

## Catch Word #86– Heads Up

### Transcript

Maura: Hello everyone. It's Maura.

Harp: And Harp.

Maura: And we're back with your Culips ESL podcast.

Harp: Yes. And go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, because there, you can become a member and have access to the additional resources, which include a detailed explanation, a transcript, and even a quiz.

Maura: And if you're listening to us on iTunes, don't forget to rate us and **let us know** how we're doing. Now, today's episode is a Catch Word episode, and this is when we look at different expressions, idioms, or slang and we explain it in more detail and we give you lots of different examples of how you can use it.

Harp: Exactly. Should we get started, Maura?

Maura: Let's get started.

Harp: OK. So our first expression today is **to give someone a heads up**.

Maura: Yes. **To give someone a heads up**. And you might also hear **to get a heads up**.

Harp: Yes. **To give someone a heads up** or **to get a heads up**.

Maura: Now, **to give someone a heads up** means that you inform them of something or you warn them about something that will happen.

Harp: Yeah. The information is given before, so that the person can prepare for what is about to happen.

Maura: Right. So if we say that **I gave my friend a heads up** about the test, it means that I told her about the test, or I warned her about the test, before it happened so that she could prepare and be ready for the test.

Harp: Exactly. And the possible origin for **this expression comes from baseball**.

Maura: Like so many American expressions.

- Harp: Exactly. So, at a baseball game, when someone yells “**heads up**,” it’s because a ball is coming towards you. So you put your head up to see the ball coming so you can move out of the way and so it doesn’t hit you.
- Maura: Right. So, if you think about it, when that person yells, “**heads up**,” they’re giving you a warning that the ball is coming.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: Just like the expression, now. **To give someone a heads up** is to tell them about something before it happens. And **to get a heads up** means that someone told you about something before it happened. Now, should we do a couple examples?
- Harp: Yeah, we should.
- Maura: Hey Jill?
- Harp: Yeah?
- Maura: Um, I just wanted **to give you the heads up** that the boss is a little bit mad at you. I heard him talking to someone saying that you’re always late and he was gonna talk to you about it.
- Harp: Oh no. Thanks for **the heads up**.
- Maura: No problem. Just so you know, so you’re ready when he talks to you.
- Harp: Yeah. No, definitely. The warning is appreciated.
- Maura: So in that example, I had some information that I wanted to share with you, so **I gave you a heads up**.
- Harp: Exactly. You **let me know** before it happened.
- Maura: Right. Let’s give one more example.
- Harp: Sounds good.
- Maura: So **class**, I just want **to give everybody the heads up** that the information that we’re covering today will be on the final exam.
- Harp: OK. So we should prepare this for the exam?
- Maura: Yes, definitely take notes and remember to study from them.

- Harp: Thanks for **the heads up**.
- Maura: So, there's another example where someone was giving information to help people in the future, so before something happened. In that case, it was an exam.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: So we could **give someone a heads up** for something positive or negative. It doesn't matter.
- Harp: Yeah. It's a pretty casual expression and it's used between friends or at work with people you know well.
- Maura: Right. So it can be used at work sometimes, too. Now, let's look at the next expression, which is ...?
- Harp: ***To give someone notice.***
- Maura: Right. ***To give someone notice.***
- Harp: Or ***to give someone advance notice.***
- Maura: Right. So they're the same expressions but we have a slight variation. ***To give someone notice*** or ***to give someone advance notice***. And what does that mean, Harp?
- Harp: It means the same thing; you give information before something happens.
- Maura: Right. So it's just like ***to give someone a heads up***, except this one is definitely more formal.
- Harp: Yeah, I agree. I would use ***to give a heads up*** in a casual setting and ***to give notice*** in more of a business, formal setting.
- Maura: So, let's give some examples of how you would use ***to give someone notice*** in a formal way.
- Harp: OK. Hi Rosy.
- Maura: Hi. How are you?
- Harp: I'm good, but I have some bad news.
- Maura: Oh, what?

