

## Catch Word #220 – Save it for a rainy day

### Episode description

Are you a spender or a saver? In this Catch Word episode, Andrew and Jeremy introduce some useful phrases to talk about saving money for the future.

### Fun fact

People in North America are finding it harder and harder to save money these days due to an increased cost of living, especially costs related to housing and daycare services.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- To squirrel [something] away
- To squander [something] away
- To get away for [some time]
- Frugal
- Live a little
- To save it for a rainy day



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## Transcript

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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.

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**Suzanne:** Hey, everyone, it's Suzanne. And coming soon to Culips, I'll be starting a brand-new series called Suzanne's Quick Tips. In this series, I'll share some great tips and tricks that will help you become a better English speaker. I'll cover lots of different topics, like pronunciation and clear speaking, my specialty, as well as presentation skills and some interview skills. Sometimes I may even share an interview with a friend. This series will be perfect for intermediate and advanced learners who want to improve their English for everyday business and academic situations. So keep your ears open for Suzanne's Quick Tips by the Culips English Podcast, and we'll see you very soon.

**Andrew:** Hello, everyone. My name is Andrew.

**Jeremy:** And my name is Jeremy.

**Andrew:** And you are listening to Culips.

**Andrew:** Welcome back to Culips, everyone. Today, we have a Catch Word episode for you. If you're not familiar with Catch Word, it is the series where we teach you English idioms and expressions that will polish your English and make you sound more like a native speaker, and also help you to understand English native speakers when they talk to you or when you're watching movies or something like this. The topic for today's Catch Word episode is expressions that you can use to talk about saving money.

**Andrew:** And joining me today to help me teach this episode to y'all is Jeremy. Hello, Jeremy.

**Jeremy:** Hello there. You know, Andrew, this is something that has been on my mind a lot lately.

**Andrew:** What is that?

**Jeremy:** Saving money.

**Andrew:** Saving money. Yeah, that's the topic for today's episode, saving money, something that I think everybody thinks is a good idea to do, but not everybody is good at doing it. Some people are better than others.

**Jeremy:** True, true.

**Andrew:** So we're going to teach you guys two expressions that you can use to talk about saving money today. But before we do that, I want to let everyone know that there is a study guide available for this episode on our website, Culips.com. We think it's a great companion to studying along to us while you listen. So visit our website, Culips.com, give it a download, and study along with us.

**Andrew:** All right, Jeremy, today's first expression is a very visual expression, I think. It's a verb, a phrasal verb, actually, and it is **to squirrel something away**. Squirrel as in the animal, you know, like the little animal that lives in the forest. **Squirrel something away**. And usually that something is money.

**Jeremy:** Money, yeah.

**Andrew:** Almost always money, **to squirrel money away**. And so maybe you could explain the imagery behind this expression?

**Jeremy:** I'm sure most people know what squirrels look like and, in my area, there are lots of squirrels. Squirrels are commonly known to bury food underground so that they can eat it later in the winter when there is no food available. So squirrels will find walnuts or nuts or acorns, they will collect them and bury them in one spot, so that they can come back later and have enough food to survive the winter.

**Andrew:** Exactly, when they're getting a little hungry and they wanna snack, they can go back to that spot and find a delicious acorn or something.

**Jeremy:** Yes, yes, exactly.

**Andrew:** Right, so just like a squirrel will bury some food for the future, kind of saving a resource for the future, when humans **squirrel something away**, it means that we save money for the future, right? So anytime that you're **squirrelling money away**, it just means that you are saving money for the future.

**Jeremy:** And we also say put away money in the same context, right?

**Andrew:** Yeah, put it away, put money away. Exactly. I think we should be careful here; there's a similar-sounding expression, **to squander away**, **to squander away**.

**Jeremy:** Mmm. That is the opposite.

**Andrew:** Right, it has the opposite meaning. So if you're very careless with your money and you waste your money by buying stupid things, then you **squander your money away**.

**Jeremy:** Like to waste, it means to waste your money, right?

**Andrew:** Yeah. So be careful, **squander** and **squirrel**—kind of similar sounding, right? They're in the same ballpark. So just be careful with those two expressions, they have very opposite meanings.

