

## Simplified Speech #024 – Roommates

### Episode description

Have you ever had a roommate? If you have, you know that sharing a house or apartment with someone can be wonderful or it can be a complete nightmare! In this episode, Suzanne and Andrew have a slow but natural conversation in which they share some of their best roommate stories.

### Fun fact

Roommates can have a big effect on the way you speak! According to one study, if you live with someone for a year, you will both start to sound and speak similarly. This can be very helpful if you're speaking a second language with a roommate; it's a great way to work on your accent without too much effort!

### Expressions included in the learning materials

- A boot camp
- A full house
- Built in
- To room (with)
- To look out for



## Transcript

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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.

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Andrew: Hey, everybody. My name is Andrew.

Suzanne: And I'm Suzanne.

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

Suzanne, how are you?

Suzanne: Hi Andrew. I'm well, how are you?

Andrew: Suzanne, I have a funny story to tell you.

Suzanne: OK. I'm ready.

Andrew: Do you know what P90X is?

Suzanne: I sure do.

Andrew: It's a really cheesy home workout video series.

Suzanne: It's like **a boot camp**, kind of, right?

Andrew: Yeah.

Suzanne: Almost **a boot camp**.

Andrew: I did one of these videos 3 days ago, and my body is so sore right now, 3 days later.

Suzanne: Oh.

Andrew: I don't even want to move my arms right now.

Suzanne: Oh, Andrew.

Andrew: I like speaking with my hands. I do a lot of gestures when I talk. But right now, zero gestures.

- Suzanne: So in other words, are you not going to be able to talk? Oh no.
- Andrew: Thankfully, my mouth isn't sore.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: I did no mouth push-ups.
- Suzanne: That's good. Stay away from those.
- Andrew: Anyway, today we have a really great topic to talk about, one that I think we could talk about for hours.
- Suzanne: Yeah. Today we're going to be talking about roommates.
- Andrew: Roommates, yeah. Oh, roommates. What is a roommate?
- Suzanne: Well, a roommate is usually a friend or someone who is not your family or your significant other, but someone who shares your apartment or your house. So they're someone who you share bills and chores and space with in your living quarters.
- Andrew: Yeah. So a roommate is simply someone you live with. And like you mentioned, it could be a friend or it could be a stranger, someone that you've never met before. And because you both need to save money, you decide to live together.
- Suzanne: Yeah. That's one of the biggest perks of having a roommate.
- Andrew: Saving money.
- Suzanne: Saving money and sharing the expenses.
- Andrew: Now I don't know about you, Suzanne, but I've had lots of roommates in my life.
- Suzanne: Yeah?
- Andrew: What about you?
- Suzanne: Oh, yeah! I have also had many roommates. At one point in one apartment, we had four girls, and one of the girls had a boyfriend. So he also lived with us, so at one point we had five people living in one apartment.
- Andrew: Yeah. I've had similar living situations. I once lived in a house with four other guys, and I think at that time three of us had girlfriends.
- Suzanne: Wow!

- Andrew: So although our girlfriends didn't live in the house, at all times one of the girls was there. So it was a madhouse. There were lots of people there all the time.
- Suzanne: It's a **full house**.
- Andrew: A literal **full house**. But, yeah, that was fun. I mean now that I'm a little older, the idea of living with roommates is not super appealing, but at that time, when I was a university student, it was a lot of fun.
- Suzanne: Yeah. I think when you're young, and maybe if you move to a new city or a new place, having roommates is a really positive experience because you have a **built-in** friend network. You have automatic friends and a community, so if you want to go out on a Friday night, usually your roommates will all go out together.
- Andrew: Exactly. It's a really great way to get connected with a group of people if you are new to a city.
- Suzanne: Yeah, and it could also be a great experience to help you learn a language if you move to a city and you want to learn English. So you **room with** someone who speaks English so you could practise.
- Andrew: Totally. I mean this is a great way to get exposure to the language you want to learn. Just find some roommates that speak that language that you're interested in learning. It's a great idea, I think.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: I mean if you need a roommate anyway, why not get that additional exposure to English or whatever language you're trying to learn?
- Suzanne: Yeah. And maybe you're both learning at the same time. It's always nice to be able to practise at home.
- Andrew: Suzanne, I'm curious. We mentioned that roommates can be friends or they can be strangers. Have you ever had a roommate that was a stranger that you didn't know before you became roommates with that person?
- Suzanne: Yes, I did, actually.
- Andrew: How did it go in the end?
- Suzanne: It's a funny story, Andrew.
- Andrew: I wanna hear it.
- Suzanne: Well, in that same apartment where we had four bedrooms ...

