

Stack Words

A running glossary for Permeating Presence

The beautiful, bizarre, and unexplainably specific language of writers on Substack.

102 words and counting



The language writers build together.

Invented terms for the rituals, anxieties, friendships, and strange joys that gather around writing on Substack. New words are reviewed before joining this living collection.

B

backstack *n.*

The old notes you revisit when you need to remember why you started writing.

backstacker *n.*

Someone who only reads notes from months ago, refuses to be current.

C

coldstack *n.*

A note you post with zero expectation, just to see who's still there.

costack *v.*

To restack someone because you meant it, not because it was smart.

D

deepstack *n.*

A note that's short but you think about it for days.

doomstack *n.*

Scrolling notes past midnight looking for one that will make you feel better, it does not.

H

humblestack *v.*

Showing your work instead of naming your wins.
Letting the notes and the numbers speak for you.

IN A SENTENCE: *She never once called herself a high achiever. She didn't have to. Everyone who read her could tell.*

L

lastnote *n.*

The final thing someone posted before they disappeared from the platform.

M

megastack *n.*

The note so long you have to sit down for it, emotionally and physically.

N

nightstack *n.*

The notes you save to read after everyone's asleep.

O

oldstack *n.*

The very first note that made you stay on this platform.

overstacked *adj.*

Too many tabs, too many notes, too many good writers to keep up with.

overstacker *n.*

Someone who restacks everything, meaning nothing.

Q

quietstack *n.*

The writer nobody talks about who's been carrying you for months.

R

restackworthy *adj.*

The bar. Not everything clears it.

S

slowstack *v.*

Restacking a note two days after you read it, once it's finished rattling around in your head.

IN A SENTENCE: *I read her note Tuesday. Thought about it Wednesday. Slowstacked it Thursday, like the restack button needed time to catch up with me.*

stackapology *n.*

The note you write explaining why you haven't posted, which is itself a post.

stackaudit *n.*

Going through your following list and asking honestly who you'd miss.

stackacious *adj.*

Bold in a way that only happened because this community made room for it.

IN A SENTENCE: *I wouldn't have posted this a year ago. This place made me stackacious.*

stackatic *adj.*

The way a stranger on Substack roots for you, sometimes harder than people who've known you for years.

IN A SENTENCE: *My cousin still hasn't read a single post. A woman in Ohio is stackatic about every one of them.*

stackaversary *n.*

The anniversary of joining Substack, or of a specific writer discovering you, or you discovering them.

IN A SENTENCE: *One year ago today I posted my first note to twelve people. Happy stackaversary to me.*

stackbet *n.*

Restacking something before you've finished reading it because the first line already sold you.

stackbound *adj.*

How you feel about the handful of writers you're actually in it with.

stackburp *n.*

Hitting restack by accident and pretending it was on purpose.

stackcheck *v.*

Going through your notes once a week to see who actually shows up for you.

stackcrumb *n.*

The tiny detail in someone's note that you can't stop thinking about.

stackcurfew *n.*

The time you promised yourself you'd stop checking notes, which you did not honor.

stackdrunk *adj.*

Reading forty notes in a row and forgetting your own name.

stackbold *adj.*

The specific courage that shows up because a Substack community made room for it.

IN A SENTENCE: *I wouldn't have posted this a year ago. This place made me stackbold.*

stackbrag *n.*

Working "as I always tell my readers" into a note with twelve readers.

stackcall *n.*

The note that makes you want to message the writer directly instead of commenting publicly.

stackcraft *n.*

A tool or approach built for deliberate, strategic growth. Not a hack. Not a shortcut. Something made on purpose.

IN A SENTENCE: *Most growth tactics are noise. This one's stackcraft.*

stackcrush *n.*

Discovering a writer so good you go back and read their whole archive.

stackdare *n.*

Writing something a little too honest because someone else just did.

stackecho *n.*

Writing something and then seeing three other people say the same thing that week.

stackenanigans *n.*

The specific joy of making up words nobody asked for and enjoying it anyway.

IN A SENTENCE: *We were only supposed to name one feeling. Two hours and a hundred words later, that was pure stackenanigans.*

stackfatuated *adj.*

Infatuated, but for a stranger's writing instead of a person.

IN A SENTENCE: *I don't know her last name. I know her last twelve notes by heart. Stackfatuated.*

stackferno *n.*

A comment section that got away from everyone, in a good way.

stackfull *adj.*

The specific fullness of realizing you're not missing anything, you just needed to notice what's already there.

