

**CITY OF GHOSTS GLOSSARY – CAMBODIAN
ENGLISH VOCABULARY FOR THE PEARL OF ASIA**

***SARCASTIC AND HUMOROUS
TOURIST SURVIVAL GUIDE***

After a decade in Cambodia, an amazing compilation of knowledge from the streets of Phnom Penh and rice paddies of the provinces. If you are a first time visitor to the Kingdom of Wonder, you will hit the ground running with important knowledge about modern post Pol Pot life in Kampuchea. If you are an ex-pat that has survived there, you will fall off your bar stool in laughter on how accurately this explains WTF is really going on in this third world country. In the sarcastic spirit of Ambrose Byrce's "The Devil's Dictionary", understand how English is used and the reality of life in Cambodia. Sarcasm is fun for the whole family. For entertainment use only.

A

accident

- Always the barang's fault as the prevailing wisdom is; if you had not come to Cambodia, this would have never happened. Khmer logic also dictates that if a barang has enough money, they can make it "not their fault".

affection

- Public taboo that baffles onlookers and inspires insulting vulgar jeers.

air filter

- Vehicle engine part that lasts forever. Cleaned by placing at the end of an exhaust pipe while the throttle is held wide open dislodging the dust and embedding carbon instead.

AK-47

- Vintage item on display in the hands of security forces in front of a jewelry shop.

alcoholic

- 1. A person who lives by the motto, "Drink not drunk- drink for what?" which is proudly the unofficial national motto during the holidays.
2. Possibly anyone foreigner who has obtained an E-visa upon entering Cambodia.

all friend

- everybody

ally

- Phonetic spelling of the lazy way Khmers pronounce "only".

aluminum ladder

- Preferred type of ladder when working on or in the proximity of high voltage electrical utility wires. Due to its light weight and easy to carry on a motorbike.

American

- A person labeled from the “USSA”, so as not be confused as being from the USSR.

angle grinder

- The official electrical songbird of Phnom Penh. Heard singing a minimum seven days a week, twelve hours per day.

angry

- Khmers like to use this term for describing a male erection. In Khmer: "kung" means angry, or is it they are saying erection in their language, "laeng rung robsa ling". Just easier to say "kung" and get busy with it.

answer

- Undefined as the standard response to any question is “Up to you!”

apology

- A once in a life time sms text message you get while traveling to Pochentong airport when the sender knows you may never return.

arson

- Easy solution for a jealous neighboring business or anyone needing to clear land from squatters.

ass crack

- Crevice like area exposed by women when bending down or over while weary pants that are too tight and sexy. Khmer males have a tendency when intoxicated to deposit lit cigarettes in this area. Khmer women have a tendency to cover this area when bending down out of habit and for good reason.

ATM card

- Get out of jail but not for free card for foreigners.

ATM machine

- Late night meeting place for drunkards, johns, and thieves.

ATM pin

- Four digits that separate life from the four horsemen of the apocalypse.

attitude

- The cohesive spirit of society which is chiseled into the mind of each Cambodian. Expressed by the ancient Khmer battle cry, "I don't care!"

aw stray lee

- Australia

ax

- Final dispute mechanism in alcohol fueled arguments between friends and family in a village.

B

baan

- Khmer word for "can" or "able". A better response to hear than "baht" (yes).

baby Anchor / baby Angkor

- A compliment on a male's apparent beer drinking capacity (beer belly) . Anchor & Angkor are Cambodian beverages.

baby powder

- A substance others use to powder your face, without your permission, as a form of community affection during a drunken village dance routine during Khmer New year holiday. The medicated variety is often used causing a sensational burning in the eyes.

back slang

- Inverting syllables to be cool and confusing, a tradition of youth everywhere. "Sok sopbai" (How are you doing?) is very often spoken "sai sobok".

backpacker

- A walking and talking encyclopedia on a budget and possibly other things. Common trait

includes inability to tell the difference between cocaine and heroin when making a purchase when drunk.

bad

- Adjective which Khmer bar girls use to describe themselves to customers which oddly is heard as the word good.

bah

- Khmer pronunciation of the word "bar". When your parents in the countryside ask you where you work, the word is pronounced "restaurant" or "university".

baht

- Somewhat of an equivalent to the word "yes". Basically it means "I heard you". Spoken twice, "I heard you and maybe understand". Said three times quickly means "We'll figure it out, I need your money."

balloon

- Festive decorative item to brighten a birthday party or other celebration which is often filled with hydrogen or cooking gas instead of helium to save money. Drunk people love to pop balloons with lit cigarettes. Can you say "emergency room" in Khmer?

barang

- You are definitely a barang (foreigner) if your reading this. Originally used to describe the French, now used to describe all foreigners. Being a barang associates you with being rich in a Cambodian's eyes.

barbed wire

- A "Do Not Enter" sign for illiterate people. Phnom Penh is the most "Do Not Enter" city in all of Asia.

barter

- The debate over the amount of money that needs to be removed from one's wallet. One side directly influenced by the level of alcohol consumption. The other by the creative oration of a pitiful and sad story.

baton

- Signaling tool in the hand of the traffic police to alert oncoming motorbike operators it is meal time and anyone without a helmet will be buying.

beauty

- A Khmer female's goal in life with the sole purpose of competing for dominant attention from all the other females. Usually found in salons which are only outnumbered on by Internet cafes (2007). As of 2016, coffee shops outnumbered beauty salons.

beer

- 1. The catalyst beverage for both destroying Khmer families and creating solidarity in the expat community. The only commodity in the Cambodian economy in which deflation is possible (once it is past its expiration date). Government promotes consuming more as the tax revenue is used to support education.
2. A substance liable to produce pregnancy in either females (via inebriation) or fat stomach in males (see *baby Anchor*, *baby Angkor*)

behavior

- The path of least resistance.

believe

- A lie one Khmer tells another Khmer which is indefensible by a foreigner. "Why did you stop working?" "*Believe me my manager bad!*" Typically said after one is fired for a serious offense.

berry goot

- Khmer pronunciation of “very good”.

bird flu

- Final dividend paid after investing two hundred US dollars (US\$200) in a duck farm only to have the disease affect the flock.

bitchsomlanh

- A girlfriend who is always complaining about their friends behind their back.

black & white

- Traditional colors for a funeral tent which is conveniently located to inconvenience traffic for three days.

blackout

- Word always used at the end of the sentence "I must have had a blackout." when trying to explain why your face is bloody and mobile telephone missing.

blade

- The end of a sharp object opposite the handle which is always pointed towards you when a Khmer gives it to you.

blindsided

- The exact moment a mobile telephone or camera is stolen after one is struck in the side of head. Often used by Khmer girls as an excuse why their telephone is missing, when in reality it is at the local pawn shop or was lost in a card game.

bong

- Term to address someone in your age group. Typical usage, "Thanks bong!"

boom

- 1. The sound a gun makes, usually near street corners, causing everyone within audible range to duck their heads down.
2. The sound an engine makes when backfiring, usually near street corners, causing

everyone within audible range to duck their heads down. Note: If said twice in a bar, “boom boom” bargaining will commence.

boom boom hai

- “I had sex already”. Deterrent phrase used to counter lady boy advances on the streets of Siem Reap. Clearly states one has recently completed a sexual act, whether true or not, and results in a lady boy howling and scampering away similar to a housewife seeing a mouse.

border

- Similar to an opinion, everyone has a different viewpoint on the exact location between countries. Border markers magically move along the Khmer-Viet demarcation line much to Cambodia’s disadvantage.

border run

- Longstanding tradition of quickly traveling to the border to renew a visa. Here one will be subjected to mystical fines by the border officials. This procedure, full of hassles, can easily be avoided by obtaining the correct visa when entering the country in the first place.

boredom

- The natural daytime state of mind disrupted only by meals, snacks, and naps. Prerequisite for derogatory gossip.

