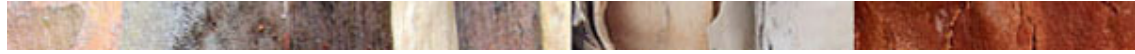


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Oxford Word of the Month – July: cruisy

adjective: easy; relaxed, easy-going.

THE STORY BEHIND THE WORD OF THE MONTH

In her recent autobiography Australian senator Jacqui Lambie describes one of her army postings in this way: ‘There were only a few of us at the field hospital, and it was a **cruisy** placement, but it was not what I wanted to do.’ (*Rebel With a Cause*, 2018) And in another recent publication we find this comment: ‘We love being here! Businesses are **cruisy** and supportive of each other.’ (*Byron Life*, January 2019)

The word **cruisy** in these two quotations has two different but closely related meanings. In the first example **cruisy** is synonymous with ‘easy’, while in the second it means ‘relaxed, easy-going’. In Australian English **cruisy** is commonly found with both these meanings, and can be applied to a person or a thing.

The adjective **cruisy** derives from a figurative sense of the verb *cruise*, which is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* in this way: ‘to advance or succeed with ease, esp. in a match, race, or other competition; (also) to expend a minimum of effort.’ This sense of *cruise* can be traced back to the early 1930s and evolved from the literal sense of *cruise*, meaning ‘to sail about without a precise destination’.

The first printed evidence for **cruisy** dates from the early 1980s. In the correspondence section of a student newspaper from the University of New South Wales, one student reflected on their predicament of being ‘busted for possession’: ‘So beware friends of higher altitudes — all is not **cruisy** sailing and personal introspection is not conducive to the majority of public opinion.’ (*Tharunka*, 30 September 1981)

In a couple of other 1980s examples we find **cruisy**, with the meaning ‘easy-going’, in the classified section of the newspaper. For example: ‘**Cruisy** non-smoking person with sense of humour to share with m and f. ... \$50 pw.’ (*Canberra Times*, 24 May 1986)

All the evidence for **cruisy** demonstrates that the adjective can be used in a wide variety of contexts, but always with a general sense of being easy and relaxed.

The comparative and superlative forms of *cruisy* in the following quotes demonstrate this:

Cancer Jun 22 – Jul 23. This week will be magic or hellish, depending on you. Your most productive activity would be revamping limiting ideas – instantly beneficial in making life cruasier, smoother and a lot less slog. (Sydney Morning Herald, 15 March 2014)

One of the cruisiest jobs in the public service is about to end. Queensland Rail staff rostered on to work at stations when no trains are running are to be sent to busier sites to improve customer service from May 19. (Brisbane Courier-Mail, 9 May 2014)

Cruisy will be considered for inclusion in the next edition of *The Australian National Dictionary*.

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