

The Geek vs Nerd debate – VOCABULARY BUILDER

Infographic source: <http://www.mastersinit.org/geeks-vs-nerds/>

In the ongoing battle between geek and nerd, one must **take sides**, but how can this be done without a solid argument for both **personas**? We here at **Masters In IT** (a mix of nerds and geeks) decided that it's time to **lay all the cards on the table** to determine which is better and answer the question some fear to know: Are you a geek, or a nerd?

History:

The terms geek and nerd may sometimes seem synonymous, but they have very different roots in history:

Nerd: This term was coined from **Dr. Seuss** in 1954 in a line that read "A nerkle, a nerd, and a seersucker too!" - So really nerkle and seersucker are synonymous with **nerd**.

Geek: While used as a **derogatory** term originally, the word "geek" gained popularity in the circus. Circus performers that performed amazing **feats** were **Geeks**.

Nerd Traits:

- Extreme interest or fascination with academics
- Introverted
- Socially Inept
- Diverse and sometimes impractical **skillets** due to broad interests in games, movies, science, computers, etc.
- A PC
- Interest might include: Battlestar Galactica (BSG), LARPing, SecondLife, Physics, Chess, Fantasy/Sci-Fi, Computer programming

Likely nerd jobs:

- Rocket scientist
- Reclusive and renowned professor
- Computer programmer
- Engineer
- IT professional
- Inventor
- Or work at a video store

Nerd Talk:

You know you're talking to a nerd when they insert obscure references into a sentence:

"There are **10** types of people in the world: those who understand binary and those who don't."

"I would love to change the world, but they won't give me **the source code**."

Comentario [S1]: TO TAKE SIDES: to decide being part of or supporting one of two opposing sides or parties.

Comentario [S2]: PERSONA (plural personae or personas): the particular type of character that a person seems to have, which is often different from their real or private character. Ex. *His kind public persona was very different from his mean personality.*

Comentario [S3]: TO LAY ALL THE CARDS ON THE TABLE: to show the truth of some issue or to tell someone honestly what you think of something.

Comentario [S4]: Dr. Seuss was an American writer, poet, and cartoonist most widely known for his children's books.

Comentario [S5]: Generally speaking, a NERD is a person, who is not attractive and awkward or socially embarrassing.

Comentario [S6]: DEROGATORY: showing strong disapproval and not showing respect.

Comentario [S7]: FEAT: something difficult needing a lot of skill, strength, bravery, etc. to achieve it.

Comentario [S8]: If you call someone a 'geek', without adding any adjectives, you usually mean they are extremely interested in computers and technology.

Comentario [S9]: SKILLET is the US word for frying pan. It's also a colloquial word to call a good friend. In the case of this infographic, SKILLETS is used instead of SKILLS (abilities).

Comentario [S10]: In binary numerical system, '10' represents number '2'.

Comentario [S11]: THE SOURCE CODE is the form in which a computer program is originally written. If you know the source code of any program you can manipulate it to change the functionalities of it.

"The box said 'Requires Windows 95 or better' so I installed **LINUX**."

Comentario [S12]: This is just a joke. "Windows 95 or better" means that version of the Operating System or a superior one is required. Nerds are supposed to believe there is nothing 'better' than Windows 95 except for Linux.

Nerd Love: "nerds marry other nerds, it's the natural state of the universe."

Geek Traits:

- Someone with a specific **niche** interest/lifestyle that they have become the expert on
- A fan of **gadgets**
- An early adopter
- A Mac
- Wears ironic t-shirts
- Can be **pretentious** and **longwinded**
- Knowledge can range from **mundane** to "living encyclopedia" status
- Interests might include gaming, film (both **artsy** and anything **Will Ferrel** stars in), collecting, gadgets/tech, computing, coding, hacking, techno music, screen printing, etc.

Comentario [S13]: A NICHE /ni:ʃ/ is a job or position which is very suitable for someone, especially one that they like.

Comentario [S14]: GADGETS are small devices or machines.

Comentario [S15]: AN EARLY ADOPTER is a person who buys a new type of product or service as soon as it is available. The opposite is A LATE ADOPTER.

Comentario [S16]: PRETENTIOUS means trying to appear or sound more important or clever than you are.

Comentario [S17]: Something LONG-WINDED is too long or using too many words.

Comentario [S18]: MUNDANE MATTERS are very ordinary and therefore not interesting.

Comentario [S19]: ARTSY is the US for ARTY. It's an informal disapproving adjective. It means being or wishing to seem very interested in everything connected with art and artists.

Comentario [S20]: Will Ferrel is an American comedian, impressionist, actor, and writer.

Comentario [S21]: A BARISTA is a person who serves customers in a modern coffee shop

Comentario [S22]: A BARTENDER is someone who makes and serves drinks in a bar. In UK the term 'barman' is more common.

Comentario [S23]: HIP is an informal adjective meaning 'fashionable'.

Comentario [S24]: TO KICK IT: To take it easy, to relax.

Comentario [S25]: CRUNCHY BASS or CRUNCHY BEATS makes reference to songs with bass hits, usually played at dance clubs.

Comentario [S26]: MALBEC is a variety of red wine.

Likely geek jobs:

- Web design/development
- IT professional
- Marketer
- Graphic designer
- Game designer/developer
- **Barista** at an indie coffee shop
- Entrepreneur
- Record store
- **Bartender**

Geek Talk:

You know you're talking to a geek when they remind you of their "**hip**" lifestyle by discussing their "cool" habits or dropping pop culture references:

"There's nothing like **kicking it** to some **crunchy bass** while enjoying a good **Malbec**"

"60% of the time it works all the time"

[while pulling out their iPhone] "Let me pull out my pocket iPad"

Comentario [S27]: MILLENNIALS refers to the MILLENNIAL GENERATION (people born between 1980 and 2000). Also known as Generation Y and The Net Generation.

Geek Love: geeks can fall for and marry non-geeks

Factoids/Stats:

- 17% of Americans identify as geeks
- 65% of video game designers identify as geeks
- 50% of technology engineers identify as geeks
- 37% of bloggers identify as geeks
- 87% of people prefer the word "geek" over "nerd"
- 66% of **millennials** think "geek" is a compliment

- 45% of people believe geeks are early adopters
- 31% of people believe geeks have a higher chance of being successful
- On average, self-identified geeks have a better view of themselves than others view geeks
- 41% of people would be comfortable called a geek while only 24% would be comfortable called a nerd
- A geek would rather be called a geek over a hipster (23% are OK with being called hipster while 41% are OK with being called a geek)

Comentario [S28]: As commented before, HIP is fashionable. So a HIPSTER is someone who is very influenced by most recent ideas and trends.