- Harp: I have to cancel our weekend plans.
- Maura: Oh, what happened?
- Harp: I have to work, so I can't go skiing.
- Maura: Aw, **that sucks**.
- Harp: I know. I think we should **cancel the hotel**.
- Maura: OK, OK. Um, but **how much notice do you have to give a hotel** if you're cancelling a reservation?
- Harp: Well, I checked, and for this hotel, we only have **to give one day notice**.
- Maura: OK, great. I'll do that then. We'll just schedule another time.
- Harp: Yeah, I'm sorry.
- Maura: So, in that example, we were two friends talking about a cancellation at a hotel. So even though it was a casual situation, we were talking about a formal reservation that we had to cancel.
- Harp: Yeah. I used this expression today at work because **I'm taking a couple days off** next month, so I just wanted **to give my boss some notice**. Well, I had to ask for approval. I told him **I'm taking some days off**.
- Maura: Good, good for you. OK, good. Now, let's look at the last expression, which is **to let someone know**.
- Harp: Yeah, **to let someone know**.
- Maura: So this is very similar to **to give someone a heads up** or **to give someone notice**, in that we give someone information or warn them in advance.
- Harp: Yeah, and it can be casual or professional.
- Maura: Right. But the one difference is that you can also use this expression, **to let someone know**, about something that's happening in the moment. It's not always used before, like the other expressions are.
- Harp: Exactly. For example, if I was at a party and I was complaining to Maura that I was really hungry, she could **let me know** when the pizza was there.
- Maura: Exactly. So let's give an example, a dialogue example. Hey Julia?

- Harp: Yeah?
- Maura: You know our lunch date today?
- Harp: Yeah.
- Maura: I just want **to let you know** that I'm going to be a little bit late.
- Harp: Oh, OK.
- Maura: OK? So just **stay put** and I'll be there soon.
- Harp: OK. Do you know how late?
- Maura: I'd say just maybe 10, 15 minutes.
- Harp: Perfect. Thanks for **the heads up**. I'm going to do some extra work then.
- Maura: Great. So, in that example, we again use an expression that means to give someone advance warning or information before something happens, which is **to let someone know**.
- Harp: Yeah, exactly.
- Maura: So, let's repeat these expressions one more time for everybody.
- Harp: So, we started today by looking at **to give someone a heads up**.
- Maura: Right, which means that you're informing or warning a person before something happens, so you can prepare for the future.
- Harp: Yeah. So **I gave her a heads up** that in the meeting she needed some information.
- Maura: Right, or **he gave them a heads up** so that they wouldn't get in trouble next week. **Get a heads up**, which means that the person was informed or given the information. Like, **I got a heads up** yesterday that I had to study for a test, so in that case someone told me about the test.
- Harp: Yeah, exactly. Then our next expression was *to give someone notice* or **to give someone advance notice**.
- Maura: Right, so we can say **she gave him notice** that she wasn't going to be there all next week.

- Harp: Yeah, or **I gave my boss notice**, or **I gave her notice or him notice**.
- Maura: Yup. Lots of different possibilities for that one, too. And the last expression we looked at was ***to let someone know***.
- Harp: Yeah, so **I let you know** that there's gonna be a party tomorrow.
- Maura: Right, or you can give someone an instruction. Like, please **let me know** when the phone rings.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: So, any time you have to share some information with someone or you wanna warn them about something before it happens, you can use these expressions to sound more natural.
- Harp: Yes, definitely.
- Maura: So don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Harp: And if you like what you hear and see, donate.
- Maura: Thanks for your support. We'll talk to you later. Bye!
- Harp: Bye everyone!

## **Detailed Explanation**

To give someone a heads up or to get a heads up

If one person **gives another person a heads up**, the first person gives information to the second person so that they can prepare for something in the future. The information that is shared could be about a plan that is set to happen or just information that will be helpful in the future.

As we explain in this episode, this expression comes from the warning that is given when a ball is coming toward a person who does not know. In order for that person to not get hurt, someone might yell “heads up” to get the person to look up, see the ball, and then move out of the way of the ball.