bottle rocket

- A small “hand-held” rocket used in village celebrations, carelessly lit when drunk.

brandy brain

- Someone drunk enough to wreck a very expensive vehicle.

bribe

- Customary transaction in which the result is a civil servant doing their work to a degree enough to accomplish the legal or illegal task.

brick

- Newtonian item tossed from construction sights used in an attempt to assault foreigners.

bro and sis

- Khmer slang on social media for a boy and girl who have sex but are not in a committed relationships. Equivalent to the English term "friends with benefits".

bro

- A good male friend whom you have gotten drunk with.

brown

- Khmers don't have a word for this color but instead use black. The browner your skin, the blacker you are.

brownout

- Time period without electricity each afternoon on a hot day just preceding Happy Hour.

bubble

- Economic version of Russian roulette in the real estate market for the Khmer middle class.

buddhist

- An eternal member of a recycling club, rarely found practicing what they preach.

buid-in

- When an option is inside a device, "built in".

bull shit

- 85% of what you hear spoken. Khmer word is "Ai ko" or sometimes spelled "Eih ko." No matter how you say it, bull shit is universal.

bus

- A large vehicle designed to be operated by an individual who's goal in life is to honk an air

horn and terrify everyone within audible range.
Job prerequisite requires failing a drug test.

bus timings

- Refers to the "bus schedule" but the timing will definitely be incorrect.

bust

- A padded area in the Khmer female anatomy.

busy

- Standard answer with ancient mystical powers which is an excuse for not performing the simplest of duties, attending an event, or going to work.

butcher knife

- First object one should hide when your live-in girlfriend is drunk and "upsad" with you.



Calamette Hospital

- Phnom Penh's version of "Hotel California". You can check out, but you can never leave. It seems everyone has to go back again and again as they never seem to get it right the first time.

Cambodian

- 1. A member of an complex ancient caste system which has devolved into two categories- "have" and "have not". The former considered a birth right and the latter, a barrier to basic human rights.
2. "Raison d'être" for most NGOs to justify their existence and posh lifestyles.

Camry (Japanese automobile)

- The evolutionary step in transportation one step level above a "tuk tuk".

cancel

- A situation occurring right before an event that one was looking forward to. Typically without any notice as your money and the person who took it have long departed.

Candy Crush (android game)

- If Karl Marx were alive today, he would restate his famous quote to: "Candy Crush is the opium of the people"."

cannot

- Cambodian response when declining a financial offer not meeting their unreal expectations. One of the few times you will hear an answer.

capacity

- Always one more. Sure!

cat

- An animal one step below a rat on the urban food chain. The Cambodian cat is genetically unique sporting a dominant cropped crooked tail and is deathly afraid of rats.

cattle

- Unsupervised source of protein found on and along National roads especially at night.

cctv camera

- Unique device which accurately identifies "barang" and at the same time filters out a Cambodian's identity. Filter is voice activated by saying, "That's not me!"

check dano

- A popular brand of Tennessee Whiskey often served with "koh kaah"- Jack Daniels. You would have never guessed it!

cheer out

- Last thing one hears after ringing the bell hanging over the bar. FYI, ring the bell and buy the entire staff of a bar a drink. They will all toast to your health and your foolish spending

of money at once in an ear piercing choral cheer. This lets neighboring competition know that they are doing well.

chicken

- Mostly commonly misused English word when Khmers really mean to say “kitchen”. You'll soon start refering to the kitchen as the chicken.

child

- Easiest form of investment for a secure financial retirement fostered by the pleasure made during initial deposits.

childhood

- 1. The stage after infancy whereas walking commences and adult supervision ceases.
2.The developmental stage in which one learns all the social skills necessary to be a happy Khmer adult by observation and imitation-kicking, slapping, pinching,tantrums, abusive vocabulary, and gambling.

childish

- Acceptable and traditional behavior used to describe Khmer response to not obtaining items of priority.

Chinese

- A migrating flock of bad behaving tourists which are replacing the current species of drunk Europeans.

chinstrap

- The unused part of a motorcycle helmet.

chopping

- A pounding sound heard twice daily of which signals 6AM and 11AM in the urban Khmer house. Basically it is the cutting of wood or charcoal.

cigarettes

- Item not a household budget. The only time money from salary is withheld from the matriarch.

Cintri garbage truck

- First symbol one quickly learns in Khmer sign language. The placement of the hand over the nose and mouth indicates a smell from hell has arrived. Usually proceeded by a low frequency rumble coming from the garbage truck down the street.

citizenship

- The most expensive item on the menu, donate a couple hundred thousand dollars and its all yours.

cleaner

- A mysterious creature that comes and goes from your dwelling silently, stacking one's belongings in bewildering piles and leaving long black hairs in the bathroom to spark jealous rages from one's girlfriend.

coffee

- Khmer say "kah-fey". One may find the price varies from US\$0.25 to US\$4.25. Logical indicator of how long an individual has been in Cambodia. Price obtained is inversely proportional to the length of stay.

commitment

- A little white lie employed to involve you in someone's hidden problems via a romantic relationship. Individual making a commitment is confident you have a working ATM card and PIN.

condominium

- Foreign monument symbolizing economic disparity between the elite and the poverty stricken masses.

condom?

- Short interrogative statement used to start an even shorter relationship based on currency exchange.

congraukation

- Khmenglish verbal praise word one hears after completing your education and have a worthless degree in hand. They are attempting to say “congratulations”.

consequence

- An unthinkable thought when a Khmer person makes a decision.

contract

- A document only as valuable as the status of the corrupt official which was bribed to view the signing and intimidate the opposing party to comply.

conversation

- A polite dialog in which a Khmer estimates your vulnerability.

coward

- An adult male faced with a decision involving a confrontation with a foreigner. Unless of course a dozen of his friends are nearby.

crap

- One will be offered this delicious seafood by the seashore. Khmers "b" and "p" sound is hard to distinguish to the Western ear. They are trying to say “crab”.

crash helmet

- A talisman against traffic accidents in case the tattoos on the driver's back don't work for protection.

customer

- Anyone who engages in a conversation with a tuk tuk driver, motodriver, or taxi girl, unknowingly responding to inquiries truthfully which results in loss of money for overpriced

services. Customers are well respected in Cambodia.

customer name

- The nick name for a regular patron who tips and always orders the same drink, i.e. “Mr Red Wine”. Often used as a response when asking the whereabouts of female bar staff when they don't come to work because they claim their mother is ill in the province. For example, “Where is the bartender?”, “I think she go to Sihanouk Ville with “Jack and Soda.”

CV (curriculum vitae)

- Standard national form one fills out with few details when applying for a job. It seems every Khmer looking for a job has the same hobbies listed: Listen to news and music, Like sport , Searching in the Internet.

D

dance floor

- A place where the anti-rhythmic style of dancing of middle aged white men is challenged by the bewildered two-step of skinny Cambodian ladies.

dancing

- A social event best described as “Monkey see, monkey do.”

death

- Prerequisite for a funeral celebration.

deathpat

- An older male expat, often on a pension, who has decided Cambodia is the place to live out his last days.

decal

- The perfect sized sticker with your favorite logo which fits over your motorbike's brake light.

decision

- Thought process which results in a mistake.

decree

- Abnormal political reaction that occurs after an official receives an avalanche of social media messages. Usually enforced for 24 hours then forgotten.

defective

- Buyer beware of great prices- Cambodia is a dumping ground for defective products.

dial 117

- Telephone number you dialed thinking it was for the police in an emergency and ends up being a someone speaking perfect English saying, "How much you want to pay?"

dial 666

- This is the real dialing code for firefighters in Cambodia for an emergency. The middle number on the dialing pad was chosen as it will be easy to push holding one hand. That is because your otherhand will be full of cash to pay them to put out the fire when they arrive. Old Khmer proverb, "You better be home when your house is on fire to pay the them to put it out".

diploma

- Certificate awarded after not missing a payment during one's education.

