

## Simplified Speech #1 – Coffee

### Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

Andrew: And I'm Andrew and we're back with another Culips episode.

Harp: Yes. And remember to check out our website, Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Andrew: And while you're on the website, we recommend that you sign up and become a member. When you're a Culips member, you get access to our learning materials. And our learning materials include transcripts for all of the episodes that we've recorded. You also get detailed explanations of all the key expressions that we talk about. And this can help you increase your vocabulary. Finally, you get quizzes that will test your comprehension and help you determine how much you understand.

Harp: If you're on Facebook or on Twitter, please come over and say hi and leave a comment!

Andrew: Exactly. Today we're introducing a brand new type of Culips episode that we're calling Simplified Speech. In Simplified Speech episodes, we're going to give you the same great Culips content that we always do, but we're going to speak a little bit slower than normal and try extra hard to speak very clearly. Now, we think that everyone will love this new series, but if you find our regular Chatterbox episodes to be difficult to understand, then the Simplified Speech shows will be perfect for you.

Harp: Yes. And this is a new type of episode for us. So please let us know what you think. And if you need us to speak even slower, we could try.

Andrew: We could, yeah! So, Harp, how's it going with you?

Harp: It's going pretty well. I'm very excited because I have some very good friends who are gonna be arriving in about an hour or two to visit for the weekend.

Andrew: They're coming for the weekend?

Harp: Yes. And I haven't seen them in a couple months and it's gonna be really fun.

Andrew: Cool! Where are they from?

- Harp: They are originally from the Montreal area but they live up north in Abitibi, so it's gonna be about a 9-hour drive for them to get here and I hope it goes well and they should be here, I think, in an hour and a half.
- Andrew: **Right on.** So do you guys have big plans for the weekend?
- Harp: Nope. They like to just eat a lot when they come here, at different restaurants and different types of cuisine, because there's not a lot of good restaurants up there.
- Andrew: Yeah. Well, that sounds perfect to me.
- Harp: Exactly. I love eating.
- Andrew: Me too. Well, have fun with them.
- Harp: Thanks!
- Andrew: So, I'm curious. Do your friends like to drink coffee?
- Harp: They actually love to drink coffee, and I have a problem because my coffee machine is broken.
- Andrew: Oh no! Well, what a coincidence. Our topic for today is coffee. And so, your coffee machine is broken, Harp?
- Harp: Yes. I just discovered this week it's broken because I don't use it very often. I don't drink coffee.
- Andrew: You don't drink coffee? I can't believe it.
- Harp: I don't drink coffee **at all**.
- Andrew: So what do you do in the mornings to get yourself awake?
- Harp: I drink tea.
- Andrew: You drink tea. OK. Well, that's respectable.
- Harp: Is it?
- Andrew: Yes. I like tea as well but I have a very hard time in the mornings if I don't have a cup or two or three of coffee.

- Harp: OK. No, see, growing up, my parents always drank tea, so I wasn't really used to even the smell of coffee before and I **used to** always drink tea, even from when I was, maybe, 11 or 12 years old. Just maybe half a cup of tea and so now I love the taste of tea and I'm OK with the smell of coffee and find that it can smell quite nice, but the taste? Can't do it.
- Andrew: This is what a lot of people say that don't drink coffee. They love the smell, and I agree, I love the smell too, but there's something about the taste... But for me, this is **a non-issue**.
- Harp: I think I would be able to drink coffee with a lot of milk and sugar in it, but that just seems quite unhealthy, to have to put in a lot of sugar to be able to make it drinkable. So, I prefer my tea.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. And now, what type of tea do you like to drink? Are you an Earl Grey type of person?
- Harp: I am actually exactly that. I love Earl Grey tea.
- Andrew: Aha! I wonder how I knew that.
- Harp: But I also like all sorts of tea. And my parents, when they make tea, they make more of the Indian-style chai and they make it with Red Rose or Tetley, like, an orange pekoe tea.
- Andrew: OK, well, that sounds delicious. I like to drink tea in the evening. If I drink coffee after 3pm, then I'll have a really hard time falling asleep. So, in the evenings, I like to drink tea. Just like you.
- Harp: Wow. That's interesting, because for me, it's the same thing, with tea through. I can't drink tea in the evening because I can't fall asleep. But you have so much caffeine in coffee that you have to switch to tea. And then it's OK?
- Andrew: Well, I usually try to drink a decaffeinated tea, like, an herbal tea or something.
- Harp: OK. I understand. And I have to be honest. I just told a lie.
- Andrew: A lie? Oh no. What did you say?
- Harp: Well, once and a while, occasionally, I'll drink an espresso.
- Andrew: An espresso. **Wait a second!** That's coffee, not tea.
- Harp: I know. I did lie and say I don't drink coffee. But for some reason, I don't know why, I really like the taste of an espresso.

