

Catch Word #192 – Late to the party

Episode description

Have you ever felt left out because you were behind the times? In this Catch Word episode, Andrew and Suzanne explain two fun expressions related to being late and missing out: to be late to the party and to miss the boat.

Fun fact

Canada's largest national park is Wood Buffalo National Park, which is in Alberta and the Northwest Territories. At 44,807 square kilometres, it's bigger than Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, and Taiwan!

Expressions included in the study guide

- To be late to the party
- To miss the boat
- To go viral
- A campsite
- A social circle



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript.

Andrew: Hey, everybody. My name is Andrew.

Suzanne: And I'm Suzanne.

Andrew: And we're back with another Culips episode. Good morning, Suzanne.

Suzanne: Good morning. Oh, as you can hear, my voice is a little bit rough in the morning.

Andrew: Hey, well, thanks for getting up early today to record with me.

Suzanne: Absolutely, how are you doing?

Andrew: I'm doing really well, and actually I'm excited for today's episode 'cause I think we have a really good one.

Suzanne: I agree with you, Andrew, we have some really great phrases and expressions that we're going to talk about.

Andrew: So today we're going to do a Catch Word episode, and Catch Word is the series where we take a look at a couple of idioms or expressions that are closely related in meaning, and of course we explain them to you. We tell you how to use them, what context you can use them in, and we give you some usage examples. So you can actually hear them being used in a very natural way.

And, Suzanne, today our episode theme is kind of about missing out and being late. OK, you're either too late to learn about something or you're too late to take advantage of an opportunity.

Suzanne: Uh, that's the worst.

Andrew: Tell me about it, it's always a bad time when you're behind the times, right, you're late.

Suzanne: Yeah, and you feel so left out.

Andrew: Exactly, so we'll share two perfect expressions for this situation with you today. Look, guys, I want to remind you just before we kick things off here, that the best way to study with us is by following along with our learning materials, which includes the transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, and examples, plus a quiz. So you get lots of material to study with when you visit Culips.com and sign up to become a Culips member.

So, yeah, we suggest that you head on over to the website and sign up today.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: OK, Suzanne, let's get started here. What is our first expression for today?

Suzanne: So, the first expression is one of my favourites to describe this feeling of kind of being late and out of it and missing out. It's **to be late to the party**. **To be late to the party**.

Andrew: Hmm, **to be late to the party**. **To be late to the party**, OK, now you don't always have to use this expression when you're going to a party, do you?

Suzanne: No, in fact, it's not a real party that you're going to, it's kind of a metaphorical party in the sense that whatever interesting or exciting thing that most people have already been aware of, you haven't been aware of it.

So the party represents some kind of exciting thing, maybe a TV show or something that is, you know, a big trend in the social world and you haven't really gotten into it, so you're kind of **late to the party**.

Andrew: Yeah, so when you're **late to the party**, you just find out about something that everybody else already knows. So you're just late to learn about that thing and, because of that, you're kind of, you know, you're a geek or maybe you're not popular, or, I don't know, there's something wrong with you. It's kind of a lame position to be in. Like, ah man, you don't know that yet? Like what's wrong with you, everybody knows this! You're **late to the party**.

Suzanne: Yeah, it's like getting into a band late or maybe, you know, a music fad or a trend of clothing or something like that, that everyone else seems to know about.

Andrew: It could even be some news in your **social circle**, like maybe a couple of mutual friends have started dating and you didn't know this. You're, like, what? They're dating? Yeah, you don't know? C'mon man, you're **late to the party**.

Andrew: Or even an announcement at work, right? Like maybe your manager got fired. You didn't hear about this somehow for a couple of days, then you find out and you're, like, "Hey, Suzanne, did you hear our manager just got fired?" And you could be like, "Yeah, I knew a couple of days ago, Andrew, you're **late to the party**."

All right Suzanne, I think it's time to listen to a couple of examples using this expression, **to be late to the party**.

Suzanne: All right.

Friend 1: Hey, have you ever heard of Game of Thrones? What an unreal show.

Friend 2: Dude, Game of Thrones came out like 5 years ago. Wow, are you ever **late to the party**.

Friend 1: Oh, so you've seen it?

Friend 2: Yeah, of course I have.

Friend 1: Ah, OK, well, let's not talk about it then, OK? No spoilers.

Suzanne: So in this example, we hear about a guy who just started watching Game of Thrones. His friend says he **is late to the party**, and this is because Game of Thrones is a super popular TV series that has been out on the air for several years. So because this guy is just learning about Game of Thrones now, and is just starting to watch it now, we can say he's **late to the party**.

