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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute Vocabulary

### New words



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*NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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#### **Rob**

Hello! Welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Rob.

#### **Catherine**

And I'm Catherine. And today we're talking about new words.

#### **Rob**

Yes, new words in English. We'll look at where they come from, why we need them and who uses them.

#### **Catherine**

We'll have a quiz; and we'll also bring you a top tip for learning vocabulary.

#### **Rob**

But first, here's Iris, talking about a photograph she took.

#### **Catherine**

And here's a question: is Iris happy with her photo?

#### **INSERT**

##### **Iris**

So here's a **selfie** from a **flashmob** I went to – there's everyone dancing and stuff, and that's my idiot boyfriend at the back: he decided to **photobomb** me! It's quite funny though... I put it on my social networks – but the **trolls** said we looked stupid! I don't care though, I like it.

#### **STING**

##### **Rob**

So that's Iris. And she said she liked the photo.

**Catherine**

Good. Now there were a few words there which are quite new in English. Let's have a look at some of them. Listen again to Iris. Two questions this time. One: what type of photo did she take and two: where was she?

**INSERT | CLIP |**

So this is a **selfie** from a **flashmob** I went to...

**Catherine**

Iris took a **selfie**, and she was at a **flashmob**. Let's take those words one at a time.

**Rob**

Yes, first of all, a very popular word now, **selfie**. That's a photograph you take of yourself, by holding your camera or phone out in front of you at arm's length.

**Catherine**

Yeah, **selfie**. Take many **selfies** Rob?

**Rob**

Absolutely not, no.

**Catherine**

None at all?

**Rob**

Don't want to look at myself, thank you.

**Catherine**

But where does the word **selfie** come from? Well the word **self-portrait** has been around for a long time. It means 'a picture you draw or paint of yourself'. So **selfie** probably comes from that.

**Rob**

And that's one way words come into English. Get an old word, change it to fit a new situation and you've got a new word like **selfie**. And that's one reason why we need new words – to talk about new situations, like all these self-portraits that everyone's taking.

**Catherine**

Yeah, good. Now another way to make a new word for a new situation is to get two old words and put them together. Iris was at a **flashmob**. Now, a **flashmob** is a crowd of people who gather together quickly and suddenly – it's often organised through social media. Now the word **flash** can mean 'something that happens very quickly', and a **mob** is a crowd of people. So when you put them together, you've got the perfect new word for the situation. Ever been on a **flashmob** Rob?

**Rob**

I'm afraid not, no one's invited me actually.

**Catherine**

Really? I'll invite you on the next one I go on.

**Rob**

Thank you. Anyway, you've probably noticed that these words are mostly made by people on social media. It's not the only place that new words come from, but a lot of new words are coming from social media at the moment.

**Catherine**

Next example. Iris's boyfriend jumped into her **selfie** at the last minute. He's actually in the photo even though she wasn't expecting him to be! And here's the word for it:

**INSERT 1 CLIP 2**

...and that's my idiot boyfriend at the back: he decided to **photobomb** me!

**Rob**

So: **photobomb**. That's a new word made from two old words: **photo**, obviously, and **bomb**, the thing that suddenly explodes. And we've got similar new words like **weatherbomb**...

**Catherine**

That's a sudden period of extreme weather, and then there's **thoughtbomb** where people get together and, basically – think!

**Rob**

Yes, that's a new word for what we used to call 'brainstorm'...?

**Catherine**

It is, yes. Very similar.

Good, right, OK. Well now, Iris used another new word to describe people who post horrible comments on social media. Listen carefully to this:

**INSERT 1 CLIP 3**

I put it on my social networks – but the **trolls** said we looked stupid!

**Rob**

A person who posts negative comments on social media is called a **troll**. And **troll** is actually an old word for an imaginary creature – a kind of monster. You find lots of trolls in old Scandinavian stories – and the word's been around in English for a long time.

**Catherine**

So an old word, with a new meaning – but there’s a link there to the original meaning isn’t there Rob?

**Rob**

Yes that’s right, because both kinds of troll are quite ugly in their own way – either in their looks or behaviour.

**IDENT**

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**Rob**

And we’re talking about new words. So Catherine, have you ever been trolled?

**Catherine**

Thankfully I haven’t Rob, I choose my friends very carefully on social media.

**Rob**

Good, good.

**Catherine**

Right, it’s quiz time! Question one: what’s the word for a group of people who gather together suddenly, and it’s normally organised on social media?

**Rob**

Any ideas? The word is **flashmob**. Question two: what word means: ‘jump into someone else’s photograph’?

**Catherine**

That’s **photobomb**. Finally, what’s the word for people who write nasty, negative comments online?

**Rob**

They are **trolls**. OK, well done if you got those right at home.

**Catherine**

Well done indeed. And now here’s a vocabulary tip. To keep your English right up-to-date, join some social media groups where people use English. Social media is a great place to pick up words and expressions that are in use, even though they’re not in the dictionary.

**Rob**

Yes, and new words are being invented all the time aren’t they?

**Catherine**

They are, yes.

**Rob**

OK, well there's more about this at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com). You can also find us on Twitter, Facebook and many other social networks but, don't **troll** us please.

**Catherine**

No.

**Rob**

OK. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

**Both**

Bye!

## **Vocabulary points to take away:**

### **flashmob** (noun)

a crowd of people who gather together quickly and suddenly, often organised through social media

### **selfie** (noun)

a photo that you take of yourself, normally on a mobile phone

### **photobomb** (verb/noun)

to suddenly put yourself into someone else's photograph

### **weatherbomb** (noun)

a short period of extreme weather

### **thoughtbomb** (noun)

a group session where people think together; brainstorm

### **troll** (noun/verb)

person who behaves badly online – for example, someone who posts negative, insulting comments on social media