

# List of Yiddish Words and Expressions

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Suggestion and additions to this list can be sent to the author

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[A](#)

- A bisel - A little
- A biseleh - A very little
- A braiteh daieh hoben - To do all the talking (To have the greatest say or authority)
- A breyre hub ich - I have no alternative
- A broch! - Oh hell! Damn it!! A curse!!!
- A broch tzu dir! - A curse on you!
- A broch tzu Columbus - A curse on Columbus
- A brocheh - A blessing
- A chazer bleibt a chazer - A pig remains a pig
- A chorbn - Oh, what a disaster (Oh S\*\*T! an expletive)
- A choleryeh ahf dir! - A plague on you! (Lit., wishing someone to get Cholera.)
- A deigeh hob ich - I don't care. I should worry.
- A farshlepteh krenk - A chronic ailment
- A feier zol im trefen - He should burn up! (Lit., A fire should meet him.)
- A finstere cholem auf dein kopf und auf dein hent und fiss - (a horrible wish on someone) A dark dream (nightmare) on your head, hands and feet!
- A foiler tut in tsveyen - A lazy person has to do a task twice
- A gesheft hob nicht - I don't care
- A gezunt ahf dein kopf! - Good health to you (lit., Good health on your head)

- A glick ahf dir! - Good luck to you (Sometimes used sarcastically about minor good fortunes) Big thing!
- A glick hot dich getroffen! - Big deal! Sarcastic; lit., A piece of luck happened to you.
- A groyser tzuleyger - A big shot (sarcastically.)
- A grubber yung - A coarse young man
- A kappore - A catastrophe.
- A khasuren die kalleh is tsu shayn - A fault that the bride is too beautiful
- A klog iz mir! - Woe is me!
- A klog tzu meineh sonim! - A curse on my enemies!
- A langer lucksh - A tall person (a long noodle)
- A leben ahf dein kepele - A life on your head (A grandparent might say to a grandchild meaning "you are SO smart!")
- A leben ahf dir! - You should live! And be well!
- A lung un leber oyf der noz - Stop talking yourself into illness! (Lit., Don't imagine a lung and a liver upon the nose)
- A maidel mit a vayndel - A pony-tailed nymphet.
- A maidel mit a klaidel - A cutie-pie showing of her (new) dress.
- A mentsh on glik is a toyter mensh - An unlucky person is a dead person.
- A metsieh fun a ganef - It's a steal (Lit., A bargain from a

thief.)

- A nahr bleibt a nahr - A fool remains a fool
- A nechtiker tog! - Forget it! (Lit., "A day that's a night.")
- A nishtikeit! - A nobody!
- A piste kayleh - A shallow person (an empty barrel)
- A ritsh in kop - Crazy (in the head.)
- A schwartz yor - Bad luck. (LIT., A black year)
- A schwartzen sof - A bad end.
- A shandeh un a charpeh - A shame and a disgrace
- A shtik naches - A great joy
- A sof! A sof! - Let's end it ! End it!
- A tuches un a halb - A person with a very large backside. (Lit., A backside and a half.)
- Abi gezunt! - As long as you're healthy!
- Achrahyes - Responsibility
- Afn gonif brennt das hittel - "He thinks everyone knows he committed a crime." (a thief's hat burns)
- Ahf mir gezogen! - I wish it could be said about me!
- Ahf tsores - In trouble
- Ahf zu lochis - Spitefully (Lit: Just to get (someone) angry.)
- Ahntoisht - Disappointed
- Ahzes ponim - Impudent fellow
- Aidel - Cultured or finicky
- Aidel gepotchet - Delicately brought up

- Aidim - Son-in-law
- Ainikle - Grandchild
- Aitzeh - Advice
- Aiver butelt - Absent minded; mixed up
- Alaichem sholom - To you be peace. Used in response to the the greeting Shalom aleichem.
- Alef-bais - Alphabet; the first two letters of the Jewish alphabet
- Alevei! - It should happen to me (to you)!
- Alle ziben glicken - Not what it's cracked up to be (all 7 lucky things)
- Alrightnik - One who has succeeded
- Alrightnikeh - Feminine form of "alrightnik."
- Alteh moid - Spinster, old maid
- Alter bocher - Bachelor
- Alter bok - Old goat
- Alter Kocker - An old man or old woman.
- An alteh machashaifeh - An old witch
- An alter bakahnter - An old acquaintance
- An alter trombenick - An old bum
- An emmisse meisse - An (absolutely) true tale
- Apikoros - An unbeliever, a skeptic, an athiest
- Arbit - Work
- Arein - Come in!
- Aroisgevorfen - Thrown out, wasted, (wasted

- opportunities)
- Aroisgevorfene gelt - Thrown out money (Wasted money)
- Arumgeflickt! - Plucked! Milked!
- Arumloifer - Street urchin; person who runs around
- Aydem - Son-in-law
- Ayn klaynigkeit - Ya, sure!! (very derogatory)
- Az a yor ahf mir. - I should have such good luck.
- Az mir vill schlugen a hunt, gifintmin a schtecken - If one wants to beat a dog, one finds a stick.
- Az och un vai! - Tough luck! Too bad! Misfortune!
- Azoy? - Really?
- Azoy gait es! - That's how it goes!
- Azoy gich? - So soon?
- Azoy vert dos kichel tzebrochen! - That's how the cookie crumbles!

## B

- Babka - Coffee cake style pastry
- Badchan - Jester, merry maker or master of ceremonies at a wedding; at the end of the meal he announces the presents, lifting them up and praising the giver and the gift in a humorous manner
- Bagroben - To bury
- Baitsim - Testicles

- Balebatim - Persons of high standing
- Balbatish - Quiet, respectable, well mannered
- Balebatisheh yiden - Respectable Jews, people of substance and good standing in the community
- Baleboosteh - Mistress of the house. A compliment to someone who is a terrific housekeeper. "She is some baleboosteh!"
- Balmalocha - An expert (sometimes used sarcastically- Oy, is he an expert!)
- Balnes - Miracle-worker
- Bal Toyreh - Learned man, scholar
- Bareden yenem - To gossip
- Baren (taboo) - Fornicate: bother, annoy
- Barimer - Braggart, show-off
- Baroygis - Angry, petulant
- Bashert - Fated or predestined
- Bashert zein - To be destined
- Batampte - Tasty , delicious
- Batlan - Someone without a trade or a regular means of livelihood
- Becher - Wine goblet
- Behaimah - Animal, cow (when referring to a human being, means dull-witted)
- Bei mir hust du gepoylt - You've gotten your way with me.

- Benken - "To yearn for" or "to long for."
- Benkshaft - Homesickness, nostalgia
- Bentsh - To bless, to recite a blessing
- Bentshen lecht - Recite prayer over lit candles on Sabbath eve or Holy Day candles
- Beryeh - Efficient, competent housewife
- Bes medresh - Synagogue
- Bialy - Named for the Polish city of Bialystock, the bialy is of Jewish origin. A Bialy is a fairly large (about 6 inches) chewy round yeast roll. Somewhat similar to a bagel, it has a depression rather than a hole in the centre, and is sprinkled with chopped sauteed onion before baking.
- Bikur cholem - Visiting the sick
- Billik - Cheap, inexpensive
- Bist meshugeh? - Are you crazy?
- Biteh - Please
- Blondjen - To wander, be lost
- Boarderkeh - A female boarder
- Bobbe maise - An old wife's tale; fable
- Bobbeh - Grandmother
- Boch - A punch
- Bohmer - Bum (masc.)
- Bohmerkeh - Bum (fem.)
- Boorvisser fiss - Barefoot

- Boreke borsht - Beet borsht which the wealthy could afford.
- Borekes - Pastries with cheese inside
- Borsht - Beet soup
- Borsht circuit - Hotels in the Catskill Mountains of New York State, with an almost entirely Jewish clientele, who are fond of borsht; term is used by entertainers
- Borviss - Barefoot
- Botvenye borsht - Borsht made from beet leaves for the poor.
- Boychik - Young boy (term of endearment)
- Boykhvehtig - Stomachache
- Breeye - Creature, animal
- Breire - choice
- Bris - Circumcision
- Bristen - Breasts
- Broitgeber - Head of family (Lit., Bread giver)
- Bronfen - Whiskey
- B'suleh - Virgin
- Bubbee - Friendly term for anybody you like
- Bubeleh - Endearing term for anyone you like regardless of age
- Bulvan - Man built like an ox; boorish, coarse, rude person
- Bupkis - Nothing. Something totally worthless (Lit.,

## Beans)

C

- Chai - Hebrew word for LIFE, comprised of the two Hebrew letters, Chet and Yod. There is a sect of Jewish mysticism that assigns a numeric value to each letter in the Hebrew alphabet and is devoted to finding hidden meanings in the numeric values of words. The letter "Chet" has the numeric value of 8, and the letter "Yod", has the value of 10, for a total of 18.
- Chaider - Religious School
- Chaim Yonkel - any Tom, Dick or Harry
- Chaimyankel kooternooz - The perennial cuckold
- Chaleria - Evil woman. Probably derived from cholera.
- Chaleshen - Faint
- Chaloshes - Nausea, faintness, unconsciousness
- Chamoole - Donkey, jackass, numbskull, fool
- Chamoyer du ainer! - You blockhead! You dope, You ass!
- Chanukah - Also known as the "Festival of Lights", commemorates the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Chanukah is celebrated for 8 days during which one additional candle is added to the menorah on each night of the holiday.
- Chap a gang! - Beat it! (Lit., Catch a way, catch a road)

