

Catchword #173 – Gonna, lotta, kinda

Episode description

Have you ever wondered what on earth the Culips hosts mean when they say gonna, lotta, or kinda? Join Andrew and Morag as they explain these common contractions.

Fun fact

Contractions are a shortened form of a word or a group of words. They have been around for a very long time, dating back to Old English (450–1150 AD) and Middle English (1150–1470 AD).

Interestingly, some words, like *sit*, started off as a contraction in Middle English, and gradually, became accepted as a full term.

Expressions included in the learning materials

- Gonna/going to
- A lotta/a lot of
- A kinda/a kind of
- A garage sale
- To get into something



Transcript

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.

Andrew: Hey everybody. I'm Andrew.

Morag: And I'm Morag.

Andrew: And you are listening to another episode of Culips.

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Andrew: I want to catch up with you, Morag. How are you doing? What's new?

Morag: Oh, hey, Andrew. Yeah, I'm doing all right. I'm actually pretty excited. Quite soon, I'm **going to be going to** Nova Scotia for the first time.

Andrew: Nova Scotia? No way.

Morag: Yeah. I've not really been to the Maritimes before, being from the whole other side of the country, so I'm excited to meet the other sea.

Andrew: Mhmm, yeah, the Atlantic. That's very cool. What are you going for? Just for fun or to see some friends?

Morag: For some silly reason, in Montreal, I've managed to make friends with **a lot of** Nova Scotians. So one of mine, her parents have a property on an island out there. And we're just **gonna** go, and be on the water and hike around and have a lovely time, apparently.

Andrew: That sounds really cool. I'm pretty jealous. I have to admit. OK, well, let's start with today's episode.

Morag: Today, we have a Catchword episode for you guys on some informal contractions that we English speakers use in everyday speech all the time. And these contractions are **gonna**, **lotta**, and **kinda**.

Andrew: Yes. **Gonna**, **lotta**, and **kinda**. And we're actually doing this episode because one of our listeners from Russia wrote us, and he said, "You know, I listen to Culips, and often, I hear these contractions, but I just can't understand them perfectly. Can you explain some of them to us?" So this is what we're doing today, and our three contractions are **gonna**, **lotta**, and **kinda**. But maybe before we define these and provide some examples, I'm **going to** ask you, Morag, what is a contraction?

Morag: Well, Andrew, a contraction is when we use a word or a combination of words and make them shorter. For example, we've got the contraction *I'm*, which is, more properly, *I am*.

Andrew: So, just like you said, this contraction is when we take words, or a combination of words, and we squish them together to make them shorter. And we usually only use contractions in casual, informal conversation. It's a big no-no to use contractions in formal writing especially.

Morag: Oh, yeah. Never ever use it in formal writing.

Andrew: Yeah. Any sort of professional context, avoid contractions, especially in writing. Speaking, sometimes it's OK, but writing, definitely avoid the contractions. Let's get to our first expression: **gonna**.

Morag: **Gonna** is the contraction of **going to**. We use **gonna** to talk about future plans, something you are **going to** do, or to make a prediction based on the evidence we can see right about now.

Andrew: Yeah, exactly. It's a very, very common contraction. And, as you can hear, the sound does change, right? **Going to** becomes **gonna** in fast, fluent speech. And so, just like you said, Morag, we use it in two specific situations. The first is when we're talking about our plans in the future, or we are making a prediction based on evidence at hand, based on something we can see or experience. So I think it's time for some examples. Let's get to them.

Morag: So summer vacation is just around the corner.

Andrew: Yeah, I can't wait. I'm so excited. Do you have any special plans?

Morag: Yeah, I'm **gonna** go on a road trip with my friends to a music festival in Chicago. I'm really excited.

Andrew: Oh, I'm so jealous. That'll be a blast.

Morag: So in this example, we have somebody who was talking about their plans for the summer. They're **going to**, or **gonna**, go to a music festival.

Andrew: Exactly. So this person is talking about her plan to go visit Chicago, and she says, "I'm **gonna** go on a road trip." "I'm **going to** go on a road trip." So she's talking about her future plan, and she uses this contraction **gonna**.

