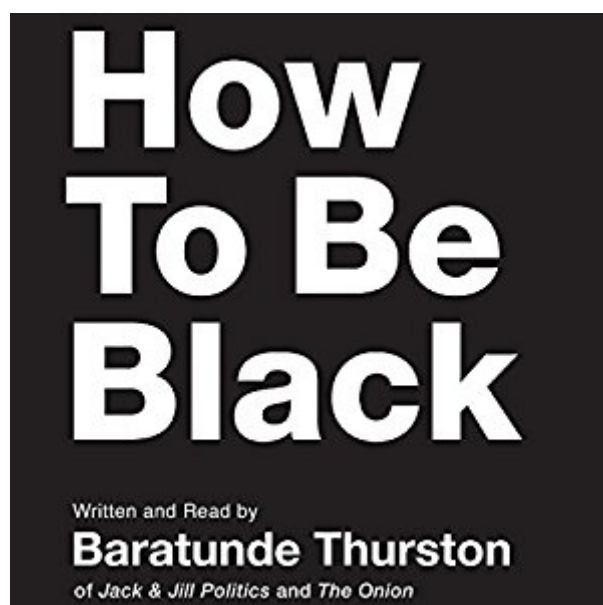


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# How To Be Black



## Synopsis

Audie Award Nominee, Narration by the Author or Authors, 2013 If you don't buy this book, you're a racist. Have you ever been called "too black" or "not black enough"? Have you ever befriended or worked with a black person? Raised by a pro-black, Pan-African single mother during the crack years of 1980s Washington, DC, and educated at Sidwell Friends School and Harvard University, Baratunde Thurston has over 30 years' experience being black. Now, through stories of his politically inspired Nigerian name, the heroics of his hippie mother, the murder of his drug-abusing father, and other revelatory black details, he shares with listeners of all colors his wisdom and expertise in how to be black. Beyond memoir, this guidebook offers practical advice on everything from "How to Be the Black Friend" to "How to Be the (Next) Black President" to "How to Celebrate Black History Month." To provide additional perspective, Baratunde assembled an award-winning Black Panel - three black women; three black men; and one white man (Christian Lander, author of *Stuff White People Like*) - and asked them such revealing questions as: "When did you first realize you were black?" "How black are you?" "Can you swim?" The result is a humorous, intelligent, and audacious guide that challenges and satirizes the so-called experts, purists, and racists who purport to speak for all black people. With honest storytelling and biting wit, Baratunde plots a path not just to blackness, but one open to anyone interested in simply "how to be".

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the book that every lover of all things black (hip hop, basketball, being a good dancer, being

a wide receiver in the NFL etc) has been waiting for. Those of you that have stood on the edges, desperately wanting to be more black but have been too scared to take the first step... this book is for you. The book answers important questions like: \* Once you've gone black, can you in fact, go back? \* What's up with those funny handshakes? \* Can white men really not jump? \* How can Obama be black AND Hawaiian? Confusing. \* What sort of rims should I get on my Escalade? \* What exactly is Grape Drank? Not really, but it is super funny, very touching, and an all round bloody smart read. Baratunde is the guy from the Onion who gave Donald Trump one of the best smack downs in internet history (Google it). His first book doesn't disappoint in the slightest. Bottom line: read it if you like funny things, are interested in race in America, or just want to raise eyebrows on the subway a bit (the last one doesn't work for the kindle version, unfortunately).

I've followed Baratunde on Twitter for a couple years now, and I've been anticipating this book for a while. He's hilarious, and the book is proof of it. With chapters on things like How to Be the Next Black President, how could it not? While the book is funny - and mostly satirical - it also comments on what it actually means to be black in the U.S. today. The personal stories that Baratunde shares are heartening, informative, allegorical and more. The interviews with people like Elon James White and Cheryl Contee are fantastic, too. Basically just a fantastic book.

Race is a tough topic to discuss in the U.S. Baratunde Thurston makes it a whole lot easier with the humor in this book. Both a memoir of growing up black in the late 20th century and a sharp social commentary--not to mention a handy instruction manual--"How to Be Black" is a funny and thought-provoking read.

I finished reading HTBB a few weeks ago and enjoyed it thoroughly, except for all the profanity. I realize nowadays people spread profanity around like confetti. There is no shame to their game when it comes to cursing. However, being a non-curser, it still jars me somewhat when all of a sudden it is in my face. That said, I waited until now to write a review to see what still resonated with me after a few weeks. First of all, it is an easy read. I read HTBB in eight to nine hours on a road trip. Second, Baratunde is so smart, honest and funny. How do I know? Just read the chapter about 'How to Be The Black Employee.' I laughed so hard about the watermelon dilemma. This book shows Baratunde's great intellect. Baratunde reminds me of comedian Jerry Seinfeld, in how he can take a seeming innocuous subject like swimming and give it such a hilarious look from the Black perspective. Third, I think including the Black Panel was a clever idea. What I am taking away

with me from HTBB is that we all need to take the time to understand each other better. We are all different and quirky. When we realize that, we can have so much fun together laughing at ourselves.

I am a white guy who was born and raised in rural southern Oklahoma where racism was still quite prevalent. I never considered myself racist... I had black friends, dated a few black girls and now my family and I have a foster baby who is black. This book is an amazing insight into the world that I never knew but somehow felt. I greatly enjoy listening to Baratunde describe his life and experiences mixed with a little humor and a healthy dose of satire. This is a must read for any one who has ever wondered about blackness but was too afraid to ask.

I heard this book when the author was a guest on an episode of the game show podcast Ask Me Another. It sounded interesting and my library had a copy so I picked it up. I read it after finishing I'd Rather We Got Casinos (and Other Black Thoughts by Larry Wilmore and found this book to have much more substance whereas the former was mostly jokes. In How to Be Black Thurston perfectly injects humor into the topics and situations he talks about without losing any of the gravitas. He teaches the reader without them ever realizing they're learning because they're too busy enjoying his writing. But when you pause to really think about some of the things he says, you realize there's so much more he leaves unsaid, leaving it up to the reader to put the pieces together for themselves. Under the guise of telling someone How to Be Black, he is educating the reader about the black experience and some of the things black people go through that I'm sure many white people are simply oblivious to. What I really took away from this book is the importance of understanding another person's experience and also examine your own contributions to their experience. I think anyone can benefit from reading this book and even though the examples are specific to black culture, you could also plug in any other ethnicity or culture and have the same point be made. The more we learn about one another the more comfortable we become being around different people which leads to getting to know a person and the realization that we're not so different after all. And when we can come together and realize we're all in it together, then we can start working to make the world better for everyone.

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