

MURDER AT  
**GATSBY'S  
GALA**

## Gatsby's Glossary

*Words & phrases to help you fit in at Gatsby's Gala*

### A

- A friend of ours** Mob shorthand for introducing one made guy to another ma guy. "A friend of mine" is just another jamook on the street.
- Action** A bet that a bookie "writes" and for which you pay him his "vig."
- Administration** The upper-level power structure of an organized crime Family, composed of the boss, underboss, and consigliere.
- Associate** An almost-there; someone who works with and for wiseguys, but who hasn't been sworn in as a member of the Family.
- Ab-so-lute-ly** Affirmative.
- All Wet** describes an erroneous idea or individual, as in, "he's all wet."
- And How** I strongly agree!
- Applesauce** an expletive same as horsefeathers, As in "Ah applesauce!"
- Attaboy** well done!; also Attagirl!

### B

- Babbo** A dope, idiot, useless underling.
- Beef** A complaint or disagreement within the organization, usually discussed during a sit-down with higher-ups in the Family.
- Big earner** Someone who makes a lot of money for the Family. A LOT of money
- Boss** The head of the crime Family; he is the only one who gives permission to "whack" or "make" someone, and he makes money from all Family operations; synonyms don, chairman.
- Broken** Demoted in rank; "knocked down."
- Brugad** A crime family; borgata. Buon' anima salutation meaning rest his soul.



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- Burn** To murder; synonyms break an egg, clip, do a piece of work, hit, ice, pop, put out a contract on, whack.
- Button** A “made” member of the Mafia; soldier, wiseguy, goodfella, Man of Honor.
- Buttlegging** Bootlegging untaxed cigarette
- Baby** Sweetheart. Also denotes something of high value or respect.
- Balled Up** Confused, messed up.
- Baloney** Nonsense!
- Bank’s Closed** No kissing or making out - i.e. - “Sorry, Mac, the bank’s closed.”
- Bearcat** A hot-blooded or fiery girl.
- Beat it** Scam or get lost.
- Beat one’s gums** Idle chatter.
- Bee’s Knees** An extraordinary person, thing, idea; the ultimate.
- Beef** A complaint or to complain.
- Beeswax** Business, i.e. None of your beeswax.”
- Bell bottom** A sailor.
- Berries** That which is attractive or pleasing; similar to bee’s knees, As in “It’s the berries.”
- Bible Belt** Area in the South and Midwest where Fundamentalism flourishes.
- Big Cheese** The most important or influential person; boss. Same as big shot.
- Big six** A strong man; from auto advertising, for the new and powerful; six cylinder engines.
- Bimbo** A tough guy.
- Bird** General term for a man or woman, sometimes meaning “odd,” i.e. “What a funny old bird.”
- Blind Date** Going out with someone you do not know.
- Bluenose** An excessively puritanical person, a prude, Creator of “the Blue Nozzle Curse.”
- Bootleg** Illegal liquor.
- Breezer** An convertible car.



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**Bronx Cheer** A loud spluttering noise, used to indicate disapproval. Same as raspberry.

**Bull** (1) a policeman or law-enforcement officer including FBI (2) non-sense (3) to chat idly, to exaggerate.

**Bull Session** Male talkfest, gossip, stories of sexual exploits.

**Bum's rush** Ejection by force from an establishment.

**Bump Off** To murder, To kill.

**Butt me** I'll take a cigarette.

## C

**Cafone** A phony or embarrassment to himself and others; "gavone" (slang pronunciation).

**Capo** The Family member who leads a crew; short for capodecina.

**Capo di tutti capi** See Boss of Bosses.

**Chased** To be banished from the Mafia and barred from associating or doing business with any made members. The punishment is merciful in that the offender is spared death.

**Cleaning** Taking the necessary steps (driving around, stopping in various locations) to avoid being followed.

**Clip** To murder; see burn.

**Clock** To keep track of someone's movements and activities.

**Code of silence** Not ratting on your colleagues once you've been pinched—no longer a strong virtue in organized crime families. Also see Omertá.