- Andrew: Maybe you just like the little cup.
- Harp: That is a possibility!
- Andrew: And so, to me, an espresso is almost **more strong** than a regular cup of coffee. What is it about the espresso that does it for you?
- Harp: Well, I think you were a little bit right when you were saying the small cup. Because it's such a little portion, I can put one cube of sugar in it and then it's just, like, the right balance of the bitter coffee with the sweetness. It's just the right mixture. I've never found that right mixture with a cup of coffee. It just is too big.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. OK. I understand. Well that makes sense to me too.
- Harp: Yup. But it's very rare that I drink that. But that is the one type of coffee that I will drink.
- Andrew: Now, some Canadians, and some of my friends especially, are coffee snobs. And so this means that they're very **picky** and very **choosy** about the coffee they drink. They always wanna drink fair-trade coffee from a fancy cafe. And... But I am not like this. I am an **average-Joe** coffee drinker. I want the caffeine and I will drink pretty much any cup of coffee. So...
- Harp: Will you drink instant coffee?
- Andrew: I have in the past, when I travel, but I prefer not to drink instant coffee. It's true. But where I work, it's really close to a Tim Hortons. So this is a ubiquitous cafe in Canada, if you could call it a cafe. It's more like a restaurant. They serve coffee and doughnuts. And right now, they have a promotion on. The famous *Roll Up the Rim* campaign. And I'm sure you know this.
- Harp: I do know it. With the disposable cup for your coffee, you roll up the tip of the cup and you can win a prize. So it kind of entices people to go there more often and to buy even more coffee.
- Andrew: And I am on the greatest **winning streak** of all time. I swear, I haven't paid for a coffee in, like, 2 months. I just keep winning a free coffee with each new coffee that I get.
- Harp: But do you drink it right away or do you keep the cup for the next time you want coffee?

- Andrew: Right. So I get a cup of coffee and then I drink the coffee and then I roll up the rim, which is actually pretty gross but you have to roll up the rim. And then it says, *you have won*, and it's great. And they I just sort of tuck that away in my pocket until the next time I need a coffee. So the next day I'll come back and repeat the cycle.
- Harp: I really wish that you'll win one of the bigger prizes, like a car! I think there's even vacations you can win.
- Andrew: Oh, me too! I hope so. But, yeah, usually, in the past, with these types of contests, I never win anything. But this winter has been amazing and I've won so much. And, yeah, I hope I get a car, that'd be great. I'd drive around.
- Harp: Now, speaking of your coffee at Tim Hortons, do you get a double-double?
- Andrew: No. I try to avoid the sugar so I don't go for a double-double, which of course means two sugars and two creams.
- Harp: OK, so you get it with just the cream?
- Andrew: Just one cream. Just a little bit of cream.
- Harp: OK.
- Andrew: And I was actually in line the other day and I heard somebody order a triple-triple.
- Harp: That's what my mom likes to drink.
- Andrew: A triple-triple? Wow.
- Harp: Yeah.
- Andrew: Yeah. I wonder if anybody has done a quadruple-quadruple?
- Harp: That seems a bit excessive and I've heard that even the double-double is quite sweet.
- Andrew: Mhmm. I don't know if I could handle that, either.
- Harp: Yup. A lot of people drink coffee black, which, I have to be honest, I can't even imagine. I've taken a little sip of black coffee and I can't do it. It's too strong and too bitter for me.
- Andrew: I always **used to** drink my coffee black, until, maybe, 2 years ago. I switched to putting a little cream or milk in, because it was hurting my stomach.
- Harp: Oh really? That's interesting.