**Jeremy:** So should we get into our first example?

**Andrew:** Yeah, let's give it a listen.

**Friend 1:** I was thinking that we should take a road trip soon, **get away for a few days**, have some fun. What do you think?

**Friend 2:** I don't know, sounds expensive.

**Friend 1:** Expensive? You can afford it. You're always working.

**Friend 2:** Yeah, but I'm just trying to be a bit **frugal** these days and **squirrel away some money for the future**.

**Andrew:** In this example that we just heard, two friends were talking about taking a road trip. But one of the friends decided not to go on the road trip because it's too expensive to travel. He's being a bit **frugal** these days. **Frugal** means that you are careful with your money, that you're not spending your money on things that are not necessary. So he's saving money, he's **squirrelling some money away** for the future, saving money for the future, instead of going on a road trip with his friend.

**Jeremy:** So let's listen to one more example?

**Andrew:** Yup, let's do it.

**Friend 1:** Whoa, nice watch. Is that a Rolex?

**Friend 2:** Yeah, dude, I just got it. What do you think?

**Friend 1:** It's rad, but how did you afford it?

**Friend 2:** I've been **squirrelling my money away** for years, but I finally decided to **live a little**, buy something that I've always wanted.

**Jeremy:** In this example, one friend has bought a new watch, specifically a Rolex, which is a very expensive watch. And because he had **squirrelled his money away** for so long, he had enough money saved up to afford the Rolex. But, Andrew, you know, honestly, if I were this guy's friend ...

**Andrew:** Yes.

**Jeremy:** I would say that he **squandered that money**.

**Andrew:** Yeah.

**Jeremy:** By buying this watch.

**Andrew:** He **squirrelled** and then he **squandered**.

**Jeremy:** That's what I would say to him.

**Andrew:** It's kind of a funny role reversal, right? **To squirrel your money away** and then **squander it**. But who knows what was going on in his mind. Maybe, maybe he was **squirrelling his money away** for that specific purpose.

**Jeremy:** And I think it's worth it to mention that in both of these examples, it is possible to say put away instead. I've been putting away money for years, something like that.

**Andrew:** Let's move on to our second expression for today, which is **save it for a rainy day**. **Save it for a rainy day** or **to save something for a rainy day**.

**Jeremy:** This is a good one.

**Andrew:** It's a good one. It's a super common expression and it also is about saving money, right?

**Jeremy:** Yeah. It could be about saving money, but it could also be about other things. You could save something valuable, like, for example, if I have a very expensive bottle of wine.

**Andrew:** That's what came into my head, too, when I was trying to think of an example, is an expensive bottle of wine.

**Jeremy:** **Save it for a rainy day**. So in this phrase, the term rainy day does not mean a day on which it rains. It is a metaphor for a time when you really need or want something.

**Andrew:** Right, so if we were to use your example of an expensive bottle of wine, it means you're kind of saving it for a special occasion, when you really want to crack it open and celebrate properly. But I think most of the time when we use this expression, it's used to talk about money, right? Talking about saving money so that you can use it when you really want to or when you really need to. I think especially we use this to talk about saving money for uncertainty in the future, right?

**Jeremy:** The rainy day here represents uncertainty, as unforeseen event.

**Andrew:** Yeah, so **saving money for a rainy day** might mean, like, I don't know if I'll have my job in 5 years. I might be replaced by a robot English teacher. So I better **save my money for a rainy day** just in case that happens, right? Something like that.

**Jeremy:** So should we get into our first example, then?

**Andrew:** Yeah, let's listen to an example using this expression, **save it for a rainy day**.

**Friend 1:** When I was a kid, I really wanted a BMX, but my parents couldn't afford one.

**Friend 2:** So what did you do?

**Friend 1:** Well, I got a paper route and I started to earn some money.

**Friend 2:** Oh, cool. And did you end up buying one?

**Friend 1:** No, in the end, I just ended up **saving the money for a rainy day** and, actually, I have a nice little savings account because of it.

