
THE CrossFit JOURNAL

Lingua Fran-ca

Mike Warkentin collects a list of terms that will help you communicate in boxes all over the world.



Uncommon Sense

By Mike Warkentin Managing Editor

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All Photos: Mike Warkentin/CrossFit Journal

CrossFit communication takes many forms.

Throughout history, people of different mother tongues have communicated via lingua francas, or “bridge languages” that developed to allow commerce and trade.

In the Renaissance Era, Lingua Franca was used for trade and diplomacy in the Mediterranean. In the fitness renaissance we are currently experiencing, we’ve developed terms that can be understood whether you’re doing CrossFit in Paris, France, or Paris, Texas.

I am more correctly librarian than originator of these terms. Credit really goes to the people who invented the terms, as well as those athletes who created a glaring need for them.

A guy like that (n): A person at another affiliate whose odd but not uncommon behavior mirrors that of the weird guy at your gym.

"Why's dude taping his hands for a 5K run?"

"No idea. He always does that kind of stuff."

"We have a guy like that."

Anti-kip (n): An affliction in which pull-ups or ring dips actually require more strength when a mistimed kip is added to the movement.

"Whoa, back off for a sec. You've got anti-kip. You might as well just do them strict till we sort this out."

Backchannel (v): To contact members of another affiliate to find out a rival's unposted Open score.

"Fucker still hasn't posted his 13.4 score. I'm going to backchannel and dig it up."



Blackout king (n): A trainer who participates in a class and coaches the session immediately afterward, potentially resulting in a 10-minute period of complete incoherence.

"What's the warm-up?"

"Let's just row for a while till the blackout king starts making sense again."



Bleeder (n): An athlete who's almost guaranteed to tear his or her hands during a pull-up workout no matter how many precautions are taken.

"Why are you wearing rubber gloves?"

"It's Cindy and we've got a few bleeders in the class."

Chalk monster (n): An athlete who frequently has chalk on his or her face.

"Hey, chalk monster, I can still see some skin."

Clothespin/rubber wedge (v): To let a band slide off your foot and into your crotch during assisted pull-ups. Dropping off the bar turns a clothespin into a rubber wedge.

"Can someone help Justin? He's clothespinned himself. Oh wait. Now it's a rubber wedge. Get the camera."





Corner 30 (n): Stopping to rest as soon as you are around the corner and out of the coach's line of site.

"Your last lap time was terrible. Did you take a corner 30?"

"Totally."

Fake (n): During a hard met-con, aggressively gripping a barbell with no intention of picking it up for another 20 seconds or until after an unnecessary trip to the chalk bucket.

"I thought you were going to pick it up and finish under 4 minutes."

"Yeah, I hit you with a fake there."

Foreign loot (n): The gear you got at the CrossFit Games that no one else has at home.

"You have the neon-yellow gymnastics grips with camo trim? OMG!"

"Yep. It's foreign loot. I almost had to sneak it across the border."

Gameboy (n): Someone who spends more time analyzing previous times on the whiteboard than warming up.

"We'll start the WOD whenever John is done playing gameboy at the whiteboard."

Gandalf (n): An older member who is far more powerful than he or she seems.

"I thought I had that one, and then fucking Gandalf comes out of nowhere with 30 unbroken snatches."

Gazelle (v): To attempt a workout with little to no warm-up.

"You need a few minutes?"

"Nah. I'll just get my shoes on and gazelle this thing."

Hydrate (v): To slowly and purposefully replace depleted electrolytes in the third minute of a five-minute met-con.

"I would have PR'd if I didn't stop to hydrate."

"You mean rest?"

"Uh, yeah."

Jackhammer (v): To take a med-ball to the face while performing wall-ball two-for-ones.

"How long was I out for?"

"About a minute. You jackhammered yourself but good. I can see lace marks on your face."

Juggernaut (n): An athlete who utterly obliterates the best score on the whiteboard by more than 2 minutes or more than 50 lb.

"The best clean of the day is 245?"

"Except for the juggernaut who came in and put up 315 without a warm-up."

Kimbo Slice (n): An athlete who specializes in particularly brutal workouts but suffers when things get technical.

"Who did the most burpees in 4 minutes?"

"Kimbo Slice over there did, like, 300."

"How'd he do on the max snatch afterward?"

"Just the bar."



Lunch-pail (v): To keep a bucket nearby after eating a large meal directly before a conditioning workout.

"What's with the bucket?"

"I'm lunch-pailing this one. I had four burgers 'cuz I thought it was squat day."

