



Murder in Margaritaland

Island Speak

Whether you are new to Margaritaland or have lived here for awhile, here are some terms to help you to fit in (and to understand) your tropical island friends.

A

- A (ah)-** Means many things from: a, to, is, it, the, will, ECT. 'A' is said before action will or has taken place. This is the main Island preposition for nearly everything.
- A DOOR (ah DOR-ah)-** Out doors; outside.
- A GO (ah GO)-** To go or will go. *Mi a go a door. (I am going outside).*
- AH SEY ONE (ah SEH WOH)-** Expression to say that something is really cool and great.
- AKS (ax)-** Ask.
- A lie-** Your lying; that is a lie.
- ALL FRUITS RIPE-** Everything is just great. All is good.
- ALL Di WHILE-** All the time; sometimes; the time during. *All the while dem depon di bashment. (They are partying all the time.)*
- AN- (ahn)** And.
- A NUH Mi-** Means that that's not me ... It's not me to...I am not one to...*A nuh mi fi like it. (I am not one to like that).*
- ARIGHT (ah-Rite)-** All right, sure, yes, okay.
- 'AT-** Hot; also hat.
- 'AT STEPPA-** Hot stepper, a jail breaker and one in trouble with the law.
- A TRUE-** It is true; I am not lying.

B

- BABY MADDA-** Mother of a child.
- BABYLON (BAH-BEE-IEN)-** A Rasta word for the police and the corrupt system.
- BACKSIDE (BOK-SIDE)-** Refers to someone else's self, expressed towards another person. A rude way to refer to someone. *Move yu backside. (Move your self).*
- BADDA (BAD-DA)-** Bother. *Naa Badda mi. (Don't bother me.)*
- BAD LIKE YAZ-** Expression for saying something is really cool.
- BAD MAN/BWOY-** Criminal type guy. A really bad individual. *Bad man no flee. (Gangsters don't run away.) Dat a bad bwoy. (That is a gangster.)*
- Bait (BE-it)-** Scoundrel, punk, scum, and these types of people. *Ooman naa like bait. (Women don't like punks.)*
- BAID HEAD-** A Rasta label for one who is too caught up with the evil system—Babylon. Also is anyone who is a non-dreadlocks; usually white people.
- BANDULU (Bah-DOO-LOO)-** criminal; crooked activity; also means a fake passport/visa.
- BARE (BEER)-** Only. Is bare pickney yahso. (There's only children here.)
- BASH, BASHY-** This is a popular slang term that means cool, awesome, nice stuff, ECT.





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- BASHMENT-** A great event or happening; dancehall; party. Also the same as bashy above. Dem bashment gyal. (They are girls who like to party.) Wi gwaan hab a bashment time. (We are going to have a great time.)
- BEG-** To ask; also means to beg.
- BiG UP-** This is a popular term for saying what's up and a gesture of tribute. *Big up uno dem. (Praise to all of them).*
- Bill-** A basic Jamaican \$100 bill. Worth just over two U.S. dollars.
- BLESSED-** A Rasta word; blessing(s).
- BLING-** Flashy and expensive; necklace or chain. Look pon mi bling. (Look at my chain).
- BLOODCLOT-** Strong curse word.
- BLOODFIRE (BLUD-FIAH)-** Hell.
- BLouse an SKIRTS-** Politically correct version of the curse word bumboclot.
- BLy-** Favor or chance. Mi mus get a bly. (I must get a chance.) Usually referring to driving on the road.
- BOBO DREAD-** A certain sect of Rastas that wear turbans and carry brooms to signify cleanness. They are of the Bobo Shanti order and are true followers of Prince Emmanuel.
- BOdderation (BOd-DA-RAY-SHUN)-** A comical version of "Bother."
- BOkkIE (BOk-ED)-** Bottle.
- BOOTS-** Condoms; also shoes.
- BOUt-** About. Naa worry bout it. (Don't worry about it).
- BOx-** To fight and punch. She box 'im face. (She punched his face.)
- BREDDA-** Brother.
- BREDREN-** Fellow friends and colleagues; brothers in unity.
- BROWning-** Complementing a black person of light skin, and good complexion.
- BRUK-** Broke, broken, break. Nuh bruk it. (Don't break it).
- BRUKOUT-** A climax of pure energy and excitement; to act unruly. Usually at a party.
- BUCK-** To accidentally bump into; to meet by chance.
- BUD-** Bird.
- BUDDY-** Male genital.
- BULLa-** Cake.
- BUMBoclot-** King of curse words.
- BUN-** To get cheated on; also burn, kill, and to smoke. She gi 'im bun ka im bun whole heap a herb. (She cheated on him because he smokes a whole heap of herb.) Di Rasta dem say, "Bun dung queer!" (The Rastas say, "Burn down (kill) the queers!")
- BUPPS-** Financially providing for a woman. She bupps im out. 'Im her bupps. (She played him for money. He is her sugar daddy).
- BUSH WEED-** A term for rendering poor quality herb.
- BUSS-** To bust; like to bust a move; burst out; unruly.
- BWOY (B-WHY)-** Boy. This is a common term for anybody—male or female.



