

## Curious Question # 23 – Dude

### Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone, this is Harp...

Maura: and Maura...

Harp: And we're here at Culips bringing you a Curious Questions podcast.

Maura: Yeah and the Curious Question episode is where we get questions from you, our listeners, and we answer it in a podcast giving you lots of examples and explanations.

Harp: Exactly and make sure you go to our website, Culips, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, where you can see the Lipservice which has the transcripts, the detailed explanations and even a quiz.

Maura: Exactly, so don't forget to check out the website.

Harp: OK so today's question is from Meg in Japan.

Maura: Yeah, hi Meg thanks for your questions! So today we're going to answer your question about the word **dude**.

Harp: Yeah, Meg's question is ... "I've often heard the word **dude** in my favourite TV drama *Friends* but I don't know about the meaning and when or how to use it in conversation. And is it a bad word?"

Maura: So, first we should say that **dude** is not a bad word. It's totally fine to say. It's very casual and informal though, that's important to know.

Harp: Yeah, but it's not insulting or mean.

Maura: No, but it's not professional so you wouldn't use it in a professional environment at work.

Harp: Yeah, don't call your boss **dude**!

Maura: Right, you want to use **dude** with your friends in a casual environment like a party or something like that.

Harp: Yeah, so **dude** is an old word.

- Maura: Yeah, and it has had a lot of different meanings that mostly, generally refer to a man.
- Harp: Yeah exactly. And **dude** became popular in the 60s and the 70s in surfer culture and then it made its way into **mainstream**.
- Maura: Yeah, so **dude** was really first used in a popular way by surfers, I guess maybe in California, somewhere where they surf in the USA.
- Harp: Exactly, but we'll talk about **dude** in surfer culture in the Lipservice.
- Maura: Yeah, because there is quite a bit of vocabulary that is related to the surfer culture. It's pretty interesting so, yeah, we'll talk about that in Lipservice a little bit.
- Harp: Exactly. **Dude** is quite popular now though.
- Maura: Yeah, especially now. It's quite popular. There was that movie that came out a few years ago, called **Dude, Where's My Car?**
- Harp: Yeah, I never saw it but I heard it was funny.
- Maura: Yeah, I never saw it either but maybe it's a great movie. It's a comedy but, yeah, it's popular in a lot of different TV shows and movies.
- Harp: Yeah like Meg mentioned, she hears it often in *Friends*.
- Maura: Yeah, *Friends*, I think, a pretty popular show and people all around the world know about it or maybe have seen it.
- Harp: Yeah, so you have probably heard **dude** before.
- Maura: And like we said already, **dude** means a man or a guy, usually refers to a male person.
- Harp: Exactly, now the female version would be **dudette**.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: But you never hear that.
- Maura: No no, no one says that. It would be a little bit strange to use **dudette**.

- Harp: Sometimes I use it when I'm trying to be funny.
- Maura: But Harp's not very funny so ... **OK, so dude, right** ... we use it when we're talking about a man.
- Harp: But we can also use it when we're talking to a female.
- Maura: Right, so when you're talking to a female or a male, **dude** is OK but you wouldn't use **dude** to talk about a female.
- Harp: Exactly, let's give some examples to explain this.
- Maura: For sure ... Harp, yesterday I was downtown and I was just waiting for the bus and this **dude** walks by and starts dancing suddenly.
- Harp: Oh that's so weird.
- Maura: I know. It was so funny; he was a pretty weird **dude**.
- Harp: OK, so in that example the person that Maura is talking about is a guy, we would never think that that was a female.
- Maura: Right, if you say, I saw a **dude**, it means it was a man. It was not a female.
- Harp: Yeah, there was a **dude** there. I saw a **dude**. It's a **guy**.
- Maura: Yeah, but sometimes we use **dude** when we're talking to a person, and this person could be male or female.
- Harp: Yeah, I could say to Maura, **dude** what are you doing tonight?
- Maura: Right and she's talking to me and I'm a female and it's OK. You could also remove the word and the sentence doesn't change. You could just say, what are you doing tonight? It's fine.
- Harp: Yeah, so you can use, **dude**, what are you doing tonight; Maura, what are you doing tonight; or what are you doing tonight?
- Maura: Yeah. So often in that way, **dude** doesn't change the meaning of the sentence at all.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: So now here's when it gets, maybe, a little bit more complicated.

