

## ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ АКРОНИМОВ В ПИСЬМЕННОЙ РЕЧИ АНГЛИЙСКИХ И БЕЛОРУССКИХ ПОДРОСТКОВ

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During our communication on the Internet with our classmates, friends and even teenagers from other countries, we face some unusual words, which are used to present different things, from military or political organizations to people's emotions. They are acronyms.

The usage of acronyms is considered necessary in different spheres of communication because it can help people of different ages and cultural levels to express thoughts in an economic and short way. So we decided to deal with some acronyms, which we have selected by the method of random selection from the so called "Fan Forum" on the Internet.

We have chosen this forum, because it is popular among teenagers and young men, and the posts of it are quite fresh and new, dated from 2015 to 2017. The topics, discussed in this forum, are quite different, including sports, cinema, television, male and female celebrities, etc.

So the main **aim** of our work is the identification of the peculiar features of acronyms in teenagers' forum and to make some classifications of them.

The **tasks** of the work are:

1. to collect some acronyms in teenagers forum;
2. to classify them according to their topic and popularity among teenagers;
3. to single out the peculiarities of usage of acronyms;
4. to analyze the similarities and difference of usage of acronyms in the speech of foreign and Belarusian teenagers;
5. to make a vocabulary of selected acronyms.

The **hypothesis** of our work is the thought, that both English and Belarusian teenagers use acronyms regularly, but the semantic groups of them are quite different.

The **object** of our work is acronyms in forums of English teenagers, while the **subject** of it is the peculiarities of acronyms, used by English teenagers, selected from "Fan's Forum".

The **methods** of our work are description, analysis, comparison, random selection, classification.

The results of the work are quite significant, because the vocabulary of acronyms, which was created, can help teenagers of dif-

ferent countries understand each other better. They were sent to the web-site [www.science-journals.info](http://www.science-journals.info) and are published in the book «Первый шаг в науку №13» in 2018.

They can also be used at the lessons of English, when the topic is connected with modern sources of communication, such as various chats, internet forums, social networks, etc. and at the elective courses, connected with English lexicology.

### 1. Acronyms as an essential part of modern communication

Nowadays the speech of people, who belong to different social groups, abounds in various lexical units, which were not typical some decades ago. Some of them are called acronyms, which are especially popular among teenagers and young men. As far as we know, they are used to make our speech more precise and definite.

#### 1.1. The notion of acronym

The word "acronym" is formed from the Greek, "point and name" [8]. Acronyms are formed by taking the initial letters of some or all the words in a phrase or title and pronouncing them as a word. This type of word-formation is prevalent in names of organizations, military, and scientific terminology.

Common examples are American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Antisocial Behavior Order (ASBO), frequently asked questions (FAQ), Scholastic Achievement (or Aptitude) Test(s) (SAT), Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG), Designer Shoe Warehouse (DSW), Personal Identification Number (PIN), Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), random access memory (RAM), very important person (VIP), read only memory (ROM), and others [2].

Strictly speaking, according to the opinion of lexicographer John Ayto, an *acronym* "denotes a combination pronounced as a word . . . rather than as just a sequence of letters" [3].

In numerous cases, speakers do not realize that they are using an acronym. One example is radar (radio detecting and ranging), which is an

acronym common throughout many languages. Other examples of acronyms are scuba (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus), and laser (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation) [2].

An *anacronym* is an acronym for which the expanded form isn't widely known or used, such as OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration).

The main reason for usage of acronyms is linguistic economy.

Acronymy is a study about acronyms. It has ancient roots, as illustrated by the early Christian use of the Greek word *ichthys* meaning "fish" as an acronym for *Iēsous Christos, Theou Huios, Sōtēr* ("Jesus Christ, God's son, Savior") [2].

It is widely assumed that the use of text shorthand known as acronyms was started as a result of the use of Morse Code to send and receive messages in the 19th century. Because telegraph companies charged the sender by the word, acronyms were invented to save the sender costs and to quicken the time and effort of the sending agent. Telegraph companies would not only charge by the word but would charge additional fees for numerals and words that could not be easily pronounced [2].

It is often mentioned, that acronyms are similar to abbreviations, but not the same. The difference between acronyms and abbreviations is this: acronyms are proper words created from the initial letter or two of the words in a phrase, and they are pronounced like other words (cf. *snafu*, *radar*, *laser*, or *UNESCO*).