OK. Let's move on to our second example, and in this example, we'll see **gonna** used with a prediction. So here we go.

Morag: Oh, the wind is really starting to pick up.

Andrew: Yeah. Check out those dark clouds rolling in.

Morag: Oh my, yeah. It's **gonna** rain any second now, We should go inside.

Andrew: Yeah, good idea. Let's go.

Andrew: So in this example, we hear two friends talking about the weather. The weather is getting worse by the second, and they predict that it's **gonna** rain. The woman says, "It's **gonna** rain any second now." She can see that the dark clouds are rolling in, and the wind is starting to pick up. She has this evidence available to her, and so she uses the contraction. **Gonna** rain any second now instead of **going to** rain any second now. So it's the same meaning with the contraction **gonna**.

Morag: Our second expression is **lotta**. **Lotta** is a contraction of **lot of**. So this contraction is used when we talk about a large quantity of something, like **a lot of** people or **a lot of** love or **a lotta** stuff, anything that we have **a lot of**. You can also say you have **a lotta** that thing.

Andrew: Yeah. And you mentioned **lotta** love. I gotta say, great song, one of my favourites.

Morag: It is a fantastic song: "Whole **Lotta** Love."

Andrew: Now, something interesting I just noticed is this expression, this contraction, **lotta**, even though we spell it with two *T*'s, when we say it in fast conversation, those two *T*'s turn into more of a *D* sound. Don't they? So you say, lodda love, not necessarily **lotta** love. It's more lodda.

Morag: Yeah, I think it's right in-between the *T* and the *D*. It's maybe just the way we speak in North America though. We don't tend to enunciate our *T*'s all that much. It would sound a little funny if somebody came up and said they have **a lotta** something.

Andrew: Yes. Maybe with a UK accent, I could hear that *T* being more prominent.

Morag: Mmhmm.

Andrew: But in North America, I think most of the English speakers will pronounce those two *T*'s as a *D*, so a lodda people, a lodda love. So again, this contraction, changing **a lot of** into **lotta** is very informal, and you should never use this one in writing.

Morag: Absolutely not. But it's really, really useful for everyday conversation.

Andrew: Mmhmm. It just makes the conversation flow. You know, us English speakers, we're a little bit lazy, and we take shortcuts with our pronunciation. It's just simply easier for us to say **lotta** than **lot of**, so this is why we do it, and it's good to know the meaning. So let's give a couple examples using **lotta**.

Morag: Hey, have you ever invested in the stock market?

Andrew: No, too risky for me. Have you?

Morag: Hmm. Not yet, but I'm thinking about starting.

Andrew: Oh, yeah? Well, you know, there's **a lotta** money that can be made if you make smart investments.

Morag: That's the thing. That's why I'm thinking about it.

Morag: So in this dialogue, two people are talking about investing in the stock market, and one of them makes the comment that there's **a lotta** money that can be made if you invest smartly. They're saying that there is **a whole lot of** money that you can make, potentially, on the stock market.

Andrew: Let's jump to example number two. Here we go.

Morag: Hey, I'm having **a garage sale** on Sunday. You should stop by.

Andrew: Oh, cool. What are you **gonna** sell?

Morag: Ugh, I have **a lot of** stuff I need to get rid of. Got some records, some household stuff, and **a lotta** books.

Andrew: Well, you know me, I love a good **garage sale**. I'll definitely see you there.

Morag: Awesome.

Andrew: So in this example, we heard that there's **going to** be a **garage sale** on Sunday, and the person hosting **the garage sale** is selling **a lotta** stuff; she has **a lotta** stuff that she needs to get rid of. So again, **lotta** is the contraction of *lot*, and this just means she has a large quantity, many things, that she needs to get rid of. **A lotta**—I like this one. It's fun to say.

Morag: **A lotta**. Yeah.

Andrew: **A lotta**. It just rolls off the tongue.

Morag: I think I use it quite a bit.

Andrew: Yeah, it would be interesting to do an experiment where we counted how often we use the contractions in everyday speech.

