

Simplified Speech #011 – Canada Day

Episode Description

Do you know what's just around the corner? On July 1st, it's Canada Day! Join Andrew and Morag as they talk about the ways they celebrate their nation's birthday. Whether you celebrate with fireworks or with cultural festivals, Canada Day is a day to party hard!

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- To ring a bell
- To be off the hook
- To be around the corner
- Trivia
- To party hard



Simplified Speech #011 – Canada Day

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

Andrew: Hi, everybody, it's Andrew.

Morag: And it's Morag.

Andrew: And you are listening to Culips.

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Hey, Morag, how's it going?

Morag: Not too bad, Andrew. How are you today?

Andrew: I'm feeling pretty good. And I'm really excited because one of my most favourite days of the year is just **around the corner**.

Morag: Yeah? Which one might that be?

Andrew: Canada Day!

Morag: Oh, that's fun! Yeah, it's our nation's national celebration coming up real soon.

Andrew: And so today we're going to do a Simplified Speech episode where we talk all about Canada Day. And, in our Simplified Speech episodes, we have a natural conversation. We use everyday English expressions but we speak at a slower speed than we usually would.

Morag: So today we'll be talking to you slowly but clearly about Canada Day.

Andrew: So, Morag, skill-testing question for you.

Morag: Oh dear!

Andrew: I know you like **trivia**.

Morag: I do!

- Andrew: So, do you know how old Canada will be this Canada Day?
- Morag: This Canada Day? 2016? I do believe Canada will be 149 years old.
- Andrew: Yeah, you are absolutely right. This year, this July 1st, which is Canada Day, Canada will be 149 years old. And we celebrate Canada Day to recognize the day that Canada became an official country, way, way back in 1867.
- Morag: Yeah, we stopped being part of England and started being our own place. But, Andrew, did you know that it used to be called Dominion Day?
- Andrew: Yeah, Dominion Day. Hmm. You know, I think I heard that before, but I actually forgot. When did they change the name?
- Morag: They changed it in 1982. I think before that we were officially called the Dominion of Canada.
- Andrew: Ah, yup. That **rings a bell**. It was before my time, so I have a good excuse.
- Morag: Me too. It's a couple years before both of us were born, I think, so no one's going to be too mad.
- Andrew: Yeah, so we're **off the hook**.
- Morag: Yes. So what did you do to celebrate Canada Day when you were a kid?
- Andrew: In my hometown, we had a cultural festival every Canada Day where different members of ethnic communities joined together to show the culture of their home country. So, there would be a little booth from the Ukrainian community, a little booth from some communities in Africa, some from Asia. Many different cultures and countries came and participated in this festival. So it was really great. We were celebrating Canada, and also everybody was celebrating their own individual heritage at the same time.
- Morag: That sounds like a really cool celebration.
- Andrew: Every booth had food for sale. So you could walk around and sample different food from all over the world.
- Morag: That sounds ideal.
- Andrew: And my favourite was always the Ukrainian booth. Maybe this is why I mentioned them first, because it really stands out in my mind, but they sold pierogi and I just love them.
- Morag: That's what I was gonna guess. Pierogi are amazing.

- Andrew: Ah, they're my favourite. And so, you know, it was funny, a couple of Canada Days ago, maybe in 2012? I had a Canada Day party with some friends and we made pierogi to celebrate.
- Morag: It's nice to make your own traditions sometimes, you know?
For me, Canada Day tends to mean fireworks.
- Andrew: Oh, yeah, fireworks.
- Morag: Fireworks and, where I grew up, we had a thing called the Symphony Splash.
- Andrew: OK, what's that?
- Morag: It was the symphony of Victoria would play on the harbour and they would broadcast it out to the whole area. Thousands of people would come down and listen to a symphony.
- Andrew: You know, now that you mention it, I have seen that before in Victoria.
- Morag: Yup.
- Andrew: And one of the things that surprised me was just how many people come out for this fireworks show.
- Morag: Fireworks show and music, yeah. But it's very strange how many people come out for the classical music, especially how many kids. Like, it's very much a family activity and there's just tons and tons of children listening to, I think, a 2-hour long show. It's quite funny.
- Andrew: Canada Day also has the reputation of being a party day.
- Morag: That's very true. Once you get a little bit older, I think people tend to, like St. Patrick's Day, use it as an excuse to have a big party.
- Andrew: Yeah, and so one of the things I remember about being at the Canada Day celebration in Victoria is how many people were really **partying hard**. It was something that you don't see in Canada too often. Lots of people wearing Canada Day shirts, but really drinking a lot of beer, too. It was quite the interesting spectacle to see.
- Morag: I think it's one of the only days where people don't mind public drinking.
- Andrew: Yes, and also if the Canadian hockey team, like, wins the Olympic gold medal or something. Then that's the only other day, I think.
- Morag: Although that happens often, it's fine. Every four years.

