

Chatterbox #164 – Café culture

Episode Description

Drinking coffee is a common part of North American life. While you can drink coffee by yourself, cafés and coffee shops make coffee a part of many people's social lives. In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne discuss their personal coffee habits and some of the interesting experiences they've had in cafés and coffee shops. So pour yourself a cup and get ready for a jolt of interesting English conversation!

Sample Dialogue

Andrew: So the other day, I woke up, and maybe it was 7:00 or 7:30 in the morning. And I felt like a cup of coffee, like I usually do in the morning.

Suzanne: Of course. Yes, definitely need **a caffeine jolt**.

Andrew: Exactly. So I went out to search for a café because I just moved here. I haven't had time to buy a coffeemaker. I can't brew my own cup at home, so I had to go out and look for a cup of coffee. And I noticed in my neighbourhood, there are lots of cafés—cafés all over the place.

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- A jolt of something
- A mom-and-pop shop
- To tip / a tip
- To head out
- Step by step
- To take up space or time
- To go about your business
- To do the trick
- In a pinch
- To be on the receiving end of something



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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.

Transcript

Andrew: Hello everybody. I'm Andrew.

Suzanne: And I'm Suzanne.

Andrew: And you're listening to Culips.

Suzanne: If you want to learn English for everyday use, you've come to the right place. At Culips, we help make English understandable. By listening to our podcast, you can learn natural expressions and conversational structure. If you're interested in learning more about Culips and what we do, check us out on Facebook, Twitter, or our website, Culips.com. Thanks for listening. We hope you enjoy this episode.

Suzanne: Hey Andrew. How's it going?

Andrew: I'm doing pretty well. How are you, Suzanne?

Suzanne: I'm OK. I'm good. You are no longer in Montreal though.

Andrew: I know. I have some big news to share with everybody. I have moved away from Montreal, and I've actually gone back to Korea. I'm living in Korea again.

Suzanne: Wow! How is Korea? How has the move been for you?

Andrew: It's been very smooth, and everything has been very nice so far. I've been in Korea now for about a week. And I'm working at a university here, and I'm continuing to teach English. So I'm very happy about this new transition. And yeah, everything has been great so far.

Suzanne: So you've been there for a week, and has there been anything in the last week that you've missed?

Andrew: You know, it's funny that you ask because I have noticed one thing that's a little weird to me being over here in Korea.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: So the other day, I woke up, and maybe it was 7:00 or 7:30 in the morning. And I felt like a cup of coffee, like I usually do in the morning.

Suzanne: Of course. Yes, definitely need **a caffeine jolt**.

Andrew: Exactly. So I went out to search for a café because I just moved here. I haven't had time to buy a coffeemaker. I can't brew my own cup at home, so I had to go out and look for a cup of coffee. And I noticed in my neighbourhood, there are lots of cafés—cafés all over the place.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: But as I tried to go into the cafés, they were all closed at 7:00–7:30 in the morning. And it was really bizarre to me that they don't open until later in the day, at 9:00 or 10:00 a.m.

Suzanne: That's so strange because at 7:30 or 8:00 is when you really need the coffee, or the caffeine.

Andrew: It's peak coffee time for me, in my opinion. As soon as I wake up, that's when I want that **caffeine jolt** to get me going for the day.

Suzanne: So what did you do?

Andrew: I kept going from café to café, and finally, when I tried to go into one café, the door was open. But as I walked in, I noticed these guys are not open for business. There's just somebody in the back. They probably just arrived in the café for their shift at work, and they weren't planning to open for a little while. But when I opened the door, some chimes that were on the door rang. And so the lady in the back came out, and she said, "You know, we're closed." And I told her I really wanted a coffee, and she actually made me one. She opened the till and turned on the coffee machines, and brewed me a cup of coffee. Uh, she was very nice.

Suzanne: That's very nice. Did you take down the address, and you know, go there again?

Andrew: Well, yeah. I felt like I was a little bit of a hindrance, and I asked her, you know, "What time do you guys open?" And she said, "Oh, not for another hour or so." And I thought, "Ugh!"

Suzanne: Wow.

Andrew: She probably has other work to do before to prep the store.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: But she was kind enough to make me a cup. So yeah. That was nice.

Suzanne: That's nice. Did you give her **a tip**?