Morag: Mmhmm.

Andrew: I bet you it's **a lot of** the time.

Morag: Yes, I think you're right. And the one that we have as our third expression, I think, is definitely my most used.

Andrew: Mmm. **Kinda**.

Morag: **Kinda**, yeah. I think it's ... It is the contraction of **kind of**, and it's very, very common in regular, everyday English speech 'cause it has, um, quite a number of different meanings and functions. One of which—it's not so great—it's used as a filler.

Andrew: You're definitely right that this is a very, very common contraction, especially among our generation. So if you're a young person in your 20s and 30s, it is very likely that you will use this expression often. And like you said, Morag, it can be used to communicate **a kind of** vagueness, right, when you're not sure. So this is one of the definitions, and if you want to learn more about this more advanced way that we use this expression, check out our learning materials for this episode 'cause we will explain it there.

Of course, if you want information about becoming a Culips member and accessing the learning materials, visit Culips.com. We've got all the information for you there. But today, we're **going to** focus more on the straightforward and the easier to understand definitions. So the first definition of **kinda** means partially or to an extent. So when something is somewhat of that thing but not fully, it is **kind of**. It is **kinda**.

Morag: I'll often be **kinda** hungry. You know, a little bit, to an extent, but not totally, you know.

Andrew: Yeah. You're not starving, but you're not full either. You're **kinda** hungry. I too am always **kinda** hungry and also **kinda** tired.

Morag: Yeah. I think that might just be life, though, you know.

Andrew: Yes.

Morag: Yeah.

Andrew: I agree. So when you are partially, or something is partially a certain way, then it is **kinda** that way.

Morag: Yeah.

Andrew: OK. So why don't we give one example using this definition of partially?

Morag: Let's **get into it**.

Morag: Hey, did you have a good time at the party last night?

Andrew: Eh, **kinda**. It was OK.

Morag: Oh, just OK? That's too bad.

Andrew: Yeah, I had a headache, so I went home early.

Morag: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that, but yeah, fair enough.

Andrew: In this example, we heard two friends talking about a party, and the guy said he had just not that great of a time. He said it was **kinda** fun. He **kinda** had a good time. It was just so-so. And the reason why is because he had a headache, and he went home early. So he didn't have the worst time in the world, but he also didn't have the best time. It was just **kinda** a good time. So here, we hear this contraction **kinda** instead of the full **kind of**. Let's look at the second way that we can use this contraction **kinda**.

Morag: Well, another way that we can use **kinda** is to talk about a kind or type of something. So when something is a certain type or part of a thing, we can use **kinda**. So my coffee is technically **a kinda** beverage, **a kind of** drink.

Andrew: Or you could say that broccoli is **a kinda** vegetable.

Morag: You totally can.

Andrew: Right. So when one thing is a part of a bigger unit of classification, we can say it's **kinda** that thing.

- Morag: Mmhmm, it's a **kinda** that thing, you know.
- Andrew: So **kind of**, again, when we're speaking quickly, when we're speaking informally, it will be pronounced as **kinda**, not **kind of**.
- Morag: Mmhmm, it's just so much easier to say.
- Andrew: Yeah. Again, it really just rolls off the tongue, doesn't it?
- Morag: It does. Do you wanna get to another example with **kind of**, **kinda**, as a part or type of something?
- Andrew: Yeah, let's do that.

- Morag: Hey, do you wanna see a movie with me on Tuesday?
- Andrew: Sure. What **kinda** movies do you like?
- Morag: I like comedies and sci-fi.
- Andrew: Oh, cool. Well, how about we watch a comedy then? I could use a good laugh.