Dis My Life

- Popular tattoo on many a Khmer girl's shoulder, beautifully written in a cursive font. Advertises low self esteem, the bearer's husband abandoned her, she has children, she works in a bar, drinks too much alcohol, and/or possibly indulges in meta-amphetamine binges. Buyer beware.

disappear

- A true news article viewed on the Internet which contains information about a rich individual or groups misconduct or wrongdoing. If the party in the wrong compensates the victim, the article is removed from all national media. Anyone who claims to have seen the information has now been told their electronic devices now have a technical issue as the article never existed.

discipline

- A thin branch applied to a child by an enraged parent or related adult. Typically used to release tensions in an adult without teaching any moral lesson to a child other than it is OK to hit a child for the smallest infraction to vent personal anxiety.

discount

- Pavlovian oral response once the vendor's stated price rings an alarm bell in your head.

distortion

- A cultural norm at a social event which signifies that the audio of recorded or live entertainment is of optimal quality as the volume overdrives the speakers.

doctot

- When one is unsure where to go when your ill, try the "doctot's" office.

dog

- Man's best friend and defender of the home. Yet at the same time a soon to be thieving neighbor's midnight snack. Often served with inexpensive palm wine while on a pic nic.

door

- The missing item on a village home which ironically has bars on all the windows.

doorway

- Architectural passage way that attempts to awaken first time tall visitors of Dutch and Nordic descent to the dangers of indoor navigation in older Cambodian dwellings.

double

- The price you pay before learning the basics of the Khmer language.

drama

- Khmer female's concept of a happy relationship filled with loud outbursts of communication and self-pity combined binge drinking after she gets dumped.

dramatized

- Attitude towards relationships which is rooted in overexposure to Khmer music videos and bad advice whispered in one's ear from jealous friends.

drink drunk

- Had a bad day at work? Broken heart? The answer is go out and get "drink drunk" to relieve the pain. Socially acceptable solution in Cambodia.

drinking straw

- Thin, hollow waxed-paper cylinder used by Khmer females to extract the contents of a beer can.

drunk

- Mental condition signifying a successful happy hour at the end of the work day for an ex-pat and used later that night as an excuse on why one entered a disco at 2AM.

dry season

- Weather pattern in a two season climate. Just another good excuse not to work because it is too hot.

duck egg

- The true WTF snack, "pong tia" or "balut" as called by the Cambodians. We have yet to see a Westerners eat a duck embryo in the shell which has been slow roasted over hot coals.

dust

- Cambodia's version of snowfall.



earth ground

- The most important connection on a high voltage electrical system that you will not find in your home or workplace and have to install yourself. Good luck.

education

- Now that you have finished learning English it is time to be lazy about speaking it correctly.

effort

- Khmer version of an attempt at obtaining a foreigner's assistance so as to avoid any real effort at improving his or her lot on their own.

eighty five percent (85%)

- Percentage of US dollars being used in cash transactions in the Kingdom (2015). Proudly displays the high level of corruption and money laundering.

Ekinok

- Equinox

elections

- Cambodian magic act performed every few years used to hypnotize donor nations and NGOs.

emergency numbers

- A truly "WTF" complicated system for contacting and paying cash up front for public services. Here's what one needs to know when you have trouble and need to dial a telephone number for help:

Toul Sleng Fire Department 023 723 555 / 012 786 693, Call from Stationary Telephone (FireFighter) 666 / 118, Call from Stationary Telephone (Police)117, S.O.S Police012 999 999, Traffic Police012 896 628, Tourist Police097 778 0002, Ambulance (S.A.M.U) 119, Call from Stationary Telephone (Hospital)023 723 840, Calmette Ambulance (S.A.M.U) 023 426 948 / 023 724 891 / 012 912 947 / 016 585 108 / 092 858 434, Russian Hospital Ambulance (S.A.M.U)023 217764, Kossamak Hospital Ambulance (S.A.M.U) 016 909774, Blood Transfusion Center 023 215 949, Water Supply 023 724 046, Electricity (EDC)023 723 871

empty

- The condition of one's pantry and refrigerator immediately after relatives visit from the countryside. Personal property is not a comprehensible concept to Khmer villagers.

English speaking

- The ability to use the English language without communicating anything.

eternity

- The span of time from early morning while one waits for a bus to the provinces. Involves a rising tropical sun and no breeze, often experienced with a hang over.

exam

- Family event, wherein students and parents use sms messages on their telephones to ensure correct answers and a passing grade on a test.

excuse

- Widely used alternative and preferred solution to a problem. Predominantly used in relationships and the workplace.

expatriation

- Classic use of taking a noun and turning it into an adjective because one was too lazy to learn proper use of prepositions in English class.

eyelashes

- Fake extensions used by females to hypnotize you into submission. When left randomly in your home, this signals to other females as marked territory.

F

face

- The losing of which is a social death sentence and the cause for revenge not in line with the Hammurabi Code.

Face Book

- Temporary Nirvana using a finger stroke. Currently more popular than watching television.

family

- The social-economic equivalent to an individual in the Western world. The family is all encompassing with full authority over all its members. One who marries a Khmer is involuntarily inducted into a Khmer family and gains the obligation of its debt plus unbelievable future problems.

fault

- Something you instantly own as a foreigner when involved in an accident. Don't be "sir pry".

fingerprint

- Cambodian version of a valid signature.

flip flops

- Standard Cambodian safety footwear for dangerous work sites. The equivalent of a steel-toed boot in the Western World. Also indicates your financial status and prevents entering an establishment which has air-conditioning.

foot

- Part of the anatomy that should never touch the tarmac when operating a two wheeled vehicle. A seemingly life or death matter when operating a motorcycle is to keep moving at all costs to safety or sanity.

fork

- Eating utensil for the left hand only.

Fort USA

- Affectionate nickname for the U.S.A. consular building.

fre fri fre fri

- Fresh fried French fries. Order some and ask the staff to repeat back the order!

free Wifi

- Internet access that your free to try and get it to work.

French

- The ability to talk about a project, start it, and not complete it in a reasonable amount of time.

fresh milk

- To one's surprise this is the Khmenglish term for milk in a carton that has been irradiated and doesn't need refrigeration.

fri

- Friend, often used on Face Book in the phrase, "Hello fri".

fruit

- Any edible item containing seeds eaten regardless of ripeness. Usually made palatable

by coating with salt and chili powder. A better gift than flowers to a Khmer girl.

furniture

- New items your Khmer girlfriend brings home a few hours after you gave her money to pay her school tuition. "*Sir pry!*"

fwish

- Accepted Cambodian pronunciation of the word "fish". Occasionally spelled "fisch" when served with chips.

G

gambling

- 1. A mental disorder equally distributed between members of both sexes and all age groups. Also considered a birth right. 2. Popular reason for Khmer woman to ask for money from their ex-pat boyfriends to cover losses. Accompanied by a lie of needing money to assist an ill relative in a far away village. 3. Preferred method of raising cash to pay off a debt to a Vietnamese loan shark.

gangster

- 1. The dream of every young Cambodian male which influences his behavior, dress, and lifestyle. 2. As decreed by the prime minister; anyone that opposes the ruling political party. 3. Any member of the ruling political party.

ganja

- Khmer word for marijuana. Used as an ingredient for "Happy Pizza". The waitstaff will ask you when you order, "How happy do you want to be?"

garbage

- Homeless person's soup kitchen, mercantile store, and source of income.

garden

- A fertile and sun soaked region of an impoverished family's property that is barren and used only to store trash.

general

- A politically connected individual with a nice uniform who has no military experience. Quantity of Generals are estimated at a ratio of one general per nineteen regular soldiers.

germ

- Equivalent entity to modern Western thinking on ghosts. If you can't see it, you can't say it exists.

ghost

- The only absolutely certain thing in Cambodia as everyone believes in them.

giant catfish

- Popular theme for Mekong River documentary films equivalent to a children's game.

glue

- A sticky and sniff-able substance that bonds the homeless society together. Typically shared in clear plastic bags.

go slow slow

- Take things easy, step by step, the Khmer language equivalent is "moi moi".

gold

- The object of a Khmer female's true affection.

