

How 'super' lost its meaning:

There was a time when the word 'super' was reserved for things that were truly special.

But nowadays, just about everything is 'super,' like slightly larger soft drinks or slightly stickier glue.

How did we get here? Where did it all go wrong? This timeline explains it all.

1590

Shakespeare describes Kate in his play, *The Taming of the Shrew*, as "super-dainty."

1891

The word "supermodel" is used for the first time by artist Henry Stacy Marks in an interview in *The Strand Magazine* to describe a man whose poses are over-the-top.

1895

"Super" starts to become used as standalone slang – just in time to describe recent inventions like the revolving door and the hair dryer.

1931

The word, "supercaliflawjalicexpialadoshus," appears in the *Daily Orange*, the student newspaper of Syracuse University. It is the first indication that we, as a society, will put the word "super" in front of literally anything.

1934

The first superhero, Mandrake the Magician, makes his debut. He has the ability to make people believe anything, simply by gesturing hypnotically.

1938

Superman makes his debut and nobody cares about Mandrake the Magician anymore.

1946

The word "duper" is notably added to "super". It describes actor Gary Cooper in Irving Berlin's song, "Puttin' on the Ritz." To this day, nobody knows what "duper" means.

1951

Songwriters Barney Young and Gloria Parker publish a song called, "Supercalafajalistickeapealadojus" (subtitled "The Super Song"). It's not exactly a hit.

1964

The Sherman Brothers write "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" for the Disney musical film, "Mary Poppins." Barney Young and Gloria Parker throw up in their mouths, sue Disney, and lose.

1966

Lamar Hunt, owner of the Kansas City Chiefs, first uses the term "Super Bowl." He later explains that the name was likely in his head because his children had been playing with a Super Ball toy. "I have kiddingly called it the 'Super Bowl,' which obviously can be improved upon," he writes in a letter. The improvement has yet to come.

1967

Hypermarkets start to become known as "supermarkets."

1979

The term "supermoon" is coined to refer to a new or full moon which occurs at or near its closest approach to Earth in a given orbit.

1980

Judy Blume's seminal coming-of-age novel, *Superfudge*, hits bookstores. Tragically, it has nothing to do with fudge.

1982

Frank Zappa pens the song, "Valley Girl," including the beautiful poetic lyric: "Everybody's, like, super, super nice."

1985

Super Mario Bros. is released. But that's not even the most super thing to happen this year – a chain of grocery stores in Canada becomes officially known as Real Canadian Superstore.

1988

McDonald's introduces the option to 'supersize' their fries and soft drinks. With 42 ounces of pop now available, the nation feels more quenched than ever before.

1989

The FDA orders tampon manufacturers to standardize their absorbency ratings. "Super" tampons can hold 9-12 grams; "Super-plus" can hold 12-15 grams.

2005 NOVEMBER

Reality show star Carson Kressley publishes a children's book called *You're Different and That's Super* about a unicorn trying to find his place in the world.

2005 DECEMBER

"Super" becomes recognized as an official baby name for girls, ranking 12,120th in popularity.

2007 JANUARY

Steve Jobs calls iPhone "super-smart" in a keynote speech. It doesn't have the ability to copy and paste text.

2011

Nicki Minaj releases "Super Bass," which peaks at #6 in Canada. "Boom, badoom, boom, boom, badoom, boom, bass, he got dat super bass," she sings, leaving us all wondering what a "super bass" is and how we can get one.

2016 FEBRUARY

Actor Ryan Reynolds says if he could have any superpower, he'd want to be able to "reenact '80s dance music videos in slow motion," displaying some confusion about the meaning of "super."

2017 OCTOBER

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau wishes everyone a "super Halloween." Okay, okay, fine, he's dressed up as Clark Kent. But still.

2017 NOVEMBER

Kim Kardashian insists in an interview that she and Kanye West are "super normal."

2017 DECEMBER

"Super" shoots up 9,000 places on the baby name popularity list from the year before.

2017 DECEMBER

Neil DeGrasse Tyson takes to Twitter to disparage supermoons as "an embarrassment to everything else we call 'super.'"

2017 DECEMBER, 1 MINUTE LATER

Tyson continues his Twitter rant: "If last month's Full Moon were a 16.0 inch pizza, then this month's 'Super' Moon would be 16.1 inches. I'm just saying."

2017 DECEMBER, 5 MINUTES LATER

Tyson flips a table and writes, "If a 16.1 inch pizza is "super" to you, compared with a 16.0 inch pizza, then we have an issue of vocabulary."

2018 JANUARY

Kim Kardashian bemoans that her biggest makeup mistake was the "super-white under eye." We don't know what that is, but it sounds simply awful.

2018 FEBRUARY

Kim Kardashian tells *People Magazine* how she stays "super present" with her kids: she puts her phone away.

2018 MAY

Real Canadian Superstore takes a stand and reclaims the meaning of the word "super" one crisp Granny Smith apple at a time.