

How to Always Catch Pop Culture References

People love to drop pop culture references in casual conversations. Missing these references can make you feel out of the loop and even embarrassed. No one wants to be the only one not laughing when someone quotes a popular show! If you...

Method 1 of 2:

Staying Current on Pop Culture



1.

Make a list of what your friends watch, read, and listen to now. Use your friends' conversations to figure out what's popular. Pay careful attention to which shows, bands and artists, movies, and celebrities they mention. Make a list and add new references whenever they come up.

1. You can use this list to pick which people and sources of entertainment you should follow first. It'll be most important for you to catch the references your friends drop, so this is a great place for you to begin your pop culture education.

2.



Go online to check celebrity gossip. There are lots of websites and online magazines that detail the glitzy and glamorous lives of the rich and famous. Some teen magazines also have content on these topics. Use these to make sure you never miss a reference to someone's new baby or a dramatic breakup.^[1]

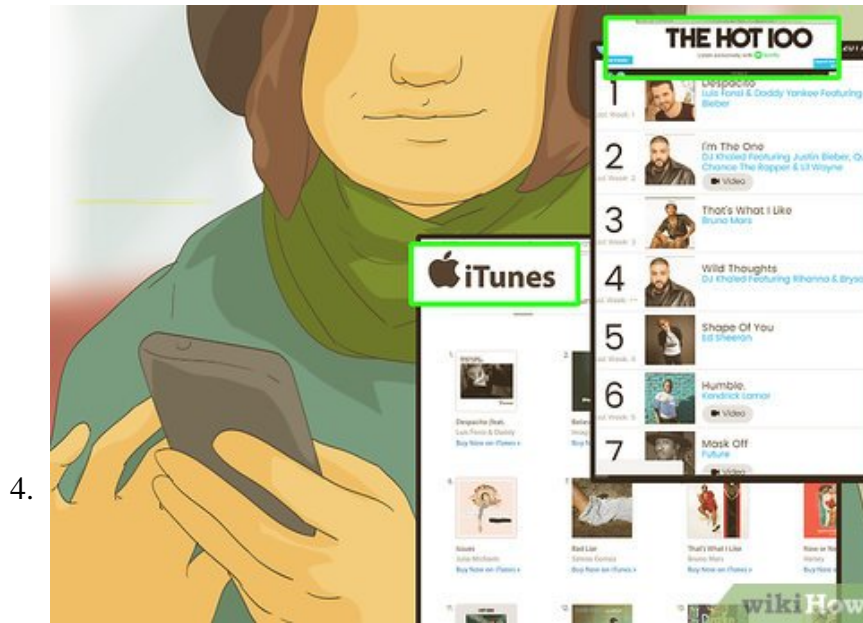
1. Download your favorite celebrity news outlet's app to be instantly informed of new gossip.
2. Try *Us Weekly* or *People*. *Seventeen* and *Teen Vogue* are also good sources.

3.



Watch popular TV shows to be in the know. TV shows are big sources of pop culture. Even if you don't have cable, you can stream shows through platforms like Hulu. Be sure to also check out Netflix for bingeable content your friends will surely talk about.^[2]

1. If you're willing to wait a week for new episodes, you can usually watch popular shows either on the networks' websites or on Hulu for free.



Check Top 100 charts to see what music is popular now. Billboard.com and iTunes both have Top 100 charts that keep track of the most popular songs in the United States. Go online to look at these charts and download the top 10 or 20 songs. You'll be singing along to all the hits in no time.^[3]

1. Billboard updates their chart weekly, and iTunes updates in real time.



Go to the movies whenever something exciting is released. You'll know when this happens. Even if people aren't planning Harry Potter-style midnight showing parties, make an event of big movie releases. Get your friends together on a Friday or Saturday night and do a group outing.

6.



Follow your favorite celebrities on Twitter and Instagram. Social media has made it much easier to feel connected to the stars. Check Twitter to stay updated on their thoughts, opinions, and even their politics. Use Instagram to see their cute or funny photos.^[4]

1. Check what's trending on Twitter to see what people are talking about on a day-to-day basis. This is a great way to make sure you don't miss any viral stories that could be tomorrow's pop culture references.

7.



Vary your interests to avoid missing references. As you start to follow new shows, celebrities, and artists, don't stick with one genre. You may decide you really like crime shows, but be sure to check out some dramas as well. This will help you avoid missing references that fall a little outside your normal set of interests.

8.



Listen to podcasts about pop culture. If you're a podcast listener, you're in luck! There are tons of shows dedicated to giving you weekly content just about pop culture. The hosts will make jokes about it, criticize it, and generally keep you informed.^[5]

1. NPR's *Pop Culture Happy Hour* and Slate's *Culture Gabfest* are catch-all shows about all pop culture. *Who Charted?* discusses top music and movies. *Nerd Culture Podcast* focuses on all things nerd, including comics, TV shows, and movies.^[6]
2. You can also follow pop culture writers on Twitter.

