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By the Numbers

In Unit 6 you learned a bunch of slang words that represent quantities: **loads, slew, heaps, gobs, tons, bunch, lots.**


Some other slang words stand for quantities and are based on numbers. You probably already know the expressions *a couple of* (= about two), *half a dozen* (= about six), and *dozen* (= twelve or about twelve):



Mr. Smith is away from the office for a **couple of days**.



I've seen that flick at least **half a dozen times**.



There's a pileup of about a **dozen cars** on the interstate.

Note that *of* often gets the "uh" pronunciation in the expression *couple of* when the next word starts with a consonant sound:

a couple of minutes /'kʌplə/

a couple of hours /'kʌpləv/

Several other slang words take the place of different numbers. The number zero has the most slang synonyms:


This baby goes from nada to 60 in just five seconds!



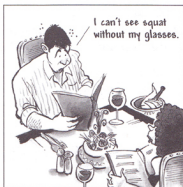
What's up?



Zip.



That guy knows zilch about computers.



Zip, zilch, nada, and squat are all slang for zero or nothing. **Zip, zilch, and squat** can also take the place of *anything* when *anything* is used with a negative word:

"He can't see squat without his glasses." = He can't see anything without his glasses.

"She won't give you zilch for that." = She won't give you anything for that.

"That doesn't mean zip to me." = That doesn't mean anything to me.

Unlike *nothing*, **zip, zilch, and squat** don't count as negatives, so you don't create a double negative when you use these words with *not*.