

Simplified Speech #3 – Haircuts

Episode Description

How do you style your hair? Today's Simplified Speech episode is all about haircuts. Join Harp and Andrew as they discuss their own worst haircuts ever and talk about some trendy hairstyles that can be seen in Canada right now!

Sample Dialogue

- Andrew: I had **a mullet** when I was in university for a short period, as a kind of ironic fashion statement, but I never had one as a kid. My mom wouldn't **let** me.
- Harp: Ah, OK. So **a mullet** is when someone has shorter hair on the top and the front and then longer hair in the back.
- Andrew: Yeah, the expression, what is it? *Short – no – business in the front and a party in the back*, right?
- Harp: Exactly. I remember one of my older cousins, he had **a mullet**, and he actually had **a permed mullet**. And I remember thinking, "Wow. That is **epic**." And now, looking at the pictures, I just can't stop laughing.

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- I would say
- Causative verbs
- To push
- Hairstyles
- Epic
- Right on

Plus comprehension questions, phrasal verbs, and more!



Simplified Speech #3 – Haircuts

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the detailed explanations section that follows the transcript.

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

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

Harp: Yes. Remember to check out the website: Culips.com. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Andrew: And while you're visiting our site, I recommend that you sign up to become a member. Because when you become a member, you get access to our Learning Materials. And Harp, what does that include?

Harp: A detailed explanation of all the interesting terms that we talk about. You get a complete transcript, so that you can read and follow what we're saying, and also a quiz to test your comprehension.

Andrew: There's lots of great stuff in the Learning Materials that will help you improve your English.

Harp: I'm sure that all of you can tell: we're speaking a little bit slower right now, and that's because this is our newer episode type, where we're trying to speak slow for our beginner listeners.

Andrew: We are going to do a Simplified Speech episode, where we chat about an interesting topic, but we speak just a little bit slower than we usually would in our other episodes. So although everybody might find something to learn from this episode, our focus is on beginner- and intermediate-level learners, so we're trying to speak just a little bit slower today for you.

Harp: Yes.

Andrew: So today our topic is going to be haircuts.

Harp: Haircuts.

Andrew: We're going to talk to you today about haircuts. And this is something that almost everybody has to do.

Harp: Yes. That is true. Most people get haircuts quite often, **I would say**.

Andrew: Mmhmm. I get a haircut maybe once every 2 months.

- Harp: You know, I don't really like **getting my hair cut** because I just like **longer hair**, and I feel that I was never able to find a good hair stylist. So I sometimes cut my hair only once a year.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. This is not unusual for people that have **longer hair**, though.
- Harp: Yeah. That's true. And I never actually had my first haircut until I was 12 years old.
- Andrew: 12 years old? Really?
- Harp: Mmhmm. I had very, very **long hair** when I was young.
- Andrew: Wow. Was this something that your family wanted you to have, or was this a personal decision?
- Harp: Oh, no. It was very much from my family. It's very traditional to just have **long hair** in India, so my parents never cut my hair, and I always had a very long braid. And when I was young, like, maybe in grade 3, I remember the school pictures where I had two braids that kind of twisted up to my ear, and then my mom put ribbons – so a little bit like Princess Leia from *Star Wars*.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Harp: It was very unfashionable, but it worked for me.
- Andrew: That sounds cool. The Princess Leia haircut is pretty neat.
- Harp: Yeah. So my first haircut was very late, but I don't know... Most people, I think, cut their hair when they're 2 or 3 for the first time?
- Andrew: Yeah. It's always funny. You know, these days a lot of my friends are starting to have kids, and so these kids have to go **get their hair cut** for the very first time. And it can be a traumatic experience for a little kid.
- Harp: Then I think there are some hairdressers that specialize in kids' haircuts because they kind of distract the kids, and they make it a very gentle experience.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. Because there's a lot of scary stuff going on. You've got scissors and buzzers and all of these sharp materials, so I can imagine it being a scary experience.
- Harp: Yup.
- Andrew: But for you, when you were 12, how was your first trip to the hairdresser? Do you remember it?

