

Shit: figurative and literal meanings essay



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Usage The word shit (or sometimes shite in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Northern England and Wales) is used by English speakers, but it is usually avoided in formal speech. Minced oath substitutes for the word shit in English include sugar and shoot. In the word's literal sense, it has a rather small range of common usages. An unspecified or collective occurrence of feces is generally shit or some shit; a single deposit of feces is sometimes a shit or a piece of shit, and to defecate is to shit, to take a shit and a new variant to leave a shit.

While it is common to speak of shit as existing in a pile, a load, a hunk and other quantities and configurations, such expressions flourish most strongly in the figurative. For practical purposes, when actual defecation and excreta are spoken of in English, it is either through creative euphemism or with a vague and fairly rigid literalism. "Shit" can also be combined with other words to denote the type of feces one has. For instance, "Snake shit" describes feces that are long and thin in shape, thus reminiscent of a snake's appearance. "Shapeepee" or "Shit pee pee" is another word for diarrhea, or can be used to describe feces that are almost entirely of liquid composition. Shit carries an encompassing variety of figurative meanings, explained in the following sections.

Vague noun Shit can be used as a generic mass noun similar to stuff; for instance, This show is funny shit or This test is hard shit, or That was stupid shit. These three usages (with funny, hard, and stupid or another synonym of stupid) are heard most commonly in the United States.

In Get your shit together! the word shit may refer to some set of personal belongings or tools, or to one's wits, composure, or attention to the task at hand. He doesn't have his shit together suggests he is failing rather broadly,

with the onus laid to multiple personal shortcomings, rather than bad luck or outside forces. To shoot the shit is to have a friendly but pointless conversation, as in “ Come by my place some time and we’ll shoot the shit. ” Surprise To shit oneself, or to shit bricks can be used to refer to surprise or fear.

The latter form can be commonly seen in a form of Internet meme which goes by the phrase when you see it, you will shit bricks, used in connection with an image of a busy scene with an often unnoticed laughing face or disturbing object which is hard to see until you study the picture. [citation needed] The word can also be used to represent anger, as in Jim is totally going to flip his shit when he sees that we wrecked his marriage. [citation needed] Trouble Shit can be used to denote trouble, by saying one is in a lot of shit or deep shit. It’s common for someone to refer to an unpleasant thing as hard shit (You got a speeding ticket?

Man, that’s some hard shit), but the phrase tough shit is used as an unsympathetic way of saying too bad to whoever is having problems (You got arrested? Tough shit, man!) or as a way of expressing to someone that they need to stop complaining about something and just deal with it (Billy: I got arrested because of you! Tommy: Tough shit, dude, you knew you might get arrested when you chose to come with me.) Note that in this case, as in many cases with the term, tough shit is often said as a way of pointing out someone’s fault in his/her own current problem.

When the shit hits the fan is usually used to refer to a specific time of confrontation or trouble, which requires decisive action. This is often used in

reference to combat situations and the action scenes in movies, but can also be used for everyday instances that one might be apprehensive about. I don't want to be here when the shit hits the fan! indicates that the speaker is dreading this moment (which can be anything from an enemy attack to confronting an angry parent or friend). He's the one to turn to when the shit hits the fan is an indication that the person being talked about is dependable and will not run from trouble or abandon their allies in tough situations. The concept of this phrase is simple enough, as the actual substance striking the rotating blades of a fan would cause a messy and unpleasant situation (much like being in the presence of a manure spreader). Whether or not this has actually happened, or if the concept is simply feasible enough for most people to imagine the result without needing it to be demonstrated, is unknown. Another example might be the saying shit rolls downhill, a metaphor suggesting that trouble for a manager may be transferred to the subordinates.

There are a number of anecdotes and jokes about such situations, as the imagery of these situations is considered to be funny. This is generally tied-in with the concept that disgusting and messy substances spilled onto someone else are humorous. Displeasure Shit can comfortably stand in for the terms bad and anything in many instances (Dinner was good, but the movie was shit. You're all mad at me, but I didn't do shit!). A comparison can also be used, as in Those pants look like shit, or This stuff tastes like shit. Many usages are idiomatic.

