
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Across

The logo for BBC Learning English, featuring the letters 'BBC' in a white box above the words 'LEARNING ENGLISH' in white text on a teal background.

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

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

Rob

...and I'm Rob. And today, we're going to use a common word in a slightly different way. It's a preposition you've no doubt known for a long time.

Feifei

Yes, our word is **across**. Of course, you can say things like: Rob is sitting **across** from me.

Rob

Or: This food is popular **across** China.

Feifei

But what about this: Rob, are you **across** the plan for tonight's event?

Rob

You're not asking me if I'm sitting **across** or on the other side from a plan, are you?

Feifei

No, when we use **across** in this way, it actually means 'to be familiar with'. If you're **across** a plan, you're familiar with it. You know what you need to know about it.

Rob

We often talk about being **across** a subject. Especially a subject that is complex or changing. It indicates you know all the important things about the subject.

Feifei

Let's listen to some examples to help clarify how we use it.

Examples

Professor Zhang is a specialist in the European economy. He's **across** all the latest developments.

A: Did you come to last week's meeting?

B: Afraid not, no.

A: OK, so you're not **across** the new plan. Let me give you a quick summary.

A: Pete, I want to make sure you're **across** the food for tomorrow. Now, remember two of our guests are vegetarian.

B: Got it.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. There we are. I hope you're now **across** how we use this word '**across**'.

Rob

Yes, you're **across** '**across**', so to speak!

Feifei

Anyway, as I was asking earlier, Rob, are you **across** the plan for tonight's event?

Rob

That was just an example of how to use this phrase, right?

Feifei

No, you really don't know about it?

Rob

What event?

Feifei

This isn't good. I thought you had sent out all the invitations?

Rob

What are you talking about, Feifei?

Feifei

Oh, just kidding! There's no event tonight.

Rob

That's not funny! Now, getting back to the subject, if you want to stay **across** all the latest slang English expressions, do remember to listen to The English We Speak.

Feifei

Bye.

Rob

That really wasn't funny.