Andrew: No. Just because tipping culture doesn't really exist in Korea.

Suzanne: Ah.

Andrew: So it would be very unusual for me to do so.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: And the coffee was super overpriced.

Suzanne: Maybe she raised the price because it was one hour before she opened the store.

Andrew: Yeah. I tell ya. I had to pay for that early-morning coffee.

OK. Well, it's quite the coincidence that we started this episode off by talking about coffee because, today, we're going to do a Chatterbox episode. And this is where we have a natural conversation about an interesting topic, and today, our topic is café culture. I guess maybe we should start with defining some expressions and some terms that we use to describe cafés and drinking coffee.

Suzanne: Yeah. Because you have your café, which I don't know how you think about this, but I think of cafés as being a place where you can also maybe eat lunch or have even wine, like in France. You can maybe even have, um, a snack or a sandwich, and there's also coffee shops. A coffee shop would be more like a Starbucks. Or here in Canada, we have Second Cup. These are places you can get treats like cookies and doughnuts or also sandwiches—quick and in-and-out, on-the-go kind of foods. And also juice and tea and coffee.

Andrew: Exactly. So I agree with your definition of the two places. I think a café is maybe, like you said, more of a place where you could have a light lunch, and obviously, coffee. Whereas a coffeehouse or a coffee shop, it's more of a place where you would mainly go for coffee.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: And also they have some snacks, like cookies or muffins, or something that goes with coffee that you could buy.

- Suzanne: Yeah. And you can stay for a long time and sit. And maybe you don't have a waiter or a waitress coming to your table to get your order, like a café. A coffee shop or coffeehouse, you go to a counter or the coffee bar. And you get your stuff, and **head out** to a table and sit down. And maybe bring your computer. Do your homework. Read a book. Write the next amazing novel. I think of writers when I think of coffee shops, coffeehouses.
- Andrew: Yeah. Definitely, if you wanted to meet aspiring writers that would be the place to go, I think.
- Suzanne: For sure.
- Andrew: You see a lot of people with their laptops out, writing the final chapter to their masterpiece.
- Suzanne: Yes. Or poetry.
- Andrew: Yes.
- Suzanne: Speaking of poetry, I find that in coffeehouses, they also have live performances. Sometimes spoken word or poetry readings, or maybe a singer/songwriter, acoustic set in the evening. Or like a book reading or a book signing. This kind of stuff.
- Andrew: Absolutely, yeah. You wouldn't go to a coffeehouse and see a band play. I think it might be too loud.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: Although my band has played in cafés before. So maybe that's not totally accurate, but I think for the most part, you would go to a coffeehouse to see some sort of quieter entertainment, right? You might see, like you said, a poetry reading, or you might see a singer/songwriter playing a guitar or playing a piano and singing. So yeah, it can be a place to go to be entertained as well.
- Suzanne: Yeah. I also had a fun evening at a coffeehouse, where I went to drink tea and coffee, and a glass of wine, and also painted. It was called Paint Nite. We have these here in North America. There's a night where you choose the painting you like, and you go to that location. Maybe it's a bar or maybe it's a coffeehouse. And you pay \$25.00, and they supply you with the paints and the canvas and a teacher. And you sit with everyone, and you're all painting the same picture.
- Andrew: Interesting. I've seen this on Facebook.
- Suzanne: It's interesting. Yeah.

- Andrew: Some of my other friends I've noticed have done this, but I never knew the story. I just saw the pictures, and they said, "Oh, this is my painting from Paint Nite."
- Suzanne: Paint Nite, yeah.
- Andrew: Um, that's cool. So you go to a café and...
- Suzanne: They have it at cafés, yeah. And...
- Andrew: And you can drink a beverage, some coffee or something.
- Suzanne: Yeah. I had wine. I think drinking wine, to be honest, helps you with your painting.
- Andrew: I'm sure, yeah.
- Suzanne: Or some people it doesn't help, but I think for me it helped.
- Andrew: Yeah, it helps bring out the artistic talent, right?
- Suzanne: Yes.
- Andrew: That's cool. So you have an instructor there that helps you, and?
- Suzanne: And they take you **step by step** through the painting, yeah.
- Andrew: **Step by step**. And how many people would be doing this together?
- Suzanne: I think the last time I went—I've only been once...
- Andrew: OK.
- Suzanne: Was about 20 to 25 people in the room with long tables, and everyone is set up next to each other. So it's a funny environment, kind of quiet and nice music over the stereo, and everyone's just painting and drinking coffee and chatting.
- Andrew: It sounds like a very nice way to spend an evening.
- Suzanne: Yeah. It's quite nice.
- Andrew: Good. So yeah, this is another way that cafés and coffeehouses can be used as sort of event places. I've also heard of "maker meetings." I don't know if you know about these, where people get together and they work on some sort of electronic thing. Maybe they make a little robot, or they build a computer together.