A person can **give someone a heads up**, but the expression can also be used to say that someone **got a heads up from another person**. Here are a couple more examples to see the difference between these variations:

Mike: I just wanted **to give you a heads up** that Mom and Dad are planning to visit you this weekend.

Carl: Thanks! I better start cleaning my place now!

Alex: How did you know that your parents were coming this weekend?

Carl: I **got a heads up from my brother**. He called earlier this week.

You might also hear **to get the heads up**. You could use *the* when you know what the warning is about. Here is an example of that:

Becky: I **got the heads up from Frank**.

Oscar: All right, then. Let's prepare for the boss's arrival.

This is a pretty casual expression, but people do use it at work, especially with people they know well.

### **Heads up!**

In this episode, the expression **heads up**, as related to baseball, is discussed as the origin of *to give someone a heads up*. But this is also still used in any situation when something is coming towards a person and you want to get that person's attention to make them aware.

You are most likely to hear this expression involved with sports or in a play area. People playing Frisbee might call “**heads up**” to people if their Frisbee goes off course. People might also say “**heads up**” to a friend, to get their attention and then throw something to them. The intention here is that the friend will look up and have enough time to catch the ball or other object.

### Baseball expressions

There are many idiomatic expressions, especially American ones, that originate in baseball. Here is a short list of other expressions that come from baseball:

To be in the ballpark	To throw someone a curveball
To cover the bases	To play hardball
To hit it out of the park	A homerun
Out of left field*	Off base
Rain check*	Right off the bat*
To step up to the plate	To strike out
To touch base*	

\*These expressions have been covered by Culips in previous episodes.

### Class

This is a word that can be used to talk about many elements of the learning environment or a subject of study. In this episode, **class** was used to address the group of students in a course. There are additional definitions, too. Here they are in a clear list for you:

1. a group of students in a course
2. the period of time meeting for a course of study
3. the subject of study, as in a cooking **class**
4. the actual room, also called a classroom
5. a larger group of students at the same school who are studying the same subject or graduating together, as in “the **class** of 2011”

Here is an example of each one, to help tell the difference between them:

Brian (a teacher): My first-grade **class** this year is really fun.

Linda: Nice! It's going to be a great year for you.

George: I have a **class** this morning, so I won't be able to make it for brunch.

Hannah: No problem. I know it's a tough **class**.

Bruno: I'm taking a **class** next year.

Irene: Oh really? What are you studying?

Manuel: Is anyone in **class** yet?

Amber: Nope, not yet.

Adam: I can't believe we're going to be the graduating **class** of 2015!

Justin: I know. It's exciting, isn't it?

There are also other meanings for *class* that are not related to school!

To give someone notice

**To give someone notice** is another way of saying *to give someone information so that they can prepare for the future*. As we say in this episode, this is a more formal expression and a more formal kind of sharing of information. It is often used in business between people and organizations.

Here is another example of when to use this:

Nathan: I might not be able to make it to the meeting tomorrow because I'm so busy.

Cynthia: Me too. Let's make sure we **give the Creative Department enough notice** if we need to cancel.

Here is an example where it would be strange to use **to give someone notice**, because the situation is informal and friendly:

Kyle: I **gave my grandmother notice** that I'm going to stop by this afternoon.

This is strange because it is a casual situation. It is an arrangement between family and it is not a formal meeting that is being arranged. In this kind of situation, Kyle would more likely say something like, "I let my grandmother know that I'm going to stop by this afternoon,"

You can also say **to give someone advance notice**, with exactly the same meaning as **to give someone notice**.

To take a day off

**To take a day off** means to stop doing some kind of work, usually whatever your job is. People might also be specific and say **to take a day off from work** or **to take a day off from school**.

You can use other verbs with this expression, like **to get a day off**, **to have a day off**, or **to want a day off**. You can use different time periods too, like **to take an hour off**, **to take a week off**, or **to take a month off**.

Here is another example:

Gene: Guess what? I **got a month off** from work!

