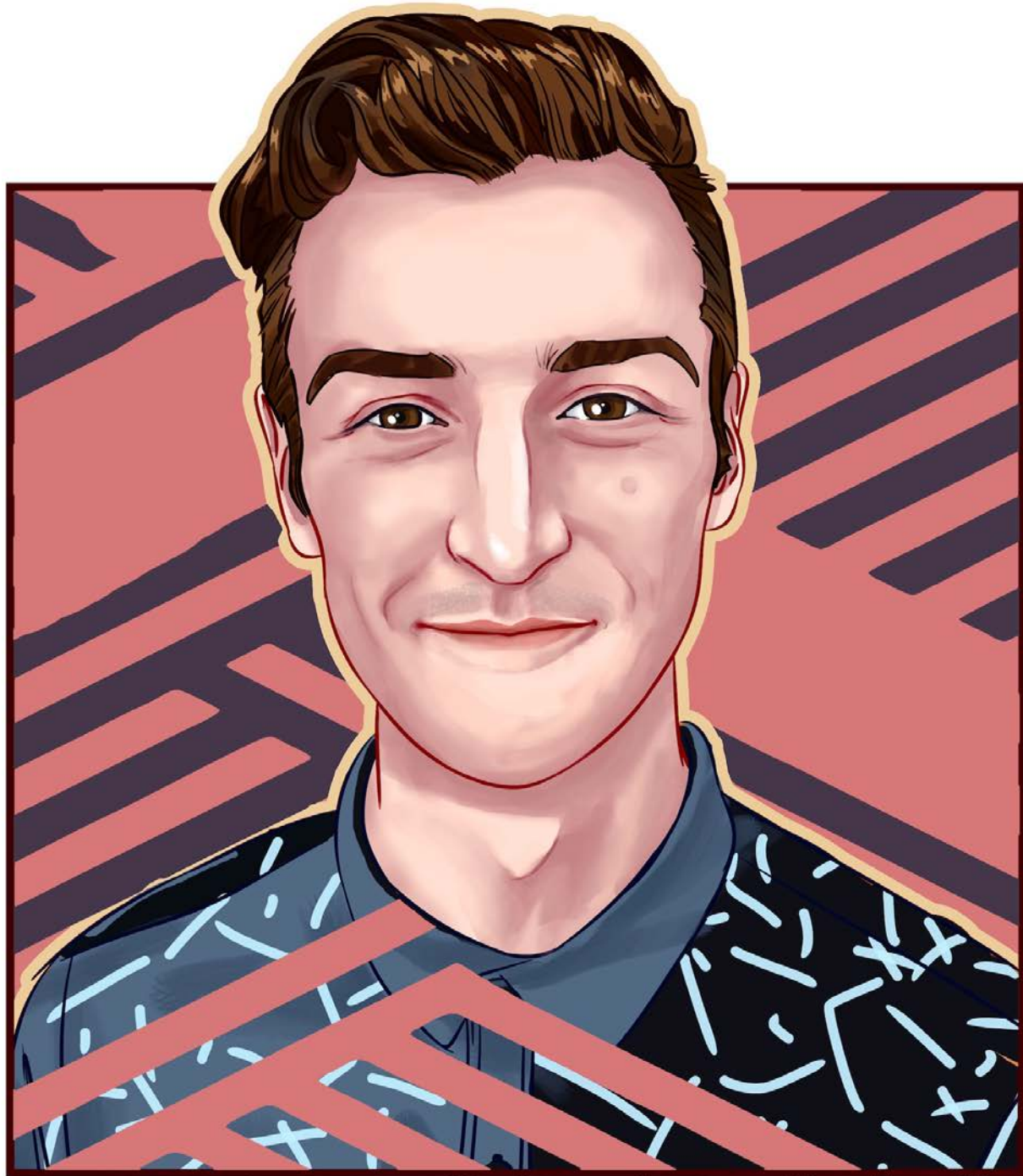


# Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #8: English names



**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.

What's up everyone? Welcome back Culips listeners. Thank you for checking out this episode of Jeremy's English Tips. **In this episode, we are going to talk about English names.** I want to remind you that there is a study guide available on our website. At Culips.com, you can head over to our website and download the study guide so that you can follow along as you listen.

All right, so I should start by saying that most of this is my personal opinion. So, I know that some people might think differently, but all I can do is share my personal opinion with you, so that's what I'm going to do. Now, **my opinion is that English names are helpful when your real name is too difficult for English speakers to pronounce correctly.** So, when I say English names, I mean you are creating a new name instead of your real name.

As I mentioned in a previous episode, I grew up in a very diverse area in California, and many of my friends were from other countries. I had Indian friends and Korean friends, Japanese and Chinese friends. Iranian and Turkish friends, as well, and many of their names were very difficult to pronounce, especially for substitute teachers. Whenever we had a substitute teacher come in, he or she would be reading the names off of the class roster. And they would always stop at some of my friends names, they would say, "E-E-Eh Ehsan?" And I always felt the need to correct them. So, I would raise my hand and help the substitute teacher pronounce my friend's names correctly.