**Andrew:** In this example, one guy talks about how he ended up **saving some money for a rainy day**. Originally, he wanted to buy a BMX, but he couldn't afford it. So he got a paper route. A paper route or a paper route, depending on how you decide to pronounce this word—there's two different options, route or route—this is a job that a lot of teenagers have, delivering newspapers, right? This means to deliver newspapers door to door, paper route. And he earned some money doing this part-time job. And, you know, once he started making some money, he decided not to buy the BMX. BMX, by the way, is a kind of bicycle that you can do lots of tricks on, right? It's kind of a smaller bicycle that you can use to do stunts and tricks and jumps. So he didn't buy this bicycle in the end. He just **saved the money for a rainy day**.

**Jeremy:** He is saving the money in case he needs it later. In case something happens and he needs the money.

**Andrew:** Yeah. So sounds like a mature young man.

**Jeremy:** Yes, but his voice did not sound like a very mature young man.

**Andrew:** That's right.

**Jeremy:** Sorry, everyone. I like to do voices, if you can't tell.

**Andrew:** Yeah, Jeremy's better at the voices than I am. We'll see what other voice you can do for this one.

**Jeremy:** OK, let's try it.

**Andrew:** OK, here we go.

**Friend 1:** We'll be getting our yearly bonus soon. I'm gonna take a trip to Vegas. How about you, any plans?

**Friend 2:** I'll probably just **save it for a rainy day**.

**Friend 1:** Really? Oh, come on, that's so boring. Why don't you come to Vegas with me and we'll have some fun? Hit the casinos, see a show. It'll be great.

**Friend 2:** I think I'll pass. You have fun, though.

**Jeremy:** In this example, two friends talk about going on a trip to Las Vegas. Las Vegas is a city famous around the world for gambling, casinos, and, in general, spending lots of money.

**Andrew:** It's nicknamed Sin City, right? Sin City, Las Vegas.

**Jeremy:** It is called Sin City by many people. But the friend in this example says he would rather **save his yearly bonus for a rainy day**, meaning that, instead of going to Las Vegas and using all that money or spending all that money, he would rather keep the money in case he needs it later on.

**Andrew:** That is right. And I think that is a wise thing to do with your yearly bonus. But, who knows, maybe you could double your money at the casino and then who's the fool, right?

**Jeremy:** You should try that one out and let me know how it goes.

**Andrew:** Yeah, I'm kinda risk averse so I don't think I'll be doing that myself, personally.

**Jeremy:** Yeah. Yeah, I don't think so.

**Andrew:** All right, guys, that brings us to the end of today's episode. Just to do a quick recap, we learned two expressions today that you can use to talk about saving money. The first one is **to squirrel money away** and the second one is **to save it for a rainy day, save money for a rainy day**.

**Andrew:** So thank you for listening and just before I let you go, I wanna remind you about the study guide for this episode. It's available on Culips.com and it is designed with love to help you improve your English and get the most out of what we covered here today. So definitely check that out on Culips.com.

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**Andrew:** Also, our email address is [contact@Culips.com](mailto:contact@Culips.com). So if you have any questions or feedback or suggestions for a future episode topic, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch with us.

**Andrew:** And, finally, I wanna let you know about our social media presence. We're on Instagram, YouTube and Facebook and Twitter. So if you use one of these social media services and you'd like to give us a follow, please do that. We'd love to see you on social media.

**Andrew:** We'll be back soon, everyone, with a brand-new Culips episode and we'll talk to you then. Goodbye.

**Jeremy:** Bye, everyone.



## Detailed Explanations

### To squirrel [something] away

Phrasal verb

**To squirrel [something] away** means to keep something in a safe place to be used sometime in the future. This expression comes from what squirrels do before winter—they collect and hide their nuts in secret places so they have something to eat during the coming winter season. People usually use this expression to talk about saving money for the future; people **squirrel away money** for future use.

Here's one more example with **to squirrel [something] away**:

**Crystal:** Ugh, these student loans are killing me. I'm not gonna be able to pay them back until I'm 50. How much have you got left?

**Greta:** I've already paid off all of my loans.

**Crystal:** What? How? I know your family's not rich and you've got the same job as me.

**Greta:** Well, first, I got a 50% scholarship from my college. Second, I've had a part-time job since I was 15. I **squirreled away every paycheck** I got from then until I graduated college, minus living expenses, of course.

