

Aspects of Contemporary English

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1 Non-standard grammar

There are just a few dozen grammatical features commonly identified as nonstandard English.

David Crystal, The Stories of English (2004)

Eg: *who / whom* *inside of, outside of, off of etc* *less / fewer*

2 *Innit?*

TIP

You may hear people using the question tag *innit?* (a form of *isn't it?*). Many people consider this to be incorrect English, but it is quite common, especially in informal speech.

It's a great film, innit?

Some people also use it irrespective of the tense and subject of the preceding statement.

Kris's coming with us, innit?

Jon Hird, Oxford Learner's Pocket Verbs and Tenses (2013)

3 *Like*

A certain postmodern fondness for not knowing what you think about anything is perhaps reflected in the North American speech habit of inserting the word 'like' after every three or four words. It would be dogmatic to suggest that something actually *is* what it is. Instead, you must introduce a ritual tentativeness into your speech, in a kind of perpetual semantic slurring.

Terry Eagleton, After Theory (2003)

4 Teen-speak

eg: *Lol at you!* *That's so lols!* *I was like omg!* *I'm going gym.*

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5 Verbing

Easy conversion of nouns to verbs has been part of English grammar for centuries. It is one of the processes that makes English English.

Steven Pinker, The Language Instinct (1994)

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ADVANCED USES OF VERBS

110 Verbing

A Verbing is the creation of a verb from a noun without making any changes to the form of the noun. It makes what we say shorter.

I hope to get an audition for the part.

I hope to audition for the part.

I'll send you an email.

I'll email you.

B The conversion of nouns to verbs has been a feature of the development of the English language for hundreds of years. Ancient verbs such as *rain* and *thunder* and more recent conversions such as *access*, *chair*, *debut*, *highlight*, *host*, *impact*, *oil*, *pressure*, and *referee* were all originally nouns only.

Alex highlighted the key problems.

Can you oil the bike chain?

Who chaired the meeting?

Harris refereed the game very well.

C Some recent examples of nouns being converted to verbs include:

Many children are not parented very well.

I was conferencing around Italy last month.

We're hoping that at least ten of our athletes will medal.

Ronaldo was red carded in the 85th minute.

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ADVANCED USES OF VERBS

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D Today, the conversion of nouns to verbs is particularly common in the field of technology, especially in digital communication and the use of the internet. Many words which were originally nouns have very quickly become verbs.

Can you email me the photos?

Did you bookmark the site?

I'll message you this evening.

Text me when you get there.

I can't access the file.

What's trending at the moment?

Some proper nouns are also used as verbs.

If you don't know the address, google it.

I'll facebook everyone about the party.

E Verbs converted from nouns are all regular and the past tense and past participle have an *-ed* ending.

I texted you three times!

I messaged him about the party.

Danny's unfriended me!

TIP

We can use many parts of the body as verbs.

The children are eyeing the cakes.

There's someone nosing around outside.

He mouthed something, but I couldn't tell what it was.

I had to elbow my way through the crowd.

I'm not going to shoulder the blame.

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Jon Hird, Oxford Learner's Pocket Verbs and Tenses (2013)

Do you salad or sandwich? The verbing of English

5 March 2013 by Oxford University Press ELT | 38 Comments

<http://oupeltglobalblog.com/2013/03/05/do-you-salad-or-sandwich-the-verbing-of-english/>