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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### In the blink of an eye



*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Helen**

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Helen and joining me today is Sian.

**Sian**

Hi everyone. It's nice to take things slowly after the weekend.

**Helen**

Have you been running around a lot?

**Sian**

Well, I did a 10K charity run with my nephew for his school.

**Helen**

How did it go? Were you prepared for it?

**Sian**

I have to say the kids did much better than me. I was almost the last one to finish the race.

**Helen**

How long did that take you?

**Sian**

Maybe six hours.

**Helen**

Em. That is slow. What about the young runners?

**Sian**

They were gone in the blink of an eye.

**Helen**

Do you mean they were fast?

**Sian**

That's right. When we say something happens in the blink of an eye, it means very fast, very quickly. It's a common expression in English to give a sense of fast speed. Here are a few examples.

### **Examples**

My new computer can download a large video in the blink of an eye.

We were so tired after the party, everyone was fast asleep in the blink of an eye.

Sarah couldn't believe that the first two years of university went in the blink of an eye.

### **Helen**

So this expression 'in the blink of an eye' doesn't only refer to running speed, it can also describe when time goes quickly.

### **Sian**

That's right. It's often used when changes are happening very fast. And it can be shortened to 'in a blink'.

### **Examples**

A 70-story skyscraper just rose from the ground in a blink.

I couldn't believe the transformation in Sarah, she went from a shy sixteen-year-old with braces to an outspoken youth MP in a blink.

### **Helen**

Well, in the blink of an eye. We've finished our programme.

### **Sian**

That went really quickly. Bye.

### **Helen**

Bye.