By contrast, abbreviations do not form proper words, and so they are pronounced as strings of letters, for example, *S.O.B.*, *IOU*, *U.S.A.*, *MP*, or *TV* [6].

Finally we want to mention, that nowadays acronyms play an important role in everyday communication of people belonging to different age groups and living in different countries.

They are the part of *netspeak* and *textspeak*, which is a rapidly emerging jargon used among the Internet users, especially young men and teenagers.

### 1.2. The types of acronyms

There are several classifications of acronyms, but we would like to mention the most extended of them. It is based on lexical meaning and sphere of usage of acronyms. It contains several points:

- common acronyms used in chat (they are used across every industry): *AFK* – away from keyboard, *BBL* – be back later, *KIT* – keep in touch, *OMG* – oh my God, *PM* – private message, etc.
- common acronyms used in military/government (understanding what is being

said in a government or official setting can be difficult): *CIA* – central intelligence agency, *MIA* – missing in action, *POW* – prisoner of war, *CPS* – child protective services, etc.

- common acronyms used in appreciation (are used when you want to express your love and appreciation): *LOL* – laughing out loud, *NP* – no problem, *WTG* – way to go, *BF* – boyfriend, *GF* – girlfriend, etc.

- common informative acronyms (they may be used in medical field, but they aren't certainly exclusive to health related subjects): *AIDS* – acquired immune deficiency syndrome, *DOA* – dead on arrival, *HIV* – human immunodeficiency virus, etc.

- common acronyms used in business (they are used in business word to identify a business or to create shorthand communication between co-workers): *AKA* – also known as, *OT* – overtime, *POS* – point of service, *EOD* – end of the day, etc.

- common acronyms used as identity (they are used to identify an organization or person): *NFL* – national football league, *PGA* – professional golfer's association, *FLAG* – foreign language association of Georgia, *TNT* – Turner Network Television [6].

One more classification can be presented next. It is connected with structure of acronyms. The points of it are:

- acronyms, which are pronounced as separate letters:

- letters, which represent the full words (*C. O. D.* – cash on delivery, *EEC* – European Economic Community, *FBI* – Federal Bureau of Investigation, *MIT* – Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *UN* – the United Nations);

- letters, which represent the elements of complex word or just parts of the word (*TV* – television, *GHQ* – General Headquarters, *TB* – Tuberculosis);

- acronyms, which are pronounced as a word (for example, *NATO*). And it often happens that they don't know the meaning of every letter. For example, *UNESCO* stands for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization; *laser* stands for the light-wave amplification by stimulated emission of radiation [1].

These classifications present the most widely used groups of acronyms according to the lexical meaning and form. But, of course, it is quite important to mention, that usage of acronyms depends on age of people, sphere and style of communication.

## 2. The usage of acronyms in fan forum

### 2.1. Our personal classification of acronyms

We want to underline, that, according to the examples that we have selected in the forums of English – speaking teenagers by the way of

random selection, we decided to make our own classification of acronyms. Our classification is based on the topic to which the acronyms belong.

We have chosen 107 acronyms, which are presented in the appendix A, and managed to divide them into 12 groups (picture 2.1). Some of them are numerous (emotions and evaluation; computers, forums and internet; etc.), some are not (names of people, characteristics of people, etc.). They are:

**1. emotions and evaluation** – 21,4%.

LOL – laugh out loud – мне очень смешно. The clothes were interesting at least, LOL [5].

QT – cute – крутой. This fashion was QT [5].

**2. computers, forums and internet** – 15,0%.

Co – mod – со – moderator – заместитель модератора. I had to say it to my co – mod [5].

OFT – off topic – не по теме. This post is OFT [5].

**3. widely-used words** – 13%.

BTW – by the way – кстати. Thank you for this PM BTW [5].

ETA – exact time of arrival – точное время прибытия. My ETA is 9 o'clock [5].

**4. TV shows, films, cartoons** – 9,3%.

BH – Beverly hills – название телевизионного сериала. I remember seeing her on BH 90210 [5].

HOC – Heroes of Camelot – название сериала. I don't want to waste my time on the last season of HOC [5].

**5. formulas of politeness** – 8,5%.

TFTNT – thank you for the new thread – спасибо за новую нить информации. TFTNT, we should add the February ratings there [5].

YW – you are welcome – добро пожаловать! Hello! YW [5]!