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C

ca (CAH)-	Because. Also can be the word “Can”. <i>Mi ca hab...? (Can I have...?)</i>
CARD-	To play a joke or trick. <i>Dem play a card pon mi. (They tricked me).</i>
CARGO-	A big and heavy gold or expensive chain one wears to show wealth.
CASCO (KAS-KO)-	Imitation, fake designer clothes.
CHA/CHÉ-	Expression of surprise. <i>Cha! (What!)</i>
CHAMPION-	A person who is extraordinary on the dancefloor and in the bed.
CHATTY-CHATTY-	Overly talkative to the point of irritation.
CHECK IT DEEP-	Check it out. <i>When mi check it deep, a casco name brand. (When I checked it out, it was a fake).</i>
CHEWSDAY-	Tuesday.
COIL-	Term for money when dollars are wrapped in a roll.
COPPA-	Copper; a term for a coin valued less than a dollar.
COO-	Look. <i>Coo yah! (Look here!)</i>
CRIS-	Slang for cool and instyle. <i>Dat cris. (That is cool.)</i>
CROSSES-	Problems and misfortunes. <i>Mi always inna crosses. (I always have bad luck.)</i>
CUSS-CUSS-	Shouting fight with bad words.

D

DAN-	Than
DANDIMITE-	Dynamite
DARKERS (DAH-KAHS)-	Sunglasses, shades.
DAT-	That
DAWTA (DEH-TA)-	Daughter; woman, good woman friend.
DEAR-	Expensive. <i>Dat cost dear. (That is very expensive.)</i>
DEH-	There—as in place. Also asks where something is. <i>Weh ih deh? (Where is it?)</i>
DEH 'BOUT-	Nearby, close to.
DEHYA (DEH-YAH)-	Here or there.
DEM-	Them. Use dem after plural objects. <i>Di gal dem. (The girls.)</i>
DEY (DAYAH)-	They; there, as in to be or exist. <i>Dey nuh odda way. (There is no other way). Nuh milk nuh dey. (There is no milk there). Dey say. (They say.)</i>
DI-	The; did, was. <i>Im did dun di ting? (Did he complete the thing?)</i>
DIDEH (DI-DAYAH)-	Was there or right over there. <i>Im dideh. (He is/was there). Member when wi dideh? (Do you remember when we were there?)</i>
DIS-	This.
DISYA-	This right here.
DEN-	A term and name for one who is well respected.
DREAD-	Person who has dreadlocks, greeting to friend, expression of a good idea.
DROP LEGS-	To dance.
DUB-	Mixed music of electronic reggae.



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DUN-	Done, finished, over with; kill. <i>Mi dun feel bad. (I am done feeling bad). Mi dun dweet. (I have finished doing it).</i>
DUN KNOW-	Don't know.
DUNG-	Down. Come dung. Sidung (Come down. Sit down.)
DUTTY-	Dirty; also a popular slang expression, as in Dutty yo.
DWEEN-	Doing.
DWEET-	Do it.

