
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute English

Hanger



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello. I'm Neil.

Dan

Hello. I'm Dan. Neil, aren't you going to say the 'welcome to 6 Minute English' bit?

Neil

Hmmm maybe. How's your mood today, Dan? Feeling happy?

Dan

Oh yes, very happy. I've just had lunch. What about you?

Neil

Well to be honest, I haven't had the chance to eat yet and it's making me a bit grumpy.

Dan

Why haven't you eaten?

Neil

Well, I was doing some research for today's topic which is all about feeling angry when you are hungry. You know what I'm talking about?

Dan

Oh yes, we're talking about being '**hangry**'. It's quite a new word, isn't it? A combination of hungry and angry.

Neil

Yes, hangry is our topic. But before we learn more about it, here's today's quiz. English has quite a few words which are made by joining two different words together like 'hangry', for example: brunch, motel, Brexit. What do we call these words? Are they...

- a) Suitcase words
- b) Portmanteau words, or
- c) Backpack words

Dan

Well, I think I know this one, so I'll keep the answer to myself - don't want to give away any spoilers. What I do want to know is if **hanger** is a real thing – or is it just something that's been made up by grumpy people, like you?

Neil

Let's hear from Sophie Medlin, who is a lecturer in nutrition and dietetics at King's College London. Is hangar a real thing and where does the word come from?

Sophie Medlin, lecturer in nutrition and dietetics, King's College London

We've long recognised that hunger leads to **irritability** - in science. But the wonderful world of social media has **merged** the two words for us and now we know it as **hanger**.

Neil

So, is **hangar** a real thing and where does she say the word comes from?

Dan

According to Medlin it is a real thing. She says that science has recognised that hunger leads to **irritability**. **Irritability** is a noun which means being easily annoyed, not in a good mood.

Neil

And she says that it was the wonderful world of social media that joined the two words together. She used the verb **merge**. **Merge**, meaning join together.

Dan

I know social media is responsible for many things, but the word **hangry** actually appeared in the 1990s – so a little before the arrival of social media. But it's certainly true that social media has made it more prominent.

Neil

Me, right now, hashtag hangry! Let's listen to that clip again.

Sophie Medlin

We've long recognised that hunger leads to **irritability** - in science. But the wonderful world of social media has **merged** the two words for us and now we know it as **hanger**.

Neil

So now we know that **hangar** is a real thing, let's learn a bit more about it. Why does it happen? Why do we get angry when we are hungry? Here's Sophie Medlin again.

Sophie Medlin

As the blood sugars drop, we increase our cortisol and adrenalin – so our kind of **fight or flight hormones** – and those have an impact on our brain and the neuropeptides – the things that

control our brain, the chemicals in our brain, the ones that trigger for hunger are the same ones that trigger for anger and also for **rage** and **impulsive** type behaviours. So that's why you get that sort of same response.

Neil

So it's all to do with blood sugar, isn't it?

Dan

Yes, it seems so. When we are hungry the level of sugar in our blood is lower and this causes an increase in particular **hormones**. **Hormones** are the chemicals we make in our bodies that control certain biological and psychological functions.

Neil

The hormones released when we are hungry are the same as our **fight or flight hormones**. They are the **hormones** that the body uses to prepare us to either fight or run away from a dangerous situation.

Dan

When these hormones are increased, it can cause anger and **rage**. **Rage** is another word for being very angry.

Neil

And when we are angry we can behave **impulsively**. **Impulsive** behaviour is when we do things without thinking, without considering the consequences.

Dan

So when we are hungry, the same emotions can run through us. We can be angry and make poor decisions. And that is **hanger**.

Neil

Which brings us nicely to our quiz question. What do we call words, like **hanger**, that are made by joining two different words together? Now you said you knew the answer Dan?

Dan

I did!

Neil

What was it?

Dan

Portmanteau words.

Neil

And you are absolutely correct. The answer is portmanteau words. Congratulations if you knew that.

Dan

I did.

Neil

Alright then smarty pants. No need to boast!

Dan

I can see that you're still a bit hangry Neil.

Neil

Yes, I'm hungry and that is making me angry! But I think I can hold on to get through a review of the rest of today's vocabulary.

Dan

Well, we also had the noun **irritability**, meaning getting annoyed very easily, just like...

Neil

Don't, just don't. Or I might just **merge** my fist with your face.

Dan

Ouch. Yes, **merge** meaning join different things together. I can see your **fight or flight hormones** are kicking in. Those chemicals in the body that prepare us for aggression or escape.

Neil

I haven't quite reached **rage** yet. This was another of our words, **rage**, and it means a state of being very, very angry.

Dan

Our last word was **impulsive**. This is an adjective to describe when we do things without really thinking about them. We just do them without any control and without thinking about the consequences.

Neil

Now I'm off, I'm starving. I've got to eat before I do something impulsive. That is it for this programme. For more, find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and our YouTube pages, and of course our website bbclearningenglish.com, where you can find all kinds of other programmes and videos and activities to help you improve your English. Thank you for joining us and goodbye.

Dan

Bye!