Andrew: Hey, Sue, I just realized something that is kind of unique about this expression. That's because we use it with the preposition to: **to be late to the party**. But usually we're late for something, right? Ah, I'm late for work, I'm late for school, I'm late for an appointment.

Suzanne: It's true.

Andrew: But here it's **late to the party**, so just a warning, guys, if you are using this expression, make sure you don't say "I'm late for the party." You know, like, Suzanne, have you heard of Game of Thrones? What an unreal show. Yeah, I have, Andrew, you're late for the party. What? Well, then I don't understand, actually, it's strange.

Suzanne: Yeah. Then you might actually think that you're referring to a real party that you're late for.

Andrew: Mmhmm, so be careful that you don't confuse to and for with this expression.

Suzanne: Should we listen to the next example?

Andrew: Let's do it.

Friend 1: I might **be a little late to the party**, but I just started listening to Radiohead recently.

Friend 2: Oh, cool, what do you think?

Friend 1: I dig it, I don't think I've ever heard a band that sounds quite like them.

Andrew: In this example, a woman mentions that she recently started to listen to the band Radiohead for the first time. Now, because Radiohead have been around for 20 years or more and are super popular, she has to admit to her friend that she **is late to the party** when it comes to listening to Radiohead.

Suzanne: That definitely seems like she's very **late to the party**.

Andrew: I'd say. Suzanne, let's move on to our second expression for today that we'll take a close look at. And, it is **to miss the boat, to miss the boat**. And sometimes people also say to miss the bus. So either **to miss the boat**. B-O-A-T or miss the bus, B-U-S.

And, what's it mean if you **miss the boat**?

Suzanne: Well, **to miss the boat** is kind of to miss an opportunity because you were maybe too slow or distracted or you just didn't take advantage of that opportunity at the right time.

Andrew: Or, if you're like me, you're just too lazy.

Suzanne: Yeah, or lazy, I totally relate to that.

Andrew: So the connection here is that if you **miss the boat** or you miss the bus, you are too late, that opportunity's passed and you can't take advantage of it anymore. It's gone.

Now, in what type of situation would you use this expression, **to miss the boat**? If, for example, a ticket sold out that I really wanted to buy, maybe a ticket to a movie on opening night, but I was too slow and I didn't buy the ticket in time—could I use **miss the boat** in this context?

Suzanne: Absolutely, absolutely. You weren't timely in taking advantage of the ticket sales and maybe they all sold out.

- Andrew: What happens if I wanted to ask a girl on a date, but just before I gathered up the courage to ask her out, I discovered that she just got a new boyfriend. Would I **miss the boat** in this context, too?
- Suzanne: I think so. I would say to you, Andrew, you **missed the boat** on that one. Yeah, if she had the week before, when you started to build up the courage and start thinking about asking her out, within those few days she got a new boyfriend, yeah, **you missed the boat**.
- Andrew: Mmhmm, sounds familiar.
- Suzanne: Also, what about applying for something, like a job? A job application deadline, or even for school sometimes, you miss the application deadline, and you didn't write it down on your agenda or put it in your phone as an alert and you **miss the boat**.
- Andrew: Yup, that is definitely another way that you can use it.
- Suzanne: Like me, like I did.
- Andrew: Hey, Sue, let's take a listen to some dialogue examples using this expression, **to miss the boat**.

- Friend 1: What are you doing this weekend?
- Friend 2: Ah, well, I wanted to go camping, but when I tried to reserve **a campsite**, they were all sold out.
- Friend 1: Guess you **missed the boat**, huh? I hear that you have to book well in advance.
- Friend 2: Yeah, evidently. I guess that's what I'll have to do next time.
- Friend 1: Yup.

- Suzanne: In this example, a man **missed the boat** for failing to reserve a camping site in advance. He waited too long and all the camping sites sold out. So because he was too slow to book a site, when some were available, he **missed the boat**.
- Andrew: Missed that opportunity, and I know this happens in Canada all the time, especially at the national parks and provincial parks. If you want to get **a campsite** in those beautiful parks, you have to book well in advance or else they're all gone.
- Suzanne: Yes, especially the little cabins as well, like the camping cabins. They go quickly.

- Andrew: Yeah, so if you're planning to come to Canada on vacation and you wanna stay in a park, it's a great idea but you need to plan ahead.
- Suzanne: Especially this year, because it's the 150th anniversary, so all the parks are free and most people have already made their reservations.
- Andrew: Did you get your free pass to the parks, Suzanne?
- Suzanne: Yeah, I did.
- Andrew: I got one too.
- Suzanne: I didn't **miss the boat** on that one.
- Andrew: For people who don't know, the Canadian Government was giving away free yearly passes to visit all the parks. You just had to sign up online, and this was a campaign that kind of **went viral**, everybody was sharing it on Facebook. Even though I'm not in Canada right now, I still signed up and I'm actually going back to Canada next week, so this is a good reminder that I should visit the parks while I'm back home.
- Suzanne: Yeah, yeah, and you're not super far from Banff, are you?
- Andrew: Well, I'm closer than you, but I'm still, like, 9 hours away.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: Canada's just too big.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: All right, let's listen to our final dialogue example using **to miss the boat**.
- Suzanne: All right.

