The Universe

Space

María

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Lorem ipsum is placeholder text commonly used in the graphic, print, and publishing industries for previewing layouts and visual mockups

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*Lorem ipsum*, or *lipsum* as it is sometimes known, is dummy text used in laying out print, graphic or web designs. The passage is attributed to an unknown typesetter in the 15th century who is thought to have scrambled parts of Cicero's *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* for use in a type specimen book. It usually begins with:

“Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.”

*Lorem ipsum* began as scrambled, nonsensical Latin derived from Cicero's 1st-century BC text *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*.

**Cicero**

**Hedonist Roots**

Until recently, the prevailing view assumed *lorem ipsum* was born as a nonsense text. “It's not Latin, though it looks like it, and it actually says nothing,” *Before & After* magazine [answered a curious reader](https://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2290/what-does-the-filler-text-lorem-ipsum-mean/), “Its ‘words’ loosely approximate the frequency with which letters occur in English, which is why at a glance it looks pretty real.”

As Cicero would put it, “Um, not so fast.”

The placeholder text, beginning with the line *“Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit”*, looks like Latin because in its youth, centuries ago, it was Latin.

Richard McClintock, a Latin scholar from Hampden-Sydney College, is [credited](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorem_ipsum) with discovering the source behind the ubiquitous filler text. In seeing a sample of *lorem ipsum*, his interest was piqued by *consectetur*—a genuine, albeit rare, Latin word. Consulting a Latin dictionary led McClintock to a passage from *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* (“On the Extremes of Good and Evil”), a first-century B.C. text from the Roman philosopher Cicero.

In particular, the garbled words of *lorem ipsum* bear an unmistakable resemblance to sections 1.10.32–33 of Cicero's work, with the most notable passage excerpted below:

“Neque porro quisquam est, qui *dolorem ipsum* quia *dolor sit amet, consectetur, adipisci velit, sed* quia non numquam eius modi tempora incidunt ut labore et dolore magnam aliquam quaerat voluptatem.”

https://img.freepik.com/free-photo/fictional-planet-with-colourful-night-sky-stars-nebula\_1048-7926.jpg?w=740&t=st=1678390243~exp=1678390843~hmac=357439dcc2fce73a2ac300406af6378cf1e199c025284b95782a66643893465d

“Nor is there anyone who loves or pursues or desires to obtain pain of itself, because it is pain, but occasionally circumstances occur in which toil and pain can procure him some great pleasure.”

McClintock's eye for detail certainly helped narrow the whereabouts of *lorem ipsum's* origin, however, the “how and when” still remain something of a mystery, with competing theories and timelines.

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