- Chap nit! - Take it easy! Not so fast! (Lit., Don't grab)
- Chassene - Wedding
- Chassene machen - To plan and execute a wedding.
- Chas v'cholileh! - G-d forbid!
- Chavver - Friend
- Chaye - Animal
- Chazen - Cantor
- Chazenteh - Wife of chazen (cantor)
- Chazzer - A pig (one who eats like a pig)
- Chazzerei - Swill; pig's feed; anything bad, unpalatable, rotten. In other words, "junk food." This word can also be used to describe a lot of house hold or other kinds of junk.
- Chazzershtal - Pigpen; slovenly kept room or house.
- Chei kuck (taboo) - Nothing, infinitesimal, worthless, unimportant (Lit., human dung)
- Chev 'r' mann - Buddy
- Chmalyeh! - Bang, punch; Slam! Wallop!
- Chochem - A wise man (Slang: A wise guy)
- Chochmeh - Wisdom, bright saying, witticism
- Choleryeh - Cholera; a curse, plague
- Choshever mentsh - Man of worth and dignity; elite person; respected person
- Chosid - Rabid fan
- Chossen - Bridegroom

- Chossen-kalleh - Bride and groom; engaged couple
- Choyzik machen - Make fun of, ridicule
- Chrain - Horseradish
- Chropen - Snore
- Chub Rachmones - "Have pity"
- Chug - Activity group
- Chupah - Canopy under which a bride and groom stand during marriage ceremony.
- Chutzpeh - Brazenness, gall, baitzim
- Chutzpenik - Impudent fellow
- Chvalye - Ocean wave
- Columbus's medina - It's not what it's cracked up to be. (Columbus's country.

## D

- Danken Got! - Thank G-d!
- Darf min gehn in kolledj? - Is a college education necessary? (said of exceptionally rich athletes or other self made success stories. A dropout like Bill Gates.)
- Davenen - Pray
- Deigeh nisht! - Don't worry!
- Der mensch trakht un Gott lahkht - Man thinks (plans) and God laughs

- Derech erets - Respect
- Dershtikt zolstu veren! - You should choke on it!
- Die goldene medina - the golden country
- Die untershte sheereh - the bottom line
- Dine Essen teg - Yeshiva students would arrange to be fed by various householders on a daily basis in different houses. (Lit., Eat days)
- Dingen - Bargain, hire, engage, lease, rent
- Dos gefelt mir - This pleases me
- Dos hartz hot mir gezogt - My heart told me. I predicted it.
- Dos iz alts - That's all.
- Dos zelbeh - The same
- Draï mir nit kain kop! - Don't bother me! (Lit., Don't twist my head)
- Draï zich! - Keep moving!
- Draïkop - Scatterbrain
- Dreïdal - Spinning top used in a game that is associated with the holiday of Chanukah.
- Drek - Human dung, feces, manure or excrement; inferior merchandise or work; insincere talk or excessive flattery
- Drek auf dem teller - Mean spirited, valueless Lit.crap on a plate.
- Drek mit Leber - Absolutely nothing; it's not worth

anything.

- Druchus - The sticks (way out in the wild)
- Du fangst shoyn on? - Are you starting up again?
- Dumkop - Dumbbell, dunce (Lit., Dumb head)
- Dybbuk - Soul condemned to wander for a time in this world because of its sins. (To escape the perpetual torments inflicted upon it by evil spirits, the dybbuk seeks refuge in the body of some pious man or woman over whom the demons have no power. The dybbuk is a Cabalistic conception)

## E

- Ech - A groan, a disparaging exclamation
- Ech mir (eppes) - Humorous, disparaging remark about anything. e.g. "American Pie ech mir a movie?"
- Efsher - Maybe, could be
- Ei! Ei! - Yiddish exclamation equivalent to the English "Oh!"
- Eingshpahrt - Stubborn
- Eingetunken - Dipped, dunked
- Einhoreh - The evil eye
- Eizel - Fool, dope
- Ek velt - End of the world
- Emes - The truth
- Emitzer - Someone

- **Enschuldig meir** - "Well excuuuuuuse ME!" (Can also be used in a non-sarcastic manner depending on the tone of voice and situation.)
- **Entoisht** - Disappointed
- **Eppes** - Something
- **Er bolbet narishkeiten** - He talks nonsense
- **Er est vi noch a krenk.** - He eats as if he just recovered from a sickness.
- **Er frest vi a ferd.** - He eats like a horse.
- **Er hot a makeh.** - He has nothing at all (Lit., He has a boil or a minor hurt.)
- **Er hot nit zorg.** - He hasn't got a worry.
- **Er iz a niderrehtiker kerl!** - He's a low down good-for-nothing.
- **Er iz shoyn du, der nudnik!** - The nuisance is here already!
- **Er macht a tel fun dem.** - He ruins it.
- **Er toig (taig) nit** - He's no good, worthless
- **Er zitst oyf shpilkes.** - He's restless. (Lit., He sits on pins and needles.)
- **Er zol vaksen vi a tsibeleh, mit dem kop in drerd!** - He should grow like an onion, with his head in the ground!
- **Eretz Yisroel** - Land of Israel
- **Es brent mir ahfen hartz.** - I have a heartburn.
- **Es gait nit!** - It doesn't work! It isn't running smoothly!

- Es gefelt mir. - I like it. (Lit., It pleases, me.)
- Es hot zich oysgelohzen a boydem! - Nothing came of it! (Lit., There's nothing up there but a small attic.)
- Es iz a shandeh far di kinder! - It's a shame for the children!
- Es iz (tsu) shpet. - It is (too) late.
- Es ken gemolt zein. - It is conceivable. It is imaginable.
- Es macht mir nit oys. - It doesn't matter to me.
- Es past nit. - It is not becoming. It is not fitting.
- Es tut mir a groisseh hanoeh! - It gives me great pleasure!(often said sarcastically)
- Es tut mir bahng. - I'm sorry. (Lit., It sorrows me)
- Es tut mir vai - It hurts me.
- Es vert mir finster in di oygen. - This is a response to receiving extremely upsetting information or news. (Lit., It's getting dark in my eyes.)
- Es vet gornit helfen! - Nothing will help!!
- Es vet helfen vi a toiten bahnkes! - It won't help (any)! (Lit., It will help like blood-cupping on a dead body.)
- Ess vie ein foygl sheise vie ein feirt! - Eat like a bird, shit like a horse!
- Ess, bench, sei a mensch - Eat, pray, don't act like a jerk!
- Ess gezunterhait - Eat in good health
- Essen - To eat
- Essen mitik - Eating midday or having dinner.

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## F

- Faigelah - Bird (also used as a derogatory reference to a gay person).
- Fantazyor - Man who builds castles in the air
- Farbissener - Embittered; bitter person

- Farblondzhet - Lost, bewildered, confused
- Farblujet - Bending your ear
- Farbrecher - Crook, conman
- Fardeiget - Distressed, worried, full of care, anxiety
- Fardinen a mitzveh - Earn a blessing or a merit (by doing a good deed)
- Fardrai zich dem kop! - Go drive yourself crazy!
- Fardross - Disappointment, sorrow
- Farfolen - Lost
- Farfoylt - Mildewed, rotten, decayed
- Farfroyren - Frozen
- Farklempt - Too emotional to talk. Ready to cry. (See "Verklemppt)
- Far Knaft - Engaged
- Farkuckt (taboo) - Dungy, shitty
- Farmach dos moyl! - Shut up! Quiet. (Lit., Shut your mouth.)
- Farmatert - Tired
- Farmisht - Befuddled
- Farmutshet - Worn out, fatigued, exhausted
- Farpitzed - To get all dressed up to the "nines."
- Farshlepteh krenk - Fruitless, endless matter (Lit., A sickness that hangs on)
- Farshmeieter - Highly excitable person; always on the go
- Farshnoshket - Loaded, drunk

- Farshtaist? - You understand?
- Farshtopt - Stuffed
- Farshtunken - Smells bad, stinks
- Farshvitst - sweaty
- Far-tshadikt - Confused, bewildered, befuddled, as if by fumes, gas
- Feh! - Fooey, It stinks, It's no good
- Feinkochen- Omelet, scrambled eggs
- Feinshmeker - Hi falutin'
- Ferd - Horse, (slang) a fool
- Ferkrimpter ponim - Twisted-up, scowling face
- Ferprishte punim - pimple-face
- Fet - Fat, obese
- Fetter - Uncle (also onkel)
- Finster un glitshik - Miserable (Lit., Dark and slippery)
- Fisfinger - Toes
- Fisslach - (chickens'/duck's) feet, often in ptsha
- Fliegel - Fowl's wing
- Focha - Fan
- Foigel - Smart guy
- Foiler - Lazy man
- Folg mich! - Obey me!
- Folg mich a gang! - Quite a distance! Why should I do it? It's hardly worth the trouble!
- Fonfen - Speak through the nose

- For gezunterhait! - Bon voyage! Travel in good health!
- Forshpeiz - Appetizer
- Fortz - Fart
- Fortz n' zovver - A foul, soul-smelling fart.
- Frageh - Question
- Frailech - Happy
- Frassk - Slap in the face
- Freint - Friend,
- Mr. Fremder - Stranger
- Fress - Eat....pig out.
- Fressen - Eat like a pig, devour
- Fressing - Gourmandizing (By adding the English suffix "ing" to the Yiddish word "fress", a new English word in the vocabulary of American Jews has been created.)
- Froy - Woman,
- Mrs. Frum, (frimer) - Pious, religious, devout
- Funfeh - Speaker's fluff, error

## G

- Gai avek! - Go away
- Gai feifen ahfen yam! - Go peddle your fish elsewhere!
- Gai gezunterhait! - Go in good health
- Gai in drerd arein! - Go to hell!
- Gai kucken ahfen yam! - Get lost (Lit: Go shit in the ocean!)