IN A SENTENCE: *I lack nothing. Grateful for everything. Stackfull.*

stackgaze *v.*

To notice the small, good, unremarkable things around you.

IN A SENTENCE: *I don't chase hot takes. I stackgaze. The good stuff is on a baseball field, a porch, a road trip, if you remember to look.*

stackfam *n.*

The writers who feel like family even though you've never met.

stackfeeling *n.*

An emotion you can only describe using another Substack writer's phrasing.

stackflex *n.*

Mentioning your subscriber count in a note about not caring about subscriber counts.

stackfused *adj.*

The state of a Substack page that can't decide if it's a comedy bit or a memoir, and refuses to pick.

IN A SENTENCE: *One week it's a made-up word about restacking too fast. The next it's my great-grandfather's chair. If you're stackfused about what this newsletter is, join the club. I'm the president.*

stackghost *n.*

The person who liked your note and never came back, may they be at peace.

stackhabit *n.*

The notes you check without thinking, like checking your pocket for keys.

stackilted *adj.*

The specific sting of losing a subscriber, treated like getting dumped by someone you barely dated.

IN A SENTENCE: *Lost one this morning. No note, no reason. Stackilted.*

stackitude *n.*

Gratitude for the people who show up on Substack, especially the ones who never met you first.

IN A SENTENCE: *My cousin still hasn't read a post. A stranger in Ohio has read all of them. Stackitude.*

stackkin *n.*

A writer whose story feels like it could have been yours.

stacklift *n.*

The mid-week boost from another writer noticing what you posted. Not a viral moment. Just enough to keep going.

IN A SENTENCE: *It's Wednesday. Then someone restacks something you wrote on Monday and it's stacklift, exactly when you needed it.*

stackmirror *n.*

The note that says exactly what you were thinking before you had the nerve to say it.

stackheirloom *n.*

A note you saved from someone who isn't writing anymore.

stackismatic *adj.*

The specific charisma a writer has that makes strangers root for them like family.

IN A SENTENCE: *She's not famous. She's stackismatic. Different thing entirely.*

stackjinx *n.*

Restacking a note right before the writer posts something even better.

stackle *v.*

To argue with a note in your head for twenty minutes and never comment.

stackmates *n.*

Two writers who show up for each other on Substack, not because the algorithm asked them to.

stacknap *n.*

Closing the app for "five minutes" and reopening it the next morning.

stackopoly *n.*

One writer who somehow shows up in every good thread you find.

stackpocalypse *n.*

The day your favorite ten writers all post within the same hour.

stackpull *v.*

Rooting for another writer, restacking because you want it to help them, not you.

IN A SENTENCE: *I don't check the algorithm for me anymore. Most days I'm stackpulling for someone else.*

stackrattled *adj.*

When someone's note says the thing you've been trying to say for weeks.

stackregret *n.*

Restacking something at 1am that made total sense at 1am.

stackreturn *v.*

Coming back to a writer after months away, no explanation needed.

stackphantom *n.*

The writer whose voice you now hear in your own head when you write.

stackprune *v.*

Unfollowing people out of guilt instead of interest, finally stopping.

stackquake *n.*

The tremor in your hand when you see a writer you admire liked your note.

IN A SENTENCE: *I restacked a note from a writer I've followed for months. She replied within the hour. Stackquake. I did not accomplish anything else that day.*

stackrecall *n.*

Remembering you liked a note but not who wrote it or what it said.

stackrelief *n.*

What Substack feels like after you've left everywhere else. No judgment. No scroll. Just a place to put a thought down.

IN A SENTENCE: *Instagram was noise. This is stackrelief.*

stackrious *adj.*

A writer on Substack who is genuinely, unreasonably funny.

IN A SENTENCE: *I read her note on the bus and laughed out loud like a person with no self control. Stackrious.*

stackroutine *n.*

The specific order you check things in, notes then inbox then nothing gets done.

stacksaurus *n.*

A writer who has been on the platform since before it was cool, and never lets you forget it.

stackship *n.*

What Substack actually builds between a writer and the people who read them.

IN A SENTENCE: *Instagram gave me followers. Substack gave me stackship.*

stacksnack *n.*

A note so short and good you wish there were more of it, like one chip.