- Harp: A little bit.
- Maura: So people use the word **dude** sometimes completely alone, completely by itself.
- Harp: Yeah, so when you use **dude** by itself it depends on the way you say it.
- Maura: Yeah, it depends on the tone of your voice or your inflection.
- Harp: Yeah, so you could say, **dude**?
- Maura: Right, and it's really the tone of Harp's voice that is important. Can you say it again Harp?
- Harp: **Dude**?
- Maura: Right. So you are kind of saying you're asking a question. You're saying, what are you doing or what are you thinking? You're questioning something.
- Harp: Exactly, or I could say, **Dude**.
- Maura: Right, so in that way you are maybe excited about something.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: OK, so we gave you 2 examples. The first **dude**, was what are you doing – has the meaning *what are you doing*, and the second **dude** was that you were excited about something.
- Harp: Yeah, sometimes it can be difficult to hear it so you have to look for visual cues. You look at the situation that people are in and you can understand better what they're saying.
- Maura: Right, so let's put both of these examples into a context.
- Harp: OK.
- Maura: Hey Harp can I show you this new shirt I just bought?
- Harp: Yeah, sure.
- Maura: OK, I'll go put it on. So this is it Harp.

- Harp: **Dude.**
- Maura: What? You don't like it?
- Harp: Um ... no it's OK.
- Maura: OK great. So in that example, Harp said **dude** but I knew from her tone of her voice that she thought my shirt was kind of crazy.
- Harp: Exactly I did.
- Maura: OK, so let's give another example with **dude**.
- Harp: Maura, I have some great news.
- Maura: What happened?
- Harp: I won free tickets to the concert!
- Maura: **DUDE!**
- Harp: I know!
- Maura: That's awesome! I guess I get to go with you?
- Harp: Of course.
- Maura: Awesome ... OK good. So in the second example I used **dude** and I was very excited.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: OK, great.
- Harp: And we're going to post a video that shows the different ways that someone can use **dude**.
- Maura: Yeah, so we showed you two different ways in this episode but there are actually many different ways and many different situations where you could use it and this video is a pretty great example.
- Harp: Yeah, the video is very funny.

- Maura: OK cool, so, Meg, we hope we answered your question well about the word **dude**. So the important thing to remember is that you can use it to talk to a man or a woman.
- Harp: But when you are talking about someone it has to be a man if you're using **dude**.
- Maura: Right.
- Harp: So, that's it for today.
- Maura: Yeah, great job **dude**.
- Harp: Yeah, **dude** it was good.
- Maura: Alright, so we'll be talking to you next time. So this has been Maura ...
- Harp: and Harp ...
- Maura: with the Curious Questions podcast.
- Harp: Bye everyone.
- Maura: Bye.

## Detailed Explanation

### Dude

The word **dude** can be used in two different basic ways. One way that **dude** is often used is to talk about a male person. If someone is talking about a person and calls them **dude**, then the person is a male. When talking to a person the person can be male or female.

Remember that it is almost never acceptable to use **dude** in a professional environment. **Dude** is generally used by younger people.

### Surfer culture

Surfer culture is a lifestyle that affects fashion, music and language. Surfing became popular in the 1950s and 1960s. It was especially popular in California, but also in other coastal locations with big waves.

Here is a short list of some slang that surfers use. This is also closely related to 'Valley Girl' slang or 'Valspeak'. Both of these kinds of slang are linked to California.



- Awesome
- Totally
- Gnarly
- Stoked

### Mainstream

The word **mainstream** is used to talk about cultural aspects that are accepted by the majority of a society. Harp talks about **dude** being part of the **mainstream**, which means that at this time the majority of North American society knows or uses this word.

We can also use **mainstream** to describe music or movies. Music or movies that many people see or general types of music or film that is enjoyed by most people can also be called **mainstream**.

Here is an example:

Carol: Have you heard the new radio station?

Gina: No. What kind of music does it play?

Carol: It plays mostly **mainstream** pop music.