**Comare** A Mafia mistress; "goumada" (slang pronunciation).

**Come heavy** To walk in carrying a loaded gun. You shouldn't have lunch with a Russian drug dealer unless you "come heavy."

**Come in** To go see the boss when summoned.

**Commission, The** The Mafia "ruling body", typically a panel made up of the bosses of the five New York Families, Gambino, Genovese, Lucchese, Colombo, and Bonanno sometimes with representatives from other U.S. Families, such as Chicago.

**Compare** Crony, close pal, buddy. Literally, "godfather" in Italian.



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<b>Confirm</b>	To be made; see made guy.
<b>Consigliere</b>	A trusted Family advisor, who is always consulted before decisions are made. Consigliere the counselor in a crime Family; advises boss and handles disputes within the ranks.
<b>Contract</b>	A murder assignment.
<b>Cosa Nostra</b>	Italian for "this thing of ours," a mob family, the Mafia.
<b>Crew</b>	A group of soldiers that takes orders from a capo.
<b>Cugine</b>	A young tough guy looking to be made.
<b>Caper</b>	A criminal act or robbery.
<b>Carry a Torch</b>	To have a crush on someone.
<b>Cash</b>	A kiss.
<b>Cash or check?</b>	Do you kiss now or later?
<b>Cat's Meow</b>	Something splendid or stylish; similar to bee's knees; The best or greatest, wonderful.
<b>Cat's Pajamas</b>	Same as cat's meow.
<b>Chassis</b>	The female body.
<b>Cheaters</b>	Eyeglasses.
<b>Check</b>	Kiss me later.
<b>Ciggy</b>	Cigarette.
<b>Clam</b>	A dollar.
<b>Copacetic</b>	Wonderful, fine, all right.
<b>Crush</b>	An infatuation.

## D

<b>Do a piece of work</b>	To murder; see burn.
<b>Don</b>	The head of the Family; see boss.
<b>Daddy</b>	A young woman's boyfriend or lover, especially if he's rich.
<b>Dame</b>	A female.
<b>Dapper</b>	A Flapper's dad.
<b>Darb</b>	An excellent person or thing (as in "the Darb" - a person with money who can be relied on to pay the check).



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<b>Dead soldier</b>	An empty bear bottle.
<b>Deb</b>	An debutant.
<b>Dick</b>	A private investigator.
<b>Dogs</b>	Feet.
<b>Doll</b>	An attractive woman.
<b>Dolled up</b>	Dressed up.
<b>Don't know from nothing</b>	Don't have any information.
<b>Don't take any wooden nickels</b>	Don't do anything stupid.
<b>Double-cross</b>	To cheat, stab in the back.
<b>Dough</b>	Money.
<b>Drugstore Cowboy</b>	A guy that hangs around on a street corner trying to pick up girls
<b>Dry up</b>	Shut up, get lost.
<b>Ducky</b>	Very good.
<b>Dumb Dora</b>	A stupid female.

## E

<b>Earner</b>	Someone whose expertise is making money for the Family.
<b>Empty suit</b>	Someone with nothing to offer who tries to hang around with mobsters.
<b>Enforcer</b>	A person who threatens, maims, or kills someone who doesn't cooperate with Family rules or deals.
<b>Earful</b>	Enough.
<b>Edge</b>	Intoxication, a buzz. i.e. "I've got an edge."
<b>Egg</b>	A person who lives the big life

## F

<b>Fence</b>	Someone with worldwide outlets to liquidate swag.
<b>Friend of Mine</b>	Introduction of a third person who is not a member of the Family but who can be vouched for by a Family member.
<b>Friend of ours</b>	Introduction of one made member to another.



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<b>Fall Guy</b>	Victim of a frame.
<b>Fire extinguisher</b>	A chaperone.
<b>Fish</b>	(1) a college freshman (2) a first timer in prison.
<b>Flat Tire</b>	A dull witted, insipid, disappointing date. Same as pill, pickle, drag, rag, oilcan.
<b>Flivver</b>	A Model T; after 1928, could mean any old broken down car.
<b>Flapper</b>	A stylish, brash, hedonistic young woman with short skirts & shorter hair.
<b>Fly boy</b>	A glamorous term for an aviator.
<b>Frame</b>	To give false evidence , to set up someone.