- Andrew: So if you like a good party, definitely visit Canada for Canada Day and you'll easily be able to find one.
- Morag: Next year, when Canada turns 150, would probably be a great time to come and visit because I'm sure that there will be all kinds of celebrations all across the country next July the 1st for Canada's 150th anniversary.
- Andrew: Yes, I think it will be an extra-big celebration.
- Morag: Mmhmm.
- Andrew: And, you know, I'm sure a lot of our listeners are kind of laughing right now when they think about Canada being only 150 years old. Like, right now, I'm in Korea and, you know, Koreans think about their country as being 5,000 years old.
- Morag: Although, you know, in Montreal there are buildings that are 400 years old. So we're not crazy young. I guess we just got together and became a country a little late.
- Andrew: Our neighbours to the south, the Americans, they also celebrate their country's birthday in July, in early July, on July the 4th.
- Morag: Mmhmm.
- Andrew: I think they celebrate in very similar ways to us. Except, from what I've heard, they do fireworks a lot better down south.
- Morag: Yes, and sort of more dangerously as well, because in the States you can just buy fireworks from the side of the road. It's crazy—the stuff is explosive!
- Andrew: I like that style of just being able to light your own fireworks, but I do understand that maybe it is dangerous, too. But, yeah, I've never been to the USA for July 4th, so one of these days I definitely hope to visit.
- Morag: I think that'd be fun. Maybe I should do some sort of cultural exchange.
- Andrew: Yeah. Hey, maybe next year we can have our American friends visit us for July 1st, and then we could go down and visit them for July 4th.
- Morag: It could be a lovely long weekend of patriotism, yes.
- Andrew: OK, well, Morag, I think we're out of time for today's episode. I want to thank everybody for listening. And I'm going to remind everyone one more time to please visit our website, Culips.com. It is the place where you can find all of our back episodes and also learn more about becoming a Culips member and taking your English studies to the next level.

OK, Morag, thanks a lot! We'll talk to you next time.

Morag: Bye, guys!

Detailed Explanations

To ring a bell

When you say that something **rings a bell**, it is an informal way of saying that thing is familiar to you.

You can use this expression to identify something that you recognize, but might not be completely sure about. People often use this expression when they encounter something they once knew, but had forgotten.

In this episode, for example, Andrew mentions that Canada's old name, the Dominion of Canada, **rings a bell** for him. By saying the name **rings a bell**, Andrew tells us that this information was once familiar to him, but that he had since forgotten it. So, when something **rings a bell** for you, you recognise that it is familiar.

Here are a couple more examples with **to ring a bell**:

Ann:	Hey, Marc, how was your weekend?
Marc:	Oh, you're going to love this! I ran into Jerry Coldwell.
Ann:	Who? The name doesn't ring a bell .
Marc:	C'mon, we went all the way through high school with the guy! Really curly black hair, short, big glasses, super funny, always wore those patterned pants.
Ann:	Oh, Crazy Pants Coldwell! I remember him now!

Leon:	What a lovely trip this has been! I love visiting Montreal.
Margaret:	I'm sad to leave, too, but we really need to get going or we'll be late.
Leon:	Right, right. Where do we catch the bus?
Margaret:	It looks like we need to get down to Bonaventure station to reach the bus station. Do you know how to get there?
Leon:	The name rings a bell , but I don't remember where it is exactly.
Margaret:	Oh no, maybe we should just take a cab. We can't miss that bus!

To be off the hook

The idiom **to be off the hook** has two meanings. The first is when a wired phone's receiver is left off its base so that the phone will not ring when someone calls. While this use is practically obsolete in 2016, you might encounter it in older media.

The second, more useful meaning of **to be off the hook** is to be saved from trouble or to be spared punishment. This idiom can also be used when simply avoiding an unpleasant situation.

To better understand this idiom, think of fishing. Imagine that the unpleasant situation is the fishhook and that you are the fish. Being on the hook, having been caught, means that you must deal with the problem. But if you're **off the hook**, you are free from whatever unpleasant situation the hook represents.

Here are a couple more examples with **to be off the hook**:

Bill:	I've got some good news, Mary! We can go on that weekend trip after all.
Mary:	That's great, but I thought you were working this weekend.
Bill:	So did I!
Mary:	Well, what happened?
Bill:	I'm off the hook ! At the last minute my boss said I didn't have to come in to work this weekend.
Mary:	Amazing! Let's get packing for that trip.

Rob:	Phew, that was a close call!
Heather:	What was a close call, Rob?
Rob:	On my way over here, a cop pulled me over for speeding. I definitely deserved a ticket, too. I was going way over the speed limit.
Heather:	Oh dear. That's really dangerous! Well ... Did you get a ticket?
Rob:	That's the awesome bit—I'm off the hook ! I was very polite, so the cop just let me go.

To be around the corner

If something is **around the corner**, then it is very close.

You can use **around the corner** to talk about locations that are close to you. If you say a location is **around the corner**, it means that you are near it. It's important to note, however, that this idiom is not literal and does not mean that you must actually turn a corner to get to that location. Something that's **around the corner** might actually be across the street or straight ahead.