So, I know firsthand how it can be very annoying to try to explain how to pronounce your name properly to each and every new person you meet. It can be very redundant and for that reason, **I think it's just easier to create an English name.**

For example, my wife is Korean and her Korean name is Jae Hyeon. Now, Heyon is a very difficult sound to pronounce for English speakers. My wife told me that often on the first day of school when she was in a new class with a new teacher, they would read her name and

say, "Jai Hi Yoon?" Jae Hyeon is the correct pronunciation but they would say Jai Hi Yoon and everybody in the class would laugh. She was so embarrassed by this that she decided to change her name to Jane. Jae Heyon, Jane.

Now my advice is if you do make an English name, **you should choose something that sounds similar to your real name**, just like in my wife's case. Jae Heyon, Jane. Now why should it sound similar? Well, because you will have to hear that name and respond quickly. People will call you by that name from across the room "Hey, so and so!" and they will try to get your attention. So, you have to be ready to respond to that name. And if it sounds like your real name, then that will be much easier. You can also choose the name of a famous figure, a famous person, like a movie star or a famous athlete, but I usually suggest asking a close friend, because it's more meaningful. If your English speaking friend makes your English name for you, it has some sentimental value. And I think that's much better. Also, if you ask a native English speaker, they can help you choose a name that fits you. Some names kind of have a feeling or a nuance to them. And it is important that your English name matches your personality and who you are.

Now, maybe you have heard of middle names, have you? Middle names are quite common in English speaking countries but are not necessary. Do you have middle names in your home country? Nowadays in North America, most people have middle names but they don't carry much importance. They are often never shared with people outside of the family and are really only sometimes required on legal documents. In my experience, most people's middle names are given to them by their parents to honor someone in the family, or a famous figure that the parents admire or like for some reason.

For example, my middle name comes from my father's name, and my brother's middle name is the name of a saint. Historically, this is especially common, sometimes women will use their maiden name as their middle name after they get married. In most western countries, traditionally, women will take the family name of their husband when they get married. So for that reason, often women will keep their maiden name which is their original last name, the last name that they were born with. And they will use that as their middle name after they have gotten married. So, since middle names are really not very important these days, if you

choose an English name, **you can use your real name as your middle name in English** speaking situations, but you really don't have to.

Now, in diverse parts of North America, in the US and Canada, many people will prefer to call you by your real name out of respect. I have seen this a lot in my lifetime and personally, I tried to learn the correct pronunciation of people's names and call them as such. So, I am used to learning how to pronounce people's real names, but it is still a good idea to have an English name.

Nicknames are another option. Now, nicknames are names that are usually made for fun, and can be a shortened form of your real name, or something completely made up. For example, when I was living in Korea, I played on a men's basketball team there, and one of my teammates had an English name. His English name was Rich. And he chose the name because he wanted to be rich. He wanted to make lots of money, so he chose the English name Rich. We can say that this is a nickname.

However, for many Koreans, it is common to shorten their Korean name into just the letters. For example, J is a common way of shortening Korean names that start with a similar sound. Even for me, sometimes, people close to me will call me, J. My dad and my brother, especially, call me that from time to time, and it kind of shows that we are close. People that use nicknames with each other usually are on friendly terms and so a nickname is a nice option.

Here are a few ways that you can introduce yourself if you do decide to use an English name or a nickname.

**Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. But my English name is \_\_\_\_\_.**

Or you can say:

**Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ But I go by, \_\_\_\_\_. Or my nickname is, \_\_\_\_\_.**

Now with all that being said, you do not need to choose an English name. It is up to you but this is just my opinion.

So that's all for this episode of Jeremy's English Tips. I hope you found this helpful. If you decide to choose an English name, maybe you can let us know on social media or send us an email at [contact@culips.com](mailto:contact@culips.com). Maybe someone can help you out with your name as well. All right, everyone. I hope you enjoyed this episode and I will see you in the next one. Happy English learning! Bye for now.

## Key points

1. **Jeremy's opinion is that English names are helpful when your real name is too difficult for English speakers to pronounce correctly.**
2. **If you make an English name, you should choose something that sounds similar to your real name.**
3. **Middle names are common in English speaking countries, but are not necessary.**
4. **In diverse parts of North America, many people will prefer to call you by your real name out of respect.**
5. **Nicknames are names that are usually made for fun, and can be a shortened form of your real name or something completely made up.**

# Writing and discussion questions

1. Do you think it's better to use an English name? Why or why not?
2. If you chose an English name, how did you go about making it?
3. Do you know anyone from your home country who uses a nickname? How did they choose their name?
4. What are some reasons why people might not want to use an English name?
5. Do you think foreigners that learn your native language should make names in your native language? Why or why not?

## Study challenges

1. Try asking an English speaking friend for help making an English name.
2. Visit the following website to browse through potential names and make a list. You can show this list to your friends and see what they think. <https://www.babynames.com/>

# Credits

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