
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Living in cloud cuckoo land



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

This is The English We Speak, with you Neil...

Neil

... and you, Feifei. Hello everyone.

Feifei

Ah Neil, it sounds like you're in a good mood.

Neil

You'll never find me in a bad mood Feifei. Why?

Feifei

Well I wanted to ask you a favour.

Neil

Oh yes?

Feifei

I need to leave early today and wondered if you could finish this programme on your own and then start writing another script?

Neil

Are you joking? If you think I'm going to do all my work and yours, then you are living in cloud cuckoo land!

Feifei

Where is that exactly? I can assure you I live in London.

Neil

Yes I know that. What I mean is that you are silly to think the impossible is possible. That's living in cloud cuckoo land. Basically, you are misguided to think I can do my work AND your work. OK?

Feifei

OK Neil, if you say so. Neil thinks I'm silly to believe he can do his work and mine – but we'll see!

Neil

Let's hear some examples shall we, while you visit cloud cuckoo land!

Examples

If my teacher thinks I can do my grammar homework and learn all my new vocabulary tonight, then he's living in cloud cuckoo land!

If you think we're going to win this match with only ten players, then you're living in cloud cuckoo land!

He's clearly living in cloud cuckoo land – how can we ever afford to buy a house with the little money we earn?

Feifei

So living in cloud cuckoo land describes a situation where someone thinks doing something impossible is possible. So it's about someone being unrealistic?

Neil

Exactly. Like you wanting to go home early and me doing all your work. Ridiculous!

Feifei

Well Neil, if you think I'm going to sit here and miss out on front row seats at the theatre, then YOU are living in cloud cuckoo land.

Neil

Oh, so you're off to the theatre, leaving me to finish the programme!

Feifei

I am Neil. See ya.

Neil

Oh. Well everyone, today's programme is about the phrase 'living in cloud cuckoo land' and it appears I am in it! Bye for now.