- Morag: So in this dialogue, when one person asked if the other wanted to go see a movie, the other person responded by asking what **kinda** movies do they like. So this is a way of asking what type of, or what **kind of**, something does the other person enjoy.
- Andrew: So again, we just hear **kind of** used as **kinda** in this example. What **kinda** movies do you like? What **kind of** movies do you like? So that's how we use **kinda**.
- Morag: Mmhmm.
- Andrew: Well, Morag, I think that brings us to the end of today's episode.
- Morag: It has been **kinda** lovely. No, no, it's been lovely. Yeah.
- Andrew: I can tell ya it's been a **lotta** fun. Thank you for listening everybody. We appreciate it. Please remember to check out our Facebook page at facebook.com/culipspodcast, and while you're there, leave us a comment, send us a message, or share our posts with your friends.
- That's it for now. We will be back soon with a brand new Culips episode. Bye.
- Morag: Bye!

Detailed Explanations

Gonna/going to

Gonna is a contraction of **going to**. **Gonna** is a common contraction that can be used in any informal situation where **going to** can be used.

Like all of the key expressions in this episode, **gonna** is an accepted part of everyday English speech, but is not appropriate to use in formal writing or business settings.

Gonna is used to express intention or to make a prediction. In other words, English speakers use **gonna** when they want to say where they are going, what they plan on doing, or what they believe will happen. In other words, **gonna** can be used in casual conversation instead of **going to**.

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

Ray:	Hey Vicky. What are you up to this evening?
Vicky:	I don't know. I haven't made any plans yet.
Ray:	Do you want to hang out? I was gonna go to the park and play Frisbee with a couple of friends. You'd be more than welcome to join us.
Vicky:	Sure, that sounds like fun!

Steven:	Isn't it Jude's birthday this weekend?
Liz:	It sure is. Do you have any idea what the plan is?
Steven:	I think he's gonna get some people together for a barbecue.
Liz:	That might be a problem. The forecast predicts that it's gonna rain Saturday evening.
Steven:	Maybe we should take him out to a restaurant instead. What do you think?
Liz:	Good idea! Let's make that happen.

A lotta/a lot of

A lotta is a contraction of **a lot of**. When you have **a lotta** of something, you have **a lot of** something or a great deal of something. In other words, **a lotta** means to have a large number or a big portion of something. The contraction **a lotta** can also mean often or frequently.

You can use **a lotta** with countable and non-countable nouns. For example, you can say that you have **a lotta** apples (countable) or **a lotta** fun (non-countable).

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

Kevin:	How was your commute yesterday?
Nathalie:	I tend to take the metro a lotta the time, so it tends to stay the same. Why?
Kevin:	There was an accident on the bridge and a lotta traffic. It took over 2 hours for me to get to work. I missed a company-wide meeting. My boss was not happy. At least, I wasn't the only one who missed it.
Nathalie:	That's just unreasonable. These things happen. There is nothing that you could have done. I hope the people in the accident were OK.
Kevin:	Me too!

Linda:	I just read the most amazing book! Do you want to borrow it?
Ben:	No thanks. I have a lotta books that I haven't read yet at home in my bookcase.
Linda:	Come on! It's just one book.
Ben:	When I say I have a lotta books, I mean it. I have a stack of 20 books that are waiting to be read!

A kinda/a kind of

A kinda is a contraction of **a kind of**. In this episode, Morag and Andrew discuss three different uses of the contraction **kinda**: to mean partially, to mean a type of something, and to express uncertainty.

Kinda means partially, or to an extent or to a moderate degree. For example, if you say that you are **kinda** thirsty, you mean that you are somewhat or moderately thirsty. If someone was dehydrated, it would be inaccurate to say that they are **kinda** thirsty.

The expression **kinda** can also be a synonym for *type*, a group of things or species that share common traits. In this episode, Andrew says, “Broccoli is **a kinda** vegetable.” So broccoli is a sort of vegetable because it shares common characteristics with other vegetables—being part of a plant used for food.

Lastly, **kinda** can be used to express uncertainty, doubt, or vagueness. If someone is unsure of something, they may use the term **kinda** in place of the interjection *um*. In other words, when someone is unsure or hesitant, they may use the term **kinda**.

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

Charlie:	What did you think of the food at that restaurant? I’m not sure I liked it.
Debbie:	It was all right, kinda good. I don’t think it was worth the expensive price tag though.
Charlie:	I agree. I mean it wasn’t bad or anything; it just wasn’t amazing.
Debbie:	My thoughts exactly! If I am paying that much for a meal, it better be extraordinary.