Suzanne: Wow!

Andrew: And I've heard of these types of courses that happen from time to time, usually in a café or a coffeehouse as the venue.

Suzanne: Nice.

Andrew: I guess the nice thing about a coffeehouse or a café is that they can serve as a meeting place.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: As long as what you're doing is quiet and not disturbing people, or **taking up too much space**, you can just meet there without getting the permission of the venue, right? If you want to have a book club...

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: You can easily host your book club at a coffee shop without getting the permission of the coffee shop.

Suzanne: Yeah. Like, a friend of mine has a knitting group. So you sit together on the couches in the coffee shop. In some coffee shops and coffeehouses in New York City, you can order wine as well. And you sit and drink wine, and even in the middle of the day, and knit.

I used to be part of a theatre company, and we met every week to, uh, discuss our company and artistic choices, upcoming shows, and casting and stuff. And we would meet at a local coffee shop and take over their biggest table, and they were OK with it. They were fine with it. And we sat there for maybe 3 hours, and drinking lots of coffee, eating lots of cookies and cakes, and having our meeting. It was a nice office.

Andrew: Yeah, it's sounds really cool.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: That's fun. Another aspect of café culture is people working in cafés sort of as their unofficial office.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Suzanne: Because of the Wi-Fi that is offered by cafés and coffee shops.

Suzanne: Yes. Yes, free Wi-Fi.

Andrew: Free Wi-Fi is huge because, in Canada, data that you can get on your cell phone is very expensive. So I know in other countries maybe data is not super expensive, and people are almost over Wi-Fi. But in Canada, it's still very important to find free Wi-Fi to connect to the internet.

Suzanne: Yes.

Andrew: And a café is a great place to do this.

Suzanne: In fact, I've had some friends Skype with me in a café.

Andrew: I've had that happen as well.

Suzanne: It's funny.

Andrew: I'm always on **the receiving end of that conversation**.

Suzanne: Yes, me too.

Andrew: So I'm at home, but my friend is in a café Skyping me. And I think, "I don't know if I'd like the situation to be reversed." I think I'd be a little embarrassed to Skype in a café, but maybe not.

Suzanne: Yeah. I think I would too. And sometimes, I hear conversations in the café that I probably wouldn't normally listen to...

Andrew: Right.

Suzanne: Because my friend would be having their headphones on, so they can't hear the conversations next to them. But I'm hearing their conversations, the conversations next to them. So it's quite funny.

Andrew: So because of the free Wi-Fi—cafés, coffeehouses, coffee shops—they're great places to bring your computer and use as an office to get some work done. And you'll see students studying and working hard. People writing reports, writing novels. This is a common sight in a café.

So now, I was thinking...

Suzanne: Yes.

Andrew: We could transition away from speaking about café culture to talk about our café experiences. So the second part of this episode will talk about our café experiences. And I know that you've shared some interesting stories with us about doing some activities in cafés.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: Um, but I'm just curious. Overall, would you prefer to go to a café or a coffee shop to get your cup of joe, or are you the type of person that just makes it at home and **goes about your business** without having to visit a café?

Suzanne: This is a very good question, Andrew.

Andrew: Thank you.

Suzanne: When I was living in New York City, I would definitely go to the local cafés because there were so many on one street. And in my neighbourhood, I had really great relationships with them, and they were my buds. And I would go there, and see all my friends from the neighbourhood. And they would give me a little extra whipped cream or, you know, a free coffee now and then. So that was fun.

But here in my neighbourhood in Montreal, there are only about two cafés that I like, and they're a little bit difficult for me to get to. In other words, I have to turn the corner and go down a different block in order to get a coffee, and then go to the train. So it's kind of out of my way.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: So here, I actually do make my own coffee at home, and I make it like my old Italian grandma, on the stove.