Golden Street

- Take a walk down Street 278 near Wat Langka and one will notice every other business has the name "Golden". Sadly, these small businesses, once a staple for the local economy, are being pushed out by large East Asian construction projects. The new name should be "Pyrite Alley".

Golden Tower 42

- Phnom Penh's iconic symbol for bad urban planning and mismanaged Foreign Direct Investment.

good 9 fri

- Khmer text slang for "good night friends".

good dream

- To sleep well. You often be asked if you had a "good dream" last night.

got lock in

- That joyful moment when a Khmer girl is engaged to be married. One has to wonder the true meaning of "got lock in", ps just an expression or confined at home for life as as a wife.

grades

- Scale used separating level of academic achievement by 15% instead of the standard 10%. A=85-100%, B=70-84%, C=55-69%,D=40-54%, F=49% or less.

granulation

- Verbal praise for a life changing event such as a graduation, engagement, wedding, or job promotion. You guessed it- "congratulations".

graphic decal

- Most popular way to display your sense of individualism and style.

group

- Several adult males gathered in hopes of overcoming their individual cowardice.

grunt

- When listening to a Khmer speak it is essential to make various tonal grunts to acknowledge agreement or disagreement with what one is hearing. Don't worry, one will catch on to this technique quickly.

guest house

- Any building with a room for rent for legal or illegal activities.

guide book

- Public display of this item indicates not only are you a tourist but will only be in Phnom Penh two or three days maximum.

guilty

- Inability to pay off of a member of the judiciary system by not having the highest bid of innocence.

H

hallowed

- Halloween

hangover

- A valid reason to drink in the morning.

happy

- The natural state of being in Cambodia, just ignore everything and remain in this condition if you can.

happy ending

- The promise of satisfaction in a bargaining process used as a sales pitch for a massage.

Happy Merry Christmas

- Holiday greeting in which Khmers are not aware happy and merry have the same meaning.

Happy New Year

- A celebration so enjoyed by Cambodians that they celebrate it three times a year, Barang, Chinese, and Khmer.

happy pizza

- Once in a life time experience your friends back home won't believe. Just how happy/high do you want to be?

hard hat

- A safety item used on construction site which is easily duplicated by Khmers using a motorcycle helmet.

Headache

- Number one function for a Khmer female's brain used as an excuse for any and everything. Instantly arrives upon when asked to answer a simple question involving a choice. Can be cured by uttering the response, "Up to you", to any question to save one from the pain of thought.

Hello Kitty

- The Asian version of "Kilroy was here" but consumerism on a base model instead of a graffiti on a wall.

helmet

- An unstrapped safety device adorning the head or handlebar signaling the nation's compliance to traffic law.

hierarchy

- The level of priority given to people in Khmer society; 1. Family 2. Livestock 3. Friends 4. Family dog 5. Face Book 6. Barang boyfriend.

hip hop

- Job creation movement in the music industry spurred on by the deportation of convicted criminals without US citizenship when Cambodia and the USA signed an extradition treaty.

HIV (VIH)

- 1. Disease which is prevalent in women working at a bars and brothels who do not have money pay for a ride home after work and have unprotected sex with a tuk-tuk or motorbike drivers in exchange for a ride home.
2. Easy and embarassing way to describe why someone is skinny.

holi sit

- holy shit

holiday

- The only category in which Cambodia leads in abundance in the international community.

homeless

- A criminal condition that results in being rounded up by the police and imprisoned.

horny water

- semen

hosteseess

- Interesting spelling of the "hostesses"- basically bar girls that will flirt for drinks & tips. At times aggressively.

hot

- 1. A reason not to work that results in a dream like condition while in front of a fan.
2. The time period from midnight until a total of 24 hours later.

Humvee

- Late night murder weapon used by the drunk rich elite.

hungry

- Physical condition following continuous losing rounds of gambling.

husband

- One of three men in a relationship with a Khmer woman. The "husband" is usually a foreigner that comes and goes from Cambodia and is pressured to financially support the Khmer woman's family problems. The other two men are an "barang ex-husband" that visits occasionally and some Khmer guy that comes around when he needs money.

**I boring**

- Wherein the lady is not suggesting that sitting next to her is going to be a profoundly uninteresting experience, but rather that she is bored.

I don't care

- Emotionally charged phrase used when the phrase, "I love you" failed in convincing you.

I go with you

- Last desperate words uttered by a Khmer bar girl after an intense worthless argument when she hears a barang say, "I finish with you!"

I love you

- Phrase signally that, yes, I am ready to accept your money and continue draining it out of you until it is all gone.

I scary

- Wherein the lady is not claiming to be frightening, or comparing herself to "Scary Spice", but rather she is scared, say of ghosts or an ex-boyfriend.

ice

- Khmenglish pronunciation same as the English word "eye".
- 1. A method of diluting beer to make it last longer bypassing the need for expensive refrigeration.
- 2. Universal street slang for a thief or prostitute's favorite smoke-able snack.
-

ice cream

- Reference to eating this in Siem Reap is slang for performing oral sex. Can be used as a joke to embarrass someone unaware of this colloquialism.

illegal

- Any action which requires a unilateral decision made by an authoritative figure resulting in a monetary transaction.

illiterate

- An economic and mental state which seems to make people happy. Usually sustained by endless hours of watching rice grow.

impolite

- Traditional Khmer behavior when operating a vehicle in traffic.

incense

- Smoldering request for good luck, always using three sticks.

incentive

- Deceptive and minimal activity employed to obtain ownership of someone's property. The instigator often motivated by debts.

individual

- A foreign concept wherein one is entitled to rights and responsibilities. First imported by the French and never successfully implemented. In Khmer society, only found occupying wooden boxes used as center piece at funeral ceremonies wherein the group, the most important functioning unit in society, shares food in his or her honor before burning the deceased individual and grieving due to the volume of the repetitive music.

infrastructure

- The construction of which is a benchmark of nation representing a government's commitment to improving its economy for the benefit of its citizens. Note: this is an area where Cambodia is in last place in the international community.

Inglish

- Popular and universally accepted way of spelling "English". Often used to notify and greet tourists on a plaque such as. "WELCOM TURIST WE SPIK INGLISH".

innocence

- The short interval between arriving in Cambodia until a few minutes after making your first purchase. The end is signaled by one's awareness of overpaying by not knowing the actual price or correct exchange rate.

Internet

- An electronic tool designed to assist an individual in creativity, communication, productivity, entertainment, and empowerment. *Note: There are no individuals in this society, hence no creativity, communication, productivity, entertainment, and empowerment.*

irresponsible

- Correct method for handling one's finances especially when going out drinking with friends.



jail

- Building used for detaining criminals without money which is occupied at at least double the rated capacity.

Japamany

- Khmer-English meaning maybe a country called Germany.

jay gar

- A chilled shot of a German liqueur, Jagermeister, which is drank in excessive amounts. Sometimes pronounced "yeah gar" when serving to foreigners.

justice

- An instantaneous outdoor event featuring group violence towards any individual accused

verbally of a crime. If someone yells, "jao!" (thief) at you run to the nearest police station.



Kampong Cham

- Most populous province and home of Cambodia's most exotic, beautiful, and conniving women. The ladies from there do not drink coffee due a congenital heart defect in that region's populace.