Make-up reps (n): The reps you tack on to the end of a WOD after you feel guilty for a few sketchy ones you shouldn't have counted during the workout.

"What was your Helen time?"

"It was 9:58, and then 5 extra pull-ups."

"So 10:15?"

"I ... guess so."

Plan B (n): Everything that happens after your strategy to "just go unbroken" fails miserably.

"Dude. It's time for Plan B. Just put the kettlebell down for a minute before you puke again."

PR stakeout (n): Friending someone on Facebook for the sole purpose of stalking his PRs before a competition.

"How do you know John Smith's best 3RM deadlift?"

"I'm on a PR stakeout on his Facebook page."

Quantum Leap programming (n): Programming secretly copied from another gym—but only after a period of time has elapsed so it's harder to notice.

"I feel like I've seen this workout before."

"Yeah, I think it's a Quantum Leap to CrossFit New England in September."

Rain Man (n): An athlete who displays impressive memory and math skills even deep in a conditioning workout.

"What the hell round are we in?"

"We're in Round 12, and if you maintain your current pace, you'll finish at 35:43, give or take 10 seconds."

"Thanks, Rain Man."

Schadenfreund (n): Someone who intentionally slows down in a tandem workout to make a partner suffer more.

"Dude, what took you so long on the pull-ups?"

"I was a schadenfreund to give Karl more time to enjoy his burpees."

Shin (v): To draw blood from the lower leg during barbell pulling movements.

"It looks like a slaughterhouse in here."

"Yeah. Six dudes shinned themselves during Grace."



Shinned but good.



The not-so-subtle shifty.

Shifty (n): Looking at someone's C2 monitor either surreptitiously or blatantly. Also a frequent behavior at urinals.

"Why did you slow down at the end?"

"I pulled a shifty and knew I was ahead."

Simple leopard (n): A breed of athletes who believe their mobility is the only aspect of fitness limiting their performance.

"Behold the simple leopard flossing his quads in hopes of breaking his squat PR by 150 lb. today."

Sniper (n): An Internet user who feels the need to point out form errors in any lift greater than his or her own PR.

"Who's this Craig Jones asshole talking about early arm bend on your 250 snatch?"

"I checked his Open profile. Sniper snatches 115."

Stalker (n): An athlete who stays two reps behind another with the sole goal of beating that athlete by one rep via a last-second sprint to the finish.

"He's a stalker. Try taking 3 minutes on your first round of Cindy and see what he does."

Taking it as it comes (v): To have no plan for a workout.

"What's your strategy?"

"I'm just taking it as it comes."

"Good luck with that."

Threat analysis (n): Only cheering for athletes who have no chance of beating you.

"Why don't you cheer for Ken?"

"Threat analysis reveals he might beat my time. Go, Carl!"

T-rex (v): To lose the false grip and stall in the muscle-up with the hands and rings directly in front of the shoulders, removing all possibility of completing the rep.

"Dude, you're T-rexxing it all to fuck. Come down and try again."

Uppercut (n): Taking a barbell to the chin during a thruster, press, push press or jerk.

"Why's he bleeding?"

"Took an uppercut on the push presses."

Upselling (v): Avoiding direct competition with a rival by altering the workout in some way.

"Who won the Elizabeth showdown?"

"No idea. Sean had the best time, but Chris upsold it and did squat cleans at 145."



The T-rex is not extinct. Not by a long shot.

Victor's rights (n): The right to cheer for someone in a workout, but only after you know he or she won't beat your time.

"Why is that girl suddenly cheering so loudly?"

"She's got victor's rights."

Video immunity (n): An elite level of CrossFit where you never have to post a video of your PR because other people do it for you.

"Did you see Froning's Fran all over Facebook?"

"It was everywhere. Dude has total video immunity."

Viking (n): An athlete who doesn't care which heat he or she goes in and will probably put up the best time regardless.

"You're going to volunteer to go first?"

"Yep. Come at me, bro."

"Good luck, Viking."



"Wait-wait-wait! I have to pee!"

Walrus (n): A male wearing compression tights without having the decency to put shorts overtop.

"Where's your deadlift bar?"

"Behind the walrus."

"Whoa. That's rough."

Warm-up warrior: An athlete who considers it essential to "win" the warm-up.

"Warm-up warrior just set a PR in the 600-meter warm-up jog. He's vomiting outside."

Water works (n): A group of athletes most likely to need a pee break directly before the WOD.

"Are we really starting in a minute?"

"No. I just said that for the water works. You've actually got 3 minutes."



About the Author

Mike Warkentin is the managing editor of the CrossFit Journal and the founder of CrossFit 204.