**6. sports** – 7,5%.

NHL – national hockey league – национальная лига хоккея. This team takes part in NHL [5].

WO – winter Olympics – зимние Олимпийский игры. I hope they'll take part in WO [5].

**7. names of organizations** – 6,5%.

PLA – public library association – общественная библиотечная организация. This city is not having a PLA [5].

FIC – federal insurance corporation – федеральная страховая организация. Who's FIC, why's he getting all my money [5].

**8. holidays** – 5,6%.

NYE – new year's eve – преддверие Нового года. This NYE pact is so great [5].

BD – Birthday – День рождения. I have a BD in two days [5].

**9. general terminology** – 4,6%.

CHI – computer – human interaction – связь человека и компьютера. OMG, the CHI is so strong there [5].

PG – parental guidance – опека родителей. Some posts cannot be allowed there by PG [5].

**10. geography** – 4,6%.

CW – cold weather – холодная погода. The time of CW comes [5].

EST – eastern standard time – время восточного полушария. I can watch anytime between 8 – 10 PM EST [5].

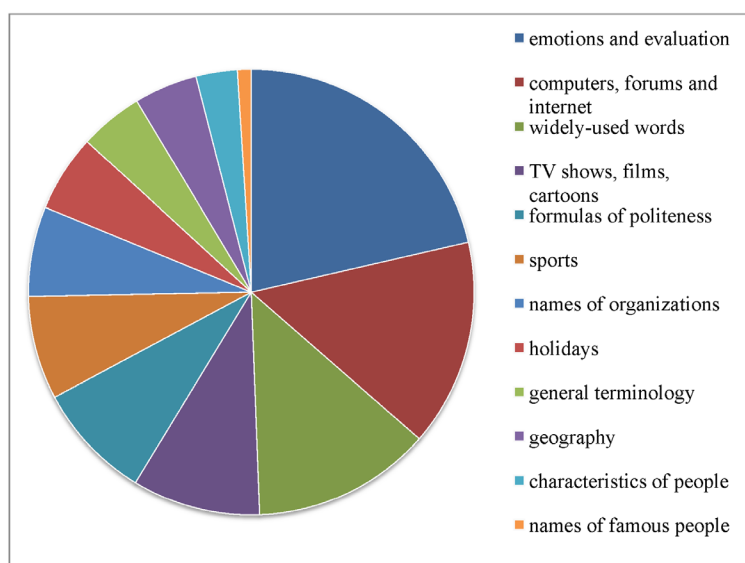
**11. characteristics of people** – 3%.

HB – heart breaker – сердцеед. He's a real HB in this season [5].

HB – hot babe – привлекательная девушка. Just look at this HB [5]!

**12. names of famous people** – 1%.

KS – Kevin Smith – Кевин Смит, режиссер. I'm glad they fired KS [5].



Picture 2.1. The proportion of usage of acronyms of different topics in teenagers' forums

It is also necessary to mention, that some acronyms are polysemic. They are represented by 23 examples, which are 21, 5% of our selection. They may have from 2 to 5 meanings, belonging to different topics. They are represented in the table 2.1 that goes next.

When the pupils were asked, if they use acronyms in their everyday speech, 100% of them gave positive answer. The sphere of usage is everyday communication at school, in chats and social networks.

**Table 2.1**

The proportion of usage of polysemic acronyms of different topics in teenagers' forums

Acronym	Number of meanings	Examples
ASAP	5	ASAP – as soon as possible; ASAP – as safe as possible; ASAP – as stupid as possible; ASAP – as small as possible; ASAP – as short as possible.
FF	2	FF – fan's forum; FF – friends forever.
HB	2	HB – heart breaker; HB – hot babe.
NY	2	NY – New Year; NY – New York.
OK	2	OK – one kiss; OK – okay.
OP	2	OP – opening post; OP – original poster.
PM	2	PM – personal message; PM – private message.
UC	2	UC – under cover; UC – under control.
WTH	2	WTH – what the hell; WTH – why the hell.
YT	2	YT – you tube; YT – you there?

To sum it all up, we may say, that the majority of acronyms, used by English teenagers in "Friends Forum" belongs to such groups as emotions and evaluation 21,4%, computers, forums and internet – 15,0%, wide-used words – 13%, TV shows, films, cartoons – 9,3%, formulas of politeness – 8,5%.