Andrew: On the stove.

Suzanne: In an Italian coffeemaker. I make espresso and I mix it with hot water, and it's called an *Americano*.

Andrew: There you go.

Suzanne: And then I put almond milk as well. I drink it with almond milk, and no sugar.

Andrew: And I've had this coffee before that you've made.

Suzanne: Oh yes.

Andrew: And it's very good. It's a good...

Suzanne: It's really strong.

Andrew: It's strong, but it **does the trick**.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: Um, OK. So that's interesting that you're not against cafés and going to them, but it's more a matter of convenience, what's around you, and...

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: Yeah, in my neighbourhood, in Montreal, as well I had the same problem. I had just a couple of chain coffee stores.

Suzanne: Like, what did you have near you?

Andrew: Well, we had a Timmy's. That was the one that was actually the closest to my place.

Suzanne: Totally, totally a Timmy's—Timbits.

Andrew: And Timbits. And so Tim Horton's is the ubiquitous coffee shop in Canada. It's everywhere.

Suzanne: Everywhere.

Andrew: And people like it because it's cheap.

Suzanne: Yeah, it's really cheap. It's like \$1.20?

Andrew: Yeah, uh, something like that.

Suzanne: It's a dollar. It's a dollar.

Andrew: But it's also very, hmm, some would say low quality.

Suzanne: Yes. When I get a Timmy's, I have to mix it with some hot chocolate.

Andrew: Uh huh. OK.

Suzanne: I make it a mocha because I need a little sweetness to balance out the coffee flavour.

Andrew: Mmhmm, yeah.

Suzanne: I might be a coffee snob.

Andrew: Well, that's another question that I have for you. Do you prefer an independent coffee shop, or do you prefer, um, a chain coffee shop, like Second Cup, Starbucks, Tim Hortons? Do you have a preference, or...

Suzanne: Yeah, I actually do prefer more **mom-and-pop shops**.

Andrew: Mmhmm.

Suzanne: More local. Less chain establishments.

- Andrew: OK.
- Suzanne: There's a coffee shop near school that I go to called Myriade.
- Andrew: Yeah, I like Myriade. Yeah.
- Suzanne: It's now a chain, but I don't think it's a chain like Starbucks. I mean it's not a big chain. It's... Maybe they have two or three locations. But around school, there aren't many other **mom-and-pop shops**, so I do sometimes go into Second Cup and Starbucks **in a pinch**.
- Andrew: Right. You have to do what you have to do when you need that **coffee jolt**.
- Suzanne: Yeah. And how about you in Korea?
- Andrew: Um...
- Suzanne: Are there Starbucks in Korea?
- Andrew: Yeah, there are lots of chains here. There's definitely Starbucks, and there's a couple of other chains that are Korean brands. But yeah, independent cafés do exist too, and I always prefer an independent café.
- Suzanne: Me too.
- Andrew: I don't know what it is. They have a charm about them. Something that's attractive. It's more cozy when you go inside them.
- Suzanne: Yes.
- Andrew: I find often the coffee is better as well. It's higher quality. So yeah, I usually try to search out the independent cafés. That's my preference.
- Suzanne: Me too. There was a really cool place in New York. It had three locations. It still probably does.
- Andrew: OK.
- Suzanne: It might have more since I've left. I don't know. But it was called Cup of Joe. Cup of Joe because coffee is called a cup of joe. You know, you have some joe; it's a coffee. And also the owner's name was Joe. And I loved this place because every barista, every coffeemaker, they would make really cute designs in the foam cappuccino milk, in the milk on top of the cappuccino.
- Andrew: Ah, yeah. I've seen this before.

Suzanne: Yeah. I loved it. They would make trees and hearts and flowers. And so for me, I feel like Starbucks and those more chain locations don't do that, and the independent coffee shops give more attention to their product.

Andrew: Definitely. There's a lot more love.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: And a lot more care that goes into crafting the perfect cup of coffee I think at the independents.

Well, Suzanne, I think that's all we have time for today. We did a Chatterbox episode about café culture, and we began by talking about some of the differences between the terms *café*, *coffee shop*, and *coffeehouse*. And then we talked about café culture and shared some of our personal stories about visiting cafés.