### Friends

This American television show started in 1994 and continued on until 2004. It was one of the most popular shows in The U.S. and Canada and was popular in other countries too.

All the episodes focused on a group of friends living in New York City. Have you already heard of this show?

### Dude, Where's My Car?

This movie, ***Dude, Where's My Car?***, was released in 2000. It stars Ashton Kutcher and Sean William Scott. In this movie, two friends wake up one morning and do not know where their girlfriends' car is. At one point one of the girlfriends asks, "Dude, where's my car?"

The two friends then continue for the rest of the movie to search for the missing car, and of course funny things happen to them, making this film a comedy.

### Dudette

If **dude** means a male, then *dudette* means female. It is important to note that *dudette* is not popular to use and so you should not use it. In general, when we add *ette* on the end of a word it becomes feminine. Sometimes *ette* on the end of a word also means that it is a smaller version of the original.

### OK, so dude, right

This explanation is not about the vocabulary used in this case. At this time in the episode, Harp says that she uses the word *dudette* when she is trying to be funny. Maura then says that Harp is not funny. Maura is being sarcastic, a certain kind of humour that people use. When someone is sarcastic they say the opposite of what is true. So, Maura is not telling the truth when she says that Harp is not funny, she is just making a joke.

Now that Maura has made this joke, she wants to get back to the original topic – **dude**. So she says, "OK, so dude, right."

Here are another couple examples of someone changing the topic back.

Gary: My trip was really amazing. I saw the Eiffel Tour and other tourist attractions. We went on a bus tour one day.

David: Did you go to cafes too?

Gary: Yeah, for sure.

David: They're great over there, aren't they? **OK, so you were talking about a bus tour.**

Josie: So, we need to have this report done by Friday morning.

Mel: OK, no problem.

Josie: I can't wait until Friday. Friday night I am going out with my friends.

Mel: That's fun. **So...the report...**

Josie: Yes, it should be edited and revised by Friday morning.

Guy

The word **guy** basically follows the same rules as **dude**. If you are talking about a **guy** or **guys**, then it is always about a male. **Guy** is not used to talk to someone the way that you can use **dude**. **Guys** in the plural form, especially *you guys*, can be used to talk to males and females or even all females. Here are some examples.



Dorothy: I met this **guy** at the gym last week. (a male)

Fiona: Last night, there were some **guys** in my class that were making a lot of noise and my professor yelled at them. (males)

Mitch: Hey **guys**, what are you doing over there? (males and/or females)

Bill: What do you want to do this weekend?

David: I don't know. It depends what **you guys** are doing this weekend. (males and/or females)

Dude – examples with tone

The first example that Harp gives with **dude** has the meaning of questioning Maura in a negative way. The negative tone shows the meaning of **dude** in this case. Harp uses the same kind of intonation in her voice in the example about Maura's new shirt.

In the second example, Harp says **dude** with a positive tone, which means she is excited or happy about something. Maura uses the same kind of intonation in her voice in the examples about Harp's free concert tickets.

In context, the intonation of **dude** would be much easier to understand!

**Quiz** (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)**1. When should you NOT use dude?**

- a) at a party
- b) at work
- c) with your friends
- d) to talk to a female

**2. What culture is dude connected to?**

- a) professional culture
- b) sailing culture
- c) surfer culture
- d) walking culture

**3. Wally: What kind of movies does your sister like?**

**Anne:** Oh, she usually likes \_\_\_\_\_ movies.

**Please fill in the blank.**

- a) mainstream
- b) upstream
- c) main
- d) mainly

**4. What is the name of the popular American television show where you can hear 'dude' being used?**

- a) Dude, Where's My Car?
- b) Friends
- c) Mainstream
- d) Gnarly

5. What suffix (ending) can be added to some words to make them mean feminine or small?

- a) -ette
- b) -ene
- c) -or
- d) -er

6. What is another slang term besides 'dude' that can also be used to refer to females?

- a) men
- b) boys
- c) guys
- d) males

7. If you remove the word dude from the following sentence does it change the meaning?

What are you doing tonight, dude?

- a) yes
- b) no

**Answers:** 1.b 2.c 3.a 4.b 5.a 6.c 7. b