- Friend 1: Did you hear about the huge sale down at the mall?
- Friend 2: No, I didn't.
- Friend 1: You gotta check it out, all of the prices have been marked down. I picked up a couple new pairs of pants for 75% off.
- Friend 2: Wow, that's super good deal.
- Friend 1: I know, right? Anyway, the sale is ending on Saturday so if you wanna check it out, you better hurry or you'll **miss the boat**.
- Friend 2: All right.

- Andrew: In this example, two friends talk about a huge sale at the mall, but the sale ends on Saturday. So if they wanna take advantage of it, they need to visit the mall soon. If they don't, they'll miss out, they'll **miss the boat**, and they won't be able to get those great savings. Ah, they gotta go.
- Suzanne: Absolutely, if they don't take advantage of this big opportunity, which probably doesn't come around very often, especially a mall-wide sale, they can basically say they've **missed the boat**.
- Andrew: Now, personally, there's no place I'd rather be less than a busy mall on a Saturday when there's a big sale.
- Suzanne: Yes.
- Andrew: But for the people in the example, they should check it out.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: Hey, Sue, that about brings us to the end of today's episode. Just to recap, to review, in this episode we studied two very useful, very natural, everyday expressions that you can use next time you learn something later than other people. We looked at the expression **to be late to the party**. This is when you learn about something later than other people. And we studied **to miss the boat**, which means you're too late to take advantage of a good opportunity.
- Suzanne: As always, to get the learning materials for this episode, which include a transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, and a quiz, check out Culips.com. And if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions for future episodes, drop us a line. Send us a message via our Facebook page at Facebook.com/CulipsPodcast, or you could also email us directly at contact@culips.com.
- Andrew: We will be back soon with another new episode, so stay tuned.
- Suzanne: Yup, talk to you then.
- Andrew: Bye.
- Suzanne: Bye.
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Detailed Explanations

To be late to the party

To be late to the party means to learn about or to become involved in something a long time after other people. You can use **to be late to the party** when someone doesn't know something that a lot of other people know or when someone is behind the times. For example, if your parents just found out about Facebook, you could say, "You're **late to the party!**"

To be late to the party (with the preposition to) does not mean the same thing as to be late for the party (with the preposition for). If you **are late to the party**, you are behind in finding out about something. However, if you are late for the party, you are not on time for an actual party.

Here's one more example with **to be late to the party**:

Marco:	Did you hear the news? Ashley is pregnant! She's gonna make a great mom.
Kemba:	You're late to the party , buddy. She's 7 months pregnant, and going on maternity leave in about 6 weeks!
Marco:	What? I'm always the last person to know these things!

To miss the boat

To miss the boat means to lose out on an opportunity or chance because you are too slow or late to act. So if you **miss the boat**, you fail to take advantage of something because your timing is off.

The expression **to miss the boat** can also mean to fail to understand something or to be ignorant of something. For example, if a student isn't paying attention in class, a teacher could say, "Pay attention or you'll **miss the boat** and fail the upcoming test."

Although the expression **to miss the boat** means the same thing as the expression to miss the bus, **to miss the boat** is more common in Canada.

Here's one more example with **to miss the boat**:

Georgia:	I'm so frustrated right now. I thought the deadline to apply for a government job was October 15, but it was October 10. I completely missed the boat! It would have been the perfect job for me.
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Kenny: I'm sorry. I have no doubt that something else will come up!

To go viral

The expression **to go viral** means to spread quickly and widely, or to become popular through fast and large-scale circulation. This expression is typically used to refer to information (eg, videos, images, or stories) that spreads quickly via the internet (eg, social networking sites or email).

In this episode, Andrew mentions that the Government of Canada launched a campaign that **went viral**. That is, Andrew is saying that the campaign reached a wide audience and was shared online by many people. When online content, like the Government of Canada campaign, is seen, forwarded, and enjoyed by many people, it **has gone viral**.

Interestingly, before the internet, **to go viral** simply meant a virus had spread and infected a lot of people. However, unless someone is talking about viruses or infectious diseases, you can bet that they are using the modern meaning of **to go viral**—to spread quickly and widely via the internet!