Kampot

- Luxurious refugee camp for European and Commonwealth pot smokers and alcoholics who are in self-exile from Phnom Penh.

kan fucky

- "Kentucky", the term is used before the words "fried chicken".

Karaoke

- National pastime performed in homes, bars, and KTVs which simulates literacy and stimulates alcoholic beverage sales.

KFC

- Three letters on a Kampot city tourist map for the novice traveler which creates excitement at the thought of fried American fast food - Kentucky Fried Chicken. In reality a longtime ex-pat Donkey Dave's joke packing the map icon to trick folks as it means, "Kampot Football Club".

KH

- International two letter designation for Cambodia.

Khmer love Khmer

- Cambodian version of sarcasm.

kitchen

- Food preparation area is usually nearest the place where Khmers defecate.

koah kshal

- In Khmer means "scraping the wind", but beware it is really that infamous "coin rubbing" technique, the favorite Cambodian medical cure. Tiger balm is abrasively rubbed into your skin with its metal jar lid, and yes, it hurts. It does work most of the time- try it next time you feel a cold coming on.

koh kaah

- The only correct way to pronounce Coca Cola when ordering so that the staff will understand. *You want "eye" (ice) with your "koh kaah" (Coca Cola)?*

krama

- Cambodian rust-proof version of a Swiss Army knife. From fashion accessory to tow strap- it is a very versatile tool!



la bell

- What you'll hear when the staff responds to your Johnny Walker whiskey order. "You want red or black "la bell" ? They really are trying pronounce the word "label".

lady

- Second most popular item for sale on the night streets of Cambodian cities. The first being a ride in a tuk-tuk or motorbike, the third being marijuana or amphetamines. "You want lady?" is heard on night time street corners.

land mine

- An object often found by farmers which is happily brought home. Since something valuable may be inside, the items are often whacked with a tool to open them. Common sense dictates that even if the item is damaged, the metal can be sold as scrap.

land speculation

- National pyramid scheme and source of much incentive.

launch

- Often seen written on a blackboard with the word "special" around noon time. Bingo! You guessed it- lunch.

laws

- The guiding principles of Khmer society which are interpreted by one's point of view and economic stature.

leak

- Common trait shared between a faucet and a roof.

lease

- A negotiated contract used to obtain a deposit by a landlord which they have no intention of returning.

leave now

- Best advice for a newcomer. If you stay don't complain- "TIC".

left hand

- Used to clean your ass and disrespectfully give items to foreigners.

leng pleng

- Khmer for "play music". Modern Cambodian music is a wonderful blend of traditional songs & instruments, Cuban rhythms, psychedelic rock n' roll and a bit of hip hop thrown in.

Lexus

- Second major purchase for rural families to elevate status. The first being a house and the third any form of utilities.

life

- Something which is of little value to Southeast Asians.

like

- Purchased in India and displayed on a Face Book page.

litter

- National expression of Cambodian solidarity and is a visual expression of their second favorite motto, "I don't care!"

little bit

- A sober Khmer girl's answer to, "Do you speak English?". When intoxicated one would wish she did not speak any language at all.

logging

- A profitable and illegal industry banned by and operated by government officials. Considered the elephant in the room.

lonely

- A very dangerous emotional state producing lack of appetite and loss of sleep. Easily cured by a massage.

lop

- Stupid person. For very stupid, say twice. You "lop lop!"

love

- The only concept money can purchase. Distributed monthly by fools who have convinced themselves they have found something true. Typical use: "How much does your barang boyfriend love you each month?"

loyalty

- A concept measured by the amount of money a Khmer estimates you have and how long you will be able to disperse it. Instantly lost when misplacing your ATM card or forgetting your PIN.

M

mah seen

- Easy, they mean "machine".

maintenance

- An annoying concept that requires a tool, money, and/or effort. Always done at the last minute in an unsafe environment.

mang

- Young people often type this on social media, means "man". i.e. "Wow cool mang!"

map

- Graphic representation of geographical features which the Khmers view as unintelligible hieroglyphics. Finding a driver who can read a map is the Western equivalent of a four leaf clover.

Mar Tini Bah

- An infamous bar/viper pit on the near south side of Phnom Penh. Pronounced- mah-tee-NEE. Rumored to translate to Chinese as "mother's house". Sadly closed as Phnom Penh modernized.

massage parlor

- Small business offering a variety of relaxing pleasures with optionally endings by highly unskilled workers.

massah

- Khmer pronunciation of the word "massage".

meat cleaver

- Cambodian can opener and saw combined. Doubles as an ombudsman. Often seen in Face Book videos being held by a person winning an argument.

medical & evacuation service

- An essential requirement for any ex-pat involved in a relationship with a Khmer woman or may have the inclination to operate a motorbike while drunk.

Merry Chrissmah

- An annual cultural virus sweeping Southeast Asia in the form of specialty stores selling snow-laden plastic trees and Santa Claus outfits.

microphone

- Probably the most dangerous item to your mental health in the hands of a Cambodian.

mil

- Khmer pronunciation of the word “milk” which is sometimes used in coffee by barangs but usually refers to a dowry, or “milk money”.

milk money

- The amount of money the parents of your Khmer fiancée claim to have spent raising their daughter, basically, decades of buying milk. Equivalent to the cost of a modest house in the provinces, yet oddly, one rarely sees single Cambodian girls drinking milk.

minimum wage

- Monthly salary which when raised is followed by an increase of monthly rent by a landlord.

mistake

- Repetitive endemic Khmer behavior.

Mister

- Politely used with your first name instead of your surname. Just another glitch in Khmenglish.

momentum

- Undesirable natural law negated by frequent Khmer holidays.

money

- The number one source of problems in a relationship between an ex-pat and Khmer. Demand usually outstripping supply at an unsustainable rate.

monk

- A orange clad member of the early riser's drum, bell and chant corp. Free meals included and shoes not required.

month

- Sum of money in the equation to determine and compare how much love a foreigner has for a Khmer girl. Basically her monthly stipend. "How much does he love you per month?"

moon

- Correct answer given by a Khmer when asked, "Which is closer- the next village or the moon?" Obviously the next village is out of visual range.

mortar round

- Recycled munition casings used for making deadly cocktails at the world famous Sharky bar. Drinking three in thirty minutes results in maximum inebriation and a free tee shirt from the bar. *Note: You will wake up in the morning with personal items missing.*

motivation

- A hidden agenda pervasive in Khmer society in which maximum profit is obtained using minimal effort.

motodup

- A member of a social club/street gang who's qualifying requirements are an exposed pot belly and a big mouth.

motorbike

- A vehicle utilized as both a family transport and status symbol. Additionally, a common prerequisite for a soon to be funeral.

motorcycle

- Upgrades transportation from a motorbike enabling the operator to attend his or her own funeral quicker.

MSG (monosodium glutamate)

- Popular spice used in Khmer cooking.

mud

- Second Cambodian weather season out of two that exist.

my friend you

- The mother of all Khmenglish words meaning "your friend". Typical usage when a bar girl wants to know the whereabouts of your friend and doesn't know his name.

Myanmar

- Country destination contemplated by ex-pats working for many years in Cambodia without a work permit.

N

nail polish

- Symbolizing the level of a bar girls popularity and high skill level at flirting with foreigners.

nas

- Pronounced "nah". Used with everything to mean "very". Can be used after Khmer or English adjectives. "Cute nas" or "saat nas" are typical usages.

Nation, Religion, King

- The only correctly spelled three word combination in English found in use.

natural resource

- Anything which can be mismanaged then exploited for profit.

neighbor

- Someone to simultaneously emulate and despise.

new chicken

- Basically, meat for the grinder, people from the farms who come to the big city to earn money for their families back in the provinces. The "new chicken" phase has a duration of six

months, and the resulting personality change is usually for the worst.

new wife

- When one comes from a broken home. It doesn't mean an official divorce and new bride for the runaway husband, he just left his wife for another woman and never to return.

