

A New Use for an Old Word

— The “*Because X*” construction —

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The “*Because X*” construction

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Introduction: *because* before and after 2013

Traditional *because*:

Because + full clause

- a. "I didn't do my homework because I was too tired."

Because + of + noun phrase (NP)

- b. "I didn't do my homework because of my lack of sleep."

Introduction: *because* before and after 2013

Because + N

c. I can't come out tonight because Skyrim.

Because + VP

d.  **HidetakaSwerySuehiro**   

Watching movie "A Beautiful Mind" because,
can't sleep.

9:35 AM - 15 Jul 2017

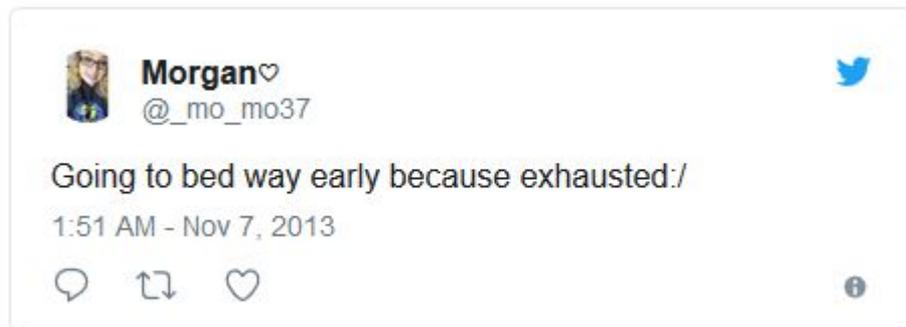
2 Retweets 45 Likes



Introduction: *because* before and after 2013

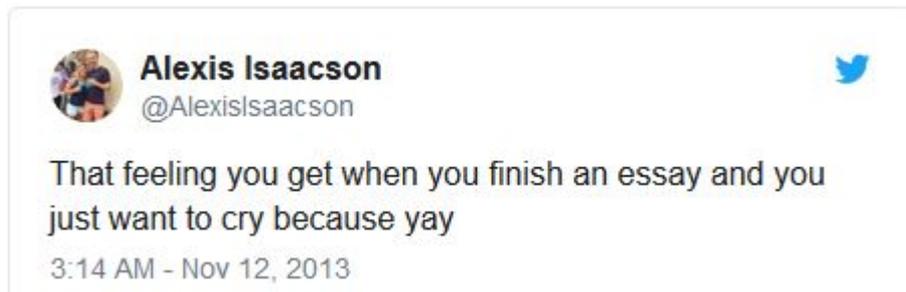
Because + adj.

e.



Because + interjection

f.



Because internet: where “*Because X*” might come from

We keep trying to find ways to make things shorter and/or more expressive because internet.

Meme (Wiktionary):

1. Any unit of cultural information, such as a practice or idea, that is transmitted verbally or by repeated action from one mind to another in a comparable way to the transmission of genes.
2. (Internet, slang) Something, usually humorous, which is copied and circulated online with slight adaptations, including quizzes, basic pictures, video templates etc. [from 1993]

Because internet



(Carey 2014)

Because internet



(Ryan Pequin 2011)

Because internet



1992 Mazda MX3 GS - \$300 (Lawrence)

[prohibited](#)

[spam/overpost](#)

[best of craigslist](#)

Date: 2011-01-26, 2:21PM CST

Reply to: sale-y7drw-2181614004@craigslist.org [Errors when replying to ads?]

1992 Mazda MX3 GS for sale. Does not run, needs motor. Completely stripped inside because race car. Battery box in the hatchback. 5 speed manual-short shift. Around 135,000 on body. 1.5L V6. Project car. Comes with brand new headers and down pipe, rest of exhaust already installed. Red and Black race car seats in car. 80% tread on tires. Only selling due to already having other project cars. Turquoise with black primer colored. Comes with cold air intake. \$300

