

<https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/what-is-a-meme>

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What is a meme – and how do I use them?

Get to know all about the world of memes – from famous examples to where the word comes from. Learn how to make a meme that’s funny and relatable for your social channels.



Why is it called a meme?

The term meme comes from the Greek word *mimema*, meaning “imitated”. While some might think it’s pronounced *me-me*, it is actually pronounced *meem*.

What does meme mean?

Memes have become part of our everyday lives in the past few years. Whether they come in the form of a funny image your friend has shared or a relatable video posted by your favorite brand, memes are everywhere.

But while we might be used to hearing the word, it can be hard to pinpoint what the definition of a meme actually is.

In short, a meme (pronounced *meem*) is a piece of content – usually an image, video or text – that is typically humorous or sarcastic in nature.

Popular memes spread rapidly online, with different variations circulating, trending and being recreated.

Ahistory of memes.

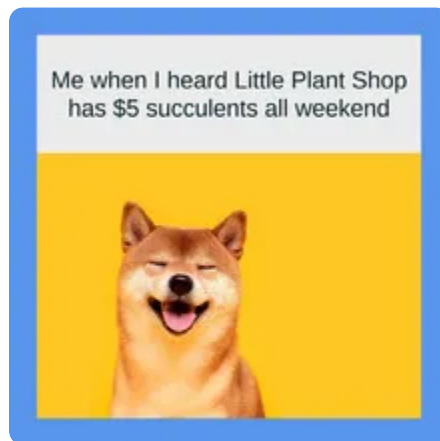
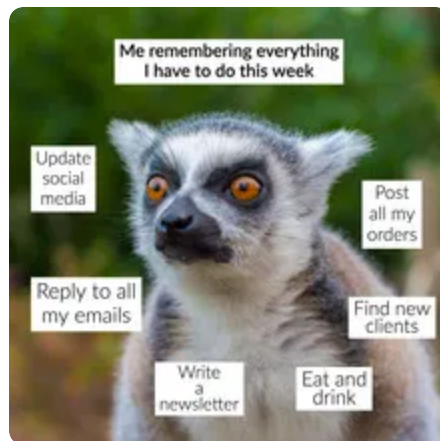
Surprisingly, memes didn't start with the internet. In fact, the term "meme" was first introduced in 1976 in Richard Dawkins' work *The Selfish Gene*. While it didn't mean the exact same thing as it does now, it was close, with Dawkins' conception of a meme being "a unit of cultural transmission".

Memes eventually made their way to the internet in 1993 in an issue of *Wired*, where a meme was described as an "infectious idea... much as viruses leap from body to body." But they didn't really take off to become the phenomenon they are today until around 2012.

2012 is when the world was greeted by Grumpy Cat, a feline from Arizona whose real name was Tardar Sauce. An iconic meme example, her scowl became an internet sensation. Pictures of Grumpy Cat were usually accompanied with sarcastic, unimpressed text – perfectly matching her signature expression.

Success Kid, however, was an earlier meme, popping up in 2007. It shows a child on a beach, holding up his fist with a proud, almost smug, expression on his face. It's known as success kid as the wording on the meme is usually related to conquering something, such as: "when you wear a white shirt and don't drop food down it!"

Take a look at these classic meme templates.



Me: I hate gossip

Also me:



Image memes.

The most famous **modern memes** were born with an image paired with a witty caption.