- Gai mit dein kop in drerd - "Go with your head in the ground." "Stick your head in the mud"
- Gai platz! - Go split your guts!
- Gai shlog dein kup en vant! - Go bang your head against the wall
- Gai shoyn, gai. - Scram! also, Don't be silly!
- Gai strasheh di vantzen - You don't frighten me! (Lit., Go threaten the bed bugs)
- Gai tren zich. (taboo) - Go fuck yourself
- Gait, gait! - Come now!
- Gait es nit! - It doesn't work!
- Galitsianer - Jewish native of Galicia
- Ganef - Crook, thief, burglar, swindler, racketeer
- Gants gut - Very good
- Gantseh K'nacker! - "Big Shot"
- Gantseh Macher - "Big shot."
- Gantseh megilleh - Big deal! (derisive)
- Gantseh mentsh - Manly, a whole man, a complete man; an adult; a fellow who assumes airs
- Gatkes - Long winter underwear
- Geben shoychad - To bribe
- Gebentsht mit kinder - Blessed with children
- Gebentshte boych - Literally-blesses stomach (womb) (Said of a lady with a fabulous child or children,
- Gebrenteh tsores - Utter misery

- Gebrochener english - Fractured English
- Gedainkst? - Remember?
- Gedempte flaysh - Mystery meat
- Gedicht - Thick, full, ample
- Geferlech - Dangerous
- Geharget zolstu veren! - Drop dead! (Lit., You should get killed.)
- Gelaimter - Person who drops whatever he touches
- Gelibteh - Beloved
- Gelt - Money
- Gelt gait tzu gelt. - Money goes to money.
- Gelt is nisht kayn dayge - Money is not a problem.
- Gembeh! - Big mouth!
- Gemitlich - Slowly, unhurried, gently
- Genaivisheh shtiklech - Tricky, sharp, crooked actions or doings
- Genevishe oigen - Shifty eyes
- Genug iz genug. - Enough is enough!
- Gesheft - Business
- Geshmak - Tasty, delicious
- Geshtorben - The state of being dead.
- Geshtroft - Cursed, accursed; punished
- Geshvollen - Swollen, puffed up (Also applied to person with haughty pride)
- Get - Divorce

- Gevaldikeh Zach! - A terrible thing! (often ironically)
- Gevalt! - Heaven Forbid! (Exclamatory in the extreme.)
- Gevalt geshreeyeh - good grief ("help" screamed)
- Gezunde tzores - Healthy troubles. Troubles one should not take too seriously.
- Gezunt vi a ferd - Strong as a horse
- Gezunteh moid! - Brunhilde, a big healthy dame
- Gezunterhait - In good health
- Gib mir nit kain einorah! - Don't give me a canary! (Americanism, Lit., Don't give me an evil eye)
- Gib zich a traisel - Get a move on
- Gib zich a shukl - Hurry up! (Give yourself a shake)
- Gleichvertel - Wisecrack, pun, saying, proverb, bon mot, witticism
- Glezel tai - Glass of tea
- Glick - Luck, piece of luck
- Gloib mir! - Believe me!
- Glustiyah - Enema
- G'nossen tsum emess! - The sneeze confirmed the truth!
- Goldeneh chasseneh - Fiftieth wedding anniversary
- Gopel - Fork
- Gornisht - Nothing
- Got in himmel! - G-d in heaven! (said in anguish, despair, fear or frustration)
- Got tsu danken - Thank G-d

- Got zol ophiten! - G-d forbid!
- Gote-Vorte - A good piece of information or short concise Torahy commentary.
- Gotteniu! - Oh G-d! (anguished cry)
- Goy - Any person who is not Jewish
- Goyeh - Gentile woman
- Goyim - Group of non-Jewish persons
- Goyishe kop - Opposite of Yiddishe kop. Generally used to indicate someone who is not particularly smart or shrewd. (Definitely offensive.)
- Greps - Blech; a burp if it's a mild one
- Grob - Coarse, crude, profane, rough, rude
- Grober - Coarse, uncouth, crude person
- Grois-halter - Show-off, conceited person
- Groisseh gedilleh! - Big deal! (said sarcastically)
- Groisser gornisht - Big good-for-nothing
- Groisser potz! (taboo) - Big penis! Big prick! (derogatory or sarcastic)
- Grooten - To take after, to favour.
- Guggle muggle - A concoction made of warm milk and honey for sore throats
- Gut far him! - Serves him right!
- Gut Yontif - Happy Holiday
- G'vir - Rich man

## H

- Haimish ponem - A friendly face
- Haiseh vanneh - Hot bath
- Haissen - To hate
- Haken a tsheinik - Boring, long-winded and annoying conversation; talking for the sake of talking (Lit., To bang on the tea-kettle)
- Hak flaish - Chopped meat
- Hak mir nit in kop! - Stop bending my ear (Lit.; Stop banging on my head)
- Hak mir nicht in tchainik (arain) - Don't get on my nerves (Lit., Don't bang my teapot.)
- Halevei! - If only...
- Hamoyn - Common people
- Handlen - To bargain; to do business
- Harte mogen - constipation
- Hartsvaitik - Heart ache.
- Hecher - Louder
- Hefker - A mess
- Heizel - Whorehouse
- Hekdish - Decrepit place, a slumhouse, poorhouse; a mess
- Heldish - Brave
- Heldzel - Stuffed neck flesh; sort of a neck-kishke

- Hendl - Chicken
- Hert zich ein! - Listen here!
- Hetsken zich - Shake and dance with joy
- Hikevater - Stammerer Hinten - Rear, rear parts, backside, buttocks; in the rear
- Hit zich! - Look out!
- Hitsik - Hothead
- Hitskop - Excitable person
- Hob derech erets - Have respect
- Hob nit kain deiges - Don't worry
- Hoben tsu zingen un tsu zogen - Have no end of trouble (Lit., To sing and to talk)
- Hoizer gaier - Beggar
- Hoizirer - Peddler (from house to house)
- Holishkes - Stuffed Cabbage
- Host du bie mir an avleh! - So I made a mistake. So what!
- Hulyen - A hellraiser

## I

- Ich bin ahntoisht - I am disappointed
- Ich bin dich nit mekaneh - I don't envy you
- Ich darf es ahf kapores - It's good for nothing! I have no use for it. (Lit., I need it for a [useless] fowl sacrifice)
- Ich darf es vi a loch in kop! - I need it like a hole in the

head!

- Ich hob dir lieb - I love you!
- Ich eil zich (nit) - I am (not) in a hurry
- Ich feif oif dir! - I despise you! Go to the devil! (Lit., I whistle on you!)
- Ich gai chaleshen bald avek - I'm about to faint (from sheer exhaustion)
- Ich hob dich in bod! - To hell with you! (Lit., I have you in the bath house!)
- Ich hob dir! - Drop dead! Go flap you ears! (Lit., I have you....!) (Americanism!)
- Ich hob es in drerd! - To hell with it.
- Ich hob im feint - I hate him.
- Ich hob im in bod! - To hell with him.
- Ich hob mir fer pacht - I have you in my pocket. (I know you for what you are.)
- Ich hob nicht kain anung - I have no idea.
- Ich ken dir nisht farfeeren - I can't lead you astray
- Ich vais - I know
- Ich vais nit. - I don't know.
- Ich vel dir geben a khamalye - I'll give you such a smack
- Ich vel dir geben kadoches! - I'll give you nothing! (Lit., I'll give you malaria or a fever.)
- Ich yog zich nit. - I'm not in a hurry.
- Ich zol azoy vissen fun tsores. - I should know as little

- about trouble (as I know about what you are asking me)
- Iker - Substance; people of substance
  - In a noveneh - For a change; once in a blue moon
  - In di alteh guteh tseiten! - In the good old days!
  - In drerd mein gelt! - My money went down the drain!  
(Lit., My money went to burial in the earth, to hell.)
  - In miten drinen - In the middle of; suddenly
  - Ipish - Bad odor, stink
  - Ir gefelt mir zaier. - You please me a great deal.
  - Iz brent mir ahfen hartz. - I have a heartburn.