The phrase, I don't give a shit denotes indifference. I'm shit out of luck usually refers to someone who is at the end of their wits or who has no

remaining viable options. That little shit shot me in the ass, suggests a mischievous or contemptuous person. Euphemisms such as crap are not used in this context. The term piece of shit is generally used to classify a product or service as being sufficiently below the writer's understanding of generally accepted quality standards to be of negligible and perhaps even negative value.

The term piece of shit has greater precision than shit or shitty in that piece of shit identifies the low quality of a specific component or output of a process without applying a derogatory slant to the entire process. For example, if one said " The inner city youth orchestra has been a remarkably successful initiative in that it has kept young people off the streets after school and exposed them to culture and discipline, thereby improving their self esteem and future prospects. The fact that the orchestra's recent rendition of Tchaikovsky's Manfred Symphony in B minor was pretty much a piece of shit should not in any way detract from his. " The substitution of shit or shitty for pretty much a piece of shit would imply irony and would therefore undermine the strength of the statement. Dominance Shit can also be used to establish superiority over another being. The most common phrase is eat shit! symbolizing the hatred toward the recipient. Some other personal word may be added such as eat my shit implying truly personal connotations. As an aside, the above is actually a contraction of the phrase eat shit and die!. It is often said without commas as a curse; they command the other party to perform exactly those actions in that order.

However, the term was originally Eat, Shit, and Die naming the three most basic things humans have to do, and it is common among soldiers. [citation <https://assignbuster.com/shit-figurative-and-literal-meanings-essay/>

needed] Positive attitude Interestingly, in slang, prefixing the article the to shit gives it a completely opposite definition, meaning the best, as in *Altered Beast is the shit*, or *The Oregon Trail is the shit*. Again, other slang words of the same meaning, *crap* for example, are not used in such locutions.

Shortening of bullshit The expression *no shit?* (a contraction of *no bullshit?*) is used in response to a statement that is extraordinary or hard to believe.

Alternatively the maker of the hard-to-believe statement may add *no shit* to reinforce the sincerity or truthfulness of their statement, particularly in response to someone expressing disbelief at their statement. *No shit* is also used sarcastically in response to a statement of the obvious, as in *no shit, Sherlock*. In this form the word can also be used in phrases such as *don't give me that shit* or *you're full of shit*. The term *full of shit* is often used as an exclamation to charge someone who is believed to be prone to dishonesty, exaggeration or is thought to be “ phoney” with an accusation.

For example: 1. “ Oh, I'm sorry I forgot to invite you to the party, it was a complete accident... But you really didn't miss anything anyway. 2. “ You're full of shit! You had dozens of opportunities to invite me. If you have a problem with me, why not say it! ” The word *bullshit* also denotes false or insincere discourse. (*Horseshit* is roughly equivalent, while *chickenshit* means cowardly, *batshit* indicates a person is crazy, and *going apeshit* indicates a person is entering a state of high excitement or unbridled rage.). *Are you shitting me!?* s a question sometimes given in response to an incredible assertion. An answer that reasserts the veracity of the claim is, *I shit you not*. Emphasis Perhaps the only constant connotation that *shit* reliably carries is that its referent holds some degree of emotional intensity

for the speaker. Whether offense is taken at hearing the word varies greatly according to listener and situation, and is related to age and social class: elderly speakers and those of (or aspiring to) higher socioeconomic strata tend to use it more privately and selectively than younger and more blue-collar speakers.

Like the word fuck, shit is often used to add emphasis more than to add meaning, for example, shit! I was so shit-scared of that shithead that I shit-talked him into dropping out of the karate match! The term to shit-talk connotes bragging or exaggeration (whereas to talk shit primarily means to gossip [about someone in a damaging way] or to talk in a boastful way about things which are erroneous in nature), but in such constructions as the above, the word shit often functions as an interjection.

Unlike the word fuck, shit is not used emphatically with -ing or as an infix. For example; I lost the shitting karate match would be replaced with ... the fucking karate match. Similarly, while in-fucking-credible is generally acceptable, in-shitting-credible is not. Drug usage Shit itself can be a dysphemism or quasi-euphemism, with many intoxicating or narcotic drugs (notably hashish and heroin) being referred to as shit. A particularly excellent drug may be described as This is some good shit. To be shitfaced is to be extremely drunk. A shitshow denotes a party or