
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

My bad



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak. Hello, I'm Feifei... but where is Rob?

Rob

Oh! Hi, Feifei, you're nice and early – can't wait to get started, hey?

Feifei

I'm not early – you are late!

Rob

Late? No, no, no, no – we said we'd start at half past ten... didn't we?

Feifei

No – ten o'clock, Rob. Look at this text message: "Can we start earlier at ten, please?" and you replied "sure".

Rob

Oh! My bad!

Feifei

Your back? Don't start complaining about your back just to avoid apologising.

Rob

No, not my back – my bad! I am apologising – that's what 'my bad' means – it's an American English phrase that we use sometimes to mean we accept responsibility for a mistake.

Feifei

Well, that's good to know. So you're really saying 'sorry'?

Rob

Well, not exactly. Let's hear some more examples of using 'my bad'...

Examples

My bad! It was me who put my pink socks in with the white washing – oops!

My friend knocked a glass of red wine over me and all he could say was 'my bad' – I don't think he was that bothered!

It was me who lost the car keys – my bad – I'm sure they'll turn up somewhere.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English, and we're finding out about the phrase 'my bad' which is slang for saying 'my fault, my mistake, I'm to blame' – but Rob, just can't bring himself to say 'sorry'! I'm sensing 'my bad' is a way of apologising without actually saying sorry.

Rob

Yes, I suppose so – but I'll say 'sorry' if that helps. You know I can't be perfect all the time!

Feifei

That's true.

Rob

Anyway, why are you so keen to start early today?

Feifei

Oh! My bad - I forgot to tell you it's Neil's birthday and we're leaving early to go and celebrate at the pub.

Rob

That is bad – that wasn't a mistake: you did that on purpose.

Feifei

Why would I do that? Come on, Rob, I'm sure you can join us – just don't forget your wallet.

Rob

OK. Bye.

Feifei

Bye.