

**LINEMAN'S  
SLANG  
DICTIONARY**



**CHANCE**

**POWER SYSTEMS, INC.**

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# LINEMAN'S SLANG DICTIONARY

The "Lineman's Slang Dictionary" is yours compliments of Hubbell Power Systems, Inc. It has been prepared to help familiarize you with some of the jargon used in the electric utility industry, particularly that of the linemen. We are sure you will find it informative as well as entertaining.

These terms have been compiled from across the country. However, we find no regional connotations of these slang terms. But in the effort of keeping this literature "G" rated we have chosen not to include certain slang terms containing ethnic words or phrases. If you know of additional slang terms not appearing in this edition, we would welcome your ideas!

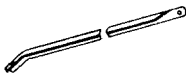
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Hubbell Power Systems, Inc.  
Advertising & Sales Promotion  
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Centralia, MO 65240  
Attn: Slang Dictionary

We hope you find this booklet easy and enjoyable to read as well as being a useful and important asset to you!



**alley-arm** - a side arm brace, used when cross-arm is not balanced on both sides of pole but extending out on one side only. Chance Catalog Section 5.



**alligator** - a tie stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.



alligator

**A.R.** - abbreviation for automatic recloser.

**baker board** - platform board. Chance Catalog Section 2350. (See also 'diving board').

**baloney** - cable.

**baloney bender** - a wireman who works with heavy cable.

**banjo** - a shovel, straight blade and long handle.

**bear grease** - Z.L.N. electric contact aid. Chance Catalog Section 13.

**becky** - a cable sling.

**bell** - suspension or deadend insulators. Ohio Brass Catalog Section 22.



bell

**bell wrench** - wrench for tightening various square head bolts.

**bender** - hammer.

**bible** - the electrician's code book.

**bicycle** - a chain drill for boring holes.

**boatswain's chair** - a small wooden seat supported by four ropes secured to a ring or tied at a common point above the workman's head.

**booger wire** - a neutral wire.

**bookie tool** - a staple puller.

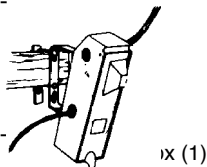
**bookie wheel** - a measuring device.

**boomer** - 1) a lineman who leaves one job to get to the next job. 2) a lineman who always worked on the installation of new transmission lines.

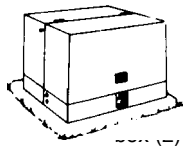
**booties** - meter clip insulators.

**bottles** - glass insulators.

**box** - 1) porcelain enclosed-type cutout.



**box** - 2) padmounted transformer or switchgear. Chance Catalog Section 17.



**broomsticks** - phase spacers, used to keep phases from coming into contact with each other at midspan.

**buck** - to lower or attempt to lower the voltage.

**buck arm** - two sets of crossarms at 90 degree angles to each other.

**bucket truck** - an aerial lift truck for raising men high enough to work on lines from the insulated bucket of the truck.

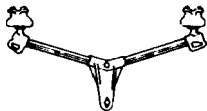
**bug** - transformer (Northwest U.S. term)

**bugs** - solderless, usually bolted, connectors.

**bug wrench** - speed wrench (Fargo box ratchet type) to install bolted connectors ('bugs').

**bulldog** - a “come-a-long” wire grip for holding conductor or strand under tension.

**bulldog wrench** - an alligator wrench.



**bullhorn** - Epoxirod bi-unit.  
Chance Catalog Section 12.

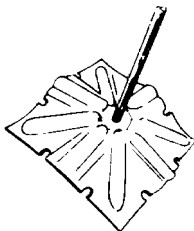
**bull line** - heavy line for pulling in wires (see also ‘hard line’).

