

IAN RICHARDSON'S RANDOM HATE LIST OF CLICHÉS AND MISUSED WORDS AND PHRASES

Calm but tense (and tense but calm)	A nonsense. It can't be both.
Tiny little village	Villages are, by definition, tiny and little.
Personal friend	Friends are, by definition, personal. But close friend is okay.
...given birth to a baby boy/girl	What else could they be but a baby?
At this moment in time	What's wrong with "now"?
Head up	Head
Light up	Light
Meet up with	Meet
Up for sale	For sale
Rising up	Rising
...in two years time	In two years.
Consult with	Consult
He/she refuted the allegation	Refute means disprove by argument, not reject/dismiss.
Completely destroyed/wrecked/flooded	Destroyed/wrecked/flooded are self-standing. But partly is okay.
War/flood/fire/conflict situation	War/flood/fire/conflict.
Passed away/passed on	Died
Collateral damage. Neutralise. Take out.	Military euphemisms aimed at hiding the brutal reality of war.
High-speed police chase	"Why high-speed? This is implied by it being a chase.
Rushed to hospital by ambulance	What's wrong with "taken to hospital"?
Outside of	Outside
Razed to the ground [by fire]	"Razed" means levelled. A brick/stone building is unlikely to be razed.
Imply/infer	You imply in a statement; those listening to/reading it will infer.
Less/fewer	Less for quantities; fewer for numbers.
Amount of people/houses etc	Number of...
Try and...	Try to...
Assisting police with their enquiries	An unnecessary euphemism for "being questioned by police".
Pre-planned	Why "pre-"? Planning is always in advance of an event.
Fierce fighting	Fighting usually is fierce.
Very unique	Unique.
I've got	I have. Got is an ugly word that usually isn't needed in a sentence.
Closed off	Closed is usually sufficient.
Finishing/finished off	Finishing/finished
Centred around	Centred on.
Presently	It means soon, not currently. Or it used to.
Mitigate against	No. Don't confuse mitigate with militate.
Trained up	Trained
Must off	Must have.
Comprised/comprising of	Comprised/comprising
Concensus of opinion	Consensus
Bored of	Bored by
Awesome	A lazy comment. Use only when someone/something really is awesome.
Loved ones	Family and friends is more neutral and accurate.
[I feel] humble	Are you sure you don't mean proud?
Hiding out	Hiding

For more thoughts on the use of words, visit the Guardian style guide:

<http://www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/styleguide/>

and the BBC guide:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/news-style-guide>

and the Daily Telegraph style book:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/about-us/style-book/>

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