ALLIGATOR:

- *alligator* (American English) = an unprofitable investment in immovables;
- *alligator* (British English, humorous) = later;
- *alligator boots / shoes* (American English) = down at heels boots / shoes;
- *alligator spread* (American English) = a business in which commissions are equal with or higher than profit.

ANIMAL:

- *animal* (British English) = (noun) snapper, savage; (adj.) phenomenal, extraordinary;
- *animal act / night* (Australian English) = maximum amusement among a group of men;
- *animal house* (American English) = a hostel inhabited by trouble makers;

[1] Volceanov, George, Nicolae, Raluca, Volceanov, Paul George, *Dicţionar de argou englez- român*, Niculescu Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015


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- *animalist* = a militant for animal rights;
- *animal training* = a role-playing game between a gay couple, in which one of the partners is the animal, while the other is the tamer.

APE / APES:

- *ape* = scrapper, muscle man; (Australian English) fifty or five hundred pounds; (adj.) far-gone, raving mad; (adv.) madly;
- *aped* = (adj.) boozy, tipsy, drunken;
- *ape-hangers* = a very high, long, curved motorcycle handle bar;
- *house ape* (American English) = a little child;
- *lead apes in hell* = to die a spinster.

BAT / BATS:

- *ball and bat* (British English) = roof, cap, hat;
- *barking moonbat* (British English) = a nut man, an erratic man;
- *bat* (American English) = tipsiness, drunkenness; tipsy, drunken;
- *bat and wicket* (British English) = ticket,
- *bat around* (British English) = to hang around, to stir about;
- *bat-phone* (British English) = a police walkie-talkie; a mobile phone;
- *bats* (American English) = nuts, half-gone; tipsy, drunken;
- *off one's own bat* (British English) = completely alone, all by himself.

BEAR / BEARS:

- *baby bear* (American English) = a tracker at the beginning of his career;
- *bear* (American English) = a baffled matter; an ugly woman; tracker, snoop; a sinewy homosexual;
- *bear cage* (American English) = iron house, the press, station house;
- *bear chaser* = queenie, homosexual;
- *bear code* = a ranking system of the homosexuals through a code made of letters, numbers, punctuation marks and mathematical symbols;
- *bear in the air* (American English) = a policeman onboard in a plane or helicopter;
- *bear's paw* (British English, humorous) = saw;
- *bear trap* (American English) = a radar of the traffic police, used to detect drivers who exceed the speed limit;
- *big bear* = a massive homosexual;
- *black bear* (American English) = a black homosexual;
- *feed the bears* (American English, verb, used referring to drivers) = to receive a civil penalty;
- *koala bear* = a blond, hairy homosexual;
- *lady bear* (American English) = a female cop.

BUCK:

- *bang for your buck* (British English) = share, interest; (American English) = balance sheet;
- *buck* (British English) = a man who is being cheated by his wife; (American English) dollar; (verb) to oppose to, to stand against;
- *buck and doe* (British English, humorous) = snow;
- *fast buck* = money for jam.

BUFFALO:

- *buffalo* (American English, verb) = to trick, to slip somebody over on, to deceive;
- *Buffalo Bill* (British English, humorous) = safe deposit.


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BULL:
- *bull* (American English, Australian English) = police officer; potent man; prison guard; useless formalities; (American English, verb) to scam, to trick; (Canadian English, verb) to work hard; (Australian English, verb) to talk nonsense;
- *bull and cow* (British English) = caterwaul, loudly argument;
- *bull-ants / bull's aunts* (British English, humorous) = shorts;
- *bull artist* = talker, bouncer;
- *bull dust* = nonsense;
- *bullheaded* (American English) = inveterate, hard-headed;
- *bull juice* (British English) = condensed milk;
- *bull session* (American English) = small conversation, chit-chat;
- *bull's eyes* (American English) = LSD pills.

CALF:
- *calf* (American English) = ten shillings; fifty pence.

