

Chatterbox #35 – Snacks

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

Maura: And Maura.

Harp: And we're here at Culips, bringing you a Chatterbox episode.

Maura: Right. And the Chatterbox episode is where we chat about different topics of interest, maybe something that's going on in Canada, or different cultural aspects that you might be interested in.

Harp: Exactly. Make sure you check out the website, that's Culips.com, CULIPS.com, because there you can become a member and you have access to the Lipservice, which is a learning guide that has a complete transcript, a detailed explanation, and even a quiz.

Maura: Right, so check it out. Now, let's get started on today's Chatterbox episode. Today we're going to be talking about **snacks**.

Harp: Yes, **snacks**.

Maura: Funny little word, **a snack**.

Harp: OK, **a snack** is a small portion of food. When you have **a meal**, you have a larger size. **A snack** is just something small that you eat in between **meals**.

Maura: Right. Of course, you have breakfast, lunch, dinner—that's not **a snack**. **A snack** is the food that you eat in between your **meals**, and, like you said Harp, it's usually smaller.

Harp: Exactly. So today we're going to break it down into three categories. We're going to talk about **unhealthy snacks**, then we're going to talk about **healthy snacks**, and then we're going to talk about trends with snacking in North America and specifically in Canada.

Maura: Great, exactly. So, first we're going to talk about **unhealthy snacks**.

Harp: Yes, **unhealthy snacks**.

Maura: Right, so **snacks** that have a lot of sugar or a lot of fat.

- Harp: Yeah, the ones that aren't good for you if you eat too many of them.
- Maura: Right, but they taste good.
- Harp: Delicious!
- Maura: Yup, they taste good; even though they might have a lot of sugar, they do taste good.
- Harp: Definitely.
- Maura: So first of all, I think of **a convenience store**, because **a convenience store** sells a lot of **snacks**, a lot of **unhealthy snacks**.
- Harp: Exactly. And one that you'll always find in **a convenience store** is **a Twinkie**.
- Maura: Mmhmm, yeah. It's a special kind of cake with cream inside.
- Harp: Yeah, and **a Twinkie** is **a snack** because it's smaller, it's individually wrapped, you would eat normally just one, something small in between **a meal**.
- Maura: Right, so it's like a cake but it's not the size of a regular cake. It's very small.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: And this **snack**, **Twinkie**, has been referenced a lot in movies and TV shows, so it's definitely popular.
- Harp: Definitely. I'm sure you've heard of it somewhere.
- Maura: Mmhmm. So, just like **a Twinkie**, we also have **Wagon Wheels**.
- Harp: I used to eat **a Wagon Wheel** a day when I was in school.
- Maura: They definitely are popular with kids. They make me think about lunch when I was in elementary school too.
- Harp: Yep, it was always packed in my lunch bag. I had one **Wagon Wheel** and then in the afternoon, during recess, I would eat my **Wagon Wheel**.
- Maura: And **Wagon Wheels** are pretty much like **Twinkies**. They're like a cake, they have a cookie part, they're chocolate, so you can see why there would be some sugar in that.

- Harp: Delicious!
- Maura: Another popular **snack** is **the doughnut**.
- Harp: Yes, **a doughnut**. That comes in so many different varieties: **frosted**, **glazed**, with cream on it, with cream inside, so many different types of **doughnuts**.
- Maura: Yeah, in Canada and in the US, **doughnut shops**, **coffee shops** are really popular and widespread. They're everywhere.
- Harp: Yeah, for sure.
- Maura: And, in addition to the sweet **snacks** that we have, we also have **salty snacks**, or **savoury snacks**.
- Harp: Yeah, an example of **a salty snack** is a potato chip.
- Maura: Yeah. So at **convenience stores**, you can definitely buy big bags of potato chips or small bags, which is really a snack size.
- Harp: Yup, exactly. And you can buy, again, so many different flavours: **ketchup**, barbecue, sour cream and onion, salt and vinegar, and the list goes on and on and on.
- Maura: Yeah, we should mention: the first flavour you said was **ketchup**, and that is a flavour that I think we only have in Canada.
- Harp: Oh, really?
- Maura: Yeah, **ketchup**-flavoured chips.
- Harp: It's an unusual chip, but it's good.
- Maura: It is unusual and I agree, it's delicious.
- Harp: If you come to Canada, you have to try the **ketchup** chip.
- Maura: But there's also some other **salty snacks**, like pretzels and popcorn.
- Harp: Yeah, these ones are not so **unhealthy**, these ones are probably **the best of the bunch**.
- Maura: Yeah, it really depends who made it, where it's from. It depends. You can get

unhealthy popcorn, but you can also find **healthy** popcorn too.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: So, those are just some of the **unhealthy snacks** that are popular and well known in Canada, but there are also **healthy snacks**.

