

BUFFI DUBERMAN

***30 WAYS
TO SAVE YOUR ASS
IN ENGLISH***

De 30 gênantste Engelse taalblunders
en hoe je ze kunt voorkomen

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ARE YOU READY?



Hello, darling you. Thank you so much for buying, borrowing, or stealing this book. I certainly hope you enjoy reading it and get lots of laughs out of it – but more importantly, I hope you *learn* from it. I've been teaching English and coaching fabulous people for over 25 years, and I have the best job in the world. My students and clients can tell you that my methods are far from traditional, but the results speak for themselves. I honestly believe that if you don't enjoy learning, you won't learn nearly as much.

My book is divided into four sections, and they all have the same structure. The first section is *Communication Confusion*, where we deal with common mistakes made when speaking English. It's basically a week in my life – the silly mistakes I hear all the time and my advice on how to stop making them. The second section has three parts: *Pronunciation Predicaments*, where I show you how to wrap your mouth around the tough sounds in English and not sound like a moron (but I say that with love in my heart), *Writing Washouts*, where we learn to write it right and not sound like an alien anymore, and *Spell Check Yourself Before You Wreck Yourself*, where you'll find the silliest spelling mistakes and the crazy reactions they cause, and your ass will be saved, letter by letter. The third section is *Grammar Grief*, where we tackle the tension many experience when it comes to the tenses in English. Some of the chapters in this particular section are overflowing with the joys of grammatical theory, so be sure to check with a doctor before you start. The fourth and final section is the *Sexy Nerd/Save Your Own Ass* section (depending on how you want to identify yourself, but I myself tend to wave the Sexy Nerd flag with pride), which includes lots of fun stuff – my *Top 5 Websites*

for *Life Without Me*, my *Irregular Verb List* and my *Top 5 Ways to Use it or Lose it*. Throughout the book, grammatical terms in English have been translated into Dutch (when applicable), to increase your enjoyment and appreciation of these fine words even more.

I start each section in the same way. Every section is made up of several chapters. In each chapter, I start out with the *Problem*. This is a quote from someone – something in English that I have actually heard or read firsthand, which was wrong, embarrassing, stupid, or ridiculous. (Most of these quotes are really funny. You might just laugh and then stop and say, ‘Oh, wait. I’ve said that.’) Then I have the *Diagnosis* – analyzing why this particular mistake was made, the background behind it, and why it’s such a common mistake. After the diagnosis comes the *Remedy* – my prescription for you (and no, it’s not a *recipe*, but I’ll explain why later in the book...) about what you have to do to never make this mistake again.

Most chapters have an *Extra Vitamins!* part. Here you’ll get additional information about this particular problem; such as phrases connected to it, exceptions to the rule, British vs. American English, or extra tips and tricks to activate the remedy even more.

After the last chapter in the section has finished, you will see a nifty QR code. (Yes, I am a technical goddess.) If you scan this code (with your superduper smart phone) you will be brought to a magical site where you can take my *Was Your Ass Saved?* test. This test deals with everything that was covered in the entire section, and it’s a great way to see how far you’ve come, as far as ass saving goes. This fun test includes questions ranging from ‘Find The Mistake (And Kill It)’ to ‘True or False?’ to multiple choice, to name a few. All of the answers are given at the end of the test, and I trust you to look at the answers AFTER you’ve taken the test, not during. Remember, darling – karma’s a bitch.

I end every section with a delicious reward for surviving that particular section. This is my soon-to-be-famous *Don't Go There* list – crazy quotes with horrendous mistakes that really don't need a lot of in-depth analysis about why they are wrong. The only thing you have to know is that they are wrong. Very, very wrong, and they should never, ever, be uttered again. Unless, of course, you want to sound like an idiot.

This book is mostly in English, maar af en toe zul je wat zinnen voorbij zien komen in het Nederlands. Waarom? Het antwoord is tweeledig. Een, ik heb ontdekt dat sommige theorieën iets makkelijker te begrijpen zijn in het Nederlands en twee, ik wil stiekem heel graag bewijzen dat ik ook in het Nederlands kan schrijven. Bij deze dus!

Now my dearest, let the ass-saving begin.

Buffi Duberman
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CHAPTER 1:

**'EVER CHECK
YOUR A-MAIL?!'**

PROBLEM: ‘My name is Gerard. That’s J-I-R-E-R-D.’

DIAGNOSIS: Gerard is not spelled ‘J-I-R-E-R-D’, but, obviously, ‘G-E-R-A-R-D’. This person (and I suspect he’s not the only one) has trouble saying the letters of the English alphabet correctly. He said J instead of G, I instead of E, and E instead of A. (The other letters were OK, thank god!) I know exactly where this problem stems from – the E in English is pronounced the same as the I in Dutch, the E in Dutch is the A in English, the I in English is the IJ in Dutch, and the I in Dutch is the E in English. No wonder we (by this I mean ‘you’) get confused! Let me save your ass on this one.

REMEDY: There is nothing more embarrassing than not being able to spell your own name. Can you imagine having a great phone call with a potential client and then asking him to send you an e-mail confirming what you’ve just discussed, only to sound like a two year old when it comes to spelling your name in English? We don’t want to go there, now, do we darling?

This little trick will help you remember the most difficult letters in the English alphabet. (And no, we don’t call this a ‘donkey bridge’ in English! It’s a ‘memory aid’, or if you really want to sound sexy, a ‘mnemonic device’... but for some reason ‘donkey bridge’ sounds like more fun!) When you think of these letters, try to remember the following words:

- A = L.A., DNA
- I = FBI, iPhone, iPad
- E = e-mail (ever heard of anyone wanting to check their a-mail?!)
- U = university, United States
- Y = YMCA, DIY, why (when you think of the y, try to imagine the letter being formed by a person standing up with their arms in the air, wondering why. This works for me, but maybe only for me...)
- G = Bee Gees, G-Star, G-Unit
- J = dj, JFK
- K = OK
- H = If you are a fashionista and have shopped abroad, then think of H&M. Otherwise, just memorize it – it sounds like the word ‘age’, but ends with a *tsh* sound: *aitsh*.

EXTRA VITAMINS! If you want to be able to spell with confidence (and you do! You do!), the best way is to practice with a friend. Spell for them the name of the street you live on, your mother’s last name, the name of the school you went to, etc. Have them write down exactly what you said. Then read what they wrote and check how well you did! (Then switch to get revenge.)

If you use English on the phone a lot, it might be a good idea to copy my letter list, laminate it and place it next to your phone. Many of my clients have done this over the years, and made copies for all their colleagues. It works! Now, if we could just find Gerard to let him know...