Andrew: Mmhmm?

Suzanne: The girl with the boyfriend, I told you before that we were three girls that were single and one girl had a boyfriend, and she wound up moving out shortly after our first year and moving in with the boyfriend.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: So we had a vacant room.

Andrew: Ah, an empty room.

Suzanne: We had another friend coming to New York City, but she wasn't going to be there right away, so we needed to fill that room for about 3 months.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: And so we put an ad in ... I don't remember if it was the *Village Voice* or Craigslist; I'm not 100% sure.

Andrew: A classified ad?

Suzanne: A classified ad, exactly.

Andrew: Roommate wanted.

Suzanne: So we were all in our early 20s, like 22-, 23-year-old girls, OK? And he was like 33. And we thought, "Oh, this guy is older." Like this is weird, right? I mean, why does he want a room with three girls?

Andrew: When you're 23, a 33-year-old seems really old.

Suzanne: Yeah. I mean it doesn't anymore, but at the time it was.

Andrew: Yeah, right.

Suzanne: And so we met him and he was the kindest person we had ever met. And he told us about his situation. He was getting a divorce and he actually was a captain of a boat ...

Andrew: Wow!

Suzanne: In the marina. Yeah, in the marina at Chelsea Piers. And he owned a boat and he had been sleeping on the boat for about a month, and he said, "Honestly, I won't even be here. I just need a place to sleep that isn't my boat, because it's kind of my office." And he said, "I'm very clean and quiet. I'll just sleep and I will go to work."

And something about him was very genuine and very kind. And we all agreed we'd give it at least a month, just to see.

Andrew: Mmhmm?

Suzanne: And he was willing to pay the 3 months in advance, which was really helpful for us.

Andrew: Bonus.

Suzanne: Totally. We just called him Captain because of the boat. And it was awesome! He was the best roommate ever! And he kind of **looked out for** us.

Andrew: Hmm, kind of like an older brother.

Suzanne: If one of us were bartending, he would meet us at the end of the shift and walk us home.

Andrew: Mmhmm?

Suzanne: And he owned this boat that took tourists out to see the harbour, like the Hudson River and to go and see New York City.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: You know, like a charter boat.

Andrew: Yes.

Suzanne: And he needed bartenders on the boat sometimes so he would hire us, and we would make so much money because we were the only bar on the boat.

Andrew: Right.

Suzanne: Yeah! And so it was such a great situation, and he was so kind. And I was so nervous **to room with** someone I didn't know. But it turned out to be a great experience.

Andrew: That is a really great ending to that story, because I think when you live with someone who you've never met before, things can be great or they can go really, really wrong.

- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: So I'm happy to hear that you had a good, positive experience.
- Suzanne: It was a great experience. He may have stayed 6 months because of a scheduling issue with my friend, and after that we were like, "Wow! He was the best roommate ever."
- Andrew: Last year I moved to South Korea, but I ran into a weird situation before I left where the lease on my apartment was finished but I still needed a place to crash in Montreal for a couple months before going to Korea. So I needed to find a temporary apartment just for a couple months. So I was in the situation where I was looking for an apartment and looking for a room in somebody's apartment.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: And I saw a place advertised on Craigslist, the online classified website.
- Suzanne: Mmhmm.
- Andrew: And it was very close to where I was already living, and also the rent was very cheap so I was interested in this place.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: I went to go look at the apartment, and even though the person living in the apartment was a stranger, we quickly realized that we had many mutual friends in common.
- Suzanne: Wow!
- Andrew: And he is actually a musician just like I am, and so we had many things in common. And I decided, "OK, I think I can live here. Even though I don't know you, I've never met you before, you're a stranger, because we have mutual friends and because we have shared interests I think this will be OK." So I stayed there for 2 months, and yeah, it worked out great. I also had a very positive experience from living with a stranger.
- Suzanne: Wow, that's really cool. It's rare that people have such good experiences as we've talked about. I'm sure we've had some bad experiences too.
- Andrew: I've had bad experiences with roommates, but they were always my friends already. They weren't strangers.
- Suzanne: Me too, always.

