
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Couch surfing



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Feifei.

Rob

And I'm Rob!

Feifei

A very messy and scruffy Rob, if I may say so. Did you not have time to brush your hair today?

Rob

Feifei, things are a bit difficult at the moment. I'm having some work done on my house.

Feifei

And has your hairbrush gone missing?

Rob

No, no. I'm not living at home at the moment – I'm sleeping where anyone has a spare sofa. It was Neil's house on Monday, Paul's on Tuesday, Sam's on Wednesday...

Feifei

I get it. You are couch surfing.

Rob

Yes - even though I don't own a surfboard! But I am moving from one couch – or sofa – to another, which is a bit like surfing!

Feifei

Yes, when someone is couch surfing it means they temporarily stay in other people's houses for free – often sleeping on the sofa or couch - because they don't have their own home. But no surfboard needed!

Rob

No, not unless you want to use one as a bed! Let's hear some more examples...

Examples

Since I left university, I haven't been able to find a job so I've been couch surfing at my friends' to try and save money.

I've been couch surfing around the world. It's a great way to meet other people and it makes travelling affordable.

I've had an argument with my girlfriend, so I'm moving out. Do you mind if I couch surf with you guys for a few weeks? Please!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the phrase 'couch surfing'. This describes temporarily staying at different people's homes for free because you haven't got your own home to stay in. It's not great if you haven't got your own place to live in but luckily for you, Rob, the work on your house is temporary, and you'll be back living at home soon.

Rob

Well, maybe not.

Feifei

Oh! Why's that?

Rob

Well, the builder has found a lot of the woodwork to be rotten and it needs replacing – and that could take weeks. So I was wondering...

Feifei

You want to couch surf at my house? The answer is no! I don't want you carrying out the other meaning of couch surfing.

Rob

And what's that?

Feifei

Couch surfing can sometimes mean just lying on the sofa watching TV or browsing the internet on your laptop.

Rob

Yeah. But I'd do the washing up.

Feifei

The answer is still no! Bye, Rob.

Rob

Bye everyone.