**bull pen** - where the construction crew gathers before and after work.

**bull wheel** - a reel device used to hold tension on a transmission conductor during stringing operations.

**bundle** - multiple strings of

**bust anchor** - expanding anchor. Chance Catalog Section 4.



bu

**buster** - expanding and tamping bar used on expanding anchors. Chance Catalog Section 4A.

**butterfly** - conductor take-up reel.

**can** - an overhead transformer (see also ‘kettle’).

**candlestick** - fiberglass downlead bracket.

**candy grabbers** - channel lock pliers

**cat head** - capstan hoist. Chance Catalog Section 1150.

**cattle guard** - a plastic or metal guy guard.  
Chance Catalog Section 5.

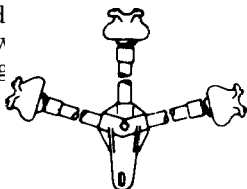
**cheaters** - channel lock pliers.

**cherry picker** - bucket truck.

**chicken catcher** - armsling

chicken tracks

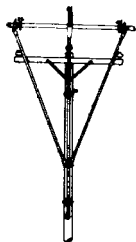
**chicken tracks** - Epoxirod  
tri-unit (see also 'crow  
foot'). Chance Catalog  
Section 12.



**chicken wing** - steel post insulator standoff for  
distribution construction (see also 'turkey  
wing'). Chance Catalog Section 5.

**chili bowl** - an oversized pin-type insulator.

**choker** - a nylon sling. Chance Catalog Section  
1250.



**christmas tree** - pole  
mounted auxiliary arm  
used for lifting conduc-  
tors. Chance Catalog  
Section 2200.

christmas tree

**CLF** - abbreviation for current limiting fuse.  
Chance Catalog Section 10C.

**climbers** - 1) hooks for climbing poles.

**clum some** - a greenhorn lineman, apprentice,  
helper.

**coffin hoist** - a chain hoist of any type.

**cold** - a de-energized line

**come-a-long** - wire grip for holding conductor or strand under tension. Also spelled cum-a-long. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**corn cob** - thimble adapter pin; Chance Catalog Section 5.

**coming up easy** - pick up load or increase tension.

**crosby clip** - wire rope guy wire clip. Chance Catalog Section 5.

**crow's foot** - Epoxirod tri-unit (see also 'chicken tracks'). Chance Catalog Section 12.

**C.S.P.** - completely self-protected transformer.

**C.S.T.** - customer subsurface transformer.

**C.T.** - current transformer, a device used to transfer current from one value to another.

**cum-a-long** - a wire grip for holding conductor or strand under tension. Also spelled come-a-long. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**d.a. bolt** - double arming bolt. Chance Catalog Section 5.

**dead man** - 1) wood pole, with U-bracket fitting for setting poles by hand without a truck. 2) short wood pole section, buried as an anchor. 3) any kind of earth anchor. Chance Catalog Section 4.

**diaper** - 1) rubber blanket pinned on overhead construction; 2) Seal-A-Conn covering connector.

**digging bar** - long, round steel bar with 2-in. chisel on one end; ("idiot stick").

**dig pole** - a transition pole for going from over-

head to underground distribution, (see also 'Riser Pole').

**disc** - suspension or deadend insulator. Chance Catalog Section 22.

**diving board** - a platform board (see also 'baker board'). Chance Catalog Section 2350.

**DOC** - drop-out cutout; open type cutout. Chance Catalog Section 10A.

**dog bone** - 1) special EHV yoke plates, so-called due to their shape; 2) vibration damper.

**door** - 1) the fuse tube on open type cutouts. 2) actual door on enclosed type cutouts.

**drifter** - a lineman who wants to see the world.

**eagle-eye** - leveling crossarms by sight with no measuring instruments.

**eels** - line hose, temporary cover-up. Chance Catalog Section 2400.

**egg breaker** - a guy strain insulator.

**egg sucker** - Grip-All sticl  
Chance Catalog Secti

**E.H.V.** - extra high volt-  
age.

**elbow** - underground  
cable terminator.



**elephant ear** - a high strength strain insulator.

**elephant ears** - 1) the arc chute on certain types of cutouts for extinguishing the arc while breaking load; 2) a triangular bracket.

**EPDM** - rubber material used in underground  
6 elbow and other connectors (ethylene pro-

pylene diene modified).

**equalizers** - a pair of connectors or club when used in a fight.

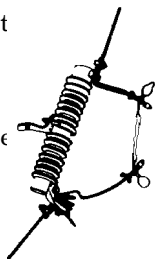
**eyeball** - visual determination without the use of instruments.