We think that this result may show us that teenagers are very emotional group of people, who tend to quick expression of their thoughts and tend to politeness. The most important sphere of their interests is connected with computers and the internet, popular TV shows, films and cartoons.

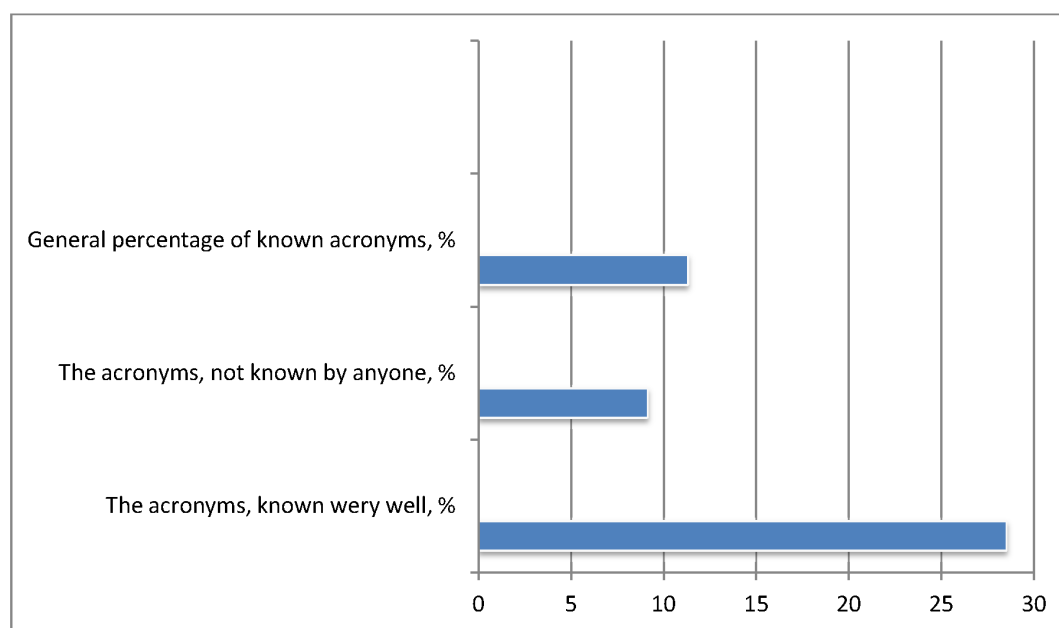
#### 2.2 Acronyms in the speech of English and Belarusian teenagers in comparison

After collecting some acronyms that are widely used by English teenagers from the so called "Fan Forum", we decided to analyze it in comparison with usage of them in speech of teenagers of the 9<sup>th</sup> form in our gymnasium. 70 pupils were asked several questions, connected with acronyms, and the results were quite interesting. They are presented next.

At the next stage we decided to learn if the teenagers from English-speaking countries and from our gymnasium use the same groups of acronyms. The pupils were given the list of acronyms, which were found in speech of English teenagers in "Fan Forum" and had to mark those acronyms, the meaning of which they know.

According to our research, only 11,3% of acronyms are known by our teenagers, and 9, 11% of acronyms are not marked by anyone, so they are not known at all. But it is important to mention, that there are some acronyms, which are familiar to many pupils from our gymnasium. They are 28, 5% from the number of the known acronyms.

So, we may come to the conclusion that teenagers of different countries use different sets of acronyms (picture 2.2). It may happen because the different set of letters and other peculiarities of language, because of different age and interests of teenagers, the level of culture and education, the style of life and religion in different countries.



Picture 2.2. The usage of acronyms in the speech of Belarusian teenagers

The next stage was to analyze the usage of acronyms, known by the majority of pupils according to the lexical groups, to which they belong. They are presented in table 2.2.

• widely-used words presented by such acronyms as 4ever, BB, BF, gonna, etc.;

TV shows, films, cartoons presented by not very numerous group of acronyms such as WOW.