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Page modified by: Michael D. Fein, February 1998

# List of Yiddish Words and Expressions

Suggestion and additions to this list can be sent to the author



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## [K](#)

- Kaas (in kaas oyf) - Angry (with)
- Kabaret forshtelung - Floorshow
- Kabtzen, kaptsen - Pauper

- Kaddish - A mourner's prayer
- Kaddishel - Baby son; endearing term for a boy or man
- Kadoches - Fever
- Kadoches mit koshereh fodem! - Absolutely nothing! (Lit., fever with a kosher thread)
- Kaftan - Long coat worn by religious Jews
- Kain ein horeh - No evil eye! (Some say "don't give me a canary")
- Kakapitshi - Conglomeration
- Kalamutneh - Dreary, gloomy, troubled
- Kalleh moid - A girl of marriageable age
- Kallehniu - Little bride
- Kalyekeh - Cripple; misfit; also, anybody not good at their craft or sport
- Kalyeh - Bad, wrong, spoiled
- Kam derlebt - Narrowly achieved (Lit., hardly lived to see)
- Kam mit tsores! - Barely made it! (Lit., with some troubles) The word "Kam," also is pronounced "Kom" or "Koim" depending on the region people come from.
- Kam vos er kricht - Barely able to creep; Mr. Slowpoke
- Kam vos er lebt - He's hardly (barely) alive.
- Kamtsoness - To be miserly
- Kaneh - An enema
- Kaporeh, (kapores) - Atonement sacrifice; forgiveness;

- (slang) good for nothing
- Karabeinik - Country peddler
  - Karger - Miser, tightwad
  - Kaseer - enema
  - Kasheh - Groats, mush cereal, buckwheat, porridge; a mess, mix-up, confusion
  - Kasheh varnishkes - Cooked groats and broad (or bowtie) noodles
  - Kashress - Kosher condition; Jewish religious dietary law
  - Kasnik, (keisenik) - Angry person; excitable person, hot head
  - Kasokeh - Cross-eyed
  - Katchka - Duck (quack, quack)
  - Katshkedik (Americanism) - Ducky, swell, pleasant
  - Katzisher kop - Forgetful (Lit., Cat head)
  - Kazatskeh - Lively Russian dance
  - Kein briere iz oich a breire - Not to have any choice available is also a choice.
  - Kemfer - Fighter (usually for a cause)
  - Ken zein - Maybe, could be
  - (To) Kibbitz - To offer unsolicited advice as a spectator
  - Kibbitzer - Meddlesome spectator
  - Kiddish (Borai pri hagofen) - Blessing over wine on the eve of Sabbath or Festivals

- Kimpet-tzettel - Childbirth amulet or charm (from the German "kind-bet-tzettel" meaning childbirth label containing Psalm 121, names of angels, patriarchs)
- Kimpetoren - Woman in labour or immediately after the delivery
- Kind un kait - Young and old
- Kinderlech - Diminutive, affectionate term for children
- Kish mir en toches - Kiss my backside (slang)
- Kishefmacher - Magic-worker
- Kishkeh - Stuffed derma (Sausage shaped, stuffed with a mixture of flour, onions, salt, pepper and fat to keep it together, it is boiled, roasted and sliced)
- (A) Kitsel - Tickle
- Klainer gornisht - Little prig (Lit., A little nothing)
- Klemt beim hartz - Clutches at my heartstrings
- Klaperkeh - Talkative woman
- Klipeh - Gabby woman, shrew, a female demon
- Klogmuter - Complainer, chronic complainer
- (A) Klog iz mir! - Woe is me!
- Kloolye - A curse
- Klop - Bang, a real hard punch or wallop
- Klotz (klutz) - Ungraceful, awkward, clumsy person; bungler
- Klotz kasheh - Foolish question; fruitless question
- Kloymersht - Not in reality, pretended (Lit., as if it were)

- K'nacker - A big shot
- K'nackerke - The distaff k'nacker, but a real cutie-pie.
- K'naidel (pl., k'naidlech) - Dumplings usually made of matzoh meal, cooked in soup
- K'nippel - Button, knot; hymen, virginity; money tied in a knot in a handkerchief
- K'nish (taboo) - Vagina
- K'nishes - Baked dumplings filled with potato, meat, liver or barley
- Kochalain - Summer boarding house with cooking privileges (Lit., cook by yourself)
- Kochedik - Petulant, excitable
- Kochleffel - One who stirs up trouble; gadabout, busy-body (Lit., a cooking ladle)
- Kolboynik - Rascally know-it-all
- (A) Kop oif di plaitses! - Good, common sense! (Lit., A head on the shoulders!)
- Kopvaitik - Headache
- Kosher - Jewish dietary laws based on "cleanliness". Also referring to the legitimacy of a situation. "This plan doesn't seem kosher".
- Koved - Respect, honour, reverence, esteem
- Krank - Sick
- Krank-heit - Sickness
- Krassavitseh - Beauty, a doll, beautiful woman

- Krechts - Groan, moan
- Krechtser - Blues singer, a moaner
- Kreplach - Small pockets of dough filled with chopped meat which look like ravioli, or won ton, and are eaten in soup; (slang) nothing, valueless
- Kroivim - Relatives
- Krolik - Rabbit
- Kuch leffel - A person who mixes into other people's business (cooking spoon)
- Kuck im on (taboo) - Defecate on him! The hell with him!
- Kuck zich oys! (taboo) - Go take a shit for yourself!
- Kugel - Pudding
- Kuk im on! - Look at him!
- Kum ich nisht heint, kum ich morgen - If I don't come today, I'll come tomorrow (procrastinator's slogan)
- Kumen tsu gast - To visit
- Kuntzen - Tricks
- Kunyehlemel - Naive, clumsy, awkward person; nincompoop; Casper Milquetoast
- Kuppe drek- A piece of fecal matter (s--t)
- Kurveh - Whore, prostitute
- Kush in toches arein! (taboo) - Kiss my behind! (said to somebody who is annoying you)
- Kushinyerkeh - Cheapskate; woman who comes to a

store and asks for a five cents' worth of vinegar in her own bottle

- K'vatsh - Boneless person, one lacking character; a whiner, weakling
- K'velen - Glow with pride and happiness, beam; be delighted
- K'vetsh - Whine, complain; whiner, a complainer
- K'vitsh - Shriek, scream, screech

## L

- Lachen mit yash-tsherkes - Forced or false laugh; laugh with anguish
- Laidik-gaier - Idler, loafer
- Lamden - Scholar, erudite person, learned man
- Lamed Vovnik - Refers to the Hebrew number "36" and traditionally each generation produces 36 wise and righteous persons who gain the approbation of "lamed vovnik."
- Lang leben zolt ir! - Long may you live!
- Lange loksch - A very tall thin person , A long tall drink of water.
- Lantslaite - Plural of lantsman
- Lantsman - Countryman, neighbour, fellow townsman from "old country".

- Lapeh - Big hand
- Layseh mogen - Diarrhea
- (A) Lebedikeh velt! - A lively world!
- (A) Lebediker - Lively person
- (A) Leben ahf dein kop! - Words of praise like; Well said! Well done! (Lit., A long life upon your head.)
- Lebst a chazerishen tog! - Living high off the hog!
- Leck, shmeck - Done superficially (lick, smell)
- L'chei-im, le'chayim! - To life! (the traditional Jewish toast); To your health, skol
- Leffel - Spoon
- Leibtzudekel - Sleeveless shirt (like bib) with fringes, worn by orthodox Jews
- Leiden - To suffer
- Lemeshkeh - Milquetoast, bungler
- Leveyeh - Funeral
- Lig in drerd! - Get lost! Drop dead! (Lit., Bury yourself!)
- Ligner - Liar
- Litvak - Lithuanian; Often used to connote shrewdness and skepticism, because the Lithuanian Jews are inclined to doubt the magic powers of the Hasidic leaders; Also, a person who speaks with the Northeastern Yiddish accent.
- Lobbus - Little monster
- Loch - Hole Loch in kop - Hole in the head.
- Loksch - An Italian gentleman.

- Lokshen - Noodles
- Lokshen strop - a "cat- o- nine tails"
- Lominer gaylen - Clumsy fool (a golem-Frankenstein monster -- created by the Lominer rebbe)
- Loz mich tzu ru! - Leave me alone! (Lit., Let me be in peace!)
- Luftmentsh - Person who has no business, trade, calling, nor income.
- Luch in kup - A hole in the head ( " I need this like a luch in kup").