CAMEL:
- *camel-jockey* (American English, deprecatory meaning) = Arabian.

CAT / CATS:
- *alley cat* (American English) = night walker; whore, slutty;
- *(to) alleycat* (British English) = to be on the wing, to stir about;
- *cat* = shrew, gossip; guy, fellow; (Australian English) homosexual; (American English) excited owing to toxicomania; (verb) to throw up;
- *cat and dog* (British English, humorous) = water closet, toilet;
- *cat and mouse* (British English, humorous) = louse; house and home;
- *cat call* (American English, of men) = a man's admiring whistle or honk at the sight of a beautiful woman;
- *cats* = pants, trousers;
- *cats and dogs* (American English) = low-class merchandise;
- *cats and kitties* (British English, humorous) = woman breasts;
- *cats and mice* (British English, humorous) = die;
- *cat's face* (British English, humorous) = ace (at cards);
- *cat-soup* (British English, humorous) = ketchup;
- *fat cat* = a wealthy person.

COW / COWS:
- *cash cow* = money resource;
- *cow* (British English) = evil woman; stupid woman; pound; unpleasant task; laughter;
- *cow and calf* (British English, humorous) = ten shillings; laughter;
- *cow belt* (British English) = the states from the north of India;
- *cow juice* (British English, humorous) = milk;
- *cows and kisses* (British English, humorous) = nurse, baby doll, girlfriend;
- *cow's lick* (British English, humorous) = prison;
- *cow's licker* (British English, humorous) = a pound;
- *have a cow* (American English) = to be extremely nervous;
- *holy cow!* = good gracious!, for crying out loud!.

DEER:
- *deer* = lover, sex partner.

DOG / DOGS:


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- *bad dog* (Australian English) = unpaid debt;
- *cattle dog* (British English, humorous) = register, catalogue;
- *dirty dog* (American English) = hound, disreputable young man;
- *dog* (American English) = leg; ugly woman; inferior merchandise; dog droppings; unlikeable young woman; sneak, villain; (British English) phone; wig, hair piece; (Australian English) someone who helps the police to arrest an evil doer; (Canadian English) trifle, gewgaw;
- *dog and basket* (British English) = the lion and the crown from Great Britain's blazon;
- *dog and bone* (British English, humorous) = telephone;
- *dog and pony* (American English, verb) = to influence someone's decisions though all kinds of tricks;
- *dog around* (American English, verb) = to pick at somebody, to take the heart out of somebody; to mistreat one's partner; to cheat on;
- *dog-box* (British English) = a mix-up, a confusing matter;
- *dog-eat-dog* (American English, adjective) = astringent, bitter;
- *dog-end* (British English) = lieutenant; stump;
- *dog it* (American English, verb) = to play with half a heart; (British English) to swing the lead;
- *dog meat* (American English) = a played out man;
- *dogs* = (British English) legs; slippers, shoes, boots; (American English) passengers, travellers (in a plane);
- *dog's dinner* = parade, show;
- *dog's eye* (British English, humorous) = pie;
- *dog's tooth* (British English, humorous) = truth.

DOE:

- *doe* = chick, little woman.

DONKEY:

- *donkey act* = blunder, mistake;
- *donkey-lick* (verb) = to walk away from other competitors (especially in horse races);
- *donkey's breakfast* (American English) = an object made of straw;
- *donkey's years* (American English) = a century, ages;
- *donkey vote* (Australian English, politics) = a voting system in which the elector orders the candidates according to his preferences;
- *swamp-donkey* (British English) = an ugly woman.

ELEPHANT / ELEPHANTS:

- *elephant* (British English) = heroine; ugly woman;
- *elephant god* = LSD;
- *elephants* (British English, humorous) = boozy, drunken.

FOX:

- *artful fox* (British English, humorous) = box seat;
- *crazy like a fox* = cunning, shrewd;
- *fox* (American English) = an attractive young lady or woman; an old homosexual;
- *foxy* = sexy; stinky; drunken; drugged;
- *stone fox* = a beautiful woman.