- Andrew: I think we'll have to share our roommate horror stories with everyone another time.
- Suzanne: In another episode all by itself.
- Andrew: We're out of time for today but I'm sure you have some good stories, and I know I do too. So in the future we'll get back to this topic.
- Suzanne: Nice.
- Andrew: To be continued.
- Suzanne: Dun, dun, dun, roommate horror stories.
- Andrew: Hey, guys, I want to thank you all for listening today. And if your goal is to improve your English, we'd love to help you out.
- Suzanne: Yeah. And the best way to study with us is to become a Culips member. Membership gets you access to our learning materials, which include transcripts, detailed vocabulary explanations, and quizzes for all of our episodes. So visit our website at [Culips.com](http://Culips.com), learn how to become a member.
- Andrew: If you have any questions or comments for us, send us a message. A great way to do that is through our Facebook page, [Facebook.com/CulipsPodcast](https://Facebook.com/CulipsPodcast). Or you can just email me directly. My address is [andrew@culips.com](mailto:andrew@culips.com).
- Suzanne: We'll be back soon with another Culips episode. Bye!
- Andrew: Bye.
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## Detailed Explanations

### A boot camp

A **boot camp** is a place for training soldiers. Before becoming a soldier, a person must go through intense physical training at a **boot camp**. This is the original meaning of the term **boot camp**, but the term is now used to talk about any place or event where people take extensive and quick training in an activity or skill.

For example, it's common for gyms to hold training **boot camps** that are designed to get people into better shape quickly. This is the type of **boot camp** that Andrew mentioned in this episode: an intense physical training schedule that isn't associated with the military.

However, there are **boot camps** for all sorts of activities! If you wanted to learn how to take better pictures, you might sign up for a short course that quickly teaches you the basic principles of photography—in other words, a photography **boot camp**!

Here are a couple more examples with a **boot camp**:

Shannon:	Hey, Paul, what are you doing this weekend?
Paul:	I didn't have any plans. Why?
Shannon:	If you want, you should come over to my place on Saturday. I'm having a party for my bother. He just got back from Army <b>boot camp</b> .
Paul:	Oh, cool! Yeah, I'll come by for sure.
Shannon:	Great!

Maria:	Oh, man, I really wish I were better at cooking.
Steve:	You should come with me to this cooking <b>boot camp</b> I just signed up for.
Maria:	Cooking <b>boot camp</b> —what's that?
Steve:	It's a course that runs for 2 weekends in a row. They teach you all the basics of cooking like a real chef!
Maria:	Wow, that sounds really cool. Maybe I'll join you.
Steve:	You should. It'll be fun!

## A full house

Have you ever been to a concert where there is a person sitting in every seat? That's **a full house**! **A full house** is a term for an event or situation where there are no empty seats. So, saying that an event is **a full house** is the same as saying that it's sold out: there is no room for more people to attend.

While **a full house** originally applied to events that had seating, such as going to a concert, a play, or a movie, people often use the term to mean any event or location that is very busy.

In this episode, Suzanne remarks that Andrew once lived in **a full house**. Here, Suzanne is making a joke that, because there were a lot of people living in Andrew's house, it was like a sold-out event.

Here are a couple more examples with **a full house**:

Greg:	Hey, Katie, how was your weekend?
Katie:	It was great!
Greg:	What made it so awesome?
Katie:	The art show I've been working on had its opening party and it was <b>a full house</b> !
Greg:	Oh, wow, congratulations!
Katie:	Thanks! It was amazing to have so many people attend.

Dane:	Did you hear about the big concert this weekend?
Becca:	I did! I got tickets for it yesterday.
Dane:	Oh, lucky! I tried to get a ticket today, but it's all sold out.
Becca:	Wow, I guess that means it's going to be <b>a full house</b> !
Dane:	Yeah, it's going to be packed! I hope you don't mind crowded events.
Becca:	I'm sure I'll manage.

## Built in

**Built in** is an adjective that has a couple of related meanings. The first meaning is a feature that is designed and included as a part of something. When something is **built in**, it is not added separately, but is part of the object.

One example of something **built in** is the camera on a smartphone. The camera is not a separate attachment, but is constructed as part of the phone itself. In other words, smartphones come with **built-in** cameras!

The second meaning of **built in** is inherent or already established. For example, in this episode Suzanne mentions that one of the good things about having roommates is that they can be a **built-in** network of friends. In other words, because you don't have to go looking for people to spend time with, roommates can act like an already established group of friends.

So, **built in** describes either a feature that is part of an object, or something that is already in place.