## M

- Machareikeh - Gimmick, contraption
- Macher - big shot, person with access to authorities, man with contacts.
- Machshaifeh - Witch
- Maidel - Unmarried girl, teenager
- Maideleh - Little girl (affectionate term)
- Maiven - Expert, connoisseur, authority
- Maisse - A story
- Maisse mit a deitch - A story with a (moral) twist
- Makeh - Plague, wound, boil, curse
- Mamoshes - Substance, people of substance.
- Mamzer - Bastard, disliked person, untrustworthy
- Mamzerook - A naughty little boy

- Mashgiach - Inspector, overseer or supervisor of Kashruth in restaurants & hotels.
- Mashugga - Crazy
- Matkes - Underpants
- Mazel Tov - Good Luck (lit) Generally used to convey "congratulations".
- Me ken brechen! - You can vomit from this!
- Me ken lecken di finger! - It's delicious!
- Me krechts, me geht veyter - I complain and I keep going.
- Me lost nit leben! - They don't let you live!
- Me redt zich oys dos hartz! - Talk your heart out!
- Mecheieh - A great pleasure
- Mechuten - In-Law
- Mechutonim - In-Laws (The parents of your child's spouse)
- Mechutainista - Mother-In-Law
- Megillah - A long story
- Mein bobbeh's ta'am - Bad taste! Old fashioned taste!
- Mein cheies gait oys! - I'm dying for it!
- Mekler - Go-between
- Menner vash tsimmer - Men's room
- Mentsh - A special man or person. One who can be respected.
- Meshpucha - Extended family

- Meshugass - Madness, insanity, craze
- Meshugeh - Crazy
- Meshugeh ahf toit! - Crazy as a loon. Really crazy!
- Meshugeneh - Mad, crazy, insane female.
- Meshugener - Mad, crazy, insane man
- Meshugoyim - Crazy people
- Messer - Knife
- Me zogt - They say; it is said.
- Mezuzah - Tiny box affixed to the right side of the doorway of Jewish homes containing a small portion of Deuteronomy, handwritten on parchment.
- Mies - Ugly
- Mieskeit - Ugly thing or person.
- Mikveh - Ritual bath used by women just prior to marriage as well as after each monthly cycle. This represents a "spiritual cleansing after a potential to create a new life was not actualized. There are some religious men who also use mikvehs prior to festivals and the Sabbath. Some Chassidim immerse every morning before praying.
- Min tor nit - One (or you) mustn't
- Minyan - Quorum of ten men necessary for holding public worship (must be over 13 years of age)
- Mirtsishem - G-d willing
- Mitten derinnen - All of a sudden, suddenly

- Mitzvah - Good deed
- Mizinik - The youngest child in an immediate family
- Mogen Dovid - Star of David
- Moisheh kapoyer - Mr. Upside-Down! A person who does everything backwards. Not knowing what one wants.
- Mosser - Squealer
- Moyel - Person (usually a rabbi) who performs circumcisions.
- Mutek - Brave
- Mutshen zich - To sweat out a job
- Muttelmessig - Meddlesome person, kibbitzer

## N

- N'vayle - Shroud; inept person
- Na! - Here! Take it. There you have it.
- Naches - Joy: Gratification, especially from children.
- Nacht falt tsu. - Night is falling; twilight
- Nadan - Dowry
- Nafkeh - Prostitute
- Nafkeh bay-is - Whorehouse
- Naidlechech - Rare thing
- Nar - Fool
- Nar ainer! - You fool, you!
- Narish - Foolish

- Narishkeit - Foolishness
- Nebach - It's a pity. Unlucky, pitiable person.
- Nebbish - A nobody, simpleton, weakling, awkward person
- Nebechel - Nothing, a pitiful person; or playing role of being one
- (A) Nechtiker tog! - He's (it's) gone! Forget it! Nonsense! (Lit., a yesterday's day)
- Nechuma - Consolation
- Nechvenin - To masturbate
- Nem zich a vaneh! - Go take a bath! Go jump in the lake!
- Neshomeh - Soul, spirit
- Neshomeleh - Sweetheart, sweet soul
- Nisht geshtoygen, nisht gefloygen - neither here nor there
- Nifter-shmifter, a leben macht er? - What difference does it make as long as he makes a living? (Lit., nifter means deceased.)
- Nishkosheh - Not so bad, satisfactory. (This has nothing to do with the word "kosher", but comes from the Hebrew and means "hard, heavy," thus "not bad.")
- Nisht fur dich gedacht! - It shouldn't happen! G-d forbid! (Lit., May we be saved from it! [sad event] )
- Nishtgedeiget - Don't worry; doesn't worry

- Nisht geferlech - Not so bad, not too shabby (Lit. not dangerous.)
- Nishtkefelecht - No big deal!
- Nisht gefonfit! - Don't hedge. Don't fool around. Don't double-talk.
- Nisht getrofen! - So I guessed wrong!
- Nisht gut - Not good, lousy
- Nisht naitik - Not necessary
- Nishtgutnick - No-good person
- Nishtikeit! - A nobody!
- Nishtu gedacht! - It shouldn't happen! G-d forbid!
- Nit kain farshloffener - A lively person
- Nit ahin, nit aher - Neither here nor there
- Nit gidacht! - It shouldn't happen! (Same as nishtu gedacht)
- Nit gidacht gevorn. - It shouldn't come to pass.
- Nit kosher - Impure food. Also, slang, anything not good
- Nit heint, nit morgen! - Not today, not tomorrow!
- Nito farvos! - You're welcome!
- Noch a mool - One more time
- Noch nisht - Not yet
- Nochshlepper - Hanger-on, unwanted follower
- Nor Got vaist - Only G-d knows.
- Nosh - Snack
- Nosherie - Snack food

- Nu? - So? Well?
- Nu, dahf men huben kinder? - Does one have children?  
(When a child does something bad)
- Nu, shoyn! - Move, already! Hurry up! Let's go! Aren't you finished?
- Nudnik - Pesty nagger, nuisance, a bore, obnoxious person
- Nudje - Annoying person, badgerer (Americanism)
- Nudjen - Badger, annoy persistently

## O

- Ober yetzt? - So now? (Yetzt is also spelled itzt)
- Obtshepen - Get rid of
- Och un vai! - Alas and alack: woe be to it!
- Oder a klop, oder a fortz (taboo) - Either too much or not enough (Lit., either a wallop or a fart)
- Ohmain - Amen
- Oi!! - Yiddish exclamation to denote disgust, pain, astonishment or rapture
- Oi, a shkandal! - Oh, what a scandal!
- Oi, gevald - Cry of anguish, suffering, frustration or for help
- Oi, Vai! - Dear me! Expression of dismay or hurt
- Oi vai iz mir! - Woe is me!
- Oif tsalooches - For spite

- Oisgeshtrobelt! - Overdressed woman.
- Oisgeshtrozelt - Decorated (beautiful)
- Oisgevapt - Flat (as in "the fizz has gone out of it.)
- Ois-shteler - Braggart
- Oiver botel - Absentminded: getting senile
- Okurat - That's right! Ok! Absolutely! (Sarcastically: Ya' sure!) Okuratner mentsh - Orderly person
- Olreitnik! - Nouveau riche!
- On langed hakdomes! - Cut it short! (Lit., without long introductions.)
- Ongeblozen - Conceited: peevish, sulky, pouting
- Ongeblozzener - Stuffed shirt
- Ongematert - Tired out
- Ongepatshket - Cluttered, disordered, scribbled, sloppy, muddled, overly-done
- Ongeshtopt - Very wealthy
- Ongeshtopt mit gelt - Very wealthy; (Lit., stuffed with money)
- Ongetrunken - Drunk
- Ongetshepter - Bothersome hanger-on
- Ongevarfen - Cluttered, disordered
- Onshikenish - Hanger-on
- Onshikenish - Pesty nagger
- Onzaltsen - Giving you the business; bribe; soft-soap; sweet-talk (Lit., to salt)

- Opgeflickt! - Done in! Suckered! Milked!
- Opgehitener - Pious person
- Opgekrochen - Shoddy
- Opgekrocheneh schoireh - Shoddy merchandise
- Opgelozen(er) - Careless dresser
- Opgenart - Cheated, fooled
- Opnarer - Trickster, shady operator
- Opnarerei - Deception
- Orehman - Poor man, without means
- Oremkeit - Poverty
- Ot azaih - That's how, just like that
- Ot kimm ich - Here I come!
- Ot gaist du - There you go (again)
- Oy vey tsu meina baina - Woe is me (down to my toes)
- Oybershter in himmel - G-d in heaven
- Oych a bashefenish - Also a V.I.P.! A big person! (said derogatorily, sarcastically, or in pity)
- Oych mir a leben! - This too is a living! This you call a living?
- Oyfen himmel a yarid! - Much ado about nothing! Impossible! (Lit., In heaven there's a big fair!)
- Oyfgekumener - Come upper, upstart
- Oys shiddech - The marriage is off!
- Oysgedart - Skinny, emaciated
- Oysgehorevet - Exhausted

- Oysgematert - Tired out, worn out
- Oysgemutshet - Worked to death, tired out
- Oysgeputst - Dressed up, overdressed; over decorated
- Oysgeshprait - Spread out
- Oysvurf - Outcast, bad person

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# List of Yiddish Words and Expressions

Suggestion and additions to this list can be sent to the author



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## [P](#)

- Paigeren - To die (animal)
- Paigeren zol er! - He should drop dead!
- Pamelech - Slow, slowly
- Parech - Low-life, a bad man

- Parnosseh - Livelihood
- Parshiveh - Mean, cheap
- Parshoin - He-man
- Partatshnek - Inferior merchandise or work
- Parveh - Neutral food, neither milchidik (dairy) nor flaishidik (meat)
- Paskidnye - Rotten, terrible
- Paskudnik, paskudnyak - Ugly, revolting, evil person; nasty fellow
- Past nit. - It isn't proper.
- Patsh - Slap, smack on the cheek
- Patsh zich in tuchis und schrei "hooray" - Said to a child who complains he/she has nothing to do (slap your backside and yell "hooray")
- Patshkies around - Anglicized characterization of one who wastes time.
- Patteren tseit - To lounge around; waste time
- Petselah - Little penis
- Phooey! foey, pfui - Designates disbelief, distaste, contempt
- Pinkt kahpoyer - Upside down; just the opposite
- Pipek - Navel, belly button
- Pischechtz - Urine
- Pisher - Male infant, a little squirt, a nobody
- Pisk - Slang, for mouth; insultingly, it means a big

mouth, loudmouth

- Pisk-Malocheh - Big talker-little doer! (man who talks a good line but does nothing)
- Pitseler - Toddler, small child
- Pitshetsh - Chronic complainer
- Pitsel - Wee, tiny
- Pitsvinik - Little nothing
- Plagen - Work hard, sweat out a job, suffer
- Plagen zich - To suffer
- Plaplen - Chatter Plats! - Burst! Bust your guts out! Split your guts!!
- Platsin zuls du - May you explode
- Plimenik - Nephew
- Plimenitse - Niece
- Plotz - To burst
- Pluchet - Heavy rain (from Polish "Plucha")
- Plyoot - Bull-shitter; Loudmouth
- Plyotkenitzeh - A gossip
- Poo, poo, poo - Simulate spitting three times to avoid the evil eye
- Pooter veren - Getting rid of (Lit: making butter)
- Pooter veren fon emitzer - Getting rid of someone; eg: "ich geh' veren pooter fon ihr" - "I'm going to be getting rid of her!"
- Potzevateh - Dimwit, someone who is "out of it."