E

EASE-UP-	To relax. <i>Ease up uno self. (Relax yourselves.)</i>
EAZ HAAD-	Ears hard. Means stubbornness or thickskulled; one who doesn't listen. <i>Yu rass claat haad eaz. (You are damn stubborn.)</i>
ENDS-	A place. <i>Mi a go pon one ends still. (I am going to one place).</i>
EVERYTHING COOK AND CURRY-	Everything is just fine.

F

FA-	For. <i>Wa mek yu dweet fa? (Why did you do it for?)</i>
FACETY (FE-AST-EE)-	Bad mannered and nasty; acting fresh.
FEEL NO WAY-	Not taken in offense; not to worry or care.
FLEX-	To chill and hang out having a time; to plan an activity.
FOLLOW-	To travel close to, to follow or seek. <i>Follow back a mi. (Follow me.) Di fly a follow yu head. (The fly is seeking your head.)</i>
FREN'-	Friend.
FROCK-	Dress. Also an expression, e.g. Fit 'n frock means everything is good.
FRAM-	From; since. <i>Mi debya fram 6:00. (I have been here since 6:00). Fram when mi a pickney mi a dweet. (I have been doing it since I was a kid).</i>

G

GAAN-	Literally means gone. <i>Im gaan. (He is gone.)</i>
GAAN TO BED-	An expression of loving something very much.
'GAINST-	Against. <i>She fight 'gainst mi. (She fought against me.)</i>
GALANG-	Go along.
GATES-	Home. Many homes in JA have gates. One's "gates" is one's home.
GET-	To have, to have had, got, gotten. <i>Mi get fi realize. (I realize or I have realized.)</i>
GENERAL-	A cool and smooth operator.
GINNAL-	Trickster, con-person. <i>Im so ginnal. (He is a tricky person.)</i>
GIMME-	Give me.
GIVE TANKS-	A expression of gratitude; a Rasta expression.
GO DEH-	Go there. <i>Mi no go deh. (I'm not going there)</i>
GONE-	Gone, passed, left. <i>Mi see har di Monday gone. (I saw her the passed Monday.)</i>





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- GORGON-** Outstanding person and very well respected. *Im a don gorgon. (He is a master of situations).*
- GREETINGS-** An opening greeting used heavily by Rastas.
- GRINDSMAN-** One who is great in bed.
- Gwaan-** Go on. Wa a gwaan? (What's going on?)
- GWINE (GWEEN)-** Going. *Wi gwine adoor. (We are going outside.)*
- GWEH-** Go away.

H

- HAB-** Have
- HALF EEDIAT (AF EE-DEE-AT)-** A very stupid person.
- HAR-** Her
- HASTE (HEE-ASE)-** To be in a hurry. *Mek haste. (Hurry up)*
- HOL IH DUNG-** Hold it down. Means keep it steady; make a secret; not to be told.
- HOT STEPPA-** Hot stepper, which is a criminal; fugitive; escapee from jail.

I

- I an I-** Rasta speech for me. Me, myself, and I.
- I-CENSE-** Rasta word for ganga, which is taken from the Biblical word "Incense."
- I-Ditate-** Rasta word for "Meditate."
- I-DREN-** Rasta word for bredren, which is taken from the Biblical word "Brethren."
- I-MAN / I-MON -** Refers to the self. *I-man waan dat. (I want that).* Rasta for: Me or you.
- I-NEY-** A classic Rasta greeting.
- I-REE-** Rasta word for "Irie", which means to be happy.
- I-SIRE-** Rasta word for "Desire"
- I-TAL-** Rasta term for "Vital", which is a strict diet and way of life. Most commonly Rasta food that is pure, unprocessed, and unsalted.
- I-WAH-** Rasta word for "Hour."
- I-YAH-** Me (I) or you.
- IH (IH OR EE)-** It. *Weh ih deh? (Where is it?)*
- 'IM-** Him
- INFORMA (in-FAH-MAH)-** Informer. One who narcs or tells on others--usually to the police. Informers are not respected.
- inna-** In the. This word can also be spelled with only one 'n'.
- inna Di LIGHTS-** Expression to say tomorrow. *See you inna di lights. (See you tomorrow.)*
- IRIE (I-REE)-** Means everything is alright. Expression of feeling great and cool.

J

- JAH-** Lord. *Jah Bless. (God Bless.)*
- JAH GUIDE-** A Rasta farewell and good-bye. Literally says that "God shall guide."





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- JAH KNOW-** Lord or God knows; an expression of agreement.
- JESTER-** To joke; kidding. *Mi naa jesta. (I'm not kidding.)*
- POOK-** To pierce or poke; to have sex.
- JUS BEGIN FI DEAD-** Expression saying that people were really shocked or amazed, like they could have dropped dead. *Dem jus begin fi dead when wi did wi ting. (They almost dropped dead when we did our thing).*

K

- KETCH-** To ketch; to get, to achieve.
- KEY-** Slang for good friend. Similar to “My main man.” *Wa'ppun mi key? (What's up man?)*
This word also means the normal key we are used to for opening doors.
- KILL MI DEAD-** Expression of certainty; I'll do it at all costs, no matter what. *Mi muss a go kill mi dead. (I'll get there no matter what.)*
- KYaan-** Can't; can not. Note: some spellings have it as “Cyaan” or “Caan”.
- KYaan Done-** Can't finish; never ending. *Mi lub yu kyaan done. (My love for you can't end.)*

L

- Laas-** Last; or lose.
- LABBA-LABBA-** Talking to much. *Labba mout. (A chatter mouth.)*
- LANG-** Long. *Lang time mi a wait. (I've waited for a long time.)*
- LARGE (laaj)-** Very well respected. *Dat large. (That's popular).* Also used as a slang term, “Large up!” (Similar to “Big up”—a term of fond greeting and appreciation.)
- LEF-** Leave, left, passed.
- LEGG-** To let go; leave, let's go. *She leggo har numba. (She gave out her number.)*
- LEGSUS-** A spoof on the luxury car, Lexus, but expresses the walking power of the legs.
- LIAD (li-ad)-** Liar. *Yu a liad. (You are a liar).*
- LICKLE MORE-** A saying of goodbye.
- LIKKY-LIKKY-** One who is greedy about eating everything seen. *Yu too likky-likky.*
- LINK UP-** Slang for “Hooking up”; getting or meeting together, ect. *Mi link yu up layta. (I'll get with you later.)*
- LOCK UP-** Closed. *Di store dem a lock up. (The stores are closed).*

M

- MANLEY-** A Jamaican \$1000 bill that has former prime minister Michael Manley.
- Mantell-** Male gigolo; a real player and whore of a man.
- MAS-** An old and wise master; a old-timer who deserves respect.
- MASH IT UP-** Expression of doing well; like, “Break a leg”; be a big success.
- MEMBA-** Remember.
- Mi-** Me, I, mine. *Mi soon come. (I'll be there soon).* [Can be pronounced Mee or Meh]



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Men-

Perhaps the single most important Island word, “Mon” can represent every person in Jamaica—man, woman, and child. *Yes mon! (Yes man, woman, or child!)*

'MONGST- Amongst

MORE TIME-

Popular expression for saying good-bye. This must be said with power and voice. *More time! (Later!)*

MES DEF-

Most definitely. An expression meaning, of course, yes, sure, ECT.

MR. MENTION-

A real ladies man who is the talk of the town so to speak.

MUDDA-

Mother.

MUSS-

Must.

MUSSI-

Must be.

MY YUTE-

My youth. Friendly expression of calling a friend or youger one. *Hey my yute. (Hey my friend).*

N

NANNY-

A Jamaican \$500 bill worth about 11 U.S. dollars.

NEBA-

Never

NIZE (niZ)-

Noise

NUFF-

Plenty, too much, many, tons, a lot, ECT.