Night of Barking Dogs

- The evening before an election when the ruling party goes around reminding people about the important things in life and who to vote for to keep those important things.

nipple

- Equivalent body part to the Western cheek which is frequently painfully pinched as a sign of affection.

no all kinds

- Text printed above a list of prohibited activities on warning signs. For example, "No all kinds of stealing and robbing activities".

No can!

- The verbal command to stop when you touch a Khmer female inappropriately.

no idea

- What a driver really means when saying- "Yeah, yeah, yeah." Basically he'll figure it out and you keep paying him until he does. Opposite of a lost sale in Western culture.

nob 70

- From a famous Thai song which Khmer people like, basically saying "darling". Often just typed "nob".

nose (nez, nariz)

- Something to pick at and clean while your having a conversation.

not drinking tonight

- Statement made before giving in to peer pressure and ordering only two or three alcoholic beverages in one evening.

not enough water

- Reference to a stupid person about their mental capabilities.

Nyum bai?

- Eat rice yet? Number one question among family and friends is to ask if you have eaten food. Go ahead use this phrase, it's very polite.

.O.

operating system

- Bootlegged computer software sold and installed at a price 90% lower than MSRP.

opposition party

- Members of which are considered piñayatas. Commonly beaten in public and recorded on video.

.P.

p

- When preceded by the period punctuation mark, ".p" the abbreviation for per month.

pajamas

- Casual and colorful urban street wear for Khmer women. Sold only in Asian sizes.

pak

- Khmenglish for "park". The stopping of a vehicle with one of the following criteria:
 1. At an intersection, typically on the corner to limit line of sight as to endanger other vehicles and pedestrians.
 2. In the middle of the road, usually for the privileged class.
 3. Area on sidewalk near a front door of a business to ensure difficulty for customers to

enter/exit. If one can meet any of these requirements, then sure, it is OK to “pak” there.

password

- Simple phrase for a business WiFi distributed by the staff to all motodups and tuk tuk drivers within range. Often the WiFi router administrative password is left unchanged leaving it open mischievous hacking.

password

- It's what you ask for when you want to logon to a computer or WiFi network, Khmenglis for "password".

patience

- Non-existent human quality which is substituted by “going with the flow”, an obnoxious phrase uttered by ex-pats stoned on locally grown marijuana giving you advice on how to deal with Cambodia.

permit

- A last minute application for a government document to comply with a suddenly new decree.

pharmacy

- A place for asking medical advice from someone who bought a medical degree and distributes medication of dubious quality and origin.

philanthropussy

- A bar girl who donates income to build a school in her village.

Photo Shop

- Most popular pirated software used by real estate agents used before advertising properties on the Internet.

pinch

- Nipples beware. Khmers love to aggressively play with nipples.

piss

- Phnom Penh's aroma reminding one that you are not in Kansas anymore.

pity

- A Khmer substitute for self-esteem.

pizza

- One of the few Western foods most Khmers like.

plastic bag

- Cambodia is a world leader in plastic bag consumption per capita.

plateen

- platinum

play

- Verb signifying the use of Face Book or email.

plece

- Common Khmenglish misspelling of "please".

Plowing Ceremony

- An annual occurrence of bovine roulette in the month of May used to predict the future usually in grave contradiction to governmental calculations.

polite

- Typical Khmer) behavior when not operating a vehicle in traffic.

politician

- A person who's belief system evolves as to match that of the ruling political party. If he or she fails this metamorphosis, eventually the defendant in a law suit or defendant accused of a crime that is not in the law books.

pooh say

- Not someone quoting "Winnie the Pooh" but Khmer pronunciation of "pussy".

pool bar

- A place at which to have employment without actually working.

poste de la police

- Pre-colonial French words which now translates into police bar.

power

- Khmer term for your physical energy level and well being. Usually used with “no” to express that one is tired.

PP

- Short form for Phnom Penh. One will understand this nick name upon first arrival. The capitol city is unique in that your sense of smell can be used as a GPS after spending a month in the city and to determine which month it is without a calendar.

prahocalypse now

- Term used to describe the uncanny increase in ex-pat deaths in Cambodia in the year 2016. Statistics: Phnom Penh: 64 Sihanoukville: 56 Siem Reap: 20 Kampot: 9 Battambang: 3 Preah Vihear: 2 Poipet: 2 Stung Treng: 1 Koh Kong: 1 Koh Rong: 1 Kampong Chan: 1 Kandal: 1 Bavet: 1 Ratanakiri: 1 Unknown location: 2 US: 28 UK: 25 Australia: 11 France: 10 China: 10 New Zealand: 7 South Korea: 7 Russian: 6 Germany: 6 Canada: 5 Norway: 4 Taiwan: 3 India: 3 Japan: 3 Switzerland: 3 North Korea: 2 Finland: 2 Denmark: 2 Malaysia: 2 Belgium: 2 Indonesia: 2 Italy: 2 Philippines: 2 Austria: 2 Thai: 2 Spain: 1 Ukraine: 1 South Africa: 1 Hungary: 1 Czech Republic: 1 Turkey: 1 Singapore: 1 Unknown: 3 Male: 148 Female: 14

prahok

- Delicious and wonderfully aromatic Cambodian cheese made from small fresh water fish and massive amounts of good bacteria. Barangs first response when encountering it is, "Oh My God, what the fuck is that smell!"

price

- Misspelling of the word "prize". Here's an example: Dance contest event!!! every Friday... 1st price: 100\$. 2nd price: 50\$, 3rd price: free bottle of whiskey or vodka.

primary education

- An antiquated form of formal instruction preparing a society's members for a life of low productivity and subservience.

priorities

- Anything that is desired without regard to the consequences.

pub quiz

- A charitable event in which highly educated expats compete in an attempt to understand the Scottish MC.

public toilet

- Any available wall.

pussy holiday

- Khmer slang for a women's menstrual cycle.

Q

question

- An avoided interrogative statement that usually generates fear in Khmer mind due to the fact it may have to result in a decision. Foreigners are advised to smile instead using this cultural taboo.

R

rabit

- The things one throws out, the "rubbage".

rag

- Any cloth, clean or dirty, within arm's reach used to sanitize a food preparation area.

rage

- 1. Socially acceptable drunken reaction employed by female Khmer to deal with an issue that upsets her plans. Typically involves a controversy with a male over the allocation of finances.
2. First indicator given by a female Khmer that a relationship is beyond reconciliation and violent incidences will increase in intensity and frequency.
3. Last indicator to a male that he should pack his bags and escape a relationship quickly or suffer a horrendous fate.

railaw

- Khmenglish for "railway".

rain

- Second weather pattern in a two season climate. Another excuse not to work.

rat

- King of the urban jungle and above dogs and cats in the food chain.

RCAF

- A form of social club that has created an enormous fashion industry.

reality

- The measurable area of concern which is 20 minutes, past or future, and 20 meters nearby. Anything outside these parameters quickly fades from memory unless needed for a reason for revenge.

rearview mirror

- A device attached to a car or motorbike in which you can check out how cool you look while driving or use as a beauty/skin car accessory while stationary.

rebar

- Cambodian decorative icicles which never melt from buildings.

reebell

- Khmer pronunciation of rebel.

relationship

- A delusional fantasy experienced by a foreign male with a Khmer female before being left in a state of ruin.

relative

- A tolerated parasite. Usually the second cause for problems in a relationship between an expat and Khmer.

religion

- Observed only on holidays in order to avoid going to work.

revenge

- A social skill used to resolve disputes without consent from one of the parties involved.

reverb

- Spicy chili pepper for the ears. Khmers like it spicy hot, foreigners do not.

rice paddy

- Secondary employment for a worker unable to obtain his or her dream of becoming a gangster or beauty queen. Used as a practice room for future employment as a singer in a beer garden.

right hand

- Used when eating and to respectfully hand items to Khmers.

roam

- Cambodian word for dance. Always followed by a Khmer word describing the type, i.e. Roam Saravan.

rock

- Hand-held confidence building tool when walking rural roads after dark.

rude

- Your first impression of Cambodians when they ask about your age, marital status, and income level when they first meet you. Actually, in their eyes, they are being extremely polite.