Harp: Yes, there are definitely so many **healthy snack** options.

Maura: Mmhmm. The first one I think about is an apple.

Harp: Yes, for sure. It's easy, it's fast to eat, it's small, it's perfect in between meals.

Maura: Yeah. And really, it can be any fruit: banana, pear, orange. A lot of people **snack** on fruit throughout the day.

Harp: That's what I do now. I bring a lot of fruit with me and I eat it throughout the day.

Maura: I also like **granola** bars.

Harp: Yeah. It's a good **healthy snack**. Well, you have to check to make sure there's not too much sugar, but you can find some definitely **healthy granola** bars.

Maura: Right, a granola bar is almost always made with oatmeal, or some kind of grain, which makes it a little bit more healthy.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: I also **snack on** raisins.

Harp: Yeah, raisins with nuts sometimes are good too.

Maura: Yep, nuts are actually an excellent **snack**. People, doctors, experts on TV, are always recommending that a handful of almonds or a handful of another kind of nut can be very good for you.

Harp: Exactly. Also, vegetables can be **snacks** too. I like to cut up some carrots, or cut up some broccoli or celery and, again eat it during the daytime.

Maura: Mmhmm. I remember when I was working in an office, sometimes I would eat one of those small bags of mini carrots **in one sitting**.

Harp: They're good little carrots.

- Maura: Yeah, that's kind of a large **snack**, maybe.
- Harp: Yes. Maybe you should have split it up.
- Maura: Mmhmm. So really, a snack can be anything, as long as the portion is small.
- Harp: Exactly. All right, let's move on to the trends section.
- Maura: Right, so **snacks** that are popular, or the habits that are becoming popular nowadays.
- Harp: Yes. One big trend that's happening in North America is the **push for** people to eat healthier snacks.
- Maura: Right, and actually, a lot of the time, you might see cookies or cakes that say, half the fat or lower calories, because they're trying to be healthy, because people want to eat healthy food.
- Harp: Yeah. You know, I think there are a lot of schools, elementary schools, that don't allow junk food. You can't bring in **the Twinkies** and **the Wagon Wheels** anymore. You have to bring in carrots or apples, or something healthy.
- Maura: OK, yeah. So, they're really encouraging healthy food for everyone, but in schools and maybe sometimes in the workplaces too.
- Harp: Yes. They should encourage it in the workplace, because, for me, I try really hard, I try to eat healthy snacks, I don't buy junk food. In the work environment, my colleagues are always bringing in cookies or potato chips. And when they're in front of me, I have no **willpower**, I have to eat it.
- Maura: When I was younger, in high school, I ate a lot of junk food and I think kids are usually drawn to junk food, and sometimes older people too. But as you get older, as you grow up, maybe like you and I now, we try to eat a bit more healthy, try to be conscious of what you're eating.
- Harp: Definitely. You know, some people like more of the sweet snacks, some people like more of the salty snacks. When I was a teenager, I was so bad, I craved both. So I would eat a chocolate bar and a bag of chips, to get the sweet and the salty.
- Maura: At the same time?
- Harp: Yep.

- Maura: Yep, I know what you mean. Sometimes I crave salty **snacks**, and sometimes I crave sweet **snacks**. I know what you mean.
- Harp: Yeah, but definitely the trend in Canada and in North America is moving towards the healthier snacks.
- Maura: Yeah, definitely. I think that people are talking a lot about **willpower** and controlling what you eat and controlling your cravings for sweet or salty foods and focusing on being healthy.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: And one more thing we should mention is the food at **Tim Hortons**.
- Harp: Yes, **Tim Hortons** is a big Canadian chain of **coffee shops** and doughnuts.
- Maura: Yes, like we mentioned that is popular—doughnuts. And **Tim Hortons** makes doughnuts so they are pretty popular in Canada.
- Harp: Yeah, definitely. They have the little mini doughnuts, which are called **Timbits**.
- Maura: Right! So if you want an even smaller snack, you can buy, literally, just one bite of a doughnut.
- Harp: Sometimes I do that. If I go for a coffee in the afternoon, and I want something sweet, to be healthier I'll get just **a Timbit**.
- Maura: I wonder how many of our listeners have actually heard of **Tim Hortons**, because if you know about Canada, or if you've been to Canada, you've probably heard of it, because, really, it's so popular. I think we need to stress how popular it is here.
- Harp: **Tim Hortons** are everywhere.
- Maura: Yes, everywhere! Sometimes, the traffic in their parking lot is out of control because there are so many cars.
- Harp: I go, and the drive-through line-ups, sometimes there are ten people waiting in their cars to get some doughnuts and coffee.
- Maura: Yeah. Just the other day, I passed one, and I think I saw a person in the parking lot controlling the traffic, because so many people were trying to turn into the parking lot.
- Harp: There was a traffic controller in a parking lot?