- Andrew: So I think you're right. It is very acidic.
- Harp: Mmhmm. That's why tea is way better.
- Andrew: Yeah. Tea is good for your stomach, right? It's the opposite.
- Harp: Yup. And there's lots of antioxidants in tea.
- Andrew: So you're making a convincing argument for tea over here. But for now, I'll stick with my coffee.
- Harp: OK. I actually sometimes feel jealous of people who drink coffee because it seems like it's kind of a cult.
- Andrew: One of the things that I enjoy about it is the ritual. It's... These are the things that I enjoy, rituals. You know, you wake up every morning and you make your cup of coffee and then you drink it before you go to work. And it's a routine. These are things that I like.
- Harp: Can you leave your house without drinking a cup of coffee?
- Andrew: Yeah. No, it's interesting that you ask because this year, one of my New Year's resolutions was to drink less coffee. Because I was just drinking a ton while I was in school, as a student, staying up late and writing papers. It was just bad. So I tried **to cut down** to just one cup a day. And I'd say for the first month of this year, for January, I did really, really well. I actually stopped drinking coffee altogether. I was just drinking tea. And this was OK, but it's just not the same as coffee. So, now I'm back on the caffeine, helped by Tim Hortons and the free coffees they're giving me. And... But I have reduced my consumption. But it's difficult for me to leave the house without a cup of coffee. You got me.
- Harp: OK. Yeah, no, I usually go to work and that's where I have my first cup of tea. I'm pretty good in the morning. But it's funny, my mom cannot function without a cup of tea. So I remember when I was even, 15 years old and I was working at my first job, at McDonald's. And I would have to sometimes open the restaurant, which was at 5:30 or 6:00 in the morning. And she would drive me. But she required me to wake her up at least 20 minutes before I had to leave so that she could make a cup of tea.
- Andrew: Yeah. I think there's a lot of people like this. This reminds me of my parents, too, when they'd wake up early to drive me to a hockey game or something. They'd always have a cup of coffee in hand. Gotta get up early to make the coffee before they leave the house.
- Harp: Yup. That's why people love the new programmable coffee machines, where you can just put in the time and it's ready when you wake up.

Andrew: That's what I have, yup. Saves me 20 minutes in the morning.

Harp: Yup.

Andrew: I think that wraps it up for today. We talked about coffee, and also tea.

Harp: Yes. And so remember, come over to Facebook or Twitter and leave us some comments because this is a new type of episode and we would love to hear some feedback.

Andrew: That is right. And so, until next time, take care, and we'll talk to you soon.

Harp: Bye everyone!

## Detailed explanation

### Right on

In this episode, Harp says that her friends are coming to visit her and they will arrive at her house in an hour and a half. Andrew responds to this comment by saying **right on**.

When we want to enthusiastically respond to a statement and show that we approve of it or agree with it, we can use the expression **right on**.

In other words, Andrew is communicating that he thinks it's great that Harp's friends are coming to visit, and he is happy that she gets to see her friends soon.

**Right on** is an exclamation that can be used when we want to show that we think something is cool.

This is a very casual expression, and should be avoided in formal situations.

Here are a couple more examples with **right on**:

Jenny: What did you do last weekend?

Bill: I went camping with my friends. What about you?

Jenny: I went and saw that new superhero movie.

Bill: **Right on!** I heard it was awesome.

Jenny: Yeah. It was really good. You should check it out.

Raul: Nice sweater!

Tiffany: Thanks. I just bought it.

Raul: It's beautiful.

Tiffany: And it was 30% off, too.

Raul: **Right on!** I love a good bargain.

### A non-issue

Something that is not important is **a non-issue**. In this episode, Andrew and Harp talk about the taste of coffee and how some people don't like it. Andrew says that he understands this, but for him it's **a non-issue**.