S:

saat

- Khmer word for "cute". Keyword for flirting. "Ot saat" means doesn't look so good (and probably smells bad too!).

safety first

- A hieroglyphic stenciled onto building site containment walls along with some Cambodian script that probably does not translate as "do not wear flip flops when mounting the scaffolding".

Sakibah

- "Sharky Bar" on Street 130 in Phnom Penh. Indochina longest running rock n' roll bar.

sale

- Misuse of "sell". Typically as, "You sale that?"

same same

- Second English phrase learned by a Khmer meaning very similar. The third being "but different". Annoying displayed on tee shirts everywhere.

sand

- Variable in a economic math formula discovered by Singaporeans and quickly solved by Khmer logic for illegal profits.

sanitize

- Acceptable condition of a food preparation surface after wiping with a filthy old rag.

savage

- Core trait of the soul applied during episodes of revenge or justice.

sawah

- Khmer pronunciation of the French expression "ça va". Literally translated "it goes."

school teacher

- Typically the drunkest individual in the village during a Khmer New Year's celebration. The urban version is the ever abundant barang English teacher typically drunk everyday.

scissors

- Cambodian screwdriver in the spirit of a "hammer", or some call it an "Irish screwdriver"

scotch

- Generic term used for adhesive tape. Most commonly used variety being clear packing tape. Often used outdoors on electrical wiring with resulting sparks and flames during rain.

scream bled

- A Western technique for cooking eggs with a Cambodian way of spelling "scrambled".

screwdriver

- An American term for a vodka with orange juice but it won't be understand. Just order a "vodka orange".

seating

- Traditional method of arranging guests is by order of arrival. Therefore, you are seated between people who arrived before you (were able to dangerously pass you), and those who arrived after you (The people who didn't pass you but continuously honked their horn attempting to). Do NOT worry, Khmer events never run out of alcohol.

sex

- It's what poor people do to pass the time and insure income during retirement.

sexy

- Any fashion which the people in a school's admin department cannot wear and is consequently banned due to its effect on societal morality.

sharp

- The condition of an object that attracts children.

shaved head

- Khmer males shave their head when their fathers or the king dies.

she young bong

- Phrase spoken to comfort a barang whose heart has been broken by a lady of any age.

shere

- Khmenglish for "share", used mainly on Face Book.

shoes

- An item found in pairs outside a home used to count the number of individuals, past the stage of infancy, residing there.

shower

- Failed attempt to beat the intense heat and maintain personal hygiene, used to break the boredom between meals. Prerequisite for sex.

shrimp

- Khmer word is "bong-kee-ah: but in English they pronounce it "sfrim".

shrine

- Final resting place for incense as well as any hope for a better life. A highly prized item due to the fact one's neighbor has one.

sick

- The condition of your mother in your home village when you want to take the day off and go to Sihanoukville.

sidewalk

- 1. The public area between a building and street used to block the path of pedestrians with a parked car or temporary construction.
- 2. Affordable real estate for starting a small night time business restaurant or store.

Siem Reap

- Cambodian version of Disneyland.

SIM bee

- A phone with dual SIM cards is basically slang for gay as "bee" means two.

Sinlg♥

- Khmenglish spelling used exclusively on social media informing the online world that one is not in a relationship that is profitable. Misspelling of "single".

sir pry

- It don't mean "Mister, use a crow bar to open it." Something you hear screamed at birthday parties when the cake comes out. "Sir pry!"

six PM

- Time when Khmer mothers lock the front gate. Good girls are always home before this time.

schooze me

- Khmer bar and restaurant staff in a hurry often yell this when navigating through a crowd of drunken barangs.

Skype

- An Internet game you play wherein one thinks of a lie to say for financial gain but magically the truth is spoken.

slap

- Public transference of emotion on a variable scale.

sleep

- A "do not disturb" condition for a Khmer and a constant unobtainable need for a foreigner.

slippers

- The go anywhere, where anytime, or hang out in a bar casual footwear for ladies.

smartphone

- An item used by dumb people while operating any motor vehicle.

smell

- Good or bad, Khmers will ALWAYS comment about how something smells.

smile

- 1. A facial expression signaling that a Khmer has successfully avoided any attempt at starting the decision making process, is dumbfounded, or embarrassed.
- 2. Possible signal of the inevitability that someone is calculating how and when to rip you off.

smoke

- 1. Fumes from a cigarette which are absorbed by a Khmer's girl hair causing them to complain and ask for US\$5 for a deluxe shampooing at the hair salon tomorrow.
- 2. Fumes from a pipe containing amphetamines valued at US\$20.

sms

- The first thing your jealous new Khmer girlfriend will read from your phone. Don't even look at her phone, it'll be a Pandora's Box of misery.

snake

- 1. A creature in the Khmer version of creation which is used to adorn all steps leading to a Buddhist temple.
- 2. A sex worker who sold her child into slavery usually found smiling at a local discotheque.

Snookie

- Sihanouk Ville

soam moi tiet

- Very important phrase in a busy bar- means "please one more".

sok sobpai?

- Most common greeting among friends, basically, "How you doing?". Best response, is to invert and say like a Khmer hipster, "Sai sahbok!"

soon

- An answer that remains elastic without any measurable units.

sorry

- Khmer response to a failed attempt at exploiting a vulnerability.

Sorry for this searching there'n't exist.....!

- When a search on a Khmer website finds nothing.

spare parts

- Items in excellent condition which are removed from your vehicle at a repair facility, only to be replaced by items of inferior quality.

speed

- A category on a police accident report usually marked as excessive along with 3 other categories- alcohol, no helmet, and death.

spinach farm

- Chinese organized crime setting up internet gambling websites in Southeast Asia to avoid restrictions imposed by the CCP in their homeland.

spoon

- Eating utensil used in the right hand only instead of a knife.

SR

- Siam Reap

star

- Visual receipt adorning a uniform's shoulder for how much one paid for the military officer rank of general. Valued at around US\$40,000 per star.

stare

- To simulate thought while looking through something or someone.

start

- What motodup and tuk tuk drivers do to their engines outside your business when you change your WiFi password. No free Internet and they leave.

status

- The ability to follow a trend disregarding one's personal financial situation.

sth

- Khmenglish abbreviation for "something".

stick

- Tool used by adults to transfer family values to the younger generation.

stop

- An action you must never ever do when you see a traffic accident- just keep moving or take the blame.

street vendor

- Main cause of diabetes in urban areas. High mobile and witty, their unhealthy snacks bring joy to slumbering staff throughout the city.

stressed

- Possibly how you'll feel the first time you try to cross a busy street in Phnom Penh.

stubborn

- A girl that won't leave a guest house lobby for financial reasons.

successful

- Any person viewed with immeasurable jealousy.

suitcase

- A mobile storage device found at police checkpoints during the holiday exodus from Phnom Penh used to collect bonus pay for law enforcement.

Sunday morning

- An opportune time period for Khmer businesses to send mass SMS advertisement to awaken hungover foreigners.

sunlight

- Daily challenge for Khmer females to avoid. White skin “berry goot”.

sunrise

- An opportune moment of the day to observe stumbling foreigners walking home that are drunk.

sunset

- End of the work day for the police.

