

Simplified Speech #108 – Happy New Year!

Episode description

Happy New Year! At the end of each calendar year, most people take time to think of the past year and look forward to the next. In this Simplified Speech episode, Andrew and Kassy reflect upon 2020 and discuss their goals for 2021.

Fun fact

Every country has different traditions for the turning of the new year. In South Korea, many people hike a local mountain in the middle of the night just to have a beautiful and memorable view of the first sunrise of the year.

Expressions included in the study guide

- To stack up against [something]
- To get fired up
- To cross [something] off [one's] list
- To feed off [something]
- To have a rhythm going
- In store



Transcript

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. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hi everyone, it's Andrew here! Happy new year! In this Simplified Speech episode, I talk with Kassy about our goals and resolutions for 2021.

But before we get to that, I just wanted to thank you all for studying English with Culips throughout 2020. There are a lot of ways that you can study English these days, but we're so happy that you've chosen to make Culips a part of your English studies.

And we've got such an awesome community of people around the world learning English with Culips and the whole Culips team and I are so happy and honoured, really, that we get to be a part of it.

So everyone, please keep learning and studying with us during 2021. If your goal is to keep improving your English this year, then of course we're here to help and support you. We're going to keep trying our best to bring you educational, motivational, and fun episodes and English lessons that will help you reach your English fluency goals.

And here at Culips, we've got a lot of big plans and we're all really excited for what 2021 will bring!

And everyone, please keep your messages, emails, comments, episode suggestions, 5-star ratings and nice reviews, coming! Even if we don't get back to you right away, we read everything that you send our way and all the success stories and nice comments that you share inspire us to keep working hard to make Culips better and better.

So once again, happy new year! And now, let's get started with this episode.

Andrew: This episode is a Simplified Speech episode. If you don't know what that is, then let me explain. Simplified Speech is our series that features clear, natural conversations that are designed to help you boost your English listening skills and increase your knowledge of essential English vocabulary and, really, at the end of the day, help you become a better English speaker.

OK, I've been talking a lot here, so rudely. I haven't brought Kassy into the conversation yet. So let me do that now. Hey, Kassy, happy New Year.

Kassy: Happy New Year, Andrew.

Andrew: Yay! Finally 2020 is finished and we're here in 2021 for a fresh start with a new year. And you know what they say, Kassy? They say "new year, new you." What does this expression mean? Have you ever heard this word before? New year, new you.

Kassy: Yes, it means, you know, it's the new year, you can start fresh and become and be anybody you set your mind to.

Andrew: Become anyone who you want to be, right? It's an opportunity to reinvent and recreate yourself. So I know 2020 was a crazy year and a difficult year for so many people. So I think we're all feeling very good about having this fresh start. And in this episode, Kassy, you and I are going to talk about some of our goals and plans for the new year.

Kassy: Yeah, I've been thinking about this the past week. We'll see how mine **stack up against yours**, Andrew.

Andrew: OK, so the first question that I have for you, Kassy, is: are you the kind of person who sets New Year's resolutions for yourself? And for all our listeners who don't know what a New Year's resolution is, it is just a goal that you set to accomplish in a new year. So many people make New Year's resolutions around the end of December. Some common ones are, you know, maybe to start exercising more or to lose weight or maybe even to improve your English skills. This is a very common New Year's resolution that maybe many of our listeners can relate to. So, Kassy, just in general, are you a New Year's resolution maker?

Kassy: Honestly, I'm not. I love to make goals, but they kind of pop up in the spur of the moment and I usually don't have any well thought-out goals until maybe March or April of each year.

Andrew: Ah, OK, interesting. I am definitely a New Year's resolution maker. For whatever reason, I just get really inspired and **fired up** at the end of the year. And I guess the psychological effect of starting a new year. It's like a blank page and opportunity to start all over. That's really inspiring for me and it gets me excited to accomplish new things and to make my goals become reality.

Andrew: I'm jealous of you, to be honest, to be able to create a new goal and just do it anytime is really awesome. I wish I could do that. And I do do that to an extent, don't get me wrong. But the time that I **get the most fired up** in the year is at the end of December or right at the start of January when a new year begins.

Kassy: So before we talk about New Year's goals for this year, Andrew, were you able to accomplish your New Year's resolutions from last year, 2020?

Andrew: Yes and no. Now, some of our long-term Culips listeners might remember my goals from last year, because I shared them on the podcast. And, actually, guys, if you wanted to listen to that episodes, you could go back to the 2020 New Year's episodes from last year and check that out. But to summarize what I said in that episode, my goals

were to keep working hard at studying Korean, which I think I did. So I will say, yes, I achieved that goal. I didn't quit. Every time that I don't quit studying Korean for another year is a big achievement for me. And I think all of our listeners, too, maybe you feel like you didn't study English as much as you wanted last year, but you're listening to this podcast now and that means that you didn't quit studying English. So that is a success.

Kassy: Congratulations.

Andrew: Yes. And congratulations to all of our listeners for not quitting studying English last year, as well. That's huge. My other goal for 2020 was to run an ultramarathon. So an ultramarathon is a very long running race that is usually 50 kilometres or longer. 50 kilometres is kind of the shortest ultramarathon and then they go up from anywhere to 100 kilometres. And then there's just insane people that do 200, 300 kilometre ultramarathons. Of course, I wasn't going to do anything ridiculous like that. My goal was to do a 50K. However, I didn't get to do it last year, Kassy, because of COVID. That hated phrase, "because of COVID," "because of corona." Everybody is saying it so often, when talking about last year, so all of the races that were here in Korea were cancelled and I wasn't able to do that ultramarathon, unfortunately.

Kassy: Well, hopefully you'll be able to do it this year or next year.

Andrew: Kassy, I don't know if I want to do this 50K run anymore because, a couple of weeks ago, I decided that even though I can't do an official ultramarathon, I could still do one by myself and **cross that goal off of my list**. So I decided to do it. And my girlfriend conveniently lives around 50 kilometres away from my place. So actually to get from my apartment to her apartment is 43 kilometres. And so I decided I'm going to run it. Usually I ride my bike there and that's OK.

Andrew: But a couple of weeks ago, I decided to run it. And I did it. It took me almost 4 hours and 20 minutes or so. And it was really difficult. I was really tired by the time I arrived. And I didn't tell her I was going to do it. I just showed up at her door in my running gear, very, very tired and sweaty. And she was like, "What did you do? Did you run here?" And I felt like running 50 kilometres is not very fun. It wasn't very pleasant towards the end. So I think I'm gonna **cross that item off of my bucket list** and just maybe retire from ultramarathon running. I don't think it's a good fit for me.

Kassy: Well, Andrew, I really love that story. I'm really proud of you. I think that's cool because even though you weren't able to fulfill, you know, like, the goal, your resolution the exact way you wanted to, you didn't give up, you know. You did it with adjustments. Instead of running in a real race, you made your own ultramarathon, which is so cool.

Andrew: Yeah, it was cool. I have to say, though, that when you run with other people, you really **feed off their energy** and it's easier. Especially if you're a competitive person like I am, that when there are other people running with you, I see those people as my enemies and I just want to beat them. So it's really easy for me to run fast in that situation. But I'm not very good at competing with myself. So when it's just me out there on the trail

by myself, yeah, then you really have to motivate yourself