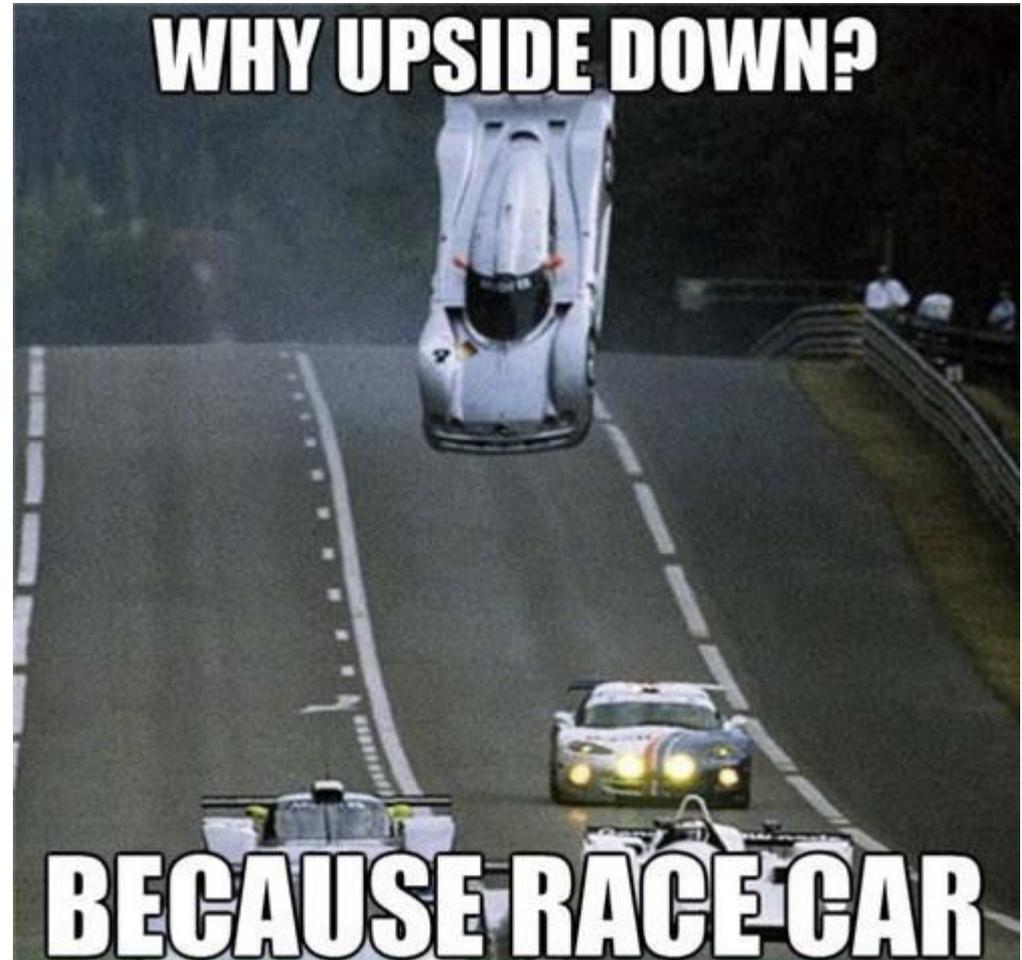
- Location: Lawrence
- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests



<http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/because-race-car>

Because internet

(Carey 2014)



Pragmatic effects: *because reasons, because science and because logic*

"*Because X*" phrases can have different effects / a different meaning from their full-clause equivalents

Because reasons

g. I want this because reasons.

h. I need this for reasons.

Two effects:

- 1) Speaker cannot justify their desire rationally
- 2) Speaker does not want to give the actual reason they want something because it is shameful

Because science

i. Of course evolution is true, because science. (Macmillan Dictionary)

Effects: obviousness, unwillingness/inability to actually explain

j. We're sending water bears in space because science/for science.

Effects: justified not by an immediate goal, but for progress in general

k.



George Takei ✓

@GeorgeTakei

Follow



Because science.



Yes, Our Pets Can See Things That Are Invisible To The Human Eye

Cats and dogs can see ultraviolet light that is invisible to the human eye.

secondnexus.com

8:55 AM - 24 Sep 2017

292 Retweets 1,246 Likes



l.



AsapSCIENCE ✓

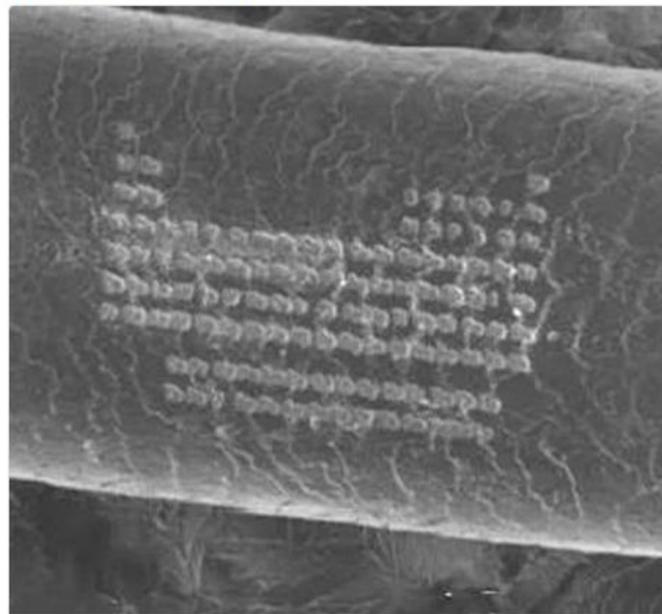
@AsapSCIENCE

Follow



WHY? Because science.