**fish** - a glass strain insulator.

**flip-cutout** - an open link cut

**floater** - 1) a lineman who would quit in the middle of a job; 2) a conductor

flip-cutout



that has become untied from an insulator; 3) a conductor, insulator and pin that has separated from the crossarm and is "floating" rather than tied down.

**flower pot** - universal bushing well, padmount transformer.

**finger-line** -  $\frac{1}{4}$ " line. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**four and a quarter** - porcelain dead end insulator. Ohio Brass Catalog Section 22.

**fuzz box** - noisy tester. Chance Catalog Section 2450.

**gate** - an open type cutout's fusetube. Chance Catalog Section 10A.

**gin** - temporary lifting device; see pole buddy. Chance Catalog Section 1200.

**goathead** - an angle-iron punch.

**goathorns** - guy hooks, iron Chance Catalog Section 5.

**goat-skin** - tarp for covering unfinished work for the night.

**gopher** - a “go for this, go for that” helper.

**goulash** - insulating compound.

**grasshopper** - see flip-cutout.

**ground hog** - a lineman’s helper (see also ‘grunt’).

**grunt** - a lineman’s helper (see also ‘ground hog’).

**gut** - 5 kV rubber line hose.

**gut wrench** - cant hook. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**guy jack** - a chain hoist. Chance Catalog Section 1100.



**half-power** - a lineman working off a jag.



**hand** - a tie stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**hard head** - a lag screw. Chance Catalog Section 5.



**hard line** - steel bull line for pulling in wires (also see ‘bull line’).

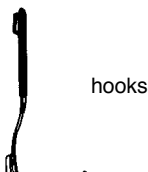
**headache** - 1) vocal warning of danger. 2) anything falling from above on pole.

**high pot** - to apply high potential to electrical machine or equipment, normally done during insulation testing.

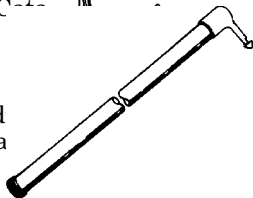
**hog liver** - flat porcelain guy strain insulator.

**hood** - insulator cover. Chance Catalog Section 2400.

**hooks** - climbers, used for climbing poles.



**hookstick** - insulated disconnect stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.



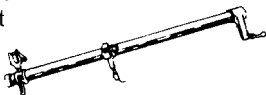
**hose** - rubber or plastic up equipment (cond cover). Chance Cata

Section 2400.

**hot** - a live or energized line.

**hot arm** - extension arm. Chance Catalog Section 2200.

**hot link** - ball and socket link or other types of extension links.



**house bracket** - a secondary rack. Chance Catalog Section 2500.

**house knob** - a wire holder.  
Chance Catalog Section  
4150.



house  
bracket

**idiot stick** - see digging bar.

**instant foundation** - streetlight foundation.  
Chance Catalog Section 4B.

**J hook** - drive and screw hook.

**jack** - a cutout.

**jack straps** - small (2-in.) blocks for pulling up  
small wire secondary.

**jacobs ladder** - a portable rope ladder.

**jiffy deadend** - non-compression deadend for  
copper.

**jiggler** - a glow light, secondary voltage tester.

**johnny-ball** - guy strain insulator.

**joy jelly** - silicone compound for elbow termina-  
tors; Chance Catalog Section 4100.

**jugs** - horizontal post insulators; Ohio Brass  
Catalog Section 22.

**jumper** - a slack electrical connection between  
two points.

**jumper holding stick** - wire holding stick.  
Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**kettle** - an overhead transformer.

**knife switch** - hook stick disconnect. Chance  
Catalog Section 2100.

**knuckle buster** - an adjustable wrench.



kettle

**lady slippers** - name applied to present day climbers by old-timers.

**leg irons** - climbers, hooks.

**lead head** - 1) nail; 2) pin with threaded lead top for porcelain insulators.

**leroy** - generator

**lid** - hard hat.

**limberneck** - a groundman.

**line gut** - conductor cover. Chance Catalog Section 2400.

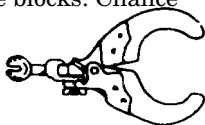
**line profile** - scaled side view drawing of actual line for engineer's review.