## G

<b>G</b>	A grand; a thousand dollars; also see large.
<b>Gavone</b>	See cafone.
<b>Get a place ready</b>	To find a burial site.
<b>Gift</b>	A bribe.
<b>Give a pass</b>	To grant a reprieve from being whacked.
<b>Going</b>	About to be whacked.
<b>Going south</b>	Stealing, passing money under the table, going on the lam.
<b>Goumada</b>	See comare.
<b>Gams</b>	A woman's legs.
<b>Get a wiggle on</b>	Get a move on, get going.
<b>Giggle Water</b>	An intoxicating beverage; alcohol.
<b>Gin Mill</b>	An establishment where hard liquor is sold; bar.
<b>Glad rags</b>	"going out on the town" clothes.
<b>Gold Digger</b>	A woman who associates with or marries a man for his wealth.
<b>Goofy</b>	In love.

## H

<b>Hit</b>	To murder; also see whack.
<b>Hot place</b>	A location suspected of being the target of law enforcement or surveillance.



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## I

- Ice** To murder; see burn.  
**It** Sex appeal.  
**Iron** A motorcycle.

## J

- Joint, the prison;** The can, the pen, go away to college.  
**Juice** The interest paid to a loanshark for the loan; also see vig.  
**Jack** Money.  
**Jake** OK, as in , “Everything is Jake.”  
**Jalopy** Old car.  
**Jane** Any female.  
**Java** Coffee.  
**Jitney** A car employed as a private bus. Fare was usually five cents; also called a “nickel”.  
**Joe** Coffee.  
**John** A toilet.  
**Joint** An establishment.  
**Juice Joint** A speakeasy.  
**Joint** A club, usually selling alcohol.

## K

- Keen** Attractive or appealing.  
**Kisser** Mouth.

## L

- Large** A thousand, a grand, a G.  
**Loanshark** Someone who lends mob money at an exorbitant interest rate, a shylock.



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- Left holding the bag** (1) to be cheated out of one's fair share (2) to be blamed for something.
- Level with me** Be honest.
- Line** Insincere flattery.
- Live wire** A lively person.

## M

- Made guy** An indoctrinated member of the Family. Essentially, you pledge your allegiance to the boss and the family for life. To even qualify, your mother has to be Italian.
- Madonn'** Madonna, common expression meaning holy smoke, holy cow, etc.
- Make a marriage** To bring two parties together for legitimate or illegitimate Family issues.
- Mannagge** Going to war with a rival clan or family.
- Message job** Placing the bullet in someone's body such that a specific message is sent to that person's crew or family; see through the eye, and through the mouth. Mattresses, hitting the, taking to the going to war with a rival Family or gang.
- Meat eater** A corrupt cop (not exclusively mobspeak).
- Middle Aisle** To marry
- Mrs. Grundy** A priggish or extremely tight-laced person
- Moll** A gangster's girl

## N

- Nut, the** Aobspeak for "the bottom line"; also the gross profit figure.
- Neck** Kissing with passion
- Nifty** Great, excellent
- "Now you're on the trolley!"** Now you've got it, now you're right!
- Nobody Home** Describes some one who is dumb



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<b>Omertá</b>	The code of silence and one of the premier vows taken when being sworn into the Family. Violation is punishable by death.
<b>Off the record</b>	An action taken without the knowledge or approval of the Family.
<b>On the record</b>	An action sanctioned by the Family.
<b>Outfit</b>	A clan, or family within the Mafia.
<b>On the lam</b>	Fleeing from police
<b>On the level</b>	Legitimate, honest
<b>On the up and up</b>	On the level
<b>Orchid</b>	An expensive item
<b>Ossified</b>	A drunk person
<b>Owl</b>	A person who's out late



