

Catch Word – **BREAK**Transcript

Maura: Hello everyone. This is Maura

Robin: and Robin at Culips, bringing you our **Catch Word** podcast. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Maura: Each Podcast, we take one word and talk about its different meanings. We talk about verbs, and nouns, and even slang.

Robin: We look closely at only one word. And today, the word is  
... (Music)...

Maura: **Break**

Robin: **Break**. Ok, so when you break something...

Maura: You damage it, you destroy it.

Robin: Destroy it like, I used to break a lot of my toys when I was younger.

Maura: Alright. So the pieces would fall off or an arm to a doll or something.

Robin: Yeah. I didn't have too many dolls but.

Maura: Action figures?

Robin: Action figures. Definitely G.I. Joes. So definitely that, and you can **break** somebody or somebody can be **broken**. Someone can be broke.

Maura: Ya. That's true too. So if you are **broke**, what does that mean?

Robin: It means you have no money. I know this very well. Alright. And what else?

Maura: We got **break down, to break down**

Robin: OK. So I can **break down** this for you in the sense that, I can explain it to you.

Maura: Right, so English teachers are good at that.

Robin: Ya. When you break something down, now imagine this image, you're putting it into smaller pieces so you're making it simple for someone to understand.

Maura: Right. But in the same way a person can fall to pieces they have a **break down**, things aren't going well for them and they've got some problems.

- Robin: Things fall apart. So, when you have a **break down**, you're not doing so well in terms of your mental health.
- Maura: Right. This seems to happen to more and more for people who are stressed at work and are too busy.
- Robin: Are you saying something?
- Maura: Not yet. No.
- Robin: OK. OK.
- Maura: We could also talk about **break down** when we're talking about cars.
- Robin: Has it ever happened to you? Has your car ever broken down? What's the next one we got?
- Maura: We got **break out**.
- Robin: **Break out** like a virus.
- Maura: A sudden explosion of virus, kind of.
- Robin: So imagine, a meteorite hits the earth and it has this crazy virus on it. There's a **break out** and a whole bunch of people are infected. It's not a good image.
- Maura: No.
- Robin: And we hope this doesn't happen, and probably it won't happen.
- Maura: But it's featured in a lot of movies and stuff like that nowadays.
- Robin: This is true. And I guess a war can **break out**.
- Maura: So to suddenly start, from nowhere.
- Robin: So for example, World War II, the war broke out because of a conflict.
- Maura: Can you think of current example?
- Robin: How about Columbia? Colombia. A war might break out between Ecuador, and Columbia, and Venezuela
- Maura: OK. Right.
- Robin: But we hope this doesn't happen.
- Maura: No, hope not. And the last one we'll look at is **break up**.

- Robin: Break up.
- Maura: Oh. It's sad, isn't it?
- Robin: Or it could be happy, depending on which side of the relationship you're on. You see, I guess it deals more with having a relationship and ending a relationship.
- Maura: So one person, or both people, decide to end their relationship, it's a **break up**.
- Robin: Ahhhh.
- Maura: It's sad, isn't it? But we're alright.
- Robin: We're OK. No tears in here. Not at all.
- Maura: So let's end there because as usual, we try to keep this podcast short. That's all the time we have for **break**. If you want to quiz yourself, check the transcripts, or read our other notes and explanations. Check out lipservice at Culips.com.
- Robin: Thanks for listening everyone. This has been Robin,
- Maura: And Maura with Catch Word.

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## Detailed Explanations

### Break

**To break** is to crack or destroy. A good example is a flower vase. If a glass flower vase falls to the ground it will probably **break** into small pieces and be destroyed. The adjective is then **broken**. So the flower vase is now **broken**.

When we say something is **broken** it doesn't necessarily mean it is cracked or destroyed, it means that it is not working properly. Maybe you have an old stereo that doesn't play music anymore. We can say it is **broken**.

We also use the word **break** when we talk about illegal activities. **To break** the law means that someone did something illegal.

There are many ways to use **break**. Check out your local dictionary if you want to know more.

I also want to point out the word **brake**. It is pronounced exactly the same as **break** but it of course has a different meaning. Car **brakes** are the parts in the car that stop it. We call them **brakes** and the verb is **to brake**.

### To break someone

We mentioned **to break someone** in this episode but we didn't get a chance to talk about it. We said when someone is **broke** it means they have no money.

The first one we mentioned in the episode was when someone is **broken**. This means that they are sad and not doing well. If someone is **broken** they are not complete and not functioning normally. This usually refers to emotions, being emotionally **broken**. It has a similar meaning to **break down**.

### Break it down

In this episode we mentioned the negative **break down**, when a personal cannot live normally, and **to break something down**, as a teacher does when she explains it. Also, when a car **breaks down** it stops working.

But there is another use for **break down** we didn't mention. This one is happy and usually used in songs. This is said, or sung, before an instrumental part or a rhythm that is a bit different from the rest of the song. It is usually a faster and exciting part of the song.

### Break out

There is another meaning to **break out** too. A meaning that we didn't discuss in the episode has to do with skin. A **break out** or **to break out** is another way we can use to talk about skin problems, acne, pimples, zits. These are most commonly skin problems for teenagers.

Example: Oh no! She **broke out** right before the big dance.

### Break up

We ended this episode with **break up**, the ending to a relationship. But there is another way we can use this.

Example: I can't hear you. You're **breaking up**.

This expression is used over a phone or other voice communication device. When we say you are **breaking up** it means that we cannot hear the other person's voice clearly, like one moment you can hear them and the next you cannot. This happens because of a bad connection.

### Pronunciation of breakfast

A strange thing about the English language is that sometimes the spelling does not help with the pronunciation of a word. We already know how to pronounce **break** from the podcast. But then we see **break** in another word, like **breakfast**, and find that it is not the same.

So sometimes word sounds change. The "**break**" in **breakfast** is pronounced more like "brek". I mention this example because I have often heard people mispronounce this word like **break**.

Quiz (see the answers at the bottom of this lipservice)

- 1. If I say my car broke down it means**
  - a) it is not working
  - b) it needs gas
  - c) it is working
  - d) the window is broken
  
- 2. A sudden virus that infects many people can be called**
  - a) a break in
  - b) a break out
  - c) a break off
  - d) a break up
  
- 3. When a couple ends their relationship**
  - a) a break off
  - b) a break up
  - c) a break down
  - d) a break off
  
- 4. What does it mean when you say someone is broke?**
  - a) they have lots of money
  - b) they only have dollar bills
  - c) they have no money
  - d) they have no car

Answers for the Quiz

1-a      2-b      3-b      4-c      5-c