

American Slang from the 1940s

SLANG TERM	MEANING
Moxie	“Energy; determination; courage; know-how.” ¹
Hi sugar, are you rationed?	“Are you seeing someone?” ²
Cut a rug	“To dance, especially to the jitterbug.” ³
Eager beaver	“An enthusiastic person who performs their duties and volunteers for more.” ⁴
Square	“Old-fashioned, boring.” ⁵
Cool cat	“An interesting or fashionable person.” ⁶
Active duty	“A promiscuous male.” ⁷
Crumb	“A jerk.” ⁸
Doll dizzy	“Girl-crazy.” ⁹
Dead hooper	“A bad dancer.” ¹⁰
Ducky shincracker	“A good dancer.” ¹¹
Flip your wig	“Lose control of yourself.” ¹²
Gammin	“Showing off.” ¹³
Going fishing	“Trying to get a date.” ¹⁴
Mud	“Coffee.” ¹⁵
Off the cob	“Silly or goofy.” ¹⁶

¹ Isabel Sepulveda, "Popular slang words from the year you were born," Stacker, last modified October 9, 2019.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ "Forties Slang (40s)," 1940s.org.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Snap your cap	“Get mad.” ¹⁷
Take a powder	“To leave.” ¹⁸
What’s buzzin’, cousin?	“What’s going on?” ¹⁹
Whammy	“A supernatural power [that brings] bad luck.” ²⁰
Zooty	“Anyone dressing ‘flashy in manner or style.’” ²¹
Honcho	“A person who exercises control or authority.” ²²
Sack out	Going to bed or going to sleep. ²³ (As in, hitting the sack.) ²⁴
Applesauce	Expletive. ²⁵
Beat me daddy eight to the bar.	“Exclamation of excitement or accomplishment.” ²⁶
Boondocks	“The middle of nowhere.” ²⁷
Bupkis	“Zero, nothing.” ²⁸
Dame	“Woman.” ²⁹
Fuddy-duddy	An “old-fashioned/not mainstream person.” ³⁰
In my book	“In my opinion.” ³¹
Merve	“Audacity.” ³²

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Kali Coleman, "This Is the Most Popular Slang Word the Year You Were Born," BestLife, last modified October 16, 2020.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ "1940s Slang, Lingo, Phrases," Cultureify.com.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.