In other words, Andrew likes the taste of coffee and it is unimportant to him that other people don't like coffee. He doesn't care that other people think coffee tastes bad.

So when something is really unimportant and you don't care about it, you can say it's **a non-issue**. If something is **a non-issue**, then it is so unimportant that you don't want to waste time talking about it. It's not worth the effort.



Here are a couple more examples with **a non-issue**:

Francois: We have to leave right now or we'll be late. Traffic will be horrible.

Kim: Are you joking? Traffic is **a non-issue** right now. Traffic is only bad during rush hour and it's already 11am.

Francois: Are you sure?

Kim: Yeah. Relax. We won't be late. Let's leave in 10 minutes.

Francois: OK.

Lindsay: Do I look OK in this dress? I don't think black is a good colour on me.

Ralph: You look great! Don't worry about the colour.

Lindsay: I think I'm going to change into a red dress.

Ralph: OK, if you feel like it, go ahead, but for me this is **a non-issue**. You look beautiful no matter what colour you wear.

Lindsay: Thanks, but I'm still going to change.

Ralph: OK, whatever you like.

### Wait a second

In this episode, Harp admits to Andrew that she lied about drinking coffee. Originally, Harp says that she never drinks coffee, but then later says that she sometimes drinks espresso. When Andrew realizes that Harp lied, he says **wait a second**.

We can use the expression **wait a second** when we realize that something we see or hear seems wrong and we want to clarify the situation. Andrew tells Harp **wait a second** because he is surprised that Harp told him a lie about drinking coffee and he wants to clarify the situation with her.

When we are surprised by a situation because something is weird or wrong, we can say **wait a second** to express our shock and get more information.

Here are a couple more examples with **wait a second**:

Tom: Are we all ready to go?

Beth: **Wait a second!** Isn't Mark coming with us?

Tom: Oh, you didn't hear? He cancelled because he has the flu.

Beth: Oh, really? Yeah, I didn't know about that. That's too bad. OK, I'm ready. Let's go!

Richard: You'll never believe what happened last night.

Diana: What happened?

Richard: I met Tom Cruise.

Diana: **Wait a second**, what? You met Tom Cruise? Where?

Richard: Yeah! I just saw him randomly walking down the street and went up and said hello. He is in town shooting a movie.

Diana: Wow, that's amazing. He's my favorite actor! I'm so jealous!

Comparisons using one-syllable adjectives

In this episode, Andrew says that espresso is “**more strong**” than regular coffee. Here Andrew makes a grammatical error. When making a comparison using a one-syllable adjective, like *strong*, we should add **-er** to the end of the word to change it into its comparative form.

So Andrew should have said that espresso is **stronger** than coffee.

This is a good example of how even native English speakers sometimes break the rules of grammar. Spontaneous speech is messy and sometimes errors happen. In fact, this mistake is one that native speakers of English make occasionally when speaking.

To recap, to avoid making the same error as Andrew, when you make a comparison with a one-syllable adjective, use the **-er** ending instead of adding the word *more* before the adjective.

Here are a couple more examples with comparisons using one-syllable adjectives:

Adam: The big ball game is tomorrow. China versus the USA. Who do you think will win?

Greg: I'm predicting that China will win. The USA is a good team but their players are **weaker** than China's.

Adam: Interesting prediction. I actually think that the USA will win. I guess we'll find out tomorrow!

Tracy: My plane arrives in Montreal tomorrow at 10pm. How should I get to your house?

Flynn: You'll probably be tired from flying all day so I recommend you take a taxi. It will be **faster** than the shuttle bus.

Tracy: Perfect. See you tomorrow!

Picky and choosy

**Picky** and **choosy** are synonyms. Someone who is **picky/choosy** is difficult to please because they have very specific things that they like and don't like. In this episode, Andrew says that some of his friends are very **picky** and very **choosy** about the type of coffee they drink. They only like to drink high-quality coffee from nice cafes.

When we describe a person as **picky** and **choosy**, it means that they don't like everything. Rather, they have particular tastes and only like certain things.

Here are a couple more examples with the words **picky** and **choosy**:

Ryan: Let's eat sushi tonight.