To be around the corner can also be used to refer to a date or event that is coming up soon. In this episode, for example, Andrew mentions that Canada Day, July 1st, is just **around the corner**, which means that it is going to happen soon.

Here are a couple more examples with both uses of **to be around the corner**:

Lindsay: Drew, how much farther to your apartment? It feels like we've been walking for hours!

Drew: Oh, come on, it's barely been 20 minutes! Stop being so whiny.

Lindsay: I'll stop complaining when you answer my question. How much farther is your apartment?

Drew: It's just **around the corner**, I promise.

Lindsay: Ugh, I don't believe you. It's probably another 10 minutes, at least!

Marie: So, there's a big day coming up—it's Caitlin's birthday in a week.

Cole: Oh no! I totally forgot!

Marie: I thought you might have. She's your girlfriend and has been hinting for months that she wants a surprise party. Are you telling me that you have nothing at all planned?

Cole: Nothing. And now her birthday is just **around the corner**!

Marie: Don't stress too much. It's soon, but we still have a week to pull something together.

Trivia

The word **trivia** has two related meanings. The first meaning of **trivia** is for something that is unimportant or is a little-known fact or detail.

In this episode, Andrew asks Morag a piece of Canadian **trivia**: How old will Canada be this Canada Day? (Can you remember the answer?) Canada's age can be considered a piece of **trivia** because it has no impact on daily life.

The second meaning of **trivia** is a game played in people's homes or at bars where people are asked questions to test their knowledge. There are many forms of **trivia** games, but they are all essentially about answering strange or difficult questions. The person or team who can answer the most questions wins!

Here are a couple more examples with both meanings of **trivia**:

Keith: So, Sandra, I think I met your match over the weekend.

Sandra: Oh, yeah? How so?

Keith: Well, I always thought of you as the queen of weird *Simpsons* knowledge, but I think I met someone who knows more than you.

Sandra: No way! I'll have to challenge this guy to a *Simpsons* **trivia** duel. No one knows more about that show than I do!

Keith: We'll have to see. He could name all three of Krusty's middle names. It was both impressive and worrying.

Peter: What do you feel like doing tonight?

Ruth: I dunno. I don't really want to stay in, do you?

Peter: No, it would be nice to go out, but I can't think of anything to do.

Ruth: How about if we grab a drink at the bar down the street?

Peter: Nah, that's not enough of an activity. Hmm ... Wait, isn't there **trivia** on at The Alibi tonight?

Ruth: Good idea—that sounds perfect!

Peter: Let's go!

To party hard

When you **party hard**, you are loud and enthusiastic, and have probably had too much alcohol to drink. **Parting hard** means not holding back, and unreservedly (and maybe inadvisably) having a good time. You can also use **to party hard** to refer to someone who is drinking too much or being insistent about keeping the party going.

In this episode, Andrew talks about seeing people **partying hard** in downtown Victoria on Canada Day. He mentions that it is not common to see people **partying hard** in Canada. Andrew is right that it is not common in Canada to see large groups of people being wild and drunk in public. **Parting hard**, especially in public places, is usually not appropriate behaviour.

However, on Canada Day there is more tolerance for people celebrating outrageously and being less than appropriate. After all, it's the day we celebrate our wonderful country!

Here are a couple more examples with **to party hard**:

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| Jeanine: | What do you want to do this Canada Day? We should figure something out soon. It's almost here! |
| Tim: | Well, we could maybe have a barbeque here at the house and invite some people over. That would be a nice, quiet way to spend the day. |
| Jeanine: | I dunno, Tim. Wouldn't it be fun to go downtown and be in the middle of the celebration? |
| Tim: | Maybe, but it's always so crowded down there and people party hard . It's so noisy! I find it kind of overwhelming, to tell you the truth. |
| Jeanine: | Fair enough. Let's just stay home, then. We can have our own party here. |

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| Liz: | Hey, Alan, do you know what happened to Ann last night? She disappeared midway through the evening. |
| Alan: | She left to go dancing at around 11 p.m. She wanted to party hard and wasn't happy just sitting around and talking. |
| Liz: | Oh well. I hope she had fun! |

Quiz

1. Which of these is a trivia question?

- a) Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- b) How many years did the TV show *Dynasty* run for?
- c) What year is it?
- d) How old are you?

2. Which pair of terms describes a night of partying hard:

- a) wild and enthusiastic
- b) quiet and sober
- c) sad and lonely
- d) moderate and fun

3. If someone says that your destination is around the corner, what do they mean?

- a) It's not visible because it's down a different street.
- b) It's far away.
- c) It's very close.
- d) It's about a 5-minute walk away.

4. If you are off the hook, you are no longer:

- a) hungry
- b) sad
- c) in love
- d) in trouble

5. If something rings a bell:

- a) You've never heard it before.
- b) It seems familiar.
- c) You know all about it.
- d) It happened yesterday.

Quiz Answers

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

Episode Credits

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