Table 2.2

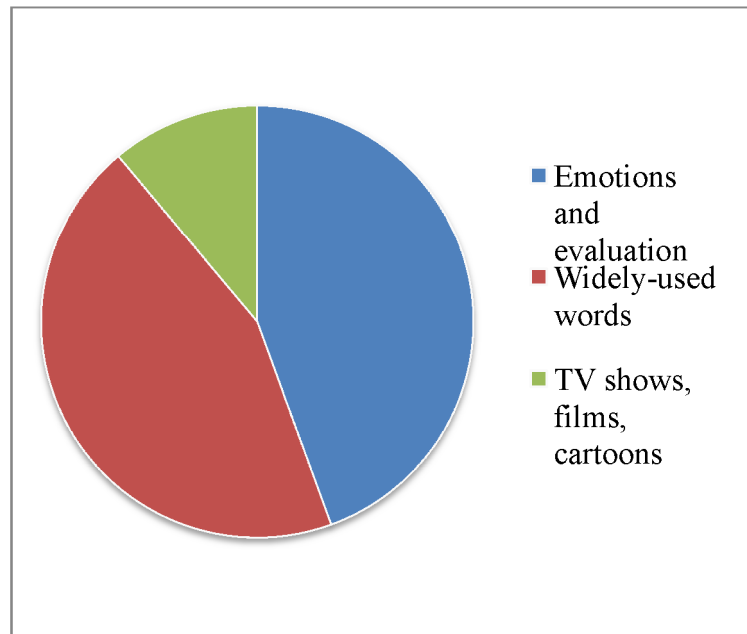
The acronyms, known by the Belarusian teenagers very well

Name of the acronym	Meaning of the acronym	Number of pupils, who know it	Percentage
4ever	Forever	52	74, 2 %
BB	be back	24	34, 2 %
BF	best friend	56	80 %
Gonna	going to	30	42,8 %
LOL	laugh out loud	60	85, 7 %
OK	okay	60	85,7 %
OMG	oh my God	60	85, 7 %
WOW	“World of Warcraft”	56	80 %
WTH	what the hell	26	37, 1 %

As we can understand from it, the majority of acronyms used and understood by English teenagers and Belarusian teenagers both belong to such groups as:

• emotions and evaluation, presented by such acronyms as WTH, OMG, OK, LOL, etc.;

It is very similar to the choice of English teenagers, who consider all these groups – emotions and evaluation, wide-used words and TV shows, films, cartoons – among the most popular in their communication in forums.



Picture 2.3. The groups of acronyms known by Belarusian teenagers best of all

To conclude we may say that acronyms used by English and Belarusian teenagers differ a lot. Belarusian teenagers know only 11, 3% of acronyms, 9,11% of acronyms are not understood by anyone, so they are not known at all.

But 28,5% of the known acronyms are marked by numerous pupils. They belong to the groups such as emotions and evaluation, widely-used words and TV shows, films, cartoons (picture 2.3), which are the most popular among English teenagers.

### Conclusion

Our work is based on the analysis of usage of acronyms in English teenagers' speech in "Fan Forum" and comparison of the results with the same aspect in Belarusian teenagers' speech.

We managed to find out, that the majority of acronyms, used by English teenagers in "Friends Forum" belongs to such groups as emotions and evaluation 21,4%, computers, forums and internet – 15,0%, wide-used words – 13, 0%, TV shows, films, cartoons – 9,3%, formulas of politeness – 8,5%.

We think that this result may show us, that teenagers are very emotional group of people, who tend to quick expression of their thoughts and tend to politeness. The most important sphere of their interests is connected with computers and the internet, popular TV shows, films and cartoons.

Not all the acronyms have the single meaning. Some of them, such as ASAP, FF, HB, NY, OK, OP, PM, etc. are polysemic. They are represented by 23 examples in our research, which are 21, 5% of our selection. They may have from 2 to 5 meanings, belonging to different topics. So it is evident, that they may be known by more people at least in one meaning.

As for the comparative moment, we may say that acronyms used by English and Byelorussian teenagers are various. Belarusian teenagers know only 11, 3% of acronyms, 9, 11% of acronyms are not understood by anyone, so they are not known at all.

But 28, 5% of known acronyms, such as 4ever, BB, BF, LOL, OK, OMG, WOW, WTH, etc. are marked by numerous pupils. They belong to groups such as emotions and evaluation, wide-used words and TV shows, films, cartoons, which are the most popular among English teenagers.

All this peculiar features helped us to create the vocabulary of acronyms and send the article to the web-site [www.science-journals.info](http://www.science-journals.info) which is published in the book «Первый шаг в науку №13» in 2018 to share the information with the interested pupils.