- Preplen - To mutter, mumble
- Prezhinitse - Scrambled eggs with milk added.
- Prietzteh - Princess; finicky girl; (having airs, giving airs; being snooty) prima donna!
- Pripitchok - Long, narrow wood-burning stove
- Prost - Coarse, common, vulgar
- Prostaches - Low class people
- Prostak - Ignorant boor, coarse person, vulgar man
- Proster chamoole - Low-class shithead
- Prosteh leit - Simple people, common people; vulgar, ignorant, "low class" people
- Proster mentsh - Vulgar man, common man
- Ptsha - Cows feet in jelly
- Pulke - The upper thigh
- Punim - Face
- Pupik - Navel, belly button, gizzard, chicken stomachs
- Pupiklech - Dish of chicken gizzards
- Pushkeh - Little box for coins
- Pustunpasnik - Loafer, idler
- Putz - Slang word for "penis." Also used when describing someone someone as being "a jerk."
- Pyesseh - A play, drama

## R

- Rachmones - Compassions, mercy, pity
- Rav - Rabbi, religious leader of the community
- Reb - Mr., Rabbi; title given to a learned and respected man
- Rebinu - "Rabbi dear!" Term of endearment for a rabbi
- Rebitsin - Literally, the rabbi's wife (often sarcastically applied to a woman who gives herself airs, or acts excessively pious) ; pompous woman
- Rechielesnitseh - Dowdy, gossipy woman
- Reden on a moss - To chatter without end
- Redn tzu der vant - Talk in vain or to talk and receive no answer (Lit. , talk to the wall for all the good it will do you)
- Redt zich ein a krenk! - Imaginary sickness
- Reich - Rich, wealthy
- Reisen di hoit - Skin someone alive (Lit., to tear the skin)
- Reissen - To tear
- Ribbi-fish, gelt oyfen tish! - Don't ask for credit! Pay in cash in advance! Cash on the barrel-head!
- Riboynoy-shel-oylom! (Hebrew) God in heaven, Master of the Universe
- Richtiker chaifetz - The real article! The real McCoy!
- Rirevdiker - A lively person
- Rolleh - Role in a play
- Rooshisher - Definitely NOT a Litvak; coming from

Ukraine, White Russia; the Crimea, Russia itself.

- Roseh - Mean, evil person
- Rossel flaysh - Yiddish refritos
- (A) Ruach in dein taten's taten arein! - Go to the devil!  
(Lit., A devil (curse) should enter your father's father!)
- Ruf mich k'nak-nissel! - I did wrong? So call me a nut!
- Ruktish - Portable table

## S

- Saichel - Common sense, good sense; tact, diplomacy
- S'art eich? - What does it matter to you? Does it matter to you?
- Schochet - A ritual slaughterer of animals and fowl.
- Se brent nit! - Don't get excited! (Lit., It's not on fire!)
- Se shtinkt! - It stinks!
- Se zol dir grihmen in boych! - You should get a stomach cramp!
- Sh' gootzim - Plural of shaigetetz
- Sha! (gently said) - Please keep quiet.
- Shabbes goy - Someone doing the dirty work for others  
(Lit., gentile doing work for a Jew on Sabbath)
- Shadchen - Matchmaker or marriage broker. There is the professional type who derives his or her living from it, but many Jewish people engage in matchmaking without compensation.

- Shaigitz - Non-Jewish boy; wild Jewish boy
- Shaigetz ainer! - Berating term for irreligious Jewish boy, one who flouts Jewish law
- Shaile - A question
- Shain vi der lavoone - As pretty as the moon
- Shain vi di zibben velten - Beautiful as the seven worlds
- Shaineh maidel - pretty girl
- Shainer gelechter - Hearty laugh (sarcastically, Some laughter!)
- Shainkeit - Beauty
- Shaitel, (sheitel) - Wig (Ultra-orthodox married women cover their hair. Some use a shaitel)
- Shalach mohnes - Customary gifts exchanges on Purim, usually goodies Shalom - Peace (a watchword and a greeting)
- Shamus - Sexton, beadle of the synagogue, also, the lighter taper used to light other candles on a menorah, a policeman (slang)
- Shandeh - Shame or disgrace
- Shandhoiz - Brothel, whorehouse
- Shat, shat! Hust! - Quiet! Don't get excited
- Shatnes - Proscription against wearing clothes that are mixed of wool and linen
- Shav - Cold spinach soup, sorrel grass soup, sour leaves soup

- Shemevdik - Bashful, shy
- Shepen naches - Enjoy; gather pleasure, draw pleasure, especially from children
- Shidech (pl., shiduchim) - Match, marriage, betrothal
- Shihi-pihi - Mere nothings
- Shik-yingel - Messenger
- Shikker - Drunkard
- Shikseh - Non-Jewish girl
- Shitter - Sparse, lean, meager
- Shiva - Mourning period of seven days observed by family and friends of deceased
- Shkapeh - A hag, a mare; worthless
- Shkotz - Berating term for mischievous Jewish boy
- Shlak - Apoplexy; a wretch, a miserable person; shoddy; shoddy merchandise
- Shlang - Snake, serpent; a troublesome wife; penis (taboo)
- Shlatten shammes - Communal busybody, tale bearer; messenger
- Shlecht - Bad
- Shlecht veib - Shrew (Lit., a bad wife)
- Shlemiel - Clumsy bungler, an inept person, butter-fingered; dopey person
- Shlep - Drag, carry or haul, particularly unnecessary things, parcels or baggage; to go somewhere unwillingly

- or where you may be unwanted
- Shleppen - To drag, pull, carry, haul
- Shlepper - Sponger, panhandler, hanger-on; dowdy, gossipy woman, free-loader
- Shlimazel - Luckless person. Unlucky person; one with perpetual bad luck (it is said that the shlemiel spills the soup on the shlimazel!)
- Shlog zich kop in vant. - Break your own head! (Lit., bang your head on the wall)
- Shlog zich mit Got arum! - Go fight City Hall! (Lit., Go fight with God.)
- Shlogen - To beat up
- Shlok - A curse; apoplexy
- Shlooche - Slut
- Shloof - Sleep, nap
- Shlosser - Mechanic
- Shlub - A jerk; a foolish, stupid or unknowing person, second rate, inferior.
- Shlump - Careless dresser, untidy person; as a verb, to idle or lounge around
- Shlumperdik - Unkempt, sloppy
- Shmaltz - Grease or fat; (slang) flattery; to sweet talk, overly praise, dramatic
- Shmaltzy - Sentimental, corny
- Shmatteh - Rag, anything worthless

- Shmeis - Bang, wallop
- Shmek tabik - Nothing of value (Lit., a pinch of snuff)
- Shmeer - The business; the whole works; to bribe, to coat like butter
- Shmegegi - Buffoon, idiot, fool
- Shmeichel - To butter up
- Schmeikel - To swindle, con, fast-talk.
- Shmendrik - nincompoop; an inept or indifferent person; same as shlemiel
- Shmo(e) - Naive person, easy to deceive; a goof (Americanism)
- Shmontses -Trifles, folly
- Shmooz; (shmuess) - Chat, talk
- Shmuck (tabboo) - Self-made fool; obscene for penis: derisive term for a man
- Shmulky! - A sad sack!
- Shmuts - Dirt, slime
- Shmutzik - Dirty, soiled
- Shnapps - Whiskey, same as bronfen
- Shnecken - Little fruit and nut coffee rolls
- Shneider - Tailor; in gin rummy card game, to win game without opponent scoring
- Shnell - Quick, quickly
- Shnook - A patsy, a sucker, a sap, easy-going, person easy to impose upon, gullible

- Shnorrer - A beggar who makes pretensions to respectability; sponger, a parasite
- Shnur - Daughter-in-law
- Shokklen - To shake
- Shoymmer - Watchman; historically refers also to the armed Jewish watchman in the early agricultural settlements in the Holy Land
- Shoymmer mitzves - Pious person
- Shoyn ainmol a' metsei-eh! - Really a bargain
- Shoyn fargessen? - You have already forgotten?
- Shoyn genug! - That's enough!
- Shpiel - Play
- Shpilkes - Pins and needles
- Shpitsfinger - Toes
- Shpogel nei - Brand-new
- Shreklecheh zach - A terrible thing
- Shtarben - To die
- Shtark, shtarker - Strong, brave
- Shtark gehert - Smelled bad (used only in reference to food; Lit., strongly heard)
- Shtark vi a ferd - Strong as a horse
- Shtetl - Village or small town (in the "old country")
- Shtik - Piece, bit: a special bit of acting
- Shtik drek (taboo) - Piece of shit; shit-head
- Shtik goy - Idiomatic expression for one inclined to