**Crystal:** Wow. You are so responsible. You should hold seminars for high school kids or something. They could learn a thing or two from you about saving money. Or, on second thought, teach me!

## To squander [something] away

Phrasal verb

**To squander [something] away** is to waste something without thinking about the future. For example, **to squander money away** is to spend lots of money on useless or unnecessary items. **To squander [something] away** is the opposite of the phrase mentioned above, to squirrel [something] away.

Here are a couple more examples with **to squander [something] away**:

**Son:** Mom, can I have \$20?

**Mom:** What happened to the \$50 allowance I gave you?

**Son:** I spent it all already.

**Mom:** What? I only gave it to you 2 days ago.

**Son:** There was a really cool video game I wanted to buy ...

**Mom:** Well, I'm not giving you any more **money to squander away**. If you need some, go ask the neighbour if you can mow and trim his lawn in exchange for \$20.

**Jasmine:** So what did you do today?

**Vicky:** Absolutely nothing. I am such a slug.

**Jasmine:** Ha. Weren't you going to go job hunting today?

**Vicky:** Yeah, I was, but I **squandered all of my time away** on Instagram and YouTube. I have a serious addiction.

**Jasmine:** Maybe you should get one of those app-blocking apps. You know, an app that blocks you from accessing other apps? You could block Instagram and YouTube for a few hours each day so you can focus.

**Vicky:** That is a brilliant idea! You're a genius!

## To get away for [some time]

### Phrase

**To get away for [some time]** means to leave town to go for a short trip or to take a short vacation. Sometimes life gets boring, stressful, or tedious, and the best way to unwind, to rest, is to take a mini-vacation. If someone says she wants **to get away for the weekend**, it means she wants to go on a weekend trip somewhere.

This phrase can be used with multiple different amounts of time, such as **to get away for a few days**, **to get away for a couple of weeks**, or **to get away for just a few hours**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get away for [some time]**:

**Jeff:** Man, this new project at work is really stressing me out.

**Mandy:** Maybe we should **get away for the weekend**. You know, just the two of us. How does that sound?

**Jeff:** I don't know ... I should probably do some work over the weekend, too.

**Mandy:** No. I'm sure if we **get away for a bit**, it'll give your brain a chance to relax and refresh so you can work 10 times harder starting on Monday.

**Jeff:** That could be true. Sure, let's do it! Where do you want to go?

**Mandy:** How about I see if that little cottage by the beach we stayed at last year is available?

**Jeff:** Yes, that sounds so perfect right now.

**Padma:** Hey, Mom, could you come over and watch the kids for a few hours?

**Mom:** Sure, what's up?

**Padma:** Nothing special. The baby didn't sleep well last night, so neither did I. I just need to **get away from the house for a few hours** and have some solid me-time.

**Mom:** Of course, sweetie. I don't want you feeling stressed and crabby. It's not good for the kids, either. I'll be over around 10:30. How's that?

**Padma:** Perfect! Mom, you're a real lifesaver.

## Frugal Adjective

**Frugal** is an adjective that means to live simply and economically by spending one's money wisely. For example, a **frugal** person might save money on gas by taking the bus to work instead of driving.

Stingy is a word that should be learned alongside **frugal**. A stingy person is also someone who saves money well, but it is because they are ungenerous and refuse to spend or give up their money without good reason. Stingy and **frugal** both describe people who save money well, but **frugal** has a positive meaning: a person who spends their money wisely. Stingy has a negative meaning: a person who is unwilling to spend money even if it causes problems for others.

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

**Rachel:** I'm drowning in credit card debt. I really need some financial advice. You're like the queen of living **frugally**. Any tips?

**Theresa:** Well, the first tip is to make a budget. You need to keep track of exactly how much money you want to spend on certain items like food, gas, clothes, and so on.

**Rachel:** It sounds like a lot of work.

**Theresa:** Most good things in life do take work, you know. Anyways, it will just be a lot of work the first time getting everything set up. After that, you only need to make adjustments here and there.

**Veronica:** Ugh, I can't stand Bob.

**Carlos:** Yeah, he's not the easiest person to get along with.

**Veronica:** Not only is he a giant know-it-all, he is so stingy! Whenever we go to lunch, we always split the bill and he makes sure it is exact, down to the very last cent.