Lola: No. We can't.

Ryan: Why not?

Lola: Javier is coming with us. He's super **picky** and doesn't eat seafood.

Ryan: Oh yeah. That's right. Maybe we should have pizza then?

Lola: Yeah. I think that's a good idea.

Chantal: We need to set Heidi up with a boyfriend. She's been single for almost 3 years!

Francesca: The problem is that she is so **choosy**. No one is good enough for her.

Chantal: It's true. If she doesn't lower her standards, she might be alone for a long time.

### An average Joe

If we describe someone as **an average Joe**, it means they are very normal. There is nothing special about **an average Joe**.

In this episode, Andrew describes himself as **an average-Joe** coffee drinker. What he means is that he drinks coffee like an ordinary person. He doesn't have special requirements for his coffee, any cup will do.

There are many different variations of this expression. You may come across the following:

- **an ordinary Joe**
- **Joe six-pack**
- **a plain Jane**

All of these expressions are used to describe people who are average or normal. The **Joe** expressions describe men and we can use **plain Jane** to describe a woman.

So, anyone who is an **average Joe** is a normal, ordinary person.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Richard: Last night my friends and I went to a jazz club to see some live music.

Carla: How was it?

Richard: It was amazing. You'll never believe who was playing the piano.

Carla: I have no idea. Who?

Richard: Tony from the accounting department!

Carla: What? Really?

Richard: Yeah. I always thought he was just some **average Joe**, but it turns out he is a talented pianist.

Carla: Wow. I'll have to go see him play sometime.

Harvey: What do you like to do in your free time?

Russ: I don't have any special hobbies. I guess you could say I'm just **an average Joe**. I like to watch football on Sundays and spend time with my friends.

Harvey: I'm a big football fan too. You should come over to my place sometime to watch the game.

Russ: Sounds great!

### A winning streak

In this episode, Andrew talks about his amazing *Roll Up the Rim* contest **winning streak**. **A winning streak** is a series of victories or wins. Whenever you keep winning a game or contest, you are on **a winning streak**. So, Andrew was on **a winning streak** because he kept winning free coffee from Tim Hortons.

When you play a game or participate in a contest and you have an unbroken series of wins, you are on **a winning streak**. This expression is most often used to talk about sports teams who are playing very well and have won several games in a row.

Here are a couple more examples with **a winning streak**:

Hank: Did you catch the Lakers game last night?

Sarah: Yeah! What a great game! They destroyed the Knicks. They're on quite the **winning streak**. How many games in a row have they won now?

Hank: Ten games! Nobody can beat them!

Tessa: I'm thinking about going to the casino on Saturday. Want to come along?

Marc: No. I don't go to casinos.

Tessa: Why not?

Marc: I used to have a gambling problem.

Tessa: Oh, really? I didn't know that.

Marc: Yeah. About 10 years ago I lost my entire life savings.

Tessa: What happened?

Marc: Well, I was gambling at the casino and I was on a terrific **winning streak**. So I decided to bet all my money in poker. I ended up losing and I lost all my money.

Tessa: I'm glad you realized that you had a problem and stopped gambling.

Marc: Yeah, me too!

### Used to / use to

We use **used to** to talk about actions and habits that happened in the past but do not happen anymore. In this episode, Andrew says that he always **used to** drink his coffee black. In other words, in the past, Andrew drank his coffee black. These days, however, he drinks it with milk.

When we make a negative sentence with *didn't* or ask a question with *did*, then we have to use **use to** instead of **used to**.

So, whenever we talk about an action or habit that happened in the past but doesn't happen anymore, we can use **used to / use to**.

Here are a few more examples with **used to** / **use to**:

Beth: I **used to** hate Brussels sprouts. These days, though, I love them!

Steve: Oh, really? That's pretty strange. I don't like them too much myself. I usually only eat them at Thanksgiving.

Olivia: Where did you **use to** work before transferring to our department?

Bob: I **used to** work in the accounting department.

Olivia: That's fantastic. Welcome to our team. Let me know if you have any questions.

Bob: Thanks!

Seth: Where do you usually buy your groceries?