**liners** - cloth glove liners or for hard hats in the winter.

**lobster claw** - an adjustable insulator fork. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**luff blocks** - small set of rope blocks. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**mac** - mechanical load pick up jumper.



**mack clamps** - insulated jumper clamps. Chance Catalog Section 2300.

**meat hook** - hand line hook. Chance Catalog 11

Section 1250.

**mickey mouse key puller** - cot

Chance Catalog Section 2100.



**milking stool** - a yoke

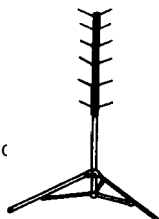
used on the end of a structure for supporting hot line tension tools. Chance Catalog Section 2250.

**moles** - underground line crew.

**music stand** - a hot line tool rack. Chance Catalog Section 2500.

**narrow back** - an inside electrician.

music



**nitros** - street light bulbs.

**nose bag** - canvas tool pouch. Chance Catalog Section 2500.

**nutty putty** - Seal-A-Conn for covering connectors.

**O.C.B.** - oil circuit breaker.

**old man** - an "A" frame transformer gin (see also 'pole buddy').

**pad** - a pad mounted transformer.

**P.C.B.** - 1) power circuit breaker; opens the current under fault or overload condition. 2) polychlorinated biphenyl chemical.

**pen and pencil set** - digging bar and spoon.

**persuader** - a hammer (see also 'bender').

**phase** - one (single) conductor.

**pickle-fork** - two or three prong tie stick.  
Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**pickles** - wire connectors.

**pig** - cover ups. Chance Catalog Section 2400.

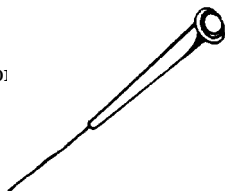
**pig livers** - special yokes used on EHV lines or dead ends.

**pig-tail** - spiral disconnect or spiral link stick.  
Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**pigtail** - the leader or cable on fuselinks.  
Chance Catalog Section 10B.

**pineapple** - a spool insulator

**pistol** - elbow terminator.



**pistol grip** - elbow terminator.

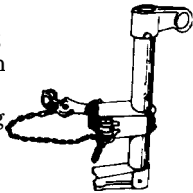
**pizza plate** - a fork suspension attachment.  
Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**pogo stick** - telescoping tools. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**pole buddy** - a transformer gin. Chance Catalog Section 1200.

**pole crab** - wire tong saddle. Chance Catalog Section 2200.

**pork chop** - a “come-a-long”; wire grip for holding conductor or strand under tension. Chance Catalog



Section 1250.

**pot** - 1) potential transformer; 2) pole-top transformer.

**pole stub** - pole reinforcer.

**potato hook** - fixed prong tie stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**pothead** - 1) a point where separate or overhead electrical conductors come together and continue as cable. 2) the termination device used on end of an underground cable.

**pouch** - a tool bag. Chance Catalog Section 2500.

**P.T.O.** - power take off.

**rake** - tie stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**red head jumper** - insulated jumper clamp. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**red one** - an extremely short distance.

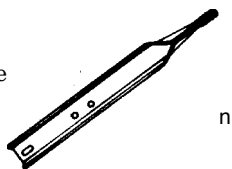
**reptile** - insulating line hose (see also ‘snake’).

**ridge pin** - pole top pin. Chance Catalog Section 5.

**riser pole** - a transition pole going from overhead to underground distribution (see also

'dip pole').

**rough neck** - a trouble



chaser.

**saddle pin** - a crossarm type pin, fits like a saddle; Chance Catalog Section 5.

**sav-a-climb** - universal fitting for laying lines over crossarms and through trees with a stick.

**saw dust machine** - a brace and bit or drill.

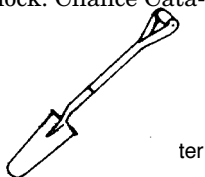
**saw dust pump** - a brace and bit, hand drill.