- Maura: I know, but it's **Tim Hortons** in Canada.
- Harp: So popular!
- Maura: Yeah, really. We can't stress that enough. If you come to Canada, it's definitely part of the experience.
- Harp: Definitely.
- Maura: So, any other snacks?
- Harp: There's always **the midnight snack**.
- Maura: That's a good one. **The midnight snack** is when, in the middle of the night, you feel this hunger, you wake up, and you go have a little bit of something to eat.
- Harp: My mom is notorious for having **a midnight snack**.
- Maura: Oh really?
- Harp: I think she'll get mad if I mention this, but so often she would get up in the middle of the night and have a little snack.
- Maura: Was it a healthy snack?
- Harp: Never!
- Maura: I think **midnight snacks** are usually something especially delicious and unhealthy.
- Harp: Yup, my mom would always have some Indian sweets in the house, which are just full of sugar. In the middle of the night, you would hear her go into the kitchen and have a little snack.
- Maura: Ah, that's cute.
- Harp: Now they don't keep any Indian sweets in the house.
- Maura: No more midnight snacks.
- Harp: Nope.
- Maura: OK, so this episode, we talked about **unhealthy snacks** and **healthy snacks** that are popular in Canada and North America.

Harp: Yeah. And then we talked about some trends with snacking and a popular place to go for a snack in Canada.

Maura: Mmhmm. So, we should probably end this episode, because I'm sure everyone who's listening is now hungry and needs a snack.

Harp: Yup, definitely.

Maura: And we need one too.

Harp: Yes.

Maura: OK, don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, and become a member, check out this episode, check out our blog, and have fun.

Harp: Yes, we'll see you next time.

Maura: Bye!

Harp: Bye everyone!

Detailed Explanation

A snack

A **snack** is a small amount of food or a light meal in between the regular meals of breakfast, lunch, and supper.

We also have the verb **to snack**. **To snack** is to eat a small portion of food. If you want to say what you are eating, we say **to snack on something**.

Here are some examples with **snack** as a verb:

Peg: What do you want to eat?

Jim: Oh, I'll just **snack on** these nuts for now.

Oscar: I always try to **snack on** fruit throughout the day instead of chocolate bars.

Ben: Me too.

Healthy vs. unhealthy

In this episode we talk generally about **healthy** and **unhealthy snacks**. There are some foods that are unhealthy and others that are healthier for you. Some people might believe a certain snack is **healthy** and others think it is not **healthy**. It depends on your personal opinion.

We've given you some examples of things that are generally considered **healthy** and **unhealthy** by most people.

More healthy or healthier

When using a comparative, like **healthier**, it is sometimes not clear whether to use the word **more** or to add **-er** on the end. This is true for people learning English and for native English speakers too. The most common error people make is using **more** instead of adding **-er**. This error is usually not very noticeable, because the listener can still understand perfectly and because so many people make that type of error. Some people also believe that using **more** instead of **-er** for many comparative adjectives will be acceptable and correct in the future!

A meal

A meal is a general word that includes breakfast, lunch, and supper, and also dinner or brunch. **Meals** are the usual times when people eat throughout the day.

Some people learning English as a second language confuse **meal** and **meat**. This might be because they are spelled almost the same way. You can eat meat at a **meal**, but you do not have to. Meat is animal flesh used for food, and **a meal** is any kind of food eaten at a usual time throughout the day. They are not the same at all.

A convenience store

A convenience store is there for your convenience! **A convenience store** is a small store that has many kinds of **snack** foods and some meals too.