Here are a couple more examples with **to go viral**:

Tom:	Did you see that video of the chimp that steals a bag of grapes from a lady at the zoo?
Kelly:	Yeah, my dad sent me a link to the video yesterday.
Tom:	I think it was posted to YouTube only 2 days ago, but it already has more than 30 million views.
Kelly:	Wow, I can't believe how quickly it went viral .

Peter:	Did you see the picture they released of the mayor of Toronto?
Mona:	Yup, it was all over Facebook. It's really going to ruin his campaign. It's amazing how quickly someone's reputation can be destroyed.
Peter:	That's the power of the internet. Something can go viral in an instant. You just can't stop it.

A campsite

A campsite (campground) is a place where people go to camp. Camping is an outdoor activity that usually involves staying overnight in a shelter that is located away from urban areas. The shelter could be a tent, trailer, or cabin.

In Canada, camping is a popular activity. The national and provincial parks are popular **campsites** because of the variety of plant and animal species. Many Canadians will often visit these **campsites** and go camping for vacation. **A campsite** may offer visitors the use of a permanent shelter, like a hut or cabin, or they may require visitors to bring their own temporary and portable shelter, like a tent or recreational vehicle.

In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne talk about visiting Canada and camping in its parks. If you've never been camping, don't worry! The Government of Canada offers Learn to Camp, a program where visitors, newly immigrated residents, and inexperienced campers can learn how to camp. Learn to Camp teaches participants all the skills they need to plan and have safe camping trips!

So **a campsite** is a location where people go to camp. **A campsite** can be a temporary site or a public or private park for camping, and may or may not offer running water or electricity.

Here are a couple more examples with **a campsite**:

Michael:	I cleaned out the trailer this weekend and prepared it for the coming summer. I'm thinking of heading to a campsite near Picton over the long weekend.
Scott:	I guess a lot of people like that area since it's near Lake Ontario.
Michael:	Yup, Picton is prime camping.

Mary:	Did you see the sale on tents at the Outdoorsman Shop?
Bob:	I did. I bought a new four-person tent to use this summer.
Mary:	Do you have a campsite in mind?
Bob:	I'm gonna try camping in as many national and provincial parks as I can.
Mary:	What a wonderful idea!

A social circle

A social circle means a group of people who are connected through their society, culture, philosophies, or beliefs. These people can work or go to school together, or have a different connection. So **a social circle** is a set of family members or friends who get together for social activities, like going to the movies, eating at restaurants, or drinking coffee.

The meaning of **a social circle** has changed over the years. With the advent of social media, **a social circle** can now be used to describe the friends or followers people have on Facebook or Twitter. In other words, **a social circle** can include a large group of people who are only connected by social media.

Generally, when people talk about their **social circle**, they are referring to their smaller group of friends, and these friends often come from similar backgrounds or share similar experiences. For example, people who go to school together and see each other every day are more likely to become friends and spend time together outside of school than people who only see each other once every 6 months.

So **a social circle** means a group of people who are connected and who get together for social activities.

Here are a couple more examples with **a social circle**:

Kevin:	Welcome to Loyola High School! Where did you go to school before coming here?
Jude:	I went to a private school in Alberta.
Kevin:	Since you're new here, would you like to come to my house on Saturday? All my best buddies will be there.
Jude:	Sure! I look forward to meeting your social circle .

Meredith:	I've created an online group for all of us to join. This way we can keep in touch outside of work.
Paulina:	What a great idea—our own little social circle ! We can use the group to plan social events, like picnics, cocktail evenings, and movie nights!
Meredith:	You read my mind! I was just thinking that we should all get together for a movie night at my place next Friday. What do you think?
Paulina:	I'm in! I'll message the rest of the group.

Quiz

- 1. Which of the following is the best example of a social circle?**
 - a) a group of people in class
 - b) a group of friends at the movies
 - c) a group of people on the bus
 - d) a group of strangers at Starbucks

- 2. Carter likes Jessica and wants to ask her to the school dance. Before Carter can ask Jessica to the dance, Brian asks Jessica and she accepts. Carter _____.**
 - a) missed the boat
 - b) was late to the party
 - c) was late for the party
 - d) was late to the dance

- 3. Barbara's dinner party is supposed to have started already, but her friends haven't shown up yet. In other words, her friends _____.**
 - a) missed the boat
 - b) are late to the party
 - c) are late for the party
 - d) are late for the boat

- 4. True or false: A campsite is a tent or trailer.**
 - a) true
 - b) false

- 5. Which of the following is the best example of something that has gone viral?**
 - a) a campaign by a government
 - b) a campsite on the internet
 - c) a video on Facebook
 - d) a video with 20 million views

Quiz Answers

1.b 2.a 3.c 4.b 5.d

Episode credits

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