

## An A to Z of Covidese (2020)

### David Crystal

The Covid outbreak has brought with it many new technical terms and descriptions, and some unexpected linguistic developments. At the same time as the serious vocabulary arrived, and despite the awfulness of the situation, people began to coin playful or imaginatively surreal expressions that captured the character and the effect on our behaviour of the virus - in the traditional spirit of laughing in the face of adversity. I've been collecting them over the past couple of months, as have linguists and lexicographers around the world, and I've picked out some of the best ones, adding a few of my own. For those items that are already in widespread use, it's impossible to identify the creators, as words and phrases of this kind are likely to have been invented by more than one person at more or less the same time. I've no doubt that this selection is but the tip of an enormous lexical iceberg - and one that will continue to grow as long as the crisis is with us. How many will have a permanent home in the language is an open question.

**AC/DC** unsure whether one has had coronavirus or not

**BC** Before Covid *or* Before Coronavirus; also **BCV**

**BCE** Before the Covid Era *or* Before the Coronavirus Era

**blursday** the response to use when someone asks you what day it is; see also **quarantime**

**coronababy** a new human conceived during lockdown; also called a **coronial** or **covidial**; a member of what will be called **Generation C**

**corona bonus** an unexpected benefit from having to stay at home or while out shopping

**coronacoaster** ups and downs of mood during a typical lockdown day

**coronacut** the usually unfortunate result of self-barbering during self-isolation; also, **covid cut**

**coronadance** dancing in the street while maintaining social distancing

**coronadodge** see **covidodge**

**corona donor** someone you would not want to meet

**coronageddon** see **coronapocalypse**

**coronalert** what we all have to be; also called **covalert** or **covigilant**

**coronaliterature** any creative writing about life during the crisis - including dictionaries like this one; also called **coronalit** or **isoliterature**, along with its genres - **coronapoem**, **coronanovel** etc.

**corona loaner** anyone prepared to lend anything to help people get through the crisis

**corona loner** someone who avoids all possible social contact when out taking exercise

**corona moaner** someone who can't talk about anything else - which means most of us; also **corona groaner**

**coronanoia** an irrational fear that the virus is all around us or is being passed on by the objects we see around us, such as radio masts; also **coronoia**; see also

**coronaphobia** a fear of coming into contact with the virus, especially as lockdown eases

**corona phoner** someone who unnecessarily telephones everyone they know to check on their state of health

**coronapocalypse** any interpretation of the virus as the end of the world; also **coronageddon**

**coronarhoea** a side-effect of the coronavirus; see also **Rs factor**

**coronarita** a Margarita type of drink consumed during lockdown; see also **quarantini**

**coronascam** > **scamdemic**

**coronasphere** the whole world; see also **coronaverse**

**coronaspiracy** the view that a company or country - or any group of people - is hiding the truth about the origins or spread of the virus

**coronasplainers** people who think they know more about the virus than anyone else; their behaviour is **coronasplaining**

**coronatimes** now

**coronavacation** an enforced holiday from work as a result of having to stay at home; also called a **coronacation** or **covacation**

**coronaverse** the whole world, and possibly other places to which the virus may already boldly have gone; also, poetry written while in isolation

**coronavicar** a church minister who maintains online services during lockdown; also called a **covivicar**; similarly, there are **coronapriests** or **covipriests**, **coronabishops** or **covibishops**, and even a **coronapope** or **covipope**

**corona waltz** see **covidodge**

**coronawash** washing of the hands after imagining they might have been in contact with the virus

**coronial** see **coronababy**

**corooning** singing to others online or in the street; see also **quarantunes**

**covacation** see **coronavacation**

**covads** television and other commercials made at home or selling virus-related products; also called **coronads** and **coronadvertising**

**covalert** see **coronalert**

**coventine** a quarantined nunnery

**covexit** the elimination of the Covid-19 virus in a country, and maybe, one day, the world

**covictory** the anticipated situation when the virus is finally brought under control

**covidalliance** a relationship born online during a period of lockdown or at a distance while outside

**covid cut** see **coronacut**

**Covidentry, sent to** made to leave a social group because of a fear that the person has the virus

**covideo** a home video made during lockdown

**Covidese** the vocabulary created in 2020 to laugh in the face of the virus

**covidial** see **coronababy**

**covidiot** the usual term of abuse for anyone thought to be breaching lockdown guidelines; the condemned behaviour is **covidiocy**; see also **morona**

**covidivorce** the likely outcome for a married couple who haven't survived the pressure of self-isolation

**covidodge** a sudden movement to avoid coming into contact with a passer-by during a period of social distancing; also called a **coronadodge** or a **covid** or **corona waltz**

**covidreaming** vivid or nightmarish dreams experienced during a virus lockdown, such as seeing yourself unable to get into a restaurant while everyone else is eating inside

**coviduals** people (individuals) who create a creative approach to coping at home

**covidiversity** an online institution offering academic courses while universities are closed

**covid waltz** see **covidodge**

**covipet** an animal obtained to give the owner a permissible reason to leave the house; many kinds, such as **covicats**, **covidogs**, and **coviparrots**

