
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

It's a small world



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

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

Rob

And I'm Rob. Now, Feifei, do I have a story for you!

Feifei

Oh? Do tell!

Rob

Well, I was out shopping at the weekend when I ran into Neil!

Feifei

OK...

Rob

Well, we decided to get some lunch together, when who should we run into but Dan!

Feifei

Dan from the office? No way!

Rob

It gets weirder! Dan joined us for a bite to eat and then we saw Sam and Sian getting lunch together as well! It was a big, unplanned BBC Learning English meet up!

Feifei

That's unbelievable - it's a small world, isn't it?

Rob

Feifei, what are you talking about? It's a massive world: Over 190 countries, more than 7.5 billion people – it's enormous!

Feifei

Rob, I'm not talking about the size of the world. I'm saying that it was quite a coincidence that you all met up!

Rob

I know! What are the chances that five of us would all meet up at the same time!

Feifei

Indeed! Let's take a look at some other examples of this phrase.

Examples

Your brother works in the same office as my girlfriend! It's a small world!

I can't believe you went to the same high school as me! What a small world!

A: We haven't seen or spoken to each other for twenty years and now you've moved into the house next to mine! Unbelievable!

B: It's a small world after all!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the phrase 'It's a small world'. It's used when we want to say that a surprising coincidence has occurred. It's used particularly when two people meet unexpectedly, or have a mutual friend or connection. Rob told us how he met four of our colleagues on the same day in the same place.

Rob

That's right. And now if we're finished, I'd like to go off and do some shopping.

Feifei

Oh yeah, what are you going to buy?

Rob

A globe! All this talk of small worlds has reminded me I need to get one for my son. And there's a globe shop just round the corner.

Feifei

Well, it really is a small world.

Rob

In this case, yes! Bye.

Feifei

Bye bye.