

Everyone's favourite topic – neologisms!

Here are some examples of new words or expressions that have been formed in English in recent years:

abuser	veg out
process (verb)	laugh (noun)
NASA	sandwich
baggravation	artsy
Hoover	swindle
cross-trainer	gearhead
taxi	fro-yo
pea (!)	radar
scuba	diss
position (verb)	televangelist
skateboard	mare (as in "English was a mare today")
pre-cook	chav
bro	do-gooder
sarcastrophe	brainstorming
schizo	flu
televise	brunch
Biro	burger

There are eight main ways of forming new words in English. Here they are!

- 1) **Affixation**: adding affixes (prefixes or suffixes) to an existing word.
- 2) **Compounding**: two words are stuck together in their entirety to make a new word.
- 3) **Blending**: two words are moulded together to form a new word, usually by sticking together the start of one word with the end of another.
- 4) **Shortening**: chopping a bit off the end of a word.
- 5) **Backformation** (the most complicated). This is when you follow a regular rule for the formation of a word, and assume that all words that appear to be the same follow this rule. So language users form a new word by going backwards in the rule. It's easiest to see this from examples:

revision = revise + ion
supervision = supervise + ion } would make you think that **television = televise + ion**

In fact it doesn't, and you have **backformed** the word televise.

- 6) **Conversion**: changing a word class (eg from noun to verb, verb to noun etc).
- 7) **Acronymisation**: taking the initial letters of words and making them into a combination pronounceable as a new word.
- 8) **Proper names**: when the brand name of a product becomes synonymous with the product itself.

Activity: Identify how each of the new words on page one has been formed. If you can't work one out, leave it as there are a few tricks in there.

Then, try to think of additional examples of these phenomena.