NUH-

No, now, or know.

NUH TRUE?-

Expression of verifying the truth; Isn't it so?

NUH EASY-

A very popular expression saying one is acting a bit off the wall or uneasy, or when ones manners are not in order. *Yu nuh easy!*

NUFFEN-

Nothen.

NYAM (nee-ahm)-

To eat. *Mek wi nyam. (Let's eat.)*

O

ODDA (UD-DAH)-

Other. *Dey nuh odda way. (There's no other way.)*

ONGLE-

Only.

OOMAN-

Woman.

OOO-

Who. *Is fi ooo? (Whose is it?)*

OVA-

Over.

OVASTAN-

Rasta word for “Understand”. Literally means “Overstand”.

P

PRIORS-

Prayers.

PULL-

To open. *Pull di can a peas. (Open the can of beans).*

PYUR (PEER)-

Only; used in conjunction with things in large quantities. Always remember to say this like peer. *Pure gal waan mi. (Many girls want me).*

Q

QUIPS- a small portion

QUATTIE- of no value, the term is derived from the name that was given to the 1/2 penny that was used in Jamaica during British rule.





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R

- RADDA-** Rather.
- RAGGA-** The current name of popular reggae music. Ragga music relies heavily on a digital equipment.
- RASS/RAAS (RASS/RAHZ)-** Common word and expression meaning ass; also it can add intensity to objects or basic words in normal speech. Ending a word with clot makes it a curse word.
- RAY RAY-** This is a term used when someone is talking too much or telling a story. Similar to saying blah blah.
- READY-** A person, usually always a woman, who is sexually attractive.
- RED-** High or drunk. Also is the color of a person who is not fully Black. E.g. Red Rat.
- RED YEYE-** One who is covetous and jealous of things. *Yu yeye too red.*
- REESPEK-** Respect. A very popular Rasta greeting that shows courtesy.
- RENK-** Foul; smelling bad; very rude.
- REST-** To relax and settle down. *Rest mon! (Calm down!)*
- RHAATID (RAH-TID)-** A mild exclamation of surprise or irritation. Similar to gosh, heck, and damn.
- RIGHTED-** Correct and with sense. *Dat nub righted. (That was with out sense).*
- ROCKAS-** Music to “rock” to. Slang for music and enjoying such.
- ROMP-** To mess with or play. *Yu wanna romp wit me? (Do you want to mess with me?)*
- ROPE EEN-** To join in or come in on an activity going on.
- RUDE BWOY (ROOD BWHY)-** A basic slang term. Can be a common greeting to a cool friend or it can describe a tough guy, rebel, or criminal. *Wa’ppun rude bwoy? (What’s up man?) ‘Im run di rude bwoy bizness. (He runs the criminal business).*

S

- SA (SAH)-** Sir.
- SALT (SAÁI)-** Bad luck, unlucky. *Mi get salt. (I was unlucky.)*
- SAMFI (SAM-FI)-** A trickster and conman out to get money. *‘Im a samfi man. (He is a conman).*
- SAPPS-** A man who is controlled by a woman.
- SATDAY, SATNIGHT-** Saturday and Saturday night.
- SHORTY-** This is a slang expression similar to saying ‘chick’ or girl.
- SHOT-** To shoot, shot, to have been shot. *Dem shot ‘im dead. (They shot him dead.)*
- SIDUNG-** Sit down.
- SISTREN-** A reference or greeting to a group of women—usually formal; sistren are the opposite of “bredren or bredrin”. *Hi sistren! (Hi ladies!)*
- SI’TING (SI-TIN)-** Something; a thing that you don’t feel like calling the proper name. *Mi a go get dat sinting. (I am going to get that thing).*
- SKIN TEET-** Smile. *Check yu’self befo yu skin ya teet. Check yourself before you smile.*
- SOON COME-** Term used for general replies in saying that one will be back. However, it does not mean necessarily that one will actually come promptly. *Mi a soon come. (I’ll come soon.)*
- STAY-** To leave alone or let be; to wait; the way someone is. *Mek it stay. (Let it be.) Jus stay deh. (Just you wait.) See ‘ow yu stay? (Do you see how you are?)*
- STEP-** To leave. *Mi step out yah. (I am leaving now.)*





