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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### On fire



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

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**Feifei**

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Feifei.

**Neil**

And I'm Neil! How are you today, Feifei?

**Feifei**

Yes, I'm well thanks – is everything OK with you Neil? You seem very smug!

**Neil**

I'm doing great! I've had a very busy, but very productive day – my most recent video has reached 100,000 views, my new project has been commissioned by a top TV company, I've recorded and edited three videos, written two scripts and now I'm here in the studio recording with you.

**Feifei**

Wow! You are on fire today, Neil!

**Neil**

What? Fire! Where? Put it out! Where's the extinguisher? Evacuate the building!

**Feifei**

Woah! Just calm down there. There isn't an actual fire. It's just an expression!

**Neil**

Phew! Thank goodness! I thought you were saying I was burning!

**Feifei**

Really, Neil! Just take a breath and think before acting! When someone has had a string of successes, we can say they're 'on fire'.

**Neil**

Ahhh, I get it. Shall we give some examples?

## **Examples**

I can't believe my team have won ten games in a row – they're on fire.

My friend is taking two extra classes and I thought she'd be exhausted by now – but she's on fire! She's getting really good grades in every subject.

The actor was on fire in the early 2000s, but his recent performances haven't been to the same standard.

## **Feifei**

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the phrase 'on fire'. Though this can mean that something is burning, a more informal use is to say that someone is experiencing a series of successes, one after another.

## **Neil**

That's right, Feifei, so for example, I've been on fire this month – I exceeded all my targets at work and earned a bonus for my success!

## **Feifei**

That's great, Neil – congratulations! Your work is on fire!

## **Neil**

Hmmm, not quite, Feifei! That would mean my scripts are burning! You can only use this expression to describe the person or people who are experiencing success.

## **Feifei**

Ah OK – so we can say a footballer is on fire if he has scored lots of goals, but we can't say his football is on fire.

## **Neil**

That's 100% right, Feifei! It seems we're both on fire today!

## **Feifei**

I couldn't agree more, Neil! Join us again for more The English We Speak. Bye!

## **Neil**

Goodbye!