Lee: Usually I go to ABC Supermarket. I didn't **use to** go there often but lately they've been having some great sales so it's quickly becoming my favorite place to shop.

Seth: Yeah. That's where I go too. It's a great place!

### To cut down on something

In this episode, Andrew says that his New Year's resolution was **to cut down on drinking coffee**.

When we **cut down on something**, we reduce the size or number of that thing. Andrew didn't resolve to stop drinking coffee but he did resolve to stop drinking as much coffee as he used to.

**To cut down on something** is a phrasal verb that means to reduce something. So, if you **cut down on something**, you make that thing smaller or reduce how much of that thing you do or consume.

Here are a couple more examples with **to cut down on something**:

Lydia: Wanna go out for pizza tonight?

Sam: I'd love to, but I'm on a diet right now and I'm trying **to cut down on the amount of junk food I eat**. Could we eat something different instead?

Lydia: Sure. What about pho?

Sam: Sounds great!

Mindy: Nice bike!

Ralph: Hey, thanks!

Mindy: I thought you always drove to work. Why did you take your bike today?

Ralph: I'm just thinking about the environment. I want **to cut down on the amount of pollution in the air** so I'm going to ride my bike to work a few times a week.

Mindy: That's great!

At all

In this episode, Harp says that she doesn't drink coffee **at all**. This means that she doesn't drink any coffee.

When we say that we don't do something **at all**, it means that we don't do that thing in any way or to any extent. So if you don't play basketball **at all**, then you never play basketball. Or if you don't know how to sing **at all**, then you are a really bad singer.

The expression **at all** is used to intensify statements and emphasize how completely someone doesn't do something.

**At all** can only be used in negative statements or in questions. It wouldn't make sense to say that someone can do something **at all**, so avoid using it in positive statements.

Here are a couple more examples with **at all**:

Terry: I'm going fishing tomorrow morning. Want to come along?

Wes: Are you taking your boat out?

Terry: Sure am.

Wes: Sounds tempting, but I don't know how to fish **at all**. I've never done it before.

Terry: That's OK. I'll help you out if you have any problems.

Wes: Really? OK then. I'll go with you.

Terry: Great!

Amanda: I'm thinking of having a dinner party next week. Wouldn't it be great to have all our friends over?

Tom: Yeah, but do you actually know how to cook **at all**?

Amanda: I'm not a very good cook, but I could just make something very simple or order food. It'd be so fun, don't you think?

Tom: Yeah. It would be pretty fun. Let's do it.

Amanda: Yay!

## Quiz

1. Which of the following expressions is used to describe a very ordinary person?
  - a) a normal Tom
  - b) a regular Bob
  - c) an average Joe
  - d) an ordinary Guy
  
2. In this episode, Andrew talks about a past habit he used to have. What was it?
  - a) He used to drink his coffee black.
  - b) He used to only drink tea.
  - c) He used to not drink coffee.
  - d) He used to drink his coffee with sugar.
  
3. In Canadian slang, what is a double-double?
  - a) an extra-large coffee
  - b) a coffee with heavy cream
  - c) a coffee with two sugars and two creams
  - d) a coffee with two espresso shots and two sugars
  
4. What does the phrasal verb *to cut down on something* mean?
  - a) to increase consumption of that thing
  - b) to reduce consumption of that thing
  - c) to divide that thing into smaller parts
  - d) to look carefully at that thing
  
5. Someone who doesn't like very many different types of food can be described as...?
  - a) fussy and wussy
  - b) picky and choosy
  - c) baby and maybe
  - d) selecty and weckty



6. Harp occasionally drinks an espresso. True or false?

- a) true
- b) false

7. If Tim doesn't cook at all, how often does he cook?

- a) all the time
- b) frequently
- c) occasionally
- d) never

8. What is an unbroken series of victories called?

- a) a winning streak
- b) a winning stripe
- c) a winning steak
- d) a winning strike

9. When can we use the expression *right on*?

- a) when we disagree with something someone says
- b) when we approve or agree with something someone says
- c) when we argue with someone
- d) when we make formal presentations

**Answers:**

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