**service drop** - the conductor between pole and terminal on a building.

**sharp shooter** - a shovel with long narrow blade for digging holes in ground like clay.

**sheaves** - any type of rope block. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**shoe-fly** - a temporary line built to bypass a construction area.



**short hook-up** - cord and clips for electric drill.

**shot gun stick** - a Grip-All stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**single jack** - a heavy hammer.

**sinker** - pin pushed down through crossarm and insulator rests on crossarm.

**sister eye** - eyebolt or anchor rod eye for guy strand or insulator. Chance Catalog Section 4.

**skywire** - a ground wire on top of poles and towers to protect the lines from lightning.

**slave market** - an employment agency's office.



sister eye

**sleeve** - a splice.

**slip stick** - a Grip-All stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

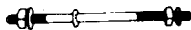
**slug** - a solid blade on open type cutouts. Chance Catalog Section 10A.

**snake** - an insulating line hose. Chance Catalog Section 2400.

**spool bolt** - an upset bolt used to support spool insulators. Chance Catalog Section 5.

**spoon** - a shovel; cup-shaped with long handle.

**squeeze on** - a compression fitting (connectors).



**squeeze wrench** - hand compression or cutting wrenches.

spool bolt

**squirrel cage** - a steel bracket mounted on a pole to support line conductors.

**staking** - to survey and mark location for each new line pole.

**stinger** - 1) wire from cutout to transformer. 2) a boom extension.

**strong arm** - a chain or strap hoist for pulling wire. Chance Catalog Section 1100.

**switch stick** - a disconnect stick. Chance Catalog Section 2100.

**tag line** - rope used to tie off line or to control load being lifted.

**tag-out** - link stick. Chance Catalog Section 2250.

**tap clamp** - a hot line clamp.

**three-phase set** - three shovels; a spoon, a spade, and a shovel; all three are of different design for different uses.

**thumper** - underground fault locator. Chance Catalog Section 2450.

**thru-bolt** - a machine bolt. Chance Catalog Section 5.

**toilet seat** - 1) insulator retainer for trolley pole. A fork suspension tool attachment.

**tongs** - 1) usually refer to pole tongs, used for controlling pole when setting 2) insulated wire tongs used for supporting or moving energized conductor. Chance Catalog Section 1250.

**transformer 'bank'** - two or three transformers at same location connected to the same

circuit.

**traveling chain** - a movable grounding device.

**traveling chair** - a fabricated aluminum two-wheel trolley with an attached chain.



**traveling ladder** - wooden ladder with fiber rollers generally used when work or inspection has to be done on transmission hardware or conductor.

**tub** - pole type transformer (see also 'kettle').

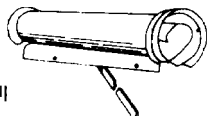
**tube** - cable in conduit.

**tupperware** - plastic protective cover. Chance Catalog Section 2400.

**turkey wing** - steel post insulator standoff for distribution construction (see also 'chicken wing'). Chance Catalog Section 2400.

**two pound** - a lineman's hammer.

**u-bangi** - 15 kV rubber line hose.



**upset bolt** - see spool bolt;  
Chance Catalog Section 5.

**URD** - underground residential distribution.

**walking crab** - a lever lift. Chance Catalog Section 2200.

**waterfall** - a triple drum puller.

**weatherhead** - the top of the conduit that contains the customer service conductors, constructed so it will resist the action of rain, sun, etc.

**westerns** - also hooks, standard climbers for old-type Western Union.

**wire twister** - an inside electrician (see also 'narrow back').

**widow** - a cable grip.

**wiggle** - a glow light, secondary voltage tester.

**wiggle wire** - any kind of formed wire used for securing conductors to insulators. Chance Catalog Section 15.

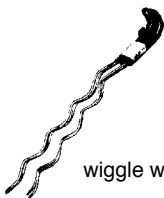
**wildcat connection** - three-phase four wire delta

**wildcat leg** - center tap connection on three-phase four wire delta

**wire bender cutout** - an open link cutout (see also 'flip cutout').

**window pole** - a disconnect stick. Chance Catalog

Section 2100.







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