Lucy: Really? Wow. I thought you were just going **to take a few weeks off**.

Gene: I was, but my boss said I could **have up to a month off**, so I took it.

### That sucks

This is an expression that can be considered impolite and possibly offensive to some people, so it should never be used with people you don't know well. The reason for this is because its believed origins are offensive. It is often younger people who tend to use this expression, usually without the intention of being rude.

To say that something **sucks** means that it is not good. Since there are so many ways to say that something is not good, be sure to only say that something **sucks** if you're with close friends and you know they won't be offended.

In this episode, Maura says that it **sucks** when the ski trip is cancelled. Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Jennifer: How is your painting coming along?

Carmen: I hate it. It **sucks**.

Jennifer: I'm sure it's not that bad.

### To cancel the hotel

In a dialogue example, Harp says that she thinks they should "**cancel the hotel**." To be more precise, she should say, "I think we should cancel the hotel reservation." People often cut out words, like *reservation*, when the message is clear without them.

Another example could be, "Let's **cancel the movie**." The complete way to say it would be, "Let's cancel our plans to go to the movie."

### To let someone know

This is a very common way to talk about sharing information with another person. This can be used in both casual and professional situations. This expression is different from the first two because it can be used in a wider variety of situations. As we mention in this episode, **to let someone know** can be used to talk about something in the present. Here is an example of this:

Jackie: I wanted **to let you know** that I think your shirt is on backwards.

Mindy: Thanks! If you hadn't **let me know**, I would have gone to the meeting like this!

This expression might also be used with information that is possibly unimportant. The information is shared because it might be important for the person. Here is an example of this:

Jasmine: I'm **letting people know** that the cafeteria is closed today.

Mark: That's OK. I brought my lunch from home.

Of course, you can also use it to give someone information that can help them prepare for the future.

Faith: Brian just **let me know** that it's going to rain this weekend.

Victor: I guess our plans for the beach are off.

### To stay put

**To stay put** means to stay in one place and not move from it. Using **to stay put** in place of *to stay* just emphasizes the staying. In English, sometimes we have two-word verbs that are not actually much different from the one word verb.

Here are a couple more examples:

Mother: I'm just going to go to the washroom. I want you **to stay put** on this bench.

Child: OK. I promise not to move.

Tyler: Are you still thinking of moving to a different country?

Nina: No, I've decided **to stay put** for now.

**Quiz** (see the answers at the bottom of the learning materials)**1. If someone calls “Heads up!” to you on a playground, why might that be?**

- a) because they are going to share important information with you
- b) because a ball is coming towards you
- c) because they want you to play ball
- d) because they want to see your face

**2. From where does the expression *to give someone a heads up* originate?**

- a) baseball
- b) volleyball
- c) basketball
- d) workplace games

**3. In this episode, when Maura says, “So class, I just want to give you ...” what does the word *class* refer to?**

- a) a group of students taking a course
- b) a period of time
- c) the classroom
- d) the subject of study

**4. What is a variation on the expression *to give someone notice*?**

- a) to give someone the notice
- b) to take notice of someone
- c) to give someone advance notice
- d) to notice someone

**5. Kathy: I’m taking Tuesday off.****What does this mean for Kathy?**

- a) She is taking a plane on Tuesday.
- b) She is working hard on Tuesday.
- c) She is not working on Tuesday.
- d) She won’t feel good on Tuesday.

**6. What is most important to note about the expression *that sucks*?**

- a) Everyone loves this expression.
- b) Some people find this expression offensive.
- c) It can be used in different situations.
- d) It is an old expression.

**7. Of the three expressions discussed in this episode, what is different about the expression *to let someone know*?**

- a) It can be used about something happening now, in the present.
- b) It can be used to share unimportant information.
- c) It is rarely used.
- d) a) and b)

**8. Rudy: This painting I'm hanging just won't stay put.**

**What does this mean about the painting?**

- a) It keeps moving.
- b) It's stuck.
- c) It's in the wrong place.
- d) It's broken.

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