IN A SENTENCE: *I opened the app to check one thing. Forty minutes later I had read nine stacksnacks and accomplished the original thing zero times.*

stackspiral *n.*

Clicking one note, then their profile, then three more writers, then it's an hour later.

stackstruck *adj.*

When a note hits so hard you forget to restack it.

stacksanctuary *n.*

The reason you stay even when the numbers say you shouldn't. A place to post a thought and not brace for what comes back.

IN A SENTENCE: *I almost quit this week. Then I remembered why I came here in the first place. Stacksanctuary.*

stacksessed *adj.*

When a reader you've never met cares more than people who've known you for years.

IN A SENTENCE: *Blood is supposed to come first. A stranger in Ohio is stacksessed anyway.*

stacksick *adj.*

Missing a writer who hasn't posted in a while.

stacksort *v.*

Separating writers you read from writers you just follow.

stackstamp *n.*

The little internal nod you give a note before moving on, no restack, no comment, just respect.

stackswap *v.*

Trading restacks with another writer, an unspoken deal neither of you named.

stacksy *adj.*

The specific whimsy that shows up in a Substack note. Playful in a way most of the internet forgot how to be.

IN A SENTENCE: *It's clear most of us lack whimsy. Substack is one of the few places still stacksy.*

stacktag *v.*

Tagging a friend in a note because you know exactly what they'll say.

stacktastrophe *n.*

Losing a subscriber you didn't just collect, you earned. Funny on the surface. A little real underneath.

IN A SENTENCE: *These aren't numbers to me, they're people who chose to stay. So when one leaves, it's a stacktastrophe. I'll live. But I noticed.*

Stacktionary *n.*

A website built to collect and invent Substack-related words, the ongoing dictionary for a language that didn't exist before this note.

IN A SENTENCE: *We've made up over a hundred of these in one conversation. It's time they had a home. Welcome to the stacktionary.*

stacktriage *v.*

Deciding in three seconds whether a note deserves a full read or a scroll past.

stacktacular *adj.*

The feeling of closing out a week where it actually felt like something was building.

IN A SENTENCE: *I checked the numbers Friday night mostly out of habit, then didn't stop smiling for the rest of the night. It's been a stacktacular week.*

stacktastic *adj.*

A note so good you have to stop and tell someone.

IN A SENTENCE: *I restacked a note from a writer I've followed for months. She replied within the hour. Stacktastic.*

stackthread *n.*

The invisible line between you and a writer you've never met but feel connected to.

stacktonic *n.*

Whatever Substack happens to be that day. A multivitamin, a pick-me-up, comic relief, someone's story landing exactly when you needed it.

IN A SENTENCE: *Some mornings I need it to wake me up. Some nights I need it to make me laugh. Either way, it's my stacktonic.*

stacktrust *n.*

What Substack is actually built on. Not audience size. Trust that compounds one note at a time.

IN A SENTENCE: *Instagram gave me followers. Substack gave me stacktrust.*

stackurage *n.*

Courage that shows up because of this specific community, not in spite of it.

IN A SENTENCE: *I didn't have this in me a year ago. This place gave me stackurage.*

stackurious *adj.*

The specific openness of a Substack reader who showed up ready to feel something, learn something, or grow.

IN A SENTENCE: *I love Substack because everyone here is stackurious.*

stackvow *n.*

Deciding you'll read someone's work no matter what, forever, no reason needed.

stackwich *n.*

Reading someone's note between two chores, never actually finishing the chores.

stackzoomies *n.*

Posting five notes in ten minutes because you finally have something to say.

stackurge *n.*

The moment you stop circling the thing you came here to write and just write it.

IN A SENTENCE: *I'd been posting around it for weeks. Then one morning, stackurge. I wrote the thing.*

stackvoted *adj.*

Devoted, but for a writer you found a month ago instead of a person you've known for decades.

IN A SENTENCE: *My cousin still hasn't read a post. A woman in Ohio is stackvoted to every single one.*

Stackwhack *n.*

A writer who uses botanical terms as cuss words.

IN A SENTENCE: *Jim was a real stackwhack, calling people smelly chrysanthemums.*

stackzilla *n.*

A writer whose notes are so big they crash your whole afternoon.

substackle *n.*

The tangled mess of open tabs from following one good link too far.

U

understacked *adj.*

The quiet ache of not having found your people here yet.