Super Cub 50

- Cambodian all-terrain all purpose family transportation vehicle- nothing stops it. Well, only other vehicles with four wheels.

supply & demand

- Inapplicable economic law of a free market economy. When demand drops prices go up to make up for the losses.

surname

- As in most of Asia, the surname (family name) comes first. This reminds you who controls your life.

Swissish

- Swedish, somewhere near there, or maybe Swiss.

syllable

- The missing sound at the end of a Khmer-English word. For example: “My wi ha fi ni” is actually “My wife has five knives”. When asked

if one is hungry expect to hear, “Ea ri?” (Eat rice?).

T

take

- One good, two, three OK, four better. Heard when one cannot decide what to do after ordering a first beer and surrounded by a dozen Khmer girls.

tarp

- Khmer word meaning “kiss”, the ultimate taboo is kissing in public view.

tattoo

- Symbol used to brand and identify a female worker as a pimp's property. Used as a visual reminder that the worker will fulfill one's duties or face violent consequences from one's master. Similar to the Western tradition of writing a child's name on clothing articles so that they might be returned.

television

- A mid-twentieth century audio visual device used a simultaneous substitute for both the truth and reality. Implants the Khmer consciousness with delusional thoughts which redefine social status.

temple

- Focal point of village life and community efforts creating a sense of solidarity which quickly disappears upon leaving the grounds and returning home.

ten percent (10%)

- A price increase imposed by merchants right before and during an official or unofficial holiday just because they can get away with it.

terrorism

- Any act committed that calls for retaliation by the ruling party. Retaliation is usually severe due to the fact a government official had to get up out of a comfortable chair or make a telephone call to respond.

T.I.C.

- Pronounced "tick". "*This is Cambodia*" - common phrase spoken whenever a newcomer to the country complains.

timber

- Cash crop harvested by the military.

tip

- Something Khmers will boldly ask for.

Tonle Sap

- Unique Cambodian river which changes directional flow. Good metaphor for Khmer female behavior.

too much

- A frequently spoken and incorrect English grammatical error substituting "too" for "very" and associated with the phrase "I love you too much." Commonly used by Khmer females to re-initiate the flow of cash from an ex-pat's wallet which had been interrupted by a cultural clash of realities during a previous encounter. Signifying one's openness for receiving financial support without actually doing anything meaningful in return. Frequently said by one person to several "boyfriends" per day.

tool

- Any object that can be misused to repair (or subsequently destroy) something in a dangerous manner while surrounded by onlookers who's only desire is to obtain the object and misuse it in a more dangerous fashion.

toothpaste

- The easy to apply gel is used to fix carburetor leaks. When the carburetor fuel bowl gasket deteriorates or leaks, this is a super smart Khmer fix that really works. Now if the moto mechanic could only fix teeth.

torn

- The smallest visible tear in US currency which makes the note unacceptable and exchangeable only at a discount. Cambodian riel in any condition accepted universally.

tourist

- A person without a reference point on local prices who, after purchasing a product, thinks he or she obtained a bargain.

towner

- Without this item, your computer's printer not work so good.

traffic light

- Publically displayed vision testing instrument at intersections. It seems that the first qualification for a driver's license is to be red/amber/green colorblind.

trash (

- Items used by the impoverished to decorate the surrounding area their domestic residence.

truth

- A quick yet tall tale agreed upon by two opposing parties to save honor. After fermenting for a few years, the real flavor will reveal itself.

tuk tuk

- 1. An evolutionary step in transportation that defies extinction.
2. A mobile carriage designed for multiple purposes such as gambling, sleeping, parting, and sitting in the shade while free loading off WiFi from local businesses. 3. An officially

banned word by the Royal Cambodian Government since its etymological roots are from Thailand.

turn

- When you are in Cambodia and in a relationship, it's "your turn". Best defined by, "You don't lose your girl, you lose your turn." When you temporarily leave Cambodia, somebody will definitely have their "turn".

tuxzdo

- Why not spell it like is sounds? Tuxedo looks too foreign of a word anyways.

.U.

unallocated spending

- Largest line item in a non-transparent government yearly budget budget. Necessary for spontaneous needs as determined by the prime minister.

uncute

- ugly

underwear (sous-vêtement, rope interior)

- Casual urban street wear for elderly Khmer men typically within 20 meters of their domestic residence whilst observing some kind of disturbance or imminent dangerous event.

upsad

- An emotion signifying one may be or was upset. No one actually is upsad, as it lives in the past and future.

UXO

- Letters on a sign marking free arable land-plow at your own risk.

.V.

Valentine's Day

- Highly prized day by unmarried Khmer males pressuring their girlfriends to help guest houses reach maximum capacity. Affectionately called “Cambodian National Rape Day”.

vegetarian

- A restaurant meal which contains twice the amount of

victim

- Accidental audition for social-media resulting in viral fame.

wife

- Cambodian pronunciation of “wife”. Typical use, “You want Cambodia wife?”

violence

- Second most popular sport after people watching. Usually preceded by large quantities of alcohol. Popularly used in dispute resolution after apprehending a thief.

virus

- Once infected one is taken to a local hospital and diagnosed by using a UN or FaceBook top ten list of most popular lethal diseases. Currently Dengue Fever and Zika are battling for the top spot whilst those suffering battle for life.

vocka

- vodka

volume (volumen)

- The control used on any equipment capable of producing sound set at maximum level usually at a distorted level. The maximization of which deters both questions and decisions ensuring a sense of temporary safety during any social event. Always accompanied by lavish amount of reverb and/or echo.

vr

- Cambodian spelling for “we are”.

vullie bullie

- American song “Wolly Bully” adopted and performed by Khmer bands and proudly claimed as their own original composition.

·W·**wahkum**

- Khmer pronunciation of “welcome”. A shy Cambodian's response in English to “thank you”.

water

- An abundant and unmanageable natural resource.

water buffalo

- A mystical creature and important asset to the Khmer farmer which seems to always be ill and the farmer's daughter is always needing to beg money for its medical bills.

wendy

- Cambodian term used for the English equivalent of “wedding”.

wheel bearing

- Critical component to keep a vehicle's wheels turning which only has a tendency to fail during journeys during important Khmer holidays.

whiskey

- Khmer business equivalent of playing golf with potential business partners. One must finish the bottle to seal the deal. Yes, you will all make fools of yourselves in doing so.

White Building

- Phnom Penh's version of the Thunder Dome in the Movie Mad Max but with many little Tina Turners running around on the inside.

Why?

- Just respond with “ot dung” (I don't know), and continue talking about the next topic.

wife

- 1. The self proclaimed nick name a Khmer bar girl will call herself after you come back to visit her at work a second time which indicates to the staff that she owns you.
- 2. Result of a traditional ceremony that open your home's front door and your wallet to a Khmer family.

work permit

- The government regulation dreaded by ex-pats residing in the kingdom and illegally working for many years. If you want an ex-pat to shut up and keep quiet, ask them if they have already obtained a work permit. See "Myanmar" for further details.

worry

- An emotional condition that should be implemented instantly after hearing a Khmer state, "Don't worry." May cause incentive in some circumstances.



X

- Letter often pronounced "kuh".



Y5

- Khmer abbreviation for "WiFi".

yeah

- Sort of means "yes", but really means we'll figure it out. Said more than once it signifies how much someone needs your money.

yes

- Does not mean "affirmative", rather "I heard you". Whether they care or not depends on number of times said in a row. See 'yeah' for further details.

You smoke?

- Slang for, "Do you use illegal methamphetamines"?

yuon

- Not to be confused with "yuan" (Chinese money) is the Khmer way of referring to Vietnamese people. Is it derogatory? To a degree, one rarely hears it used when talking "sweet" about Cambodia's eastern neighbors.

Z**zebra crossing**

- A series of parallel lines drawn across a Phnom Penh road, at either end of which map-clutching tourists can be found waiting for long periods.