

So you been in the Navy for a while, bet you don't know where the word geedunk comes from,

Even though you have probably used it hundreds of times. Well for your information and edification read on

Gedunk (also Geedunk and Gedonk)

Gedunk refers to ice cream, candy, potato chips, and other snack foods, as well as to the place on a ship where these items are sold. The first known published usage of the term "gedunk" in a non-naval context is in a 1927 comic strip which refers to "gedunk [ice cream] sundaes." In 1931 it was mentioned in *Leatherneck* magazine; subsequent early naval usage includes Robert Joseph Casey's *Torpedo Junction: With the Pacific Fleet from Pearl Harbor to Midway* (published in 1943); and Robert Olds' *Helldiver Squadron: The Story of Carrier Bombing Squadron 17 with Task Force 58* (published in 1944).

Usage of the pejorative term "gedunk sailor" to refer to an inexperienced sailor apparently dates to 1941, and is mentioned in Theodore C. Mason's *Battleship Sailor*, published in 1982.

The origin of the word gedunk is uncertain, though it has been suggested it derives from a Chinese word referring to a place of idleness, or a German word meaning to dunk bread in gravy or coffee.

Ice-maker and refrigerated compartments were first introduced on some U.S. Navy ships in 1893, and an ice-cream maker is reported on board USS *Missouri* (Battleship No. 11, later BB-11) as early as 1906.

Source of Information:

Davis, Martin. *Traditions and Tales of the Navy*. (Missoula, MT: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 2001): 45.

Harrod, Frederick S. *Manning the New Navy: The Development of a Modern Naval Enlisted Force, 1899-1940*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978): 148.

Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang, Volume 1, A-G. (New York: Random House, 1994): 875.

YOU ARE WELCOME

BMC(SS) MICHAEL SHORT