Donny:	What do you want for dinner?
Bev:	I’m not sure. Maybe something kinda spicy.
Donny:	OK. Can you be a little more specific? What about chicken curry?
Bev:	I guess. It’s hard to say. I’m not hungry enough yet to make up my mind.
Donny:	OK. Well, we still have time. Let me know when you are a bit hungrier, and we can make dinner together.
Bev:	Great!

A garage sale

The expression **a garage sale** is used when someone sells previously owned items from their home. The purpose of **a garage sale** is to get rid of old or unwanted items. Items at **a garage sale** are usually sold for very little money. **Garage sales** are common in the summertime.

When people have too many possessions that they don't need, they will sometimes hold **a garage sale**. Although some people will hold the sale out of their garage, most **garage sales** take place on someone's lawn or in front of their house.

Here are a couple more examples with **a garage sale**:

Richard:	Jen, we need to do something about our apartment. I can't find anything. We have too much stuff. Do we really need it all?
Jen:	No, but I don't want to throw it away.
Richard:	Why don't we have a garage sale next weekend? That way we won't be throwing anything out, and maybe we can make a little cash!
Jen:	Fine. You've convinced me.

Lisa:	Your mom told me you're moving out. Congratulations! Where are you gonna be living?
Joanne:	I found a great apartment near my university.
Lisa:	That's great, honey. Are you all set up? Do you have everything you need?
Joanne:	Not quite. I'm gonna hit all the garage sales in our area this weekend. Hopefully, I'll be able to find everything I need.
Lisa:	I have a pair of old coffee tables that I don't use anymore. You are welcome to them.
Joanne:	Thanks! I appreciate it.

To get into something

The expression **to get into something** is a phrasal verb that means to start something or become involved in something. It is usually used to express someone's interest or excitement in relation to a subject or an activity.

So if you are developing or have recently developed an interest in something, you are **getting into** that thing. For example, if you say that you are **getting into** mystery novels, it means that you started reading mystery novels and are enjoying doing so.

You can also use the expression **to get into something** to make a suggestion to another person. Using **to get into something** in this way indicates interest and excitement. In this episode, Morag says, "Let's **get into it**." Here, Morag is using **to get into something** as a way to suggest that they begin an activity and to express that she is excited to begin.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get into something**:

James:	Hey Leah. Is that your skateboard? I've never seen you with one before.
Luke:	I've really been getting into skateboarding lately! I don't know why I didn't try it when I was younger. I'll probably never be able to do any fancy tricks, but it's a fun way to get around quickly!
James:	That's really cool. I used to skateboard when I was younger, but I haven't done so in years.
Luke:	You should try it again! It's a surprisingly speedy way to get around town.

Kurt:	It's that time of the year again.
Lauren:	What time do you mean, Kurt?
Kurt:	Mom's birthday is coming up. We both need to find her a gift.
Lauren:	Oh no, not again! She is the most difficult person to shop for. She has zero hobbies and always buys whatever she wants.
Kurt:	Why don't we buy her something together? That way we could get her jewellery or something nice.
Lauren:	Good idea! We can go right now. Let's get into it !

Quiz

1. When someone says they have a lotta something, what do they mean?
 - a) They have a large quantity of that thing.
 - b) They decorated their bedroom with the theme of that thing.
 - c) They have a small quantity of that thing.
 - d) They don't know how much of that thing they have.

2. True or false: *Gonna* is used to talk about events that have already happened.
 - a) true
 - b) false

3. Which of these items would you be unlikely to find at a garage sale?
 - a) old books
 - b) used clothing
 - c) a new TV
 - d) a 20-year-old bicycle

4. If someone talks about getting into an activity, how do they feel about it?
 - a) unsure
 - b) excited
 - c) regretful
 - d) angry

5. Which of the following is not another way of saying *a kinda*?
 - a) a sort of
 - b) a bit of
 - c) completely
 - d) partially

Quiz Answers

1. a 2. b 3. c 4. b 5. c

Episode credits

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