

MORE  
Brit Wit

The perfect riposte for every social occasion



## MORE BRIT WIT

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# Editor's Note

The best of British wit: there's nothing quite like it, whether you're a lover of language or simply want to impress. A date, a dinner, a wedding, an argument, a presentation, an essay – there are occasions galore when an amusing quip is worth its weight in gold.

Thanks to popular demand, we're delighted to present this second compendium of the funniest quotations from across the centuries right up to today. We've found even more of the sharpest barbs on topics ranging from art to drinking to Brits themselves. When it comes to families, marriage and religion, sometimes you've just got to laugh.

Oddly enough, British Prime Ministers seem to produce some of the wittiest (and cattiest) remarks, while the differences between the sexes always yield a fresh crop of deliciously obnoxious observations. And naturally, there's a special place for insults and rude ripostes to impress your friends and crush your enemies.

They all add up to a superb array of Brit wit, and we trust you'll derive hours of pleasure from browsing through this book. After all, as Thomas Love Peacock said in the nineteenth century, 'A book that furnishes no quotations is no book – it is a plaything.'



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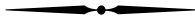
Brit Wit





Hot water is my  
native element.  
I was in it as a baby,  
and I have never  
seemed to get out  
of it ever since.

Edith Sitwell, poet (1887–1964)



# Advice

Have the courage to be ignorant of a great number of things, in order to avoid the calamity of being ignorant of everything.

Sydney Smith, essayist (1771–1845)

---

The only way to be sure of catching a train is to miss the one before it.

G. K. Chesterton, writer (1874–1936)

---


There is no such whetstone, to sharpen a good wit and encourage a will to learning, as is praise.

Roger Ascham, writer (1515–1568)

## ADVICE

Don't give a woman advice: one  
should never give a woman anything  
she can't wear in the evening.

Oscar Wilde, poet, novelist, dramatist and critic  
(1854–1900), *An Ideal Husband*, 1895



If a thing's worth doing,  
it's worth doing badly.

G. K. Chesterton



Good but rarely came  
from good advice.

Lord Byron, Romantic poet and satirist (1788–1824)

## MORE BRIT WIT

Moderation is a fatal thing  
– nothing succeeds like excess.

Oscar Wilde, *A Woman of No Importance*, 1893

---

When a man wants your advice,  
he generally wants your praise.

Lord Chesterfield, statesman,  
diplomat and wit (1694–1773)

---

The worst men often  
give the best advice.

Francis Bacon, lawyer and philosopher (1561–1626)

---

Never try to reason the  
prejudice out of a man. It was  
not reasoned into him, and  
cannot be reasoned out.

Sydney Smith



Action may  
not always bring  
happiness; but there  
is no happiness  
without action.

Benjamin Disraeli, former Prime Minister  
and novelist (1804–1881)



# Age

You only have to survive in  
England and all is forgiven...  
if you can eat a boiled egg at  
90 in England they think you  
deserve a Nobel Prize.

Alan Bennett, playwright, writer and actor

---

Mrs Allonby: I delight in men over  
seventy, they always offer one  
the devotion of a lifetime.

Oscar Wilde, *A Woman of No Importance*

---

One should never trust a woman  
who tells one her real age. A  
woman who would tell one that  
would tell one anything.

Oscar Wilde, *A Woman of No Importance*

## AGE

I do wish I could tell you my  
age but it's impossible. It  
keeps changing all the time.

Greer Garson, actress (1908–1996)

---

Life begins at 40 – but so do  
fallen arches, rheumatism, faulty  
eyesight, and the tendency  
to tell a story to the same  
person, three or four times.

Helen Rowland, English-American writer (1876–1950)

---

He was either a man of 150  
who was rather young for his  
years, or a man of 110 who  
had been aged by trouble.

P. G. Wodehouse, humorist and writer  
(1881–1975), *Lord Emsworth Acts for the Best*, 1937

Youth is a blunder; manhood  
a struggle; old age a regret.

Benjamin Disraeli



| wanna live 'til | die, no more, no less.

Eddie Izzard, stand-up comedian and actor



What I am looking  
for is a blessing  
not in disguise.

Jerome K. Jerome, humour writer (1859–1927)



# Animals

The great pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself too.

Samuel Butler, author (1835–1902)



Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.

Winston Churchill, statesman, author and Prime Minister during World War II (1874–1965)

