

Ask about English

Satisfactory



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BBC Learning English – Ask about English

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A question from Ha in Vietnam:

Could you tell me the difference between "**satisfying**" and "**satisfactory**"? Thank you.

George Pickering answers:

Well Ha, thank you very much for your question about the difference between "satisfying" and "satisfactory".

"Satisfactory" means that something is adequate, or acceptable. Whereas "satisfying" means that something meets your needs or requirements and has positive associations.

So what would be the difference between a "satisfactory" meal and a "satisfying" one? In the first case the meal was ok, in the second case it was one that you enjoyed.

So generally we prefer to have "satisfying" experiences to "satisfactory" ones.

George Pickering is an educational coach, consultant and trainer. He is an associate tutor at the University of Sheffield, and a British Council inspector of language schools in the UK.

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