
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Crunch time

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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Hello I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak.

Rob

And hello, this is Rob. And it's an important day in the office today, isn't it Feifei?

Feifei

Err, is it?

Rob

Yes, it is! Remember that big project we've all been working on?

Feifei

Errr. A big project?

Rob

Yes, well it's crunch time.

Feifei

Oh great – I'm starving. I'll get my crisps.

Rob

No, I didn't say 'lunch time'.

Feifei

I know. You said 'crunch time' – time to start crunching these delicious crisps. I love crisps.

Rob

No, no – I didn't mean it's time to crunch crisps. Crunch time is an important or critical time when a decisive or difficult decision has to be made. And it's crunch time for our big project.

Feifei

If you say so, Rob. Why don't I finish these crisps while we hear some examples of the expression 'crunch time'?

Examples

We've reached crunch time in our relationship – I'm going to ask my boyfriend to move in with me. I wonder what he'll say?

The team are doing well but come crunch time, will they score that vital goal?

It's crunch time for us tomorrow – that's when we find out if our building plans have been approved.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. We're finding out about the expression 'crunch time', which describes an important moment in a situation where a difficult or decisive decision has to be made. But, Rob, I'm still not clear why it's crunch time for our big office project?

Rob

Come on, Feifei, you know – the project we've been working on for months.

Feifei

Oh, you mean the biscuit project?

Rob

Exactly! We have to decide today which biscuits we're going to buy for our meetings. And if we don't order them today, we won't have anything to eat in tomorrow's meeting.

Feifei

So, Rob, your crunch time is just about what you'll be crunching tomorrow. You really need to change your priorities. I think I've reached 'crunch time' in this programme.

Rob

What's that? You've got a big decision to make?

Feifei

Yes - to finish this programme or finish my crisps?

Rob

Shall we just eat the crisps?

Feifei

OK. Bye.

Rob

Bye. Pass them over then!