So I wanna thank everybody for listening.

Suzanne: And also I wanted to remind everyone to check out our website at Culips.com, and visit us on Twitter and Facebook. We like visits.

Andrew: Awesome. Thanks for listening. We'll talk to you soon. Bye.

Suzanne: Bye guys.

Detailed Explanations

A jolt of something

A jolt of something is a sudden feeling of that thing. For example, you might get **a jolt of surprise** when your doorbell rings unexpectedly or when someone taps you on the shoulder.

In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne talk about needing **a jolt of caffeine**. When Andrew and Suzanne say they want **a jolt of caffeine**, they're referring to the feeling of being suddenly more alert after drinking a cup of coffee. They both use coffee to feel **a jolt of wakefulness** in the mornings. Drinking coffee or tea to give you **a jolt of wakefulness** in the morning is very common in North America.

By itself, the noun **a jolt** means either a sudden feeling of shock or surprise or a quick and uncoordinated movement.

Here are a couple more examples with **a jolt of something**:

Caley: Oh man, I had to wake up way too early this morning. I'm having trouble with the new job. I really don't like that my shift starts at 6:00 a.m.! I can hardly keep my eyes open.

Sam: You're feeling sleepy? It's only noon!

Caley: I know, I know. I still wish I could take a nap, though.

Sam: You can't skip class! Why don't you go get a cup of coffee? It might help to have **a jolt of caffeine**.

Caley: Good idea! I'll go grab a cup right away.

Sam: OK. See you in a few minutes.

Kim: Morning, Garth. How are you doing today?

Garth: Not bad. I got a bad **jolt of surprise** last night at 2:00 a.m., though.

Kim: Oh yeah? What happened?

Garth: What, didn't you feel the earthquake?

Kim: No, I didn't know we had one!

Garth: Yeah, it was pretty surprising. It even made the windows in my house shake!

A mom-and-pop shop

A **mom-and-pop shop** is a small business owned by a couple or a family. You can have all kinds of **mom-and-pop** shops: music stores, bookstores, grocery stores—pretty much anything!

In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne both say they prefer to buy their coffee from locally owned, **mom-and-pop coffee shops** instead of large chains like Starbucks or Tim Hortons.

Sometimes people call a store a **mom-and-pop shop** even though it's not actually owned by a family. The important part about a **mom-and-pop store** is that it is owned and operated by a small number of people, not a large company like Starbucks or Tim Hortons.

Here are a couple more examples with **a mom-and-pop shop**:

Jen: Wow, you have a really impressive record collection.

Marie: Yeah, I've been collecting them for years.

Jen: It looks like you have a few hundred of them. You must have spent a ton of money!

Marie: Not really. The collection started when my mom gave me all of her old records. And now when I buy new ones, I usually go to the **mom-and-pop record store** downtown. They always have really great deals on old records. I bought a bunch of my records for less than \$5!

Hugo: Hey, are you hungry?

Alan: Oh man, now that you mention it, I could really go for some food.

Hugo: Fantastic, because I'm starving! I'm not picky about where we go. Do you have any strong feelings about what you want to eat?

Alan: How about going for Mexican?

Hugo: Yeah, that sounds great! I don't know any good Mexican restaurants around here, though.

Alan: I know a great little **mom-and-pop place** just down the street.

Hugo: Awesome. Let's go!

To tip / a tip

While the word **tip** has a number of meanings, when it's used in a discussion about going to a restaurant, café, or bar, **to tip** means to give an extra amount of money to your server or bartender.

In this context, the word **tip** can be either a noun (**a tip**) or a verb (**to tip**). **A tip** is the money you give, and **to tip** means to give **a tip**.

The amount of money you give as **a tip** depends on a few things. After eating at a restaurant in Canada, it's normal to give your server about 15% of the total amount of your bill as **a tip**. At a bar, it's customary **to tip** the bartender \$1 for each drink you order. Leaving **a tip** is a way of showing your gratitude to the person who served you.

In this episode, Suzanne asks Andrew whether he gave a big **tip** to the person who served him coffee before the café he visited was open. In that case, Andrew hadn't tipped, because tipping is not the custom in Korea, but in North America leaving a generous **tip** would be a great way to show thanks in a similar situation.