**coviewing** watching a movie or other show online along with others in different houses

**covigilant** see **coronalert**

**covignette** a small design or anecdote circulated online to keep spirits up

**covigorousness** the state of keeping extra-busy during lockdown

**covilla** a rather nice second home, especially abroad, which is now unreachable

**covillain** someone who takes advantage of the crisis to commit crimes

**covindaloo** an unexpectedly hot takeaway ordered during lockdown

**covindictive** taking one's Covid-related frustrations out on others  
**covincible** a personal belief that one is immune from the virus  
**covindicated** the state following an antibody test, positive or negative  
**covintage** wine produced during 2020  
**covirginity** a state of enforced chastity due to lockdown  
**covirility** the male feeling of 'it's not going to get ME'  
**covitroll** an online vitriol-spreading covidiot; also called a **quarantroll**  
**covivicar** see **coronavicar**  
**covocabulary** new words and senses that describe the Covid-19 event  
**disoman** someone who keeps cheating while playing dice on his own  
**drivecation** getting into one's parked car to gain the feeling of going on holiday  
**elbump** a gentle nudge used to avoid hand-shaking; now obsolete and possibly illegal when there is a 2-metre rule; also, **elbowshake**  
**generation C** see **coronababy**  
**infodemic** the spread of false news about the virus; see also **scamdemic**  
**isobar** a home stock of alcohol brought in to survive lockdown  
**isobath** taking a bath alone, or with fresh water, just in case  
**iso-breaker** a remark made at the beginning of an online conversation that makes everyone feel comfortable  
**isocooking** - devising or sharing new home recipes during lockdown; also called **isobaking**  
**iso-creams** the possibility of cones, wafers, etc fitted with an edible app that would warn you if you were getting too close to someone else eating them; also **iso-lollies**; see also **lickdown**  
**isodesking** having a desk at work or at home that is at least 2 metres away from anyone else  
**iso-hockey** a possible variant of the traditional game in which you are not allowed to come within 2 metres of any other player  
**isoliterature** see **coronaliterature**  
**isolocks** the growth of hair resulting from the inability to go to a hairdresser  
**iso-skates** the possibility of skates fitted with an app that lets you know when you come too close to another skater, and stops you moving; scientists would have to work on another app that would enable you to leave the **iso-rink** safely  
**lickdown** a ban on offering your ice-cream cone to others; see also **iso-creams**  
**lochdown** a ban on visiting Scottish lakes  
**lockdowner** anyone in a state of imposed isolation  
**locksit** the way out of a period of lockdown; also **lexit** and **loxit**  
**locktail** a cocktail created during a lockdown; usually drunk during a **locktail hour**  
**maskee** or **masker** anyone wearing a protective face-mask  
**masklessee** anyone refusing to wear a protective face-mask  
**miley** rhyming slang for the virus, as in 'Have you 'ad the miley?' - from the singer Miley Cyrus  
**morona** anyone behaving in an idiotic way - a **covidiot**  
**physical distancing** what is really happening; see **social distancing**  
**priso-rise** a hike in the cost of e.g. toilet rolls when in short supply  
**quarantanned** how one looks, following an overuse of tanning equipment during lockdown  
**quaranteaching** what all teachers have to do while schools are closed  
**quaranteam** any group - sporting, musical, theatrical... - performing together online  
**quaranteatime** meeting online to share a cup of tea during lockdown  
**quarantechnology** any device, physical or digital, that helps pass the time while staying at home during a lockdown; also **quarantech**  
**quarantedium** for many, the daily state

**quarantee** the promise made by a government or other organization to do something to help people suffering financial loss during lockdown; also, the first drive in golf where the golfers have to maintain social distancing

**quaranteen** a youngster who becomes a teenager in 2033

**quaranteenager** there are few things more fearsome

**quaranteeny** an infant no longer able to go to a creche or nursery-school

**quaranteething** of babies: first teeth coming through while in lockdown

**quaranteetotal** giving up alcohol during lockdown

**quarantime** the sense of timelessness while in lockdown; see also **blursday**

**quarantimes** how historians will one day label 2020

**quarantini** a looked-forward-to Martini-type drink while having to stay at home; see also **coronarita**

**quarantip** any idea that helps you survive a period of lockdown

**quarantipple** an increased reliance on alcohol during lockdown

**quarantough** a description of the times we live in during lockdown

**quarantrendy** describing any new fashion, recipe, game, exercise... that becomes popular during lockdown

**quarantunes** songs composed to raise spirits; see also **corooning**

**quaranTV** television programmes or online videos now being watched assiduously

**risolating** experiencing an irrational desire to eat rice-pudding during lockdown; see also **riso-pudding**

**Riso-Krispies** proprietary name for a possible breakfast cereal in which the grains of rice would have been grown at 2 metres distance from each other

**riso-pudding** a failed attempt to create a new rice-based dessert during lockdown; see also **riceolating**

**ronavation** getting on with home improvements during lockdown

**Rs factor** [pronounced 'arse'] the rate at which coronarhoea spreads; see **coronarhoea**

**safewishing** the usual way of ending an online message these days; also **safetywishing**

**scamdemic** the spread of online fraudulent messages (**coronascams**) purporting to be from genuine sources

**social distancing** what should not be happening; see also **physical distancing**

**thriceolation** a third period of enforced quarantine; see also **twiceolation**

**TPH** toilet paper hoarder

**twiceolation** a second period of enforced quarantine ; see also **thriceolation**

**upperwear** the part of your clothing that can be seen on screen

**viso-chancellor** a senior academic who runs a university from home

**viso-president** a politician who keeps a safe distance from the president

**Y2K** short for **Y2Kovid** - the real start of the new millennium

**zombie** the zombie-like state when someone leaves an overlong online meeting

**zombombing** an unexpected or unwelcome appearance during a Zoom meeting (on analogy with photobombing)

**zoom coma** the state of lethargy that follows a long session in Zoom room

**zoomdate** a relationship formed after meeting someone in a Zoom room or other online forum during lockdown; also called a **quarandate**; see also **zoomped**

**zoomed out** or **zoomed up** exhausted by sending too much time in Zoom rooms

**zoomer** a member of Generation Z, who lives life chiefly in Zoom rooms or other online meeting-places

**zoomped** or **zumped** the ending of a relationship formed in a Zoom room or other online forum