Here are a couple more examples with **built in**:

Mario:	I hate my couch. I think it's too comfortable—I have trouble getting up once I sit down!
Sara:	If you don't like it, I would be happy to buy it from you. I need a couch for my new apartment!
Mario:	I might take you up on that offer! I should warn you of one annoying feature of the couch; it has <b>built-in</b> cushions.
Sara:	I don't get it—why is that annoying?
Mario:	The cushions are sewn into the rest of the couch so you can't remove them. It makes the whole thing really annoying to clean!

Anne:	Hey, Tim, how do you like your new coffee shop job?
Tim:	It's OK. I hate getting up for work at 6 AM, but I love all the free coffee I get to drink!
Anne:	I hadn't thought of that perk! I guess free coffee is a <b>built-in</b> advantage of the job.
Tim:	Sure is!

## To room (with)

**To room** is a verb that means to rent a room or to share a house or apartment with someone. The first definition, to rent a room, is uncommon in modern speech.

The second definition, to share a living space with someone, is the more common way to use **to room**. In this second meaning, **to room** is usually followed by “with.” For example, in this episode Suzanne mention that **rooming with** an English speaker is a great way to improve your English. In other words, living with someone who speaks English is a good way to practise!

So, saying that you **room with** someone is another way of saying that they are your roommate.

Here are a couple more examples with **to room (with)**:

Greg:	Hey, Tracey, want to come to lunch with me? My friend Leon will be there and I can introduce you guys.
Tracey:	Is your friend Leon Smith, by any chance?
Greg:	That's him. Do you know him?
Tracey:	That's too funny! I used <b>to room with</b> him back in college.
Greg:	No way! You guys were roommates?
Tracey:	Yeah, we lived together for 2 years!

Louis:	How did your move go last month? You moved in with your boyfriend, right?
Pam:	Yeah, Jason and I moved in together. It's been great!
Louis:	That's good to hear! I've always been worried about <b>rooming with</b> someone I'm romantically involved with.
Pam:	It's a little strange, for sure, but it's also really nice. It's great to come home and find your favourite person there!
Louis:	Well, when you put it that way, I don't know what I've been nervous about!

## To look out for

**To look out for** is a phrasal verb that has two meanings, both related to avoiding bad or dangerous situations.

The first meaning of **to look out for** is to know about and try to avoid something dangerous or bad. This meaning is often used to give advice. For example, if you're driving a car and someone tells you **to look out for** holes in the road, they are warning you to be careful because the roads are in bad condition.

The second meaning of **to look out for** is to watch and protect someone or something. This is the meaning Suzanne used when she said that her old roommate used **to look out for** her and her other female roommates. In other words, he was protective of them and would help them stay out of trouble. Walking her home from work late at night is an example of Suzanne's old roommate **looking out for** her.

Here are a couple more examples with both meanings of **to look out for**:

Joanne:	I'm so excited about my trip to Paris in a month!
Charles:	I'm sure you're going to have an amazing time. Just be careful and <b>look out for</b> pickpockets in the big tourist locations.
Joanne:	Oh, I didn't know pickpockets were a problem! So, I should keep an eye on my purse when I visit the Eiffel Tower?
Charles:	Exactly! My friend had his wallet stolen when we were there last year. You don't want that to happen.
Joanne:	No kidding! Thanks for the warning.

Joe:	I can't believe my little sister is getting married!
Chelsea:	She's not that little anymore! Isn't she almost 30?
Joe:	Yeah, but I still think of her as the little girl that I used <b>to look out for</b> at school.
Chelsea:	That's really sweet! I wish my older brother had been protective of me.
Joe:	He wasn't?
Chelsea:	No way! He just teased me all the time.

## Quiz

1. If something is built in to an object, it \_\_\_\_\_ that object.
  - a) can be added to
  - b) is similar to
  - c) is part of
  - d) matches
  
2. If you want to tell someone to be careful, you can say, “\_\_\_\_\_ yourself.”
  - a) keep tabs on
  - b) look out for
  - c) stay close to
  - d) look back on
  
3. True or false: A boot camp can refer to an event where you receive intensive and quick training in a subject or activity.
  - a) true
  - b) false
  
4. Saying that you \_\_\_\_\_ someone is another way of saying that you are roommates.
  - a) keep up with
  - b) stay with
  - c) hold on to
  - d) room with
  
5. A full house is an event where there are \_\_\_\_\_ empty seats.
  - a) no
  - b) some
  - c) many
  - d) only

## Quiz Answers

1.c    2.b    3.a    4.d    5.a

### Episode credits

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