Here are a couple more examples with **to tip** and **a tip**:

Adam: What took you so long? You went to get another drink 10 minutes ago. Did you get lost on your way to the bar?

May: I couldn't get the bartender to notice me! I don't get it. I come here almost every week, but she always serves other customers before me.

Adam: That's pretty weird. She always seems nice to me. Wait, how much do you **tip**?

May: You're supposed **to tip** bartenders?

Adam: That's your problem, right there! It's rude not **to tip**. No wonder she ignores you.

Susan: So, my mom is coming to town in a couple of days. Do you know any nice restaurants I could take her to? You know I don't eat out very often.

Andy: Is she OK with spicy food? I went to this amazing Indian place the other day. The food is just great.

Susan: I don't know much about Indian food. I wouldn't know what to order.

Andy: Oh, don't worry about that! They have great servers who will explain the menu to you. I was so impressed I left an extra big **tip**!

To head out

To head out is a phrase that means to go somewhere or to change locations. You might **head out** to a coffee shop to get some work done, or **head out** to the grocery store to pick up some groceries.

To head out can also be used without a specific location. For example, if someone wanted to tell their friends they were leaving, they might say, "I'm going **to head out** now. It was nice seeing you guys!"

Saying you are **heading out** is an informal way of talking about going somewhere, so it should be avoided in formal contexts.

To head out is often used when discussing plans that don't already have a set time. Here are a couple more examples with **to head out** that show it being used in that way:

Amy:	There's an awesome new action movie I really want to go see this afternoon. Do you want to come with me?
Harold:	I'd like to, but I have a bunch of work I need to get done. When do you think you're going to head out ?
Amy:	I want to see the 3:00 p.m. showing, so I'll head out around 2:00 p.m. Does that give you enough time?
Harold:	Yeah, that should work.
Amy:	Great!

Jacob:	How are you doing? Are you enjoying the party?
Liz:	Yeah, it's lovely. It's so nice to see everyone again. I'm getting a little tired though.
Jacob:	Me too. Do you want to head out in half an hour or so?
Liz:	I don't mind staying a little later.
Jacob:	OK, we'll stay for a little while. Just let me know when you want to head out , OK?
Liz:	I will.

Step by step

To do something **step by step** means to do something gradually, in a series of stages. Instructions on how to do something often explain things **step by step**.

In this episode, Suzanne talks about going to Paint Nite, where she was taught how to paint a picture **step by step**. In other words, someone explained how to recreate a painting by showing the series of actions involved in making it.

Step by step can also be used to talk about a process that takes a long time or that you are find difficult. For example, learning English is a process that you have to take **step by step**. There's no way to learn a language all at once!

Here are a couple more examples with **step by step**:

Ian: Here, try this bread I made.

Carol: Oh my, this is amazing! You have to give me the recipe.

Ian: It's really easy! It's a typical sourdough, then you just...

Carol: Hold up! You need to take me through this **step by step**. I've never made bread before.

Ian: OK, I can write out the recipe for you.

Carol: Thanks a bunch!

Hannah: How's your math class going?

Ted: I'm really having a hard time. I got this question wrong on the test and I don't know why! I thought I understood it. I don't want to go ask my teacher, though. I've already bothered him enough this year.

Hannah: Don't be discouraged. I took that class last year. I still have all the materials for it. If you want to study with me some time, I can walk you through that problem you were having trouble with.

Ted: Thanks. That would be amazing!

Hannah: No problem. That class was really tough but it's not so bad if you just take it **step by step**.

To take up space or time

To take up space or time means to fully occupy it with one thing in particular.

First, let's talk about **taking up space**. In this episode Suzanne mentions that it's OK to stay in a café for quite a while, as long as you're drinking coffee and don't **take up too much space**. In other words, it's OK as long as you don't occupy so much of the café that other people can't use it too.

Both people and objects can **take up space**. For example, beds usually **take up a lot of space** in your bedroom.

Time can also be **taken up**, just like space. If something takes you many hours to do, you can say that it's **taking up a lot of time** in your day. For example, working **takes up most of the time** in a day.

In both cases, whether something or someone **takes up time or space**, it means that the time or space cannot be used for anything else.