<b>Paying tribute</b>	Giving the boss a cut of the deal.
<b>Piece</b>	A gun.
<b>Pinched</b>	To get caught by the cops.
<b>Points</b>	Percent of income; cut.
<b>Pop</b>	To murder; see burn
<b>Problem</b>	A liability, someone likely to be whacked.
<b>Palooka</b>	(1) a below-average or average boxer (2) a social outsider
<b>Pet</b>	Same as neck, but more so
<b>Piker</b>	(1) a cheapskate (2) a coward
<b>Pill</b>	(1) a teacher (2) an unlikable person
<b>Pinch</b>	To arrest
<b>Pipe down</b>	Stop talking
<b>Pushover</b>	A person easily convinced or seduced
<b>Putting on the Ritz</b>	After the Ritz hotel in Paris; doing something in high style



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## R

- Rat** A member who violates Omertá; synonyms squealer, canary, snitch, stool pigeon, yellow dog.
- Rag-a-muffin** A dirty or disheveled individual
- Razz** To make fun of
- Real McCoy** The genuine article
- Ritzy** Elegant (from the hotel)
- Rubes** Money or dollars

## S

- Shakedown** To blackmail or try to get money from someone; also to give someone a scare.
- Shy** The interest charged on loans by loansharks.
- Shylock** See loanshark
- Sit-down** A meeting with the Family administration to settle disputes.
- Skipper** A capo.
- Stand-up guy** Someone who refuses to rat out the Family no matter what the pressure, offer, or threat.
- Swag** Stolen goods, also an acronym for “stolen without a gun.”
- Sap** A fool
- Says you** A reaction of disbelief
- Scram** Ask someone to leave immediately
- Sheba** A woman with sex appeal (from the movie Queen of Sheba) or (e.g. Clara Bow)
- Sheik** A man with sex appeal (from the Valentino movies)
- Shiv** A knife
- Sinker** A doughnut
- Speakeasy** An illicit bar selling bootleg liquor
- Spifflicated** Drunk. The same as canned, corked, tanked, primed, scroched, jazzed, zozzled, plastered, owled, embalmed, lit, potted, ossified or fried to the hat



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<b>Spiffy</b>	An elegant appearance
<b>Spoon</b>	To neck, or at least talk of love
<b>Struggle Buggy</b>	The backseat of a car. A parent's worst nightmare
<b>Stuck On</b>	Having a crush on
<b>Swanky</b>	Ritzy
<b>Swell</b>	Wonderful. Also a rich man

## T

<b>Taste</b>	A percentage of the take. ex Tony gets a big taste from book making or racketeering but only a little taste from medical fraud.
<b>Tax</b>	To take a percentage of someone's earnings.
<b>This thing of ours</b>	A mob family, or the entire mob.
<b>Take for a Ride</b>	To drive off with someone in order to bump them off
<b>Tin Pan Alley</b>	The music industry in New York, located between 48th and 52nd street
<b>Tomato</b>	A female
<b>Torpedo</b>	A hired gun

## U

<b>Underboss</b>	The second in command to the boss.
	Upchuck - To vomit when one has drunk too much

## V

<b>Vig</b>	The interest payment on a loan from a loanshark (short for "vigorish").Synonymjuice.
<b>Vouch for</b>	To personally guarantee--with one's life--the reputation of someone dealing with the Family.



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## W

**Walk talk, take a walk** To conduct a sensitive discussion while striding up and down the block to avoid being overheard on those pesky eavesdropping devices.

**Wearing it** Showing off one's status in the organization by dressing the part. "Wearing it" usually involves an Italian suit, a pinky ring, a hankie in the breast pocket, gold cufflinks, and other ornamentation. Silvio has his own inimitable way of wearing it.

**Whack** To murder; also clip, hit, pop, burn, put a contract out.  
Wiseguy a made guy. Whack to murder; see burn.

**Wet Blanket** A solemn person, a killjoy

**What's eating you?** What's wrong

**Whoopee** To have a good time

## Y

**You slay me** That's funny



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