[Reddit/scienceimages]



The world's smallest Periodic Table of Elements

7:08 AM - 27 Sep 2017

Because logic

m. I'm sure kneejerk antifeminist dickwads think that the eradication of men is exactly what we women mean by "plz can we have equal rights now thx." Because logic." (West 2012)

Effects: used for reported speech to undermine the other point of view; sarcasm, mockery

Schnoebelen 2014

23'583 public tweets (January 2014)

PART OF SPEECH	WORD COUNTS ≥ 50
Noun (<i>people, spoilers</i>)	32.02%
Compressed clause (<i>ilysm</i>)	21.78%
Adjective (<i>ugly, tired</i>)	16.04%
Interjection (<i>sweg, omg</i>)	14.71%
Agreement (<i>yeah, no</i>)	12.97%
Pronoun (<i>you, me</i>)	2.45%



Schnoebelen 2014

Compared to other folks tweeting at the same time, because-X'ers are fans of Sherlock, YouTube, Tumblr, One Direction (especially Harry), Justin Bieber, and Ariana Grande. They also like “bands” more generally, pizza, sex, cats, and books. They are decidedly less likely to talk about software, basketball, NASCAR, business, or to use words associated with African-American Vernacular English. In terms of broad demographics, it does look like young women are leading the innovation. Folks who use because X are mostly in the US (but there are a fair number of Londoners using it). The construction is fairly evenly spread across the US, though there's a bit more on the East Coast and in Arizona than we'd expect given the base levels of Twitter uses in those places.

GloWbE

Corpus of Global Web-based English (Mark Davies)

2012-2013, 1.9 billion words

20 countries, web language

Search: “ because NOUN . ”

GloWbE

Most common Xs: because science, because duh, because art

Countries of origin: USA, UK, Aus, Bangladesh, Ireland, Singapour, Hong Kong, Canada, Niger

NOW

News On the Web (Mark Davies)

2010-now, 6+ billion words

20 countries, online press

Search: " because NOUN . "



100



SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

ACCOUNT

	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONTEXT	FREQ	
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE GOV .	52	
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE REASONS .	26	
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE SCIENCE .	13	
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE DUH .	10	
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE MONEY .	9	
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE LOOK .	6	
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE COMICS .	5	
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE ART .	4	
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE LOVE .	4	
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE FASHION .	3	
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE MAGIC .	3	
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE NEWS .	3	
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE PEOPLE .	3	
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE PRIORITIES .	3	
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE PRIVACY .	3	
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE PROP .	3	
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE BOOBS .	2	
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE BURGERS .	2	
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE CAPT .	2	
20	<input type="checkbox"/>	BECAUSE ...	1	

CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT		<input type="checkbox"/> [?]	SAVE LIST	CHOOSE LIST	CREATE NEW LIST	<input type="checkbox"/> [?]	SHOW DUPLICATES
1	18-02-07 CA	Yahoo Sports	A	B	C	space station where the action is to take place before swooping the camera all around because reasons . We're denied that basic visual here until ab	
2	18-01-14 CA	Sudbury.com	A	B	C	socially. Elves are at the toppermost of the uppermost, running things and such because reasons . And humans are in the middle or near the bottom	
3	17-12-06 GB	The INQUIRER	A	B	C	and US models; UK and European handsets get Samsung's own Exynos chipset, because reasons . # It's pretty likely the next LG flagship, the LG G7	
4	17-11-30 CA	Mile High Hockey	A	B	C	could, Winnipeg put too many men on the ice with 8 seconds left. Because reasons ; After the resulting face-off, Colorado lost the draw and the clock	
5	17-09-24 CA	BayToday	A	B	C	that involves both wiping out the Kingsmen and sabotaging the world's illicit drug supply because reasons . In classic Bond villain tradition, the villain	
6	17-05-24 GB	Den of Geek UK	A	B	C	above a nightclub in LA, and Mitch Buchannon (Hasselhoff) joined him, because reasons . # While Baywatch sometimes had the characters acting abo	
7	17-04-17 US	The Verge	A	B	C	sixth installment, the crew was suddenly dealing with special-ops superhumans and god-level hackers. Because reasons . But these are James Bond /	
8	17-03-29 CA	Vancouver Courier	A	B	C	Biega actually had a couple of chances, because Biega was playing at forward, because reasons . But there was no further scoring and Anaheim went	
9	17-01-20 AU	Gizmodo Australia	A	B	C	people in power think it's all a hoax. Created by the Chinese. Because reasons . # Image credit: NASA/NOAA # While it's natural to get wrapped	
10	16-11-29 SG	Mothership.sg (registration)	A	B	C	a petition asking Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to apologise to China AND Trump. because reasons . # Paperwork schmaperwork? # It could all be .	
11	16-11-28 US	Salon	A	B	C	small minority of ACA users that they're not allowed to have insurance they like because reasons . # Oh, and by the way, you'd never know this	
12	16-09-23 US	Reason (blog)	A	B	C	video, which exonerates us. But we aren't going to release it, because reasons . Even though we are having riots right now because people think the c	
13	16-07-21 AU	Gizmodo Australia	A	B	C	they're doing with regards to trackpads. # A 360-hinge and touch screen. Because reasons . # Memory and storage can easily be upgraded by the ene	
14	16-07-13 AU	Gizmodo Australia	A	B	C	UI was designed in a Steady Eddy-Stevie Wonder collabo. It crashes all the time because reasons . It's probably the worst piece of software I ever inst	
15	16-06-20 IE	...rt101.com (press release) (blog)	A	B	C	He would be facing the man he beat last night, Titus O Neil, because reasons . The two began brawling in the ring before the bell was even rang	
16	15-12-17 US	Motherboard	A	B	C	n't connect! Or, even better, a water bottle that has an app because reasons . It's like, why?? I assume it's an	
17	15-12-14 ZA	Lazygamer	A	B	C	will always be about there is a tournament and someone has to win it, because reasons . The fate of the world hangs in the balance, but I got	
18	15-12-13 ZA	Lazygamer	A	B	C	# My PS4 is collecting dust. An Xboxe will never see my money. Because reasons ; Wedding. Boerbeskuit. # Pieter Kruger # Sony made their intention	
19	15-11-24 GB	Evening Standard	A	B	C	absolutely anything. I mean, ANYTHING. So i started writing the reasons down because reasons . **26;759;TOOLONG # Hundreds of Twitter users ha	
20	15-08-04 ZA	Lazygamer	A	B	C	where I'm determined to hit the level cap of 34 in that game, because reasons . To do that in Destiny however, requires the kind of effort that	
21	14-12-18 AU	Pedestrian TV	A	B	C	kibosh on that as well, pulling even that film from tiny little indy cinemas because REASONS .	
22	14-09-23 ZA	Lazygamer	A	B	C	copy of Goat Simulator at BT games, but of course it costs R200, because reasons .	
23	14-05-15 ZA	Lazygamer	A	B	C	me at all, although according to the publisher it is what I should like because reasons . NERD! # Other than that I agree with Zoe's points about	
24	14-01-15 US	The Consumerist	A	B	C	McDonald's has separate " boys " and " girls " Happy Meal toy line-ups because reasons . The Adventure Time set, devoid of the distaff half of the cas	
25	14-01-07 GB	Telegraph.co.uk	A	B	C	" Now one often sees tersely worded rationales like ' because science ' or ' because reasons ' ; You might not go to a party ' because tired .	
26	13-08-27 US	PC Gamer Magazine	A	B	C	remote launch pad. All of which are descended upon by violent military men, because reasons . As is now customary, the packs have launched early r	
27	13-05-21 GB	TechRadar UK	A	B	C	account. If you want to do that you need to do it before August because reasons . # So that leaves us with four account options: free with ads	
28	13-05-14 US	The San Francisco Appeal	A	B	C	did a couple of runs with my high school's cross country team before bailing because reasons . But now I'm in the midst of a periodized training cycle	

Further developments and conclusion

Research is still being conducted

New Web-based corpus coming soon from Mark Davies (2017 data, 14 billion words)

On-going development with other conjunctions

e.g. *I was gonna go out for drinks, but Netflix.*

Similar constructions in many languages -> linguistic need?

Thank you for your attention!



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