

American Dialect Society
2011 Words of the Year
NOMINATIONS to be voted on by
the American Dialect Society
Jan. 6, 2012, Portland, Oregon

MOST USEFUL

humblebrag - expression of false humility, especially by celebrities on Twitter
FOMO - acronym for “Fear of Missing Out,” describing anxiety over being inundated by information on social media
occupy - verb, noun, and combining form referring to the Occupy protest movement
tablet - lightweight portable computer with a touchscreen to input data

MOST CREATIVE

bunga bunga - name for sex parties allegedly involving former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi
kardash - unit of measurement consisting of 72 days, after the short-lived marriage of Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries (coined by Weird Al Yankovic)
Mellencamp - a woman who has aged out of being a “cougar” (after John Cougar Mellencamp)

MOST UNNECESSARY

planking - posing for a photograph, esp. in a public place, with one’s body in a stiff, prone position, for circulation online
bi-winning - term used by Charlie Sheen to describe himself proudly, dismissing accusations of being bipolar
amazeballs - slang form for “amazing”

MOST OUTRAGEOUS

deather - one who doubts the official story of the killing of Osama bin Laden
assholocracy - government by obnoxious multi-millionaires
botoxionist - a doctor who administers Botox injections

MOST EUPHEMISTIC

artisan, artisanal - faux-fancy term used to describe food and other products
job creator - a member of the top one-percent of moneymakers
regime alteration - alternative to “regime change” promoted by Obama administration in some Middle Eastern countries

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

Arab spring - a series of popular uprisings in Middle Eastern countries against dictatorial regimes
cloud - online space for the large-scale processing and storage of data
tiger mom, tiger mother - an exceedingly strict parent (after Amy Chua’s memoir, “Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother”)

LEAST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

Tebowing - posing for photograph praying on one knee, after Denver Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow
9-9-9 - tax plan proposed by Herman Cain (9% business tax, 9% personal income tax, 9% federal sales tax)
brony - Adult male fan of the “My Little Pony” cartoon franchise

OCCUPY WORDS (new category)

occupy - verb, noun, and combining form referring to the Occupy protest movement
the 99%, 99 percenters - those held to be at a financial or political disadvantage to the top moneymakers, the **one-percenters**.
people’s mic, human microphone - method of amplifying a person’s speech by having surrounding people repeat it line by line
twinkling - system of wiggly hand gestures to register approval or disapproval

WORD OF THE YEAR

Nominations to be made at final meeting.
