



Alaska Terms

Every locale has its own lingo, certain words or phrases that only the folks from that locale truly understand. Alaska, of course, is no different from any where else. Here are a few terms used by Alaskans which may help you in your study of this great land.

Doug Ruzicka
MushHusky!

Alaska Words & Phrases

Alaska Horse	Mosquitoes, big ones and lots of them	
Blue Cloud	Southern term for a break in a cloudy sky	
Breakup	Time in spring when ice begins to melt & rivers start to flow; the end of winter	
The Bush	Any part of Alaska inaccessible by road	
Bush Pilot	Pilot who services remote areas in a small plane which usually has floats or skis.	
Cabin Fever	Housebound, typically in cramped quarters, due to inclement weather and darkness.	
Cache	Small structure built on stilts to protect food from animals	
Calve	The action by which glacial ice breaks off, or calves, from a glacier to form icebergs	
Cheechako	A newcomer to Alaska; the opposite of a sourdough, or old-timer	
Chum	Another name for dog salmon	
Iditarod	Thousand-mile sled dog race from Anchorage to Nome held annually in March	
Lower 48	Reference to the continental U.S. minus Hawaii	
Midnight Sun	The sun above the horizon at midnight on the longest day of the year	
Mukluks	Sealskin or reindeer-skin boots traditionally worn by the Inuit Indians	
Outside	Any place not in Alaska	
Pay Dirt	A mining term referring to placer gold that was sure to bring a profit to a miner	
Quiviut	Wool from the Alaska Musk Ox	
Reindeer	Domestically raised Caribou	
Runners	The bottom section of a dog sled that slides on the snow	
Southeast	A local term for Southeast Alaska	
S.E. Sneaker	Brown rubber boots residents tend to wear often; whether it is raining or just in case	
Snow Machine	A snow mobile	
Snow Hook	A hook used to secure a team of sled dogs while at stop on the trail	
Sourdough	Applies to anyone who has managed to weather an Alaska Winter, or an old-timer	
Taku Wind	A sudden, powerful wind gusting up to 100 mph, which can cause rain to fall sideways	
Termination Dust	The first snowfall marking the beginning of winter	
Ulu	A fan-shaped knife used for chopping meat	

MushHusky!
1-888-866-0156
mushhusky@acsalaska.net
www.mushhusky.com