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## Appendix A

### The vocabulary of acronyms

4ever – forever – навсегда. Chan and Jan **4ever**.

AC – all clear – все ясно. They are newcomers. **AC**.

AFC – Asian football confederation – азиатская конфедерация футбола. This team is a member of **AFC**.

ASAP – as soon as possible – как можно скорее. I'm truly hoping to start posting a lot more again, **ASAP**.

ASAP – as safe as possible – как можно безопаснее. Treat them **ASAP**.

ASAP – as stupid as possible – очень глупый. He is **ASAP** in S3.

ASAP – as small as possible – как можно меньше. Try to spend **ASAP** on this.

ASAP – as short as possible – как можно короче. Tell me this story **ASAP**.

ATM – at the moment – в данный момент. I'm having a rest **ATM**.

BaTB – beauty and the beast – название сериала. **BaTB** is the name of the serial I love.

BB – be back – скоро вернусь. **BB** in a minute.

BD – Birthday – День рождения. I have a **BD** in two days.

BF – black Friday – «черная» пятница. I think about **BF** week on Amazon.

BH – Beverly hills – название телевизионного сериала. I remember seeing her on **BH** 90210.

BTW – by the way – кстати. Thank you for this PM **BTW**.

CHI – computer – human interaction – связь человека и компьютера. OMG, the **CHI** is so strong there.

Co – mod – co – moderator – заместитель модератора. I had to say it to my **co – mod**.

CW – cold weather – холодная погода. The time of **CW** comes.

DP – data picture – основная фотография в аккаунте. I am sorry for the old **DP**.

DRW – Detroit red wings – название спортивной команды. I am a fan of **DRW**.

DTS – don't think so – я так не думаю. Oh, my dear, I **DTS**.

ETC – entertainment that counts – название телевизионного шоу. Let's watch the **ETC** tonight.

EP – episode – серия. We needed to set "a time" to actually watch the **EP** together.

ER – emergency room – комната скорой помощи. Was that their doctor names on **ER** or not?

ESPN – entertainment and sport promoting network – сеть по продвижению спорта и развлекательных мероприятий. They are the members of **ESPN**.

EST – eastern standard time – время восточного полушария. I can watch anytime between 8 – 10 PM **EST**.

ETA – exact time of arrival – точное время прибытия. My **ETA** is 9 o'clock.

FAS – favourite scenes – мои любимые сцены. My **FAS** are just watching six of them together.

FAVA – favourite animation – любимый мультфильм. Have you seen the 1<sup>st</sup> one? Not my **FAVA**.

FIC – federal insurance corporation – федеральная страховая организация. Who's **FIC**, why's he getting all my money.

FF – fan's forum – форум друзей. It will hopefully never close as long as **FF** is around.

FF – friends forever – друзья навсегда. We are **FF**.

FTW – for the win – за победу. I'll pray **FTW** of this team.

Gonna – are going to – собираются. Most people **gonna** watch this film.

Gotta – got to – придется. At some point you **gotta** let go.

GTM – good to me – хорошо для меня. That is not **GTM**.

HB – heart breaker – сердцеед. He's a real **HB** in this season.

HB – hot babe – привлекательная девушка. Just look at this **HB**!

HIMYM – how I met your mother – название телесериала. I am a real fan of the 1s of **HIMYM**.

HIN – Happy Islamic New Year – исламский Новый год. Yesterday was the start of **HIN**.

HOC – Heroes of Camelot – название сериала. I don't want to waste my time on the last season of **HOC**.

HQP – high quality pictures – картинки высокого качества. Please don't post **HQP** in this forum.

IC – information center – информационный центр. We may go to **IC** for support.

ILL – I love life – я люблю жизнь. I felt **ILL** when I got back from my trip.

IMDB – internet movie database – база фильмов в интернете. I looked for this film in **IMDB**.

IMO – in my opinion – с моей точки зрения. And **IMO** the best perk you may be able to post.

JH – junior high school – старшая школа. I went to **JH** in 2000.

Kinda – kind of a – вроде. I **kinda** forgot about this ep.

Kook – keeper of odd knowledge – странный человек. I like the scenes with Monica and how she isn't a kook.

KS – Kevin Smith – Кевин Смит, режиссер. I'm glad they fired **KS**.

LMAO – laugh my ass out – очень смешно. Monica felt really sorry for herself, **LMAO**.