FROG:


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- *chocolate frog* (Australian English) = foreigner, immigrant; whistleblower, leaker;
- *frog* (British English, humorous) = road, highway; (British English, deprecatory meaning) Frenchman, the French language; (American English) a flight from New York to London; (Australian English) condom;
- *frog queen* (Canadian English) = a francophone Canadian homosexual;
- *green frog* = LSD.

GIRAFFE:

- *baby giraffe* (British English) = a pint of beer of about 300 ml..

GOAT:

- *get somebody's goat* = to get on someone's nerves, to irritate someone;
- *goat* (American English) = a fast car; (politics, deprecatory meaning) elector;
- *goat heaven* = wellness, well-being;
- *nanny goat* (British English, humorous) = throat; coat; boat; quotation.

GORILLA:

- *gorilla* (British English) = one thousand pounds; (American English, in theatre, cinema) a blockbuster;
- *gorilla-finger* (Australian English) = a marijuana cigarette.

HEDGEHOG:

- *hedgehog* (British English, humorous) = foreigner; (deprecatory meaning) Negro;
- *sonic the hedgehog* = LSD.

HORSE / HORSES:

- *Charlie-horse* (American English) = muscular cramps on hands or on legs;
- *dark horse* = a competitor who surprisingly wins; an unexpected candidate for a political position;
- *dead horse* (Australian English) = sauce; (American English) debt;
- *hobby horse* (British English) = mistress, fancy woman;
- *horse* (British English) = ugly woman; (humorous) friend, pal; cough; (American English) heroine; horse droppings;
- *horse and cart* (British English, humorous) = heart; flatulence;
- *horse doctor* (American English) = an incompetent doctor;
- *horse laugh* (American English) = a sarcastic laugh;
- *horse opera* (American English, cinema) = a western movie;
- *horses* (of engine) horse power; (humorous) darts.

KANGAROO:

- *happy as a boxing kangaroo* (Australian English) = extremely unhappy;
- *kangaroo* (British English) = Jew; (Australian English) cattle; money;
- *kangaroo in the top paddock* (Australian English) = wacky, nuts.

KITTEN / KITTENS:

- *have kittens* (American English) = to laugh one's head off; to be surprised, puzzled;
- *kittens* = nerves, anger.

LAMB:

- *baa-lamb* (British English, humorous) = tram;
- *lamb* = an obedient homosexual; an unexperienced investor;
- *lamb's fries* (British English, humorous) = mirrors, lights, eyes.

LION:

- *lion's lair* (British English, humorous) = chair;


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- *lion's roar* (British English, humorous) = snoring.

MARE:

- *grey mare* (British English, humorous) = a ticket;
- *have a mare* (British English) = to get mad;
- *mare* (British English, deprecatory meaning) = a bitch, a mean unbearable woman.

MONKEY / MONKEYS:

- *brass monkeys weather* (British English) = a keen frost;
- *cubicle monkey* (American English, deprecatory meaning) = IT expert;
- *grease-monkey* (American English) = a motor mechanic;
- *monkey* (British English) = five hundred pounds; fifty pounds; under-clerk; (American English) a playful child; a drug addict; lover;
- *monkey business* (British English) = illegal business; foreplay; (American English) nonsense;
- *monkey talk* (American English) = chatter, rambling.

MOUSE / MICE:

- *mouse* (British English) = a young girl; bruise; black eye;
- *mousetrap* (British English, humorous) = cheese of inferior quality; Japanese;
- *white mice* (Australian English) = lice.

OX:

- *dumb ox* (American English) = thick head, stupid;
- *ox* = a man who is being cheated by his wife.