Here's a list of things you can find at most **convenience stores** in Canada:

Chocolate bars	Candy
Chips	Nuts
Water, juice, soda pop, coffee	Soup
Sandwiches	Doughnuts, muffins, other pastries

Some non-food items include lottery tickets and cigarettes, and drug store items like deodorant and shampoo.

The Twinkie

A Twinkie is a registered name of a snack cake made by the company Hostess Cakes. **A Twinkie** is a yellow sponge cake with a creamy filling. **A Twinkie** is one of the most well-known American snack cakes.



Twinkie - GFDL photo by Larry D.

The Wagon Wheel

Just like **the Twinkie**, we also have **the Wagon Wheel**. We have **the Wagon Wheel** in Canada, and in countries like Australia and the UK enjoy this snack too. For some reason, Wagon Wheels never became popular in the United States. **A Wagon Wheel** has a cookie part, a cake part, and is covered in chocolate.

A doughnut

Doughnuts taste delicious. **Doughnuts** are made of a sweet batter deep-fried in fat. Unfortunately, that description does not really sound delicious! Doughnuts are traditionally shaped like a ring with a hole in the middle, but they also come in many other shapes too.

Doughnut can also be spelled *donut*.

Frosted, glazed, etc.

These are some of the types of doughnuts you can get. There are so many different kinds to choose from. Harp lists some of them in this episode;

Frosted – covered with frosting or icing

Glazed – covered with a sugar syrup

Cream filling – cream inside the doughnut

Fruit filling – fruit jam inside the doughnut

Dipped – the top is covered with chocolate, vanilla, maple (in Canada), etc.

A doughnut shop/coffee shop

There is a whole culture around **doughnut** and **coffee shops** in Canada and the United States. Some people go every day for coffee and/or doughnuts. Some older people meet there in the afternoon or evening regularly with friends. Many people get coffee at the same place every day at the same time.

It is also a known joke in North America that police officers are often at **coffee shops**. The reason for this is probably because many **coffee shops** are the only restaurants around that are open 24 hours a day.

Ketchup-flavoured chips

In this episode, we list some of the flavours of potato chips we have in Canada. The most interesting one we have is **ketchup**-flavoured chips. You might be able to get them in other parts of the world too, but they are less popular and more difficult to find.

Here's a short list of other, more common, kinds of chips available across North America:

Barbecue

Sour cream and onion

Salt and vinegar

Regular (just salted)

All dressed

Dill pickle

There are also new kinds of chips being invented all the time. Some of them last for only a short time because they don't become popular.

The best of the bunch

This expression, **the best of the bunch**, is talking about the best in one category or type of thing. **A bunch** is a group of things, and *the best* can refer to the most important, or the most favourite, or the healthiest, or any other superlative adjective!

Harp says that in the category of unhealthy food, like chips and chocolate bars, the best, or healthiest, in that category is pretzels and popcorn. So pretzels and popcorn are **the best of the bunch**.

Here are a couple more examples with **the best of the bunch**:

Cindy: Who do you think should get the part of Maria in the play?

Jan: I thought Melinda was **the best of the bunch**.

Cindy: OK then. Maria will be played by Melinda.

Wendy: What's your favourite song by the Rolling Stones?

Kevin: **The best of the bunch** is *Ruby Tuesday*, in my opinion.

Granola

Granola is rolled oats (oatmeal) and other grains, with brown sugar and fruits and nuts. It is generally considered to be healthy, but, like Harp says in this episode, if there's a lot of sugar, **granola** can be unhealthy too.

Granola can be eaten as a cereal with milk or yogurt, or on its own. It is also popular, as we talk about in this episode, as a bar. People eat **granola** bars for breakfast or throughout the day as a snack.

Granola can also be a slang term for a person who is very natural, who likes the outdoors, and who likes to eat healthy food. This might be because these people often eat **granola**, because it's healthy and easy to take with you into the woods!

In one sitting

To do anything **in one sitting** means that you sit down and do the task to completion before getting up again. Usually, when people use this expression, **in one sitting**, it's to emphasize that they did something all at once that most people do not do all at the same time.

For example, in this episode Maura says that she ate a bag of mini-carrots **in one sitting**. Most people do not eat a whole bag of carrots at one time, so this is why Maura uses this expression.

Here are a couple more examples with **in one sitting**:

Sandra: I loved the book!

