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When we use the word *nonsense* in everyday conversation, it's usually in quite a negative way – to show that we think something isn't right. For example, if we disagreed with somebody, we might say:

*I think that's nonsense!*

This is a very strong word. Another strong word, which the British use in the same way, is the word *rubbish*:

*That's rubbish!*

We can use the verb *to talk* with these words.

*Don't talk rubbish!*

These words are very strong and can be quite rude, but we can make them even stronger by using the adjectives *total*, *complete* and *absolute*.

*I'm sick of hearing this! It's total rubbish!*

*What he said at the time was absolute nonsense, as he admitted himself later.*

*I wouldn't read that article. It's complete nonsense, I think.*

We can also say *a load of nonsense*.

*I wouldn't watch read that article. It's a load of nonsense, I think.*

If we want a formal word to describe something unreasonable, we can use the adjective *nonsensical*.

‘When you think about it carefully, it’s a nonsensical argument’.

So that’s *talking nonsense* or *rubbish*, *absolute nonsense*, *total nonsense*, *complete nonsense*, *a load of nonsense* and *nonsensical*.

There are two words that have a similar meaning to *nonsense*. They are *gibberish* and *gobbledygook*\*. In the field of linguistics, a nonsense sentence like *Colourless green ideas sleep furiously*, follows grammatical rules but doesn’t have a meaning – but *gibberish* and *gobbledygook* don’t follow grammatical rules – they aren’t examples of language at all.

*You were talking in your sleep last night, but I couldn’t understand what you were saying. It was just gibberish.*

*Something’s wrong with my phone. All I can hear is gobbledygook.*

In conversational English, we can use *gibberish* and *gobbledygook* like we use *nonsense*.

*Oh stop talking gibberish!*

But more often, we use these words to describe something that is expressed very badly. This might be because it’s too technical or because it’s written in a poor style.

*I can’t understand a word of this manual. It’s just gobbledygook!*

We have another word which describes something that is difficult to understand because it’s poorly expressed. This is *mumbo-jumbo*.

*Trust me, you won’t understand the contract. We’ll have to get a lawyer to translate all the legal mumbo-jumbo.*

An adjective which describes something that is very clear and easy to understand is *no-nonsense*. We don't use this word much in conversation, but you often see it in the titles of books.

*I bought this book the other day, 'The no-nonsense guide to downloading music'. It's really interesting.*

So that's *gibberish, gobbledygook, mumbo-jumbo* and *no-nonsense*.

\* Note these alternative spellings: *gobbledygook, gobbledegook*