Venezuelan Slang: Common Words and Phrases (with Examples)

Updated October 30, 2026



Quick answer: The most common Venezuelan slang words are **chamo / chama** (kid, buddy), **pana** (friend), **chévere** (great), **burda** (a lot), **vaina** (thing) and **¡epa!** (hey!). Venezuelans use them constantly, at home and abroad.

Venezuelan Spanish is fast, expressive and full of unique words. This guide covers 40+ Venezuelan slang words, phrases and sayings, with meanings and example sentences, so you can follow real conversations with Venezuelan friends, coworkers or a tutor from Venezuela.

Venezuelan slang for people

Slang	Meaning	Example
Chamo / chama	Kid, young person; buddy	*¡Epa, chamo! ¿Qué más?* – Hey buddy, what's up?
Pana	Friend	*Él es mi pana.* – He's my friend.
Jeva / jevo	Girlfriend / boyfriend	*Vino con su jeva.* – He came with his girlfriend.
Catire / catira	Blond person	*La catira de la oficina.* – The blond girl from the office.
Sifrino / sifrina	Posh, snobby person	*No seas sifrino.* – Don't be such a snob.
Malandro	Thug, street criminal	*Cuidado con los malandros.*

Everyday Venezuelan slang words

Slang	Meaning	Example
Vaina	Thing, stuff (any situation)	*¿Qué vaina es esa?* – What is that thing?
Coroto	Thing, belongings	*Recoge tus corotos.* – Pick up your stuff.
Burda	A lot, very	*Había burda de gente.* – There were tons of people.
Cola	Line / traffic jam; also a ride	*¿Me das la cola?* – Can you give me a ride?
Rumba	Party	*Vamos de rumba.* – Let's go party.

Slang	Meaning	Example
Bochinche	Commotion, mess	*Se armó un bochinche.* – A big commotion broke out.
Cotufas	Popcorn	*Compramos cotufas para la película.*
Cambur	Banana	*Un batido de cambur.* – A banana smoothie.

Venezuelan slang for feelings and reactions

- **Chévere / chévere cambur** – great, awesome
- **Fino** – great, cool. *¡Qué fino!*
- **Guayabo** – heartbreak or nostalgia after a breakup
- **Na' guará** – wow! (typical of the Lara region)
- **¡Epa!** – Hey! (greeting or surprise)
- **Al pelo** – perfect, just right

Common Venezuelan phrases

- **¿Qué es la que hay?** – What's up?
- **Echarle los perros a alguien** – to flirt with someone
- **Tripear** – to really enjoy something. *Tripeé burda el concierto.*
- **Dar la cola** – to give someone a ride
- **Estar en la luna** – to be distracted

Venezuelan sayings

- **“El que es perico, dondequiera es verde.”** – A parrot is green wherever it goes. (You can’t hide who you really are.)
- **“No hay peor diligencia que la que no se hace.”** – The worst attempt is the one you never make.
- **“Camarón que se duerme se lo lleva la corriente.”** – The shrimp that falls asleep gets swept away by the current. (Stay alert.)

Venezuelan food words you’ll hear

Arepa (corn cake), *cachapa* (sweet corn pancake), *tequeños* (cheese sticks), *pabellón* (national dish: rice, black beans, shredded beef, plantain), *caraotas* (black beans), *hallaca* (Christmas tamale), *papelón con limón* (sugarcane lemonade). Learn more food words in food in Spanish.

Learn more Venezuelan Spanish

Read our full guide to learning Venezuelan Spanish, then compare it with Colombian slang, Peruvian slang and Ecuadorian slang.

Frequently asked questions

What does “chamo” mean in Venezuela?

It means kid or young person, and it’s also used like “buddy” or “dude.” The feminine form is chama .

What does “pana” mean?

Friend. Mi pana = my friend. It’s used in Venezuela, Ecuador and parts of the Caribbean.

What does “burda” mean?

A lot or very: burda de gente – lots of people; burda de bueno – really good.

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