- heretical views, or ignorance of Jewish religious values
- Shtik naches - Grandchild, child, or relative who gives you pleasure; a great joy
- Shtikel - Small bit or piece; a morsel
- Shtiklech - Tricks; small pieces
- Shtilinkerait - Quietly
- Shtimm zich- Shut up!
- Shtoltz - Pride; unreasonably and stubbornly proud, excessive self-esteem
- Shtrafeeren - To threaten
- Shtrudel - Sweet cake made of paper-thin dough rolled up with various fillings
- Shtuk - Trouble
- Shtum - Quiet
- (A) Shtunk - A guy who doesn't smell too good; a stink (bad odor) a lousy human
- Shtup - Push, shove; vulgarism for sexual intercourse
- Shtup es in toches! (taboo) - Shove (or stick) it up your rectum (ass)!
- Shul - Colloquial Yiddish for synagogue
- Shule - School
- Shushkeh - A whisper; an aside
- Shutfim - Associates
- Shvachkeit - Weakness
- Shvantz - tail, penis

- Shvegerin - Sister-in-law
- Shvengern - Be pregnant
- Shver - Father-in-law; heavy, hard, difficult
- Shviger - Mother-in-law
- Shvindel - Fraud, deception, swindle
- Shvindeldik - Dizzy, unsteady
- Shvitz - Sweat, sweating
- Shvitz bod - Steam bath
- Shvoger - Brother-in-law
- Sidder - Jewish prayer book for weekdays and Saturday
- Simcheh - Joy; also refers to a joyous occasion
- Sitzfleish - Patience that can endure sitting (Lit., sitting flesh)
- Smetteneh - Sour cream; Cream
- Sobaka killev - Very doggy dog
- Sof kol sof - Finally
- Sonem - Enemy, or someone who thwarts your success.
- S'teitsh! - Listen! Hold on! How is that? How is that possible? How come?
- Strasheh mich nit! - Don't threaten me!

## T

- Ta'am - Taste, flavor; good taste
- Ta'am gan eyden - Fabulous (Lit: A taste of the Garden of Eden)

- Tahkeh - Really! Is that so? Certainly!
- Tahkeh a metsieh - Really a bargain! (usually said with sarcasm)
- Taiglech - Small pieces of baked dough or little cakes dipped in honey
- Tallis - Rectangular prayer-shawl to whose four corners, fringes are attached
- Talmud - The complete treasury of Jewish law interpreting the Torah into livable law
- Talmud Torah - The commandment to study the Law; an educational institution for orphans and poor children, supported by the community; in the United States, a Hebrew school for children
- Tamavate - Feeble-minded
- Tamaveter - Feeble-minded person
- Tandaitneh - Inferior
- Tararam - Big noise, big deal
- Tashlich - Ceremony of the casting off of sins on the Jewish New Year (crumbs of bread symbolizing one's sins are cast away into a stream of water in the afternoon of the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashoneh)
- Tateh, tatteh, tatteh, tatteleh, tatinka, tatteniu - Father, papa, daddy, pop
- Tateh-mameh, papa-mama - Parents
- Tatenui - Father dear (The suffix "niu" in Yiddish is

- added for endearing intimacy; also, G-d is addressed this way by the pious; Tateniu-Foter means G-d, our Father
- Tchotchkes - Little playthings, ornaments, bric-a-brac, toys
- Teier - Dear, costly, expensive
- Tei-yerinkeh! - Sweetheart, dearest
- Temp - Dolt
- Temper kop - Dullard
- T'noim - Betrothal, engagement
- Toches - Buttocks, behind, fanny (ass)
- Toches ahfen tish! - Put up or shut up! Let's conclude this! (Lit., Asses on the table!)
- Toches in droissen - Bare behind
- Toches-lecker - Brown-noser, apple-polisher, ass-kisser
- Togshul - Day school
- Toig ahf kapores! - Good for nothing! It's worth nothing!
- Traif - Forbidden food, impure, contrary to the Jewish dietary laws, non-kosher
- Traifener bain - Jew who does not abide by Jewish law (derisive, scornful expression)
- Traifeneh bicher - Forbidden literature
- Traifnyak - Despicable person; one who eats non-kosher food
- Trenen - To tear, rip
- Trogedik - Pregnant

- Trog gezunterhait! - Wear it in good health!
- Trombenik - A bum, no-good person, ne'er-do-well; a faker
- Tsaddik - Pious, righteous person
- Tsaloochesnik - Spiteful person
- Tsatskeh - Doll, plaything; something cute; an overdressed woman; a sexy girl
- Tsatskeleh der mamehs! - Mother's favorite! Mother's pet!
- Tsebrech a fus! - Break a leg!
- Tsedrait - Nutty, crazy, screwy
- Tsedraiter kop - Bungler
- Tseereh - Face (usually used as put-down)
- Tsemisht - Confused, befuddled, mixed-up
- Tsevishen-shtotishch telefonistkeh - Long distance operator
- Tsegait zich in moyl - It melts in the mouth, delicious, yummy-yummy
- Tsemishnich - Confusion
- Tshatshki - Toy, doo-dad
- Tshepen - To annoy, irk, plague, bother, attack
- Tsigeloisen - Compassionate, rather nice
- Tsiklen zich - The cantor's ecstatic repetition of a musical phrase
- Tsimmes - Sweet carrot compote; (slang) a major issue

- made out of a minor event
- Tsitskeh - Breast, teat, udder
- Tsivildivit - Crazy, wild, overwhelmed with too many choices
- Tsnueh - Chaste
- Tsores - Troubles, misery
- Tsutsheppenish - Hanger-on; unwanted companion; pest; nuisance
- Tsum glik, tsum shlimazel - For better, for worse
- Tsvilling - Twins
- Tu mir a toiveh. - Do me a favor.
- Tu mir nit kain toives. - Don't do me any favors.
- Tumel - Confusion, noise, uproar
- Tumler - A noise-maker (person); an agitator
- Tut vai dos harts - Heartbroken
- Tzedakeh - Spirit of philanthropy; charity, benevolence
- Tziginer bobkes - Jocular, truly valueless. Also used to describe black olives. Lit: goat droppings
- Tzitzis - Fringes attached to the four corners of the tallis
- Tzufil! - Too much! Too costly!

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# List of Yiddish Words and Expressions

Suggestion and additions to this list can be sent to the author



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## U

- Um-be-rufen - Unqualified, uncalled for; God forbid; (A deprecation to ward off the evil eye)
- Um-be-shrien - God forbid! It shouldn't happen!
- Umgeduldik - Petulant

- Ummeglich! - Impossible!
- Umglick - A misfortune; (masc) A born loser; an unlucky one
- Umshteller - Braggart
- Umzist - For nothing
- Un langeh hakdomes! - Cut it short! (lit., Without a long introduction)
- Unterkoifen - To bribe
- Unterschmeichlen - To butter up
- Untervelt mentsh - Racketeer
- Utz - To goad, to needle

## V

- Vahksin zuls du vi a tsibeleh, mitten kup in drerd - May you grow like an onion, with your head in the ground!
- Vahksin zuls du, tsu gezunt, tsu leben, tsu langeh yor - May you grow to health, to life, to long years. (Each may me said when someone sneezes)
- Vai! - Woe, pain; usually appears as "oy vai!"
- Vai is mir! - Woe is me!
- Vai vind iz meine yoren - "Woe is me!"
- Vais ich vos - Stuff and nonsense! Says you! (Lit., Know from what)

- Vaitik - An ache
- Valgeren zich - Wander around aimlessly
- Valgerer - Homeless wanderer
- Vaneh - Bath, bathtub
- Vannit - Where (from) "Fon vannit kimmt ihr?" (Where do you come from?)
- Vantz - Bedbug; (slang) a nobody
- Varenikehs - Round shaped noodle dough stuffed with meat, potato, etc. and fried
- Varfen an oyg - To look out for; to guard; to mind (Lit., To throw an eye at)
- Varnishkes - Kasha and noodles
- Vart! - Wait! Hold on!
- Vash-tsimmer - Bathroom, washroom
- Vash-tsimmer far froyen - Ladie's room
- Vash-tsimmer far menner - Men's room
- Vechter - Watchman
- Veibernik - Debauchee
- Veibershe shtiklach - Female tricks
- Veis vi kalech! - Pale as a sheet!
- Vek-zaiger - Alarm clock
- Vemen barestu? - (taboo) Whom are you kidding? (Lit., Whom are you screwing?)
- Vemen narstu? - Whom are you fooling?
- Ver derharget! - Get killed! Drop dead! (Also "ver

geharget)

- Ver dershtikt! - Choke yourself!
- Ver farblondjet! - Get lost! Go away!
- Verklempt - Extremely emotional. On the verge of tears. (See "Farklempt")
- Ver tsuzetst - "Go to hell" (or its equivalent)
- Ver vaist? - Who knows?
- Ver volt dos geglaibt? - Who would have believed it?
- Veren a tel - To be ruined
- Veren ferherret - To get married
- Vi a barg - Large as a mountain
- Vi der ruach zagt gut morgen - Where the devil says good morning! (has many meanings; usually appended to another phrase)
- Vi gait dos gesheft? - How's business?
- Vi gait es eich? - How goes it with you? How are you? How are you doing?
- Vi gait? - How goes it? How are things? How's tricks?
- Vi haistu? - What's your name?
- Vi ruft men...? - What is the name of...?
- Vi ruft men eich? - What is your name?
- Viazoy? - How come?
- Vifil? - How much?
- Vilder mentsh - A wild one; a wild person
- Vilstu - Do you want...