Here are a couple more examples with **to take up space or time**:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Keith: | It's nice to see you! Come on in, take a seat. |
| Josephine: | Good to see you, too, Keith! Hey, is this a new couch? What happened to the old one you used to have? It was so comfortable. |
| Keith: | It was too big for this little apartment. This new one doesn't take up so much space in the living room. |
| Josephine: | Yeah, I guess the old couch was a bit too big for the room. |

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Kate: | How's learning to play the guitar coming along? |
| Jenny: | Not so great. I was practicing every day for a couple of months, but I stopped a while ago. |
| Kate: | What happened? I thought you were really interested in playing music. |
| Jenny: | I am! I just got really busy in the last little while. |
| Kate: | You don't have to practice for long. Just do twenty minutes a day—it won't take up much time , and you'll still get better pretty fast. |
| Jenny: | Yeah, you're right. |

To go about your business

To go about your business is to continue to do what you normally do. In other words, it is to behave normally.

In this episode, Andrew asks if Suzanne goes out to get coffee from a shop, or if she makes it at home and **goes about her business**, meaning that she continues with her day as usual. Some people might not be able to **go about their business** without a cup of coffee in the morning.

You can use **to go about your business** as a way to tell people to ignore an event and continue acting as though nothing were different. For example, a police officer might tell people to **go about their business** at the scene of a car accident. By this, the officer would mean that people should not pay attention to the accident but should continue to behave normally, as though nothing were wrong.

So, **to go about your business** means to behave normally, either because it is a normal day or despite some difficult event.

Here are a couple more examples with **to go about your business**:

Jack: Hi, Christine. It's nice to see you again. How have you been?

Christine: I'm not doing too well, actually.

Jack: Oh no! What's going on?

Christine: You know my dog, Ruby? She's going to be fifteen years old in a few days. She's getting pretty old and arthritic. I'm pretty worried about her. I've had her for half my life!

Jack: I'm really sorry to hear that. She has always been such a sweet dog.

Christine: Yeah, she's my best buddy. I know she's only a dog, but I'm really going to miss her when she's gone. Oh well, I guess there's nothing that can be done. It's best to just **go about my business**.

Jack: You're right. Enjoy the time you have with her!

Helena: It's really raining out there!

Ken: Oh no, I forgot my umbrella today, too! Do you still want to go to the gym at lunch?

Helena: Yeah, we can't let the rain stop us. Let's just **go about our business**.

To do the trick

When something **does the trick**, it succeeds at solving a problem, or produces the desired result.

In this episode, Andrew says that Suzanne's coffee is strong, but that it **does the trick**. By this he means that it works effectively to produce the desired result, which, in this case, is to wake him up.

Lots of things can **do the trick**. If someone has an old bicycle that doesn't look nice but works just fine, they might say that it's old but it **does the trick**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to do the trick**:

- Ben: Would you like something to drink?
- Grace: Yes, thanks. What do you have?
- Ben: I could make you a cup of coffee, if you like.
- Grace: No, thanks, my stomach doesn't like coffee. I would love something with a little caffeine in it, though. I'm feeling an afternoon slump.
- Ben: Well, I have some awesome Japanese-style green tea called *genmaicha*, if you'd like to try it. It's green tea and roasted brown rice! It's delicious.
- Grace: I don't drink much tea. Would it still **do the trick**?
- Ben: For sure! It will wake you right up. Let me make you a cup.

- Jackie: How are you doing today? You look a little pale. Are you all right?
- Joel: I'm not doing too well. I've had this killer headache for two days now. I can't concentrate on anything.
- Jackie: Have you been drinking enough water? Headaches can be a sign of dehydration.
- Joel: I know they can. I've been drinking tons of water! I took some Advil, too, but it didn't do anything.
- Jackie: When I get headaches, I take acetaminophen. It really **does the trick**! I have some in my purse. Here, take them.
- Joel: Thanks. I really hope you're right!

In a pinch

There are two main uses of **in a pinch**, both of which relate to being in a situation and not having what you need to help you out.

The first use refers to the state of being in trouble. If you are having trouble, you are **in a pinch**, or a situation in which you need help. This expression is easy to imagine. It's as though you're trapped, pinched in, and need help to get free.

The second use refers to an alternative to what you would ideally need to help you fix a problem. If you're making a recipe that calls for lemons but you don't have any, you might be able to use limes **in a pinch**. In this case, **in a pinch** works the same way as "if necessary."