**Carlos:** Maybe he's having money problems?

**Veronica:** No, this isn't some **frugal** lifestyle thing. He's just completely unwilling to pay even a penny more than what he sees as his fair share. Even if he's the one to order an appetizer and eat most of it, I still have to pay exactly half! It's ridiculous.

## Live a little Slang

If someone tells you to **live a little**, it means they think that you are boring or conservative, or that you work too hard and you need to get out and have some fun. Someone who is a workaholic, a person who spends all of their time at work, might be told to **live a little**.

To **live a little** means to get outside of your comfort zone, to take some risks, to go a little bit crazy. There are a lot of quotes on the internet about life versus work, but this one sums it up nicely: "All work and no play will make you sad and grey." This quote means that if you don't go out and **live a little**, you will waste your life and end up being sad and regretful when you get old.

Here are a couple more examples with **live a little**:

**Chris:** Hey, man, a couple of us are going to the bar to grab a few drinks after work. Wanna join?

**Roger:** No, sorry. I should really stay late and get this work done.

**Chris:** C'mon, Roger. You stay late all the time. You need to relax and **live a little**.

**Roger:** You know I'm trying to get this big promotion. If I get it, then I'll think about taking a break.

**Chris:** OK, but you know where to find us if you change your mind.

**Daphne:** So how did that date go with the guy you mentioned?

**Janessa:** Oh, him ... I cancelled that.

**Daphne:** What? Why? You haven't gone on a physical date in forever!

**Janessa:** I don't know. The kids were fussy. I was tired. I just wasn't feeling in the dating mood, I guess.

**Daphne:** Girl, you've been divorced for over a year now. It's time to get back out there and **live a little**. You don't want to die alone, do you?

## To save it for a rainy day

### Idiom

**To save it for a rainy day** has a very similar meaning to the phrase to squirrel [something] away. Both phrases mean to save something, usually money, to have for future use. In the phrase **to save it for a rainy day** in particular, it is implied that the money will be used to solve some kind of problem that arises. Rainy day doesn't literally mean a rainy day, but instead it means a day that something unfortunate happens, such as getting into a car accident or breaking a tooth. In these instances, extra money will be required to solve these problems, so people should **save their money for a rainy day** to be able to fix problems such as these.

Here's one more example with **to save it for a rainy day**:

**Lance:** So I heard you inherited some money from your grandfather. Got any special plans for that cash?

**Michael:** Not really. I'll probably go on a fishing trip and then **save the rest of it for a rainy day**.

**Lance:** That's definitely the responsible thing to do. If I were you, I'd take it straight to Vegas.

**Michael:** That's the difference between us. That's why I have a house, a wife, and two lovely children, and you have a shoebox apartment and a dog.

**Lance:** Touché.

## Quiz

1. Which word has a similar meaning to the word frugal, but with a much more negative connotation?
  - a) slimy
  - b) stingy
  - c) feisty
  - d) wasteful
  
2. Which person might be told to live a little? Select all that apply.
  - a) a homebody
  - b) a world traveller
  - c) a workaholic
  - d) a skydiver
  
3. Which of the choices below cannot fill in the blank? I really need to get away for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) 10 years
  - b) the weekend
  - c) a couple of hours
  - d) a few days
  
4. True or false? The phrase to save money for a rainy day means that someone saves money so that they can spend a lot of money on days when there is not much to do, life is boring, and the weather is rainy.
  - a) true
  - b) false
  
5. Which is an example of squandering away money?
  - a) paying a high electricity bill
  - b) going on a family vacation
  - c) spending a whole paycheck on a Gucci bag
  - d) buying a hybrid car for fuel efficiency

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## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Are you good at squirreling away money? What is your method?
2. Have you ever had an experience where you were happy that you saved money for a rainy day? What happened that required you to use that money?
3. What is something that you squander your money away on? Was it worth it?
4. If you wanted to get away for the weekend, where would you go? Who would you go with?
5. Has anyone ever told you to live a little? What would you like to do to make your life more interesting or exciting?



## Quiz Answers

1.b    2.a,c    3.a    4.b    5.c

### Episode credits

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