- Vo den? - What else?
- Voglen - To wander around aimlessly
- Voiler yung! - Roughneck (sarcastic expression)
- Voncin - Bed bug
- Vortshpiel - Pun, witticism
- Vos art es (mich)? - What does it matter (to me)? What do I care?
- Vos barist du? - (taboo) What are you screwing around for? What are you fooling around for?
- Vos bei a nichteren oyfen lung, is bei a shikkeren oyfen tsung. - What a sober man has on his lung (mind), a drunk has on his tongue.
- Vos draistu mir a kop? - What are you bothering me for? (Lit., Why are you twisting my head?)
- Vos failt zai? - What are they lacking?
- Vos gicher, alts besser - The faster, the better
- Vos hakst du mir in kop? - What are you talking my head off for?
- Vos hert zich? - What do you hear around? What's up?
- Vos hert zich epes nei-es? - What's new?
- Vos hob ich dos gedarft? - What did I need it for?
- Vos-in-der-kort - Capable of doing anything bad (applied to bad person; Lit., everything in the cards)
- Vos iz? - What's the matter?
- Vos iz ahfen kop, iz ahfen tsung! - What's on his mind is

on his tongue!

- Vos iz der chil'lek? - What difference does it make?
- Vos iz der tachlis? - What's the purpose? Where does it lead to?
- Vos iz di chochmeh? - What is the trick?
- Vos iz di untershteh shureh? - What's the point? What's the outcome? (Lit., What on the bottom line?)
- Vos iz mit dir? - What's wrong with you?
- Vos kocht zich in teppel? - What's cooking?
- Vos macht a yid? - How's it going?
- Vos macht vos oys? - What difference does it make?
- Vos macht es mir oys? - What difference does it make to me?
- Vos macht ir? - How are you? (pl.); How do you do?
- Vos Machstu? - How are you? (singular)
- Vos maint es? - What does it mean?
- Vos noch? - What else? What then?
- Vos ret ir epes? - What are you talking about?
- Vos tut zich? - What's going on? What's cooking?
- Vos vet zein - What will be
- Vos vet zein, vet zein! - What will be, will be!
- Vos zagt ir? - What are you saying?
- Vu tut dir vai? - Where does it hurt?
- Vuhin gaitsu? - Where are you going?
- Vund - Wound

- Vursht - Bologna
- Vyzoso - Idiot (named after youngest son of Haman, archenemy of Jews in Book of Esther); also, penis

## W

- Wen der tati/fater gibt men tsu zun, lachen baiden. Wen der zun gibt men tsu tati/fater, vainen baiden. - When the father gives to his son, both laugh. When the son gives to the father, both cry.
- Wen ich ess, ch'ob ich alles in dread. - (Lit. When I am eating, I have everything in the ground.) When I am eating, everybody can go to hell!

## Y

- Yachneh - A coarse, loud-mouthed woman; a gossip; a slattern
- Yachsen - Man of distinguished lineage, highly connected person, privileged character

- Yarmelkeh - Traditional Jewish skull cap, usually worn during prayers; worn at all times by observant Orthodox Jews.
- Yashir koyech - May your strength continue
- Yatebedam - A man who threatens; one who thinks he's a "big shot"; a blusterer
- Yedies - News; cablegrams; announcements
- Yefayfiyeh - Beauty; woman of great beauty
- Yenems - Someone else's; (the brand of cigarettes moochers smoke!)
- Yeneh velt - The other world; the world to come
- Yenteh - Gabby, talkative woman; female blabbermouth
- Yente telebente - Mrs. National Enquirer
- Yentzen (taboo) - To fornicate, to whore
- Yeshiveh - Jewish traditional higher school, talmudical academy
- Yeshiveh bocher - Student of talmudic academy
- Yeshuvnik - Farmer, rustic
- Yichus - Pedigree, ancestry, family background, nobility
- Yiddisher kop - Jewish head
- Yiddishkeit - Having to do with all things relating to Jewish culture.
- Yingeh tsats-keh! - A young doll! A living doll!
- Yiskor - Prayer in commemoration of the dead (Lit., May God remember.)

- Yom Kippur - Day of Atonement (the most holy of holy days of the Jewish calendar)
- Yontefdik - Festive, holiday-ish; sharp (referring to clothes)
- Yortseit - Anniversary of the day of death of parents or relatives; yearly remembrance
- Yoysher - Justice, fairness, integrity
- Yukel - Buffoon
- (A) Yung mit bainer! - A powerhouse! Strongly built person
- Yung un alt - Young and old
- Yungatsh - Street-urchin, scamp, young rogue
- Yungermantshik - A young, vigorous lad; A newlywed

## Z

- Zadnitse - vagina
- Zaft - Juice
- Zaftik - Pleasantly plump and pretty. Sensuous looking (Lit., juicy)
- Zaftikeh moid! - Sexually attractive girl
- Zaideh - Grandfather
- Zaier gut - O.K. (Lit., very good)
- Zaier shain gezogt! - Well said! (Lit., Very beautifully)

said!)

- Zee est vee a feigele - She eats like a bird
- Zeh nor, zeh nor! Look here, look here!
- Zei (t) gezunt - Be well! Goodbye! Farewell
- Zei mir frailich! - Be Happy!
- Zei mir gezunt! - Be well!
- Zei mir matriach - Be at pains to... Please; make an effort.
- Zei nit a nar! - Don't be a fool!
- Zei nit kain vyzoso! - Don't be an idiot! Don't be a damn fool!
- Zeit azoy gut - Please (Lit., Be so good)
- Zeit ir doch ahfen ferd! - You're all set! (Lit., You're on the horse!)
- Zeit (mir) moychel - Excuse me! Be so good as...Forgive me!
- Zelig - Blessed (used mostly among German Jews in recalling a beloved deceased ----- mama zelig)
- Zeltenkeit - Rare thing
- Zetz - Shove, push, bang! Also slang for a sexual experience (taboo)
- Zhaleven - To be sparing, miserly
- Zhlob - A jerk; slob, uncouth
- Zhu met (mir) in kop - A buzzing in one's (mind) head
- Zhulik - Faker

- Zi farmacht nit dos moyl - She doesn't stop talking (Lit., She doesn't close her mouth)
- Zindik nit - Don't complain. Don't tempt the Gods.
- Ziseh neshomeh - Sweet soul
- Ziseh raidelech - Sweet talk
- Ziskeit - Sweetness, sweetheart, (Also endearing term for a child)
- Zitsen ahf shpilkes - Sitting on pins and needles; to fidget
- Zitsen shiveh - Sit in mourning (Shiveh means 7 which is the number of days in the period of mourning)
- Zitsflaish - Patience (Lit., Sitting meat)
- Zog a por verter - Say a few words!
- Zogen a ligen - Tell a lie
- Zogerkeh - Woman who leads the prayers in the women's section in the synagogue
- Zoineh - Prostitute
- Zol dich chapen beim boych. - You should get a stomach cramp!
- Zol dir klappen in kop! - It should bang in your head (the way it is bothering me!)
- Zol er tsebrechen a fus! - May he break a leg! He should break a leg!
- Zol es brennen! - The hell with it! (Lit., Let it burn!)
- Zol Got mir helfen! - May God help me!

- Zol Got ophiten! - May God prevent!
- Zol ich azoy vissen fun tsores! - I haven't got the faintest idea! (Lit., I should so know from trouble as I know about this!)
- Zol vaksen tzibbelis fun pipek! - Onions should grow from your bellybutton!
- Zol ze vaksen ze ve a tsibble mit de kopin dreid - You should grow like an onion with your head in the ground.
- Zol zein! - Let it be! That's all!
- Zol zein azoy! - O.K.! Let it be so!
- Zol zein gezunt! - Be well!
- Zol zein mit glik! - Good luck!
- Zol zein shah! - Be quiet. Shut up!!
- Zol zein shtil! - Silence! Let's have some quiet!
- Zoltsu azoy laiben! - You should live so!
- Zolst geshvollen veren vi a barg! - You should swell up like a mountain!
- Zolst hobn tzen haizer, yeder hoiz zol hobn tzen tzimern, in yeder tzimer zoln zain tzen betn un zolst zij kaiklen fun ein bet in der tzweiter mit cadojes! - I wish you to have ten houses, each house with ten rooms, each room with ten beds and you should roll from one bed to the other with cholera. (not a very nice thing to say.)
- Zolst leben un zein gezunt! - You should live and be well!

- Zolst ligen in drerd! - Drop dead! (Lit., You should lie in the earth!)
- Zolst nit vissen fun kain shlechts. - You shouldn't know from evil.
- Zolst es shtipin in toches! - (taboo) Shove it up your rectum!
- Zorg zich nit! - Don't worry!
- Zuninkeh! - Dear son! Darling son!

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