So, if someone is **in a pinch**, they need help with something. If you use something **in a pinch**, you are using it as necessary alternative.

Here are a couple more examples with **in a pinch**:

Jody: How do you like your new apartment?

Ralph: It's pretty great! I love the location, but I don't have everything I need yet.

Jody: Oh yeah? What are you missing?

Ralph: The apartment didn't come with any appliances and I haven't been able to buy an oven! I'm getting really tired of eating takeout all the time.

Jody: Do you have a microwave? You can get an inexpensive one and, **in a pinch**, it will work for cooking things like potatoes.

Ralph: Great idea!

Mahalia: Hey, I hate to ask, but could you help me out?

Sebastian: That depends on what kind of help you need. What's up?

Mahalia: I'm **in a pinch** and could really use a hand. Come on, man!

Sebastian: You have to tell me what it is before I'm going to agree to anything!

Mahalia: I'm really behind on this project for school, but I also have to go to work tonight at the movie theatre. Can you do my homework? Or take my shift? I can't do both!

Sebastian: No way! You created this problem yourself. I have my own work to do!

To be on the receiving end of something

There are two main ways **to be on the receiving end of something**. The simple way relates to telephone or video calls. One person makes or sends the call, and the person they are contacting **is on the receiving end of the call**.

In this episode, Andrew talks about **being on the receiving end of Skype calls** his friends make from cafés. In other words, he is not the one Skyping from a café, but he is receiving a call from someone who is in a café.

You can also **be on the receiving end of something** more abstract, like emotions or arguments. When used in this way, **to be on the receiving end of something** is usually negative.

For example, if someone is grumpy and isn't behaving nicely, you might **be on the receiving end of their bad mood** when you talk to them. In other words, they are behaving poorly and you are the one who experiences their behavior.

Here are a couple more examples with **to be on the receiving end of something**:

Trevor: How's your family doing?

Yutaka: Pretty well, but I feel a little guilty about my mom.

Trevor: Why? What's up?

Yutaka: I've been really busy lately and I'm always **on the receiving end of her phone calls** when we talk. I really should be the one calling her sometimes.

Trevor: I'm sure she understands. It's usually that way with my dad and me too.

Yutaka: That's not any better! We should both make more of an effort.

Bill: How are you enjoying your new job?

Fiona: I love the work I'm doing! It's so nice to be working in an office where everybody gets along. Well, almost everybody.

Bill: Are you having trouble with a co-worker?

Fiona: It's my boss. He's really stressed out at the moment. He's been pretty hard on me lately. I feel like I'm always **on the receiving end of his bad mood**.

Bill: That's pretty hard. I hope things get better.

Quiz

1. **In this episode, Suzanne says that she'll go to Starbucks or Tim Horton's in a pinch. What does she mean?**
 - a) They're her favourite coffee shops.
 - b) She'll go to them if there's no other option.
 - c) She would never go to those coffee shops.
 - d) She would go to them if she were broke.

2. **If you get a jolt of something, what happens?**
 - a) You receive it as a gift.
 - b) You have had it for weeks.
 - c) You enjoy it.
 - d) You experience it suddenly.

3. **What is someone doing if they are going about their business?**
 - a) They are working in a bank.
 - b) They are opening a store.
 - c) They are acting normally.
 - d) They are having a hard day.

4. **If something does the trick, what does it do?**
 - a) It fixes a problem.
 - b) It performs magic.
 - c) It keeps you awake.
 - d) It makes you dinner.

5. **Which of these things takes up a lot of time?**
 - a) a five-minute film
 - b) a couch
 - c) a TV commercial
 - d) a vacation

6. **True or false: If someone teaches you something step by step, it means that you will learn something all at once.**
 - a) true
 - b) false

7. If you are at a restaurant and you give the waiter a tip, what do you do?

- a) Give them money as a show of thanks.
- b) Give them advice.
- c) Leave without paying your bill.
- d) Pay exactly the amount shown on your bill, and no more.

8. If someone asks if you want to head out, what do they mean?

- a) "Do you want to get a haircut?"
- b) "Do you want to change locations?"
- c) "Do you want to stick your head out the window?"
- d) "Do you want to go back to where we just were?"

Quiz Answers

1.b 2.d 3.c 4.a 5.d 6.b 7.a 8.b

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