Germaine: Me too! It was so interesting that I read it all **in one sitting**!

Howard: How's your new video game? Did you try it yet?

Adam: Yeah. It was actually really short. I played it this morning and finished it all **in one sitting**.

A push for

A push for something or **to push for** is to promote an idea. People most often **push for** new laws or rules in government, other organized groups, or in society. Harp says that there is **a push for** healthy eating in general society. The idea of eating healthy food is everywhere in conversations, in the media, and even in the packaging of our food products.

Here are a couple of examples with **the push for** or **to push for**:

Bob: There's **a big push for** renewable energy nowadays.

Jasmin: Yes, and I'm glad. We need to help the environment as much as we can.

Louise: Children cannot come late to school any more.

Daniel: We need to **push for** more detention for late students.

Willpower

Willpower is your ability to control yourself. When people talk about staying away from unhealthy food, they often talk about **willpower**. If you have **willpower**, you can resist the desire to eat unhealthy food, but if you have no **willpower**, then you're not able to control yourself and you eat the unhealthy food.

Willpower is only important to you if you want to eat healthy food and stop eating unhealthy food. If you like to eat junk food and you don't want to stop, then you just eat whatever you want, and you don't care about **willpower**.

Willpower can also be used to talk about things other than food. You can use **willpower** to talk about anything you would like to control in your life. You need **willpower** to quit smoking or to go to the gym. You may also need **willpower** to stop calling an ex-boyfriend or girlfriend.

Tim Hortons

Tim Hortons is the most popular Canadian doughnut and coffee shop. This shop began in 1964 in Hamilton, Ontario. At first, they only served coffee and doughnuts, but now you can also get cakes, muffins, and bagels. They also have sandwiches and soups.



There's one quick grammatical note to make here! **Tim Hortons** is named after a Canadian hockey player who started the chain, Tim Horton. In English, we add an **s** to make nouns plural, and an **'s** to show possession. For some reason, **Tim Hortons** is written as a plural when it should have an **'s** to be a possessive. It originally started as **Tim Horton's** but was later changed to be grammatically incorrect! We don't know exactly why.

A Timbit

A timbit is a small, bite-sized doughnut that Tim Hortons started to make in 1976 and it continues to be popular today. You can get **a timbit** in most kinds of doughnut and it is literally one bite. The cost is under 20 cents each.

A midnight snack

When someone wakes up during the night and goes to the kitchen for something to eat, this is **a midnight snack**. The snacking does not have to be close to midnight, but just at any time during the night when others are asleep. Midnight snacks are usually unhealthy, but really they can be anything.

Quiz

1. Irene: I love to snack ____ nuts in between meals.

Fill in the blank with the preposition that follows the verb *to snack*.

- a) on
 - b) in
 - c) off
 - d) under
2. Which error is very common among English speakers when using comparatives?
- a) using *the*
 - b) adding *-ir* instead of using *more*
 - c) using *more* instead of adding *-er*
 - d) there is no common error
3. Which kinds of things can you usually buy at a convenience store?
- a) board games, video games, cards
 - b) chocolate bars, potato chips, candy
 - c) shoes, purses, wallets
 - d) apples, oranges, pineapples
4. Which is NOT a kind of doughnut?
- a) honeysuckled
 - b) glazed
 - c) cream-filled
 - d) frosted

5. Which flavour of potato chips is very popular in Canada, but difficult to find in the United States?

- a) dill pickle
- b) all dressed
- c) salt and vinegar
- d) ketchup

6. Alison: I don't know which necklace I want to buy. What do you think of the red necklace?

Scott: The red one is the best of the bunch.

What does Scott think of the red necklace?

- a) It is the best necklace he has ever seen.
- b) It is the best one in the group of necklaces they are looking at.
- c) It is the worst necklace he has ever seen.
- d) It is worst necklace in the group of necklaces they are looking at.

7. Are granola bars healthy snacks?

- a) Yes, always.
- b) No, never.
- c) Yes, but it depends on how much sugar is in it.
- d) You never know.

8. Bob watched *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* in one sitting. What does that mean?

- a) He didn't like it.
- b) He did not lie down.
- c) He watched the trilogy at one time.
- d) He watched it over one week.

9. What is willpower?

- a) Not eating cakes
- b) Self-control
- c) Free will
- d) Eating cakes

Answers: 1.a 2.c 3.b 4.a 5.d 6.b 7.c 8.c 9.b