

Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #6: Walking on eggshells



Culips English Podcast

Transcript

Hello everyone, this is Jeremy and you're listening to Jeremy's English tips, a series by the Culips English Podcast where I teach you interesting expressions or share language learning tips.

~~Before we get into the content, I'd like to remind you that we have a study guide available for this episode. At Culips.com. You can head over to Culips.com to check it out and find out how you can study along as you listen.~~ So in this episode, we are going to talk about the idiomatic expression **walking on eggshells**. Walking on eggshells.

Now, first, I should explain that egg shells are the shells of eggs. I'm sure we all have seen an egg before. And most of us have probably tried to cook an egg before and if you have ever handled egg shells, you will know that they are very brittle. They are very easily broken, very breakable. So if you imagine putting egg shells all over the floor in a room and trying to walk on the eggshells, you will almost definitely break them, right? Now this is the visual for this expression. And in a moment when I explain the situations and the example sentences, you will see how this expression is actually used in real life.

So, the meaning of this expression is: **to be extra careful around someone so as not to make them angry or offend them**. To say that again, this phrase means that you are being very careful around someone so that you don't make them angry or offend them. To offend someone is to hurt their feelings, to make them angry by saying something that hurts their pride. For example, telling a man he is weak and he is not a man or something like that. That is something that is offensive. If you tell a Real Madrid football fan that their team is terrible, then likewise, that would be offensive, that would offend them.

So let's look at our first example sentence here. It's actually two sentences. But the first sentence helps you to understand the situation.

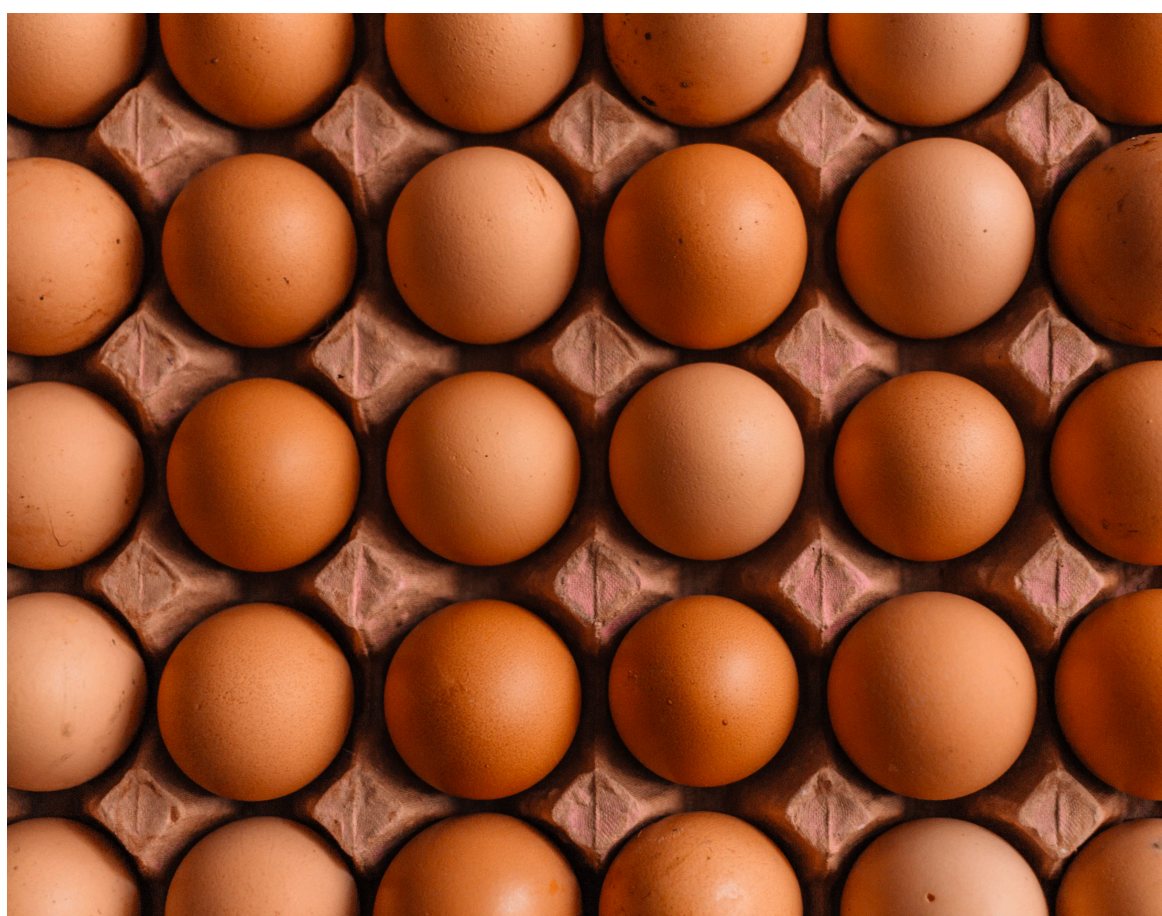
I forgot my girlfriend's birthday last week, and she's still kind of mad about it. So, I've been walking on eggshells around her ever since.

In this example, the boyfriend tells us about how he forgot his girlfriend's birthday. He didn't remember that her birthday was last week. This of course, made her angry. And since she is still angry, he is being extra careful not to make her more angry. He is walking on eggshells around her. So, it is as if there are eggshells all over the floor in the house. And if he breaks some of the eggshells, it will make her angry. This is sort of the metaphorical meaning of this one. Okay, let's look at our second example now.

My new boss gets angry very easily. So I always feel like I'm walking on eggshells at the office.

In this example, the speaker tells us about their new boss. This new boss is very quick to get angry. He has a hot temper. So, the speaker says that he feels like he is walking on eggshells at the office, walking very carefully, trying not to break the eggshells, trying not to make his new boss angry. So, you can use this expression in your life as well. If there is someone who is very sensitive in your life, someone who gets angry very easily, usually over a small thing, not something big or substantial.

And if you do find a way to use this in your daily life, why don't you let us know? You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube. You name it, we're there. Or you can send us an email at contact@culips.com. Thanks for listening everyone. I hope you found this episode helpful and useful. Like always until next time, bye



Extra example sentences

- When Tom was a kid, he felt like he was always walking on eggshells when he was around his step dad.
- You don't have to go around like you're walking on eggshells. I'm not mad at you.
- After her divorce, Jessie finally felt like she didn't have to walk around on eggshells anymore.
- My manager has such a short temper. I feel like I'm always walking around on eggshells when he's around.

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a time when you walked on eggshells? Describe it.
2. What emotions do people feel when they walk on eggshells?
3. In your native language, do you have an idiomatic expression that is similar to to walk on eggshells?

Study Challenges

1. Write five example sentences using the expression **to walk on eggshells**.
2. Record a short video and talk about a time you had to **walk on eggshells**.

Credits

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