LMFAO – laugh my f\*\*\*ing ass out – чертовски смешно. This situation is so cool, **LMFAO**.

LOL – laugh out loud – мне очень смешно. The clothes were interesting at least, **LOL**.

LPCWL – low post count warning list – список постов с низким уровнем популярности. Our topic may soon appear in **LPCWL**.

LT – late – поздно. **LT** album brings her the show time.

M2 – me too – я тоже. – I love it! – **M2**.

MST – mobile support team – команда поддержки мобильной связи. You'd better phone the **MST**.

NFL – national football league – национальная футбольная лига. I don't care much about the **NFL**.

NHL – national hockey league – национальная лига хоккея. This team takes part in **NHL**.

NOP – no problem – без проблем. – Can you try not to quote? – **NOP**.

NY – New Year – Новый год. It's next to the **NY**.

NY – New York – Нью Йорк. Cynthia Nixon may run for **NY** governor.

NYE – new year's eve – преддверие Нового года. This **NYE** pact is so great.

OCD – Office of Child Development – офис детского развития. We get to see Monica's cleaning **OCD** for the first time.

OFT – off topic – не по теме. This post is **OFT**.

OK – one kiss – один поцелуй. Bye, **OK**.

OK – okay – хорошо. This EP is **OK**.

OMG – oh my God – о мой Бог. Then he saw this baby on the screen, **OMG**.

OP – opening post – первый пост. This **OP** is fresh, you know.

OP – original poster – оригинал постера. That **OP** looks nice.

OT – on topic – по теме. This post is **OT**, of course.

OTP – one true pair – пара на самом деле. They are quite an **OTP**.

PB – prison break – название сериала. The 3s of **PB** is only in plans.

PLA – public library association – общественная библиотечная организация. This city is not having a **PLA**.

PG – parental guidance – опека родителей. Some posts cannot be allowed there by **PG**.

PM – personal message – личное сообщение. Thank you for this **PM**.

PM – private message – личное сообщение. Tell it to me in **PM**, OK?

QT – cute – крутой. This fashion was **QT**.

RL – real life – реальная жизнь. We all have time when we get more busy with **RL** and stuff.

RR – rescue rangers – название мультфильма. The **RR** connection from the beginning is so apparent and so great to watch.

S3 – season 3 – третий сезон. The first episode I saw was during **S3**.

SATC – sex and the city – название сериала. **SATC**: it's fabulous.

SB – super bowl – супер кубок. I want it at least win one **SB**.

SD – sweet dreams – сладких снов. Good-night and **SD** to you!

SVU – Southern Virginia University – университет Южной Вирджинии. She graduated from **SVU** in 1998.

TFPT – thank you for posting that – спасибо за публикацию. John, **TFPT**.

TFT – thanks for this – спасибо за это. **TFT**, Betty!

TFTI – thank you for the information – благодарю за информацию. **TFTI**, Holly!

TFTNT – thank you for the new thread – спасибо за новую нить информации. **TFTNT**, we should add the February ratings there.

TGIF – thanks God, it's Friday – спасибо Богу, воскресенье пришло. I'm dead, **TGIF**.

TRAM – the person above me – человек, высказавшийся выше. I agree with **TRAM**.

TWD – the walking dead – название сериала. I don't want to waste my time on **TWD**.

TY – thank you – спасибо. **TY**, my friend!

UC – under cover – под прикрытием. He worked as a **UC** detective.

UC – under control – под контролем. Keep yourself **UC**.

WA – world association – мировая ассоциация. The **WA** of football keeps it under control.

WC – world cup – мировой кубок. The **WC** starts in December.

WO – winter Olympics – зимние Олимпийские игры. I hope they'll take part in **WO**.



WOF – wheel of fortune – колесо фортуны. The **WOF** is going to turn to me one day.

WOW – world of Warcraft – компьютерная игра. I love when Phoebe was like telling about **WOW**.

WTH – what the hell – что же. **WTH** are you doing?

WTH – why the hell – почему же. **WTH** are you here?

Wyl – while – в то время как. I loved Noah **wyl** she starred in this ep.

Xmas – Christmas – Рождество. The friend of mine was born on **Xmas**.

YT – you tube – название сайта для просмотра видео. I used to watch them on **YT** before I bought DVD.

YT – you there? – вы здесь? People, are **YT**?

YW – you are welcome – добро пожаловать! Hello! **YW**!