

What is Manifest? Why Manifest was chosen as the word of the year 2024

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Manifest has 'leaped' from use in the self-help community and on social media to widespread use across mainstream media and beyond, with celebrities such as singer DuaLipa, Olympic sprinter Gabby Thomas and England striker Ollie Watkins using the word to talk about manifesting their success in 2024.

Mentions of **Manifest** gained traction during the pandemic and have grown in the years since, especially on TikTok and other social media, where millions of posts and videos use the hashtag #manifest.

They use 'to manifest' in the sense of: 'to imagine achieving something you want, with the belief that doing so will make it more likely to come true more quickly'. However, despite being developed from a spiritual philosophical movement that has been around for 100 years, this meaning of manifest has not been specifically proven.

Wendalyn Nichols, Publishing Director of Cambridge Dictionary, said: '*When we choose the Cambridge Dictionary Word of the Year, we consider three things: Which word has been looked up the most or spiked? Which word really captures what happened that year? And what is interesting about the word from a linguistic point of view?*

"Manifest' won because of the number of lookups, its use increased significantly across all types of media, and it shows that the meaning of a word can change over time '.

However, experts warn that 'manifest' has no scientific merit, despite its popularity. It can lead to dangerous behaviour or promote false beliefs and, for example, that just wishing can cure illness.

'Manifest is what psychologists call 'magical thinking' or the general delusion that particular mental rituals can change the world around us,' said Dr Sander van der Linden, a social psychologist at the University of Cambridge and author of *The Psychology of Disinformation*.

'Manifests have become hugely popular during the pandemic on TikTok with billions of views, including the popular 3-6-9 method, which requires you to write down your wishes three times in the morning, six times in the afternoon, and nine times before bed. This process promotes obsessive and compulsive behavior with no apparent benefits.

'Manifest' wealth, love and power can lead to unrealistic expectations and disappointment. Consider the dangerous idea that you can cure serious illnesses simply by wishing them away.

'There is a lot of good research on the value of positive thinking, self-affirmations and goal setting. Believing in yourself, having a positive attitude, setting realistic goals and putting in the effort will pay off as people make real world change. However, it is important to understand the difference between the power of positive thinking and actually moving things with your mind – the former is healthy, while the latter is pseudoscience.

Other words of 2024

The Cambridge Dictionary is the world's most popular dictionary for English learners. The rise and fall in searches reflects global events and trends. In addition to "manifest," other popular terms in 2024 include:

1. brat: child, especially a badly behaved child
2. demure: quiet and well-behaved
3. Goldilocks: used to describe a situation where something is or should be absolutely right
4. ecotarian: a person who eats only foods that are produced or prepared in ways that do not harm the environment

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