PIG / PIGS:

- *lie like a pig* (Australian English) = to lie like a lawyer;
- *male chauvinist pig* = woman hater;
- *never in a pig's ear / when pigs fly* (British English, humorous) = never;
- *on the pig's back* (British English) = a lucky person;
- *orderly pig* (British English) = an officer on duty;
- *pig* (British English) = a circus elephant; an officer; urine; (American English) an overweight woman; a Negro (deprecatory meaning); an ugly woman;
- *pig heaven* (American English) = a police station;
- *Pig Island* (Australian English, English spoken in New Zealand) = New Zealand;
- *Pig Latin* = gibberish;
- *pig's meat* (British English) = a naval officer's mistress.

PONY:

- *pony* (British English) = twenty five pounds; twenty five thousand pounds; excrement; nonsense; (American English) a prostitute;
- *pony up* (American English) = to pay.

RABBIT / RABBITS:

- *jigger-rabbit* (British English) = she-cat;
- *pants rabbits* (American English) = head lice;
- *rabbit* (Australian English) = a native Australian; chit-chat, small talk; (verb) to steal; to chat;
- *rabbit food* (American English) = fresh fruit and vegetables;
- *rabbit on* (British English, verb) = to talk nonsense;
- *rabbits* (British English) = river-borne smuggled goods; hand-made toys; short journeys.

RAM:


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- *ram* (Australian English) = a stall; (verb) to be on the racket;
- *ram it!* = don't move a muscle!; stand just so!

RAT / RATS:

- *arena rat* (Canadian English) = a hockey fan;
- *black rat* (British English) = police patrol officer;
- *fanny rat* (British English) = Don Juan, womanizer;
- *fatter than a shithouse rat* (Canadian English) = as plump as a partridge;
- *gym rat* (American English) = a fellow who goes regularly to the gym;
- *rat* = leaker, whistleblower; (British English, humorous) Japanese;
- *rat and mouse* (British English) = louse; (British English, humorous) house;
- *ratboy* (American English) = drug addict;
- *rat-house* (Australian English) = mental hospital;
- *rats* (American English) = nerves; damn it! (interjection); (British English, humorous) rice.

SNAIL:

- *at a snail's gallop / pace* (American English) = as slow as a snail.

SNAKE / SNAKES:

- *bag of snakes* (American English) = jugs, big breasts;
- *bang like a rattle snake* (British English) = to have intense sex;
- *snake* (British English) = tubing, pipe; worm (American English) leaker, whistleblower; (Australian English) railway; sergeant;
- *snake in the grass* (British English, humorous) = glass; mirror;
- *snake juice* (Australian English) = a home-made alcoholic drink;
- *snakes* (British English) = urination; toilet.

SQUIRREL:

- *secret squirrel* (British English) = secret agent;
- *squirrel* (American English) = erratic; a horse-power; a secret agent.

STAG:

- *stag* (American English) = a party for men only; a single man.

TIGER:

- *tiger* (British English) = wife; heroine; swimming (humorous); (American English) a potent man;
- *tiger juice* (American English) = an alcoholic drink; beer.

WOLF:

- *cut one's wolf loose* (American English) = to get tipsy, to tipple;
- *wolf* = aggressive homosexual or lesbian; womanizer;
- *wolf-whistle* = an admiring whistle at the sight of a beautiful woman;

ZEBRA:

- *zebra* (American English, sport) = an American football referee.

Within English slang, we often use animal-related words to mean other things. In conversation, one is likely to hear quite a number of words or expressions which refer to animal names. However, such terms are not often used literally. A big number of animal words are included in certain colloquial expressions and slang, which have meanings quite different from their original uses.

In conclusion, as our article has tried to highlight, there are numerous slang expressions based on animals that help us differentiate between men and women. Generally, we invoke different animal expressions when we get upset and, consequently, call people nasty animal


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names. This is often regarded as a method to release stress or to resist more easily to pain. Sometimes animal-related names are used vulgarly to designate private body parts. Dictionaries consider these words "vulgar slang" and label them as such.

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