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- STOOSH-** Any person that is rich; a rich object. *Dis computa stoosh!* (This computer is “stoosh”!) *Mi live inna stoosh place.* (I live in a rich place.)
- SU-SU (SUE-SUE)-** To gossip and spread rumors. The sound of whispering in one’s ear denotes gossip and backbit
- SUP’M (SUP-HM)-** Another way of saying “Something”.

T

- TACK-** Bullet.
- TAN-** Stand, stay, wait and see; also to be as in to be such a way. *Tandeh.* (Stay there, just you wait). *A so ‘im tan.* (That’s the way he is).
- TANKS-** Thanks.
- TEIF-** Thief; to steal. *Di teif a teif mi tings.* (The thief has stolen my things.)
- TEK-** Take or get. *Tek time.* (Take time / slow down).
- TESS-** Test. *Yu waan tess mi?* (Do you want to test me?)
- TRASH an READY-** A popular slang expression meaning to be very stylish and fashionable.
- TRUU-** Truth; true; through; threw.
- TRUSS Mi-** Trust me. This is an ever-popular expression used when agreeing with some one. Basically means: “Oh yeh, believe me, I know”, ect.
- TRUUT-** Truth past tense. *‘Im tol di trut.* (He told the truth.)
- TUN-** Turn. *Im tun deh.* (He turned there).

U

- UNDASTAN (UH-DAH-STAAH)-** Understand.
- UNE OR UNNE (UH-NE)-** The plural form of you, you all, the all of you, ECT. Also means all. *Uno yu.* (All of you.)
- UPFUL-** Positive feelings. *Yu so upful.* (You are cheerful.)
- USBAND-** Husband.

V

- vank-** To beat, eliminate, or conquer. Comes from the word vanquish.
- vex-** This the key word that is used to mean angry, mad, upset, furious, ECT. *Naa mek mi vex, mon!* (Don’t make me mad!)

W

- wa (WAH)-** What.
- wa DAY-** The other day. *Memba wa day weh wi dweet?* (Do you remember the other day when we did it?)
- wa MEK? -** Why
- wanga GUT-** One who has a fat stomach; one who likes to eat and seems hungry all the time; a hungry-belly.



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wa'PPUH-

What's happening? This is the most popular greeting used. Always say this instead of the American, "What's up."

weH-

Where; past tense of was; present tense of is; that is.

weaR-

To wear; it is worn, worn, wears. Batty ridas still a wear by di gal dem. (Short shorts are still worn by the girls.)

wHEELS-

Car.

WHOLE HEAP-

Slang for very large quantities; a lot, a whole heap. Very common to use.

Wi-

We, us, our, ours. *Naa touch wi tings. (Don't touch our things). Yu a come wit wi? (Are you coming with us?)*

WICKED-

Slang for bad or evil. *Dat wicked, nub? (That's cool, huh?)*

winji-

Very thin and unattractive. *She too winji. (She's too thin.)*

wit-

With.

WRAP UP-

Slang for kidding or joking. *Mi naa wrap up. (I am not joking.)*

WORK (WUK)-

Slang for sex.

WUTLESS-

Worthless.

X

x amount-

Countless; many. *Mi get x amount a lovin. (I receive plenty of love/sex.)*

Y

Ya, YAH-

You, here, also can mean yes.

YAHSe-

Over here; right here.

Ya nuH see it? -

Slang for, you know?

YEH-

Yes.

YEYE (Yi)-

Eye.

YEWata-

To shed tears, cry.

YUut-

Youth. A popular name for calling a friend; can also refer to someone younger. Also popular using man as ending. *Yu a mi bredrin fram yuuts. (You're my friend from youth.)*

Z

zed-

The letter Z. Fram A to Zed. (From A to Z).