Method 2 of 2:

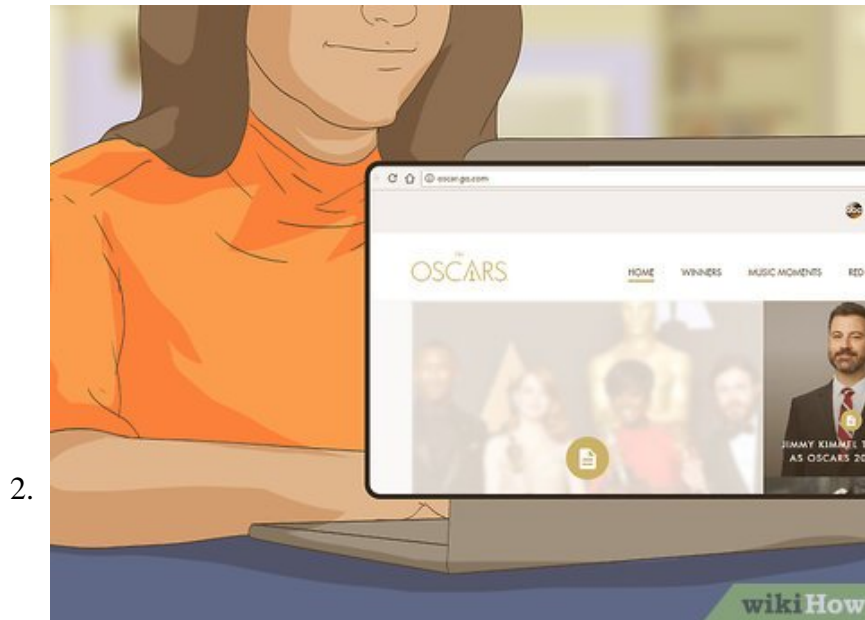
Reading up on Pop Culture You Missed

1.



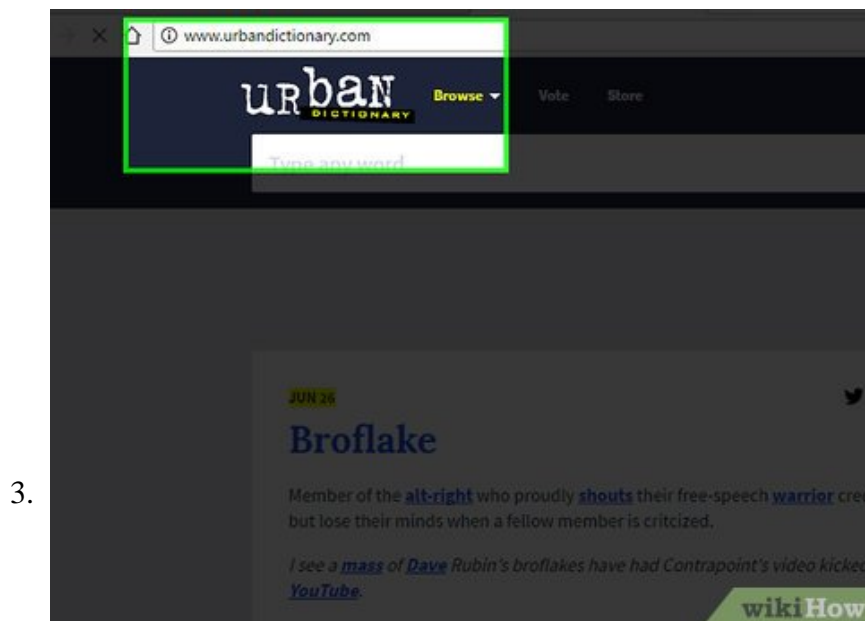
Make a list of references you don't understand. If you're new to pop culture, you've likely missed a lot over the past years or even decades. Pay attention when people chat about older shows or movies, and make a list of the ones that come up most often.

1. If people just drop references without mentioning which show or movie they're talking about, you may have to ask them. If you're trying to hide your lack of knowledge, try to memorize the quote or reference and look that up instead.



Look up quotations from popular shows, movies, and songs. People love to quote movies and shows to get a laugh or make everyone feel nostalgic. There are tons of online lists that rank the best movies and TV shows of all time. Check out these lists, as well as lists with famous quotations from TV shows and movies.

1. You can also find lists of quotations from specific shows, such as *The Office* or *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.^[7]



Use online slang dictionaries to look up words you don't know. Words and phrases can become part of pop culture, too. If you're feeling confused when you chat with your friends, go online to look these things up. [8]

1. Urban Dictionary is one option, or you can just Google the word or phrase.



Watch or listen to the old stuff with friends. View your lack of experience with pop culture as a chance to bond with the people you're close to. Don't be embarrassed, because they'll probably be excited they get to binge-watch their favorite shows and movies with you!

1. Netflix is a great place to look for older shows and movies.



Don't try to know it all. There's so much that counts as pop culture, and it's impossible to know everything. That's ok! Start with the most popular stuff and the things your friends are into, and then develop your own tastes and interests from there. As you become aware of older and newer pop culture, you'll catch more and more references. [9]

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