- Harp: I do remember it. It was very exciting. 'Cause I had **to push** my parents for almost a year, **I would say, to get my hair cut**. And they finally agreed, but I wasn't allowed to go short, so I cut – **I'm gonna say** maybe – 8 inches off, which sounds like a lot. But I'm telling you, my hair was very, very long. So I don't even think she gave me layers; it was almost, like, a straight haircut across.
- Andrew: Anybody could have done it then.
- Harp: Yeah. I don't think we paid a lot of money, but I do remember how light I felt after my hair was cut.
- Andrew: Ah. That's one of my favourite things, actually. Because I always have my hair quite short. And after I **get my hair cut** in the summer, and I get to ride on my bike, it feels so light and airy. You know, it's a great feeling.
- Harp: Yup. Now, did you have any of those really bad haircuts when you were a kid, and there are pictures where you just look slightly ridiculous?
- Andrew: Yeah, well, kids of my generation, in the '80s, growing up, the **mushroom cut** was very popular.
- Harp: Yup. I was actually thinking of the **mushroom cut**.
- Andrew: Yeah. Yeah. So the **mushroom cut** essentially turns you into a mushroom. You look like a mushroom. It's just as if somebody put a bowl on your head and cut around the circumference of the bowl. And so your head looks round, and it really looks awful, but it was very popular.
- Harp: Yeah. I don't know why it was so popular, but I think almost all of my friends had that haircut.
- Andrew: Yeah. It was popular on girls and boys too. My sister even had a **mushroom cut** at one point.
- Harp: Now another haircut that was popular in that time was **the mullet**. Did you ever have **a mullet**?
- Andrew: I had **a mullet** when I was in university for a short period, as a kind of ironic fashion statement, but I never had one as a kid. My mom wouldn't **let me**.
- Harp: Ah, OK. So **a mullet** is when someone has shorter hair on the top and the front and then longer hair in the back.
- Andrew: Yeah, the expression, what is it? *Short – no – business in the front and a party in the back*, right?

- Harp: Exactly. I remember one of my older cousins, he had **a mullet**, and he actually had **a permed mullet**. And I remember thinking, “Wow. That is **epic**.” And now, looking at the pictures, I just can’t stop laughing.
- Andrew: Yeah, **a permed mullet**. Well, that is pretty funny. What about you? Did you ever have any bad haircuts?
- Harp: No, I... Like I said, 'cause I didn’t **get my hair cut** until I was a bit older, but that style with the two braids tied up with the ribbons... I looked pretty ridiculous in that picture.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. You’ll have to share it with us.
- Harp: Yeah. It’s at my parents’ house, so next time I go there, I’ll definitely take a picture of it.
- Andrew: **Right on, right on**. And what about hairstyles these days? What are you noticing on the streets of Montreal? How do all the cool kids style their hair?
- Harp: Um. I’m noticing a lot of shaved on one side and longer on the other. But I mean, kind of, the left side of the head and the right side is longer. It’s a bit strange for me. Or shaved underneath.
- Andrew: That’s what I see too. I see a lot of people walking around, and one side of their head is normal hair, and the other side is shaved.
- Harp: Yup. That seems to be very popular. I think a lot of guys are getting longer hair and wearing ponytails, or... not braids, but no, more ponytails. I see that a lot more.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. There’s a special name for this, actually. It’s called **the man bun**.
- Harp: Wow. I had no idea.
- Andrew: And maybe I know this because a couple of my friends have **the man bun**. But essentially this is when a guy grows their hair out longer and then starts to wear it up and put it into a bun on the top of their head. And, yeah, this is pretty popular these days.
- Harp: Yup. It definitely is.
- Andrew: I would love to grow my hair long, but I just don’t think it would look very good.
- Harp: Yeah. I can’t actually picture you with longer hair, but I would love to see a picture of you with your **mullet**.

- Andrew: You know, I think it's because I play in a rock 'n' roll band. And this is kind of a fantasy if you're a rock musician. You gotta have the **long hair**. But I just never have.
- Harp: Yeah, like one of those hair bands of the '80s with the big hair, and you can just, like, wave your head around and your hair's splashing everywhere. I think you need to grow it out.
- Andrew: OK. I'll work on it just for you. We'll check back in a year.
- Harp: All right. So, I think we should wrap it up here with our conversation about haircuts.
- Andrew: Yeah. So we talked about a whole bunch of different styles that exist and some embarrassing cuts that I've had in the past.
- Harp: Yes. I would love to see some of your pictures with embarrassing haircuts.
- Andrew: Oh, that would be so good. Please send us some of your bad haircut photos.
- Harp: Yes. Please post them on Facebook. We would love to see them.
- Andrew: Yup. And that will wrap it up for us today. We want to thank you for listening. And don't forget to check out our website at Culips.com. Thank you everybody.
- Harp: Bye everyone.
- Andrew: Bye.

Detailed Explanations

I would say

In this episode, Harp uses the construction ***I would say*** twice. We can use this construction in a few different ways.

The first time Harp uses ***I would say***, she states, “Most people get haircuts quite often, ***I would say***.” Here, Harp is sharing her opinion about how often people get haircuts. We can use ***I would say*** to qualify a statement and make it known to everyone that what we are saying is just a guess or an estimate. When we use ***I would say***, we share our opinion even though what we say might not be completely accurate or factual.

The second time Harp uses ***I would say***, she says, “I had to push my parents for almost a year, ***I would say***, to get my hair cut.” The meaning here is almost identical to that in the first example; however, in this second example, Harp is not sharing her opinion but rather just making a guess about how long it took her parents to allow her to get her hair cut. We can use ***I would say*** when we make a guess but aren’t sharing an opinion.

When talking about her first haircut, Harp also uses a construction that is almost identical to ***I would say***. She states, “And [my parents] finally agreed, but I wasn’t allowed to go short, so I cut – ***I’m gonna say*** maybe – 8 inches off.” Here, Harp makes a guess and uses ***I’m gonna say*** to make it clear that she is estimating the amount of hair the hairdresser cut off.

In spoken English, ***I would say*** is often abbreviated to ***I’d say***.

Here are a couple more examples with ***I’d say***:

Jason:	Are you feeling OK? You don’t look so good.
Margaret:	I have a bad headache. I’m going to see if I can leave work early.
Jason:	Good idea. I’m not an expert, but <i>I’d say</i> you should see a doctor, too.
Margaret:	If I don’t feel better by tomorrow, I’ll make sure to do that.

Tim:	Your house is beautiful! When was it built?
Sandra:	I’m not sure, actually. <i>I’d say</i> it is at least 100 years old.
Tim:	Oh, definitely. It might even be older. If you’re interested, you should check with city hall. They’d have records about when it was built.
Sandra:	I might do that! It’d be interesting to know the history of the building I live in.

Causative verbs

We use causative verbs when a person or thing causes another person or thing to do something. In this episode, Harp and Andrew use causative verbs in several sentences.

For example, Harp says, “I don’t really like **getting** my hair cut because I just like longer hair.” Here, the verb **to get** is used as a causative verb. This is because when you get a haircut, it’s really the hairdresser who actually makes your hair shorter. You get your hair cut by a hairdresser.

Andrew uses the same causative verb **to get** when he says, “After I **get** my hair cut in the summer, it feels so light and airy.” Just like Harp, Andrew uses the causative verb **to get** when talking about haircuts because it is the hairdresser actually makes Andrew’s hair short.

Here’s a list of some more verbs that can be used to show cause:

Causative verb	Meaning	Examples
<i>To have</i>	To get someone to do something	Bill had his grass cut by the landscaper. I’m going to have the mechanic look at my car next week. It’s making a weird sound.
<i>To let</i>	To allow someone to do something	My dad said he’d let me go to the party if I finish all my homework. I’ll let you use my car for a week if you help me clean my basement.
<i>To make</i>	To force someone to do something	I was made to feel embarrassed by my elementary school bully. Tina made me go to the party and I’m glad she did. I ended up meeting some great new friends!

To push

In this episode, Harp mentions that she didn't get her first haircut until she was 12 years old. Even then, she had **to push** her parents for nearly a year to let her cut her hair.

When we **push** someone, we try to convince them to do something that they probably do not want to do. In other words, Harp had to persuade and convince her parents that getting a haircut was a good idea.

There are several ways to use this verb. Harp talks about the length of time it took her to persuade her parents to let her cut her hair: nearly a year. When we talk about the duration of the persuasion, we use the construction **to push for**. For example, "After I **pushed for** 6 months, my boss finally agreed to give me a raise."

A second way we use this verb is with the construction **to push someone to do something**. We use this when we want to get someone to do something they might not want to do. Check out this example: "My teacher **pushed me to present** at the science fair and I'm glad she did because I won first prize." In this example, the student probably didn't originally want to make a presentation but was persuaded by his teacher to do so.

A third way we use **to push** is with the construction **to push someone into doing something**. This is similar to the previous example. We use this when talking about someone convincing someone else to do something. Here's an example sentence: "My best friend **pushed me into joining** his gym." The speaker was persuaded to join a gym by her best friend, something she might not have done without her friend's coaxing.

Here are a couple more examples with the expression **to push**:

Mother:	You've been married for 3 years. When will I be a grandma?
Daughter:	Mom, please stop pushing us to have a baby . We want to wait until we're more stable financially.
Mother:	But it would be so much fun to have a cute little baby around!
Daughter:	I know, but we'll have a baby when we feel ready.

Pepe:	Wanna hang out this weekend?
Samuel:	I would, but my boss pushed me into working an extra shift. At least I'll get paid overtime, though.
Pepe:	OK. Maybe we can hang out next weekend then?
Samuel:	Oh yeah. That'd be great.

Hairstyles

In this episode, Harp and Andrew discuss various hairstyles.

The first style they talk about is **long hair**. This is a very simple term that describes any haircut where the hair is longer than the shoulders. It is worn by both men and women in Canada, but is more popular with women. The woman shown here has very **long hair**.



The second hairstyle Harp and Andrew talk about is the **mushroom cut** (also known as the bowl cut). This is a hairstyle that is usually only worn by kids and was very popular in the '80s and '90s. The **mushroom cut** involves straight bangs and a side undercut.

The next cut Harp and Andrew discuss is **the mullet**. Andrew says that he had **a mullet** for a little while in university. With **a mullet**, the hair is cut short at the front and sides but is left long in the back. Interestingly, the word **mullet** was invented in 1994 by the hip hop group the Beastie Boys.

A funny expression that is used to describe **mullets** is *business in the front, party in the back*, because **the mullet** looks like a professional haircut from the front but looks more casual from the back.

The mullet is not a very popular haircut these days and has a reputation for being cheesy or low-class.





Another hairstyle discussed by Harp and Andrew is a **perm**. The word **perm** is a shortened form of the expression **permanent wave**. A **perm** is achieved by using chemicals to make the hair curly. Harp tells us that in the '80s, her cousin had a **permed** mullet, which must have been a very interesting hairstyle!

And finally, Harp and Andrew talked about **the man bun**. This is a hairstyle that is trendy among Canadian men right now. **The man bun** is achieved by tying long hair up on the top of one's head. This is a very practical style for men with long hair because it keeps the hair neat, tidy, and somewhat professional-looking.

The man bun is so common in Vancouver right now that someone even started a blog to document its popularity.

You can check it out at:

<http://therealmanbunsofvancouver.tumblr.com>



Epic

The adjective **epic** describes anything that is amazing, very cool, or extreme. In this episode, Harp says that her cousin had an **epic** permed mullet. In other words, although the permed mullet probably wasn't very cool, it was an extreme example of a mullet and something that was impressive.

The expression **epic** was very hip in the early and mid-2000s. Although it is still a common slang expression, it isn't used as commonly now as it used to be. So, something that is **epic** is cool, amazing, extreme, or impressive.

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

Jody: I just ate the most **epic** slice of pizza for lunch.

Bill: Oh yeah? Tell me about it.

Jody: It was so delicious. Perfect amount of cheese, a very tasty sauce, and a massive amount of toppings.

Bill: You're making my mouth water. Where did you get it?

Jody: At Italian Pizzeria, just down the street.

Bill: Cool. I'll have to check that place out. Sounds great.

Jody: Yeah do it. It's the best.

Susana: I love your new shirt! It's so wacky and colourful.

Ricardo: Oh, thanks!

Susana: It's totally **epic**. Where did you find it?

Ricardo: I bought it from an online store.

Susana: Ah, you can really find the unique stuff online, can't you?

Ricardo: Yup. I've started buying most of my clothes online actually. I am able to find stuff that shows off my eccentric personality.

Susana: Perfect!

Right on

Right on is an informal expression that is used to show that you approve of something that someone else has said. In this episode, Harp says that her parents have a funny picture of her wearing her hair in braids with ribbons. She says that the photo is at her parents' house but she will get a copy of it to share with Culips listeners next time she sees her parents. In response to this statement, Andrew says **right on**. In other words, Andrew is showing his approval and thinks that this is a good idea.

So, when we hear something that we agree with or think is a good idea, we can say **right on**.

Because this is an informal expression, it should be avoided in formal contexts.

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

Marnie: I just signed up for guitar lessons.

Philip: Oh wow. **Right on**. I didn't know you wanted to learn how to play.

Marnie: I actually played when I was a teenager but want to get back into it.

Philip: That's really cool. I wish I knew how to play.

Marnie: You should sign up for lessons too! We could learn together!

Philip: That's an interesting idea. I'll think about it!

Marnie: Cool!

Wife: I'm gonna run down to the supermarket to grab a few things.

Husband: OK, **right on**.

Wife: Do you need anything?

Husband: Could you pick up some bread? I want to make a sandwich for my lunch tomorrow.

Wife: OK. Anything else?

Husband: Nope. That's it, thanks.

Wife: OK. See you soon.

Husband: Bye!

Quiz

Multiple Choice

1. **What does it mean when you push someone to do something?**
 - a) You shove them.
 - b) You persuade them.
 - c) You hit them.
 - d) You discourage them.

2. **If a car is epic, what is it?**
 - a) comfortable
 - b) loud
 - c) impressive
 - d) slow

3. ***Right on* is said when you want to do what?**
 - a) show disapproval
 - b) show indifference
 - c) show frustration
 - d) show approval

4. **When you attach *I would say* to a statement, what are communicating to your listener?**
 - a) that you are making an estimate
 - b) that you are being factual
 - c) that you are being precise
 - d) that you don't know what you're talking about

5. **Which of the following examples does NOT include a causative verb?**
 - a) I let my granddaughter take the dog for a walk.
 - b) Sally might go to the party.
 - c) I had my hair stylist give me a trim.
 - d) His teacher made him apologize for being rude in class.

Comprehension

1. How often does Andrew get his hair cut?
2. How old was Harp when she got her first hair cut?
3. Harp's elementary-school hair style made her look like which fictional character?
4. How did Harp feel after her first hair cut?
5. What type of hairstyle would Andrew like to have?

Phrasal Verbs

In this episode, Andrew and Harp use the following phrasal verbs in their conversation about haircuts. Match each verb with its meaning.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. To cut off | a. To verify later |
| 2. To turn into | b. To finish |
| 3. To go on | c. To shorten |
| 4. To check back | d. To happen |
| 5. To wrap up | e. To transform |

Quiz Answers

Multiple Choice: 1.b 2.c 3.d 4.a 5.b

Comprehension: 1. Once every 2 months
2. 12 years old
3. Princess Leia from *Star Wars*
4. Light
5. Long hair

Phrasal Verbs: 1.c 2.e 3.d 4.a 5.b

Episode Credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Harp Brar
Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates
Audio editor: Andrew Bates
Transcription: Nancy Miller
Learning Materials writer: Andrew Bates
Transcript and Learning Materials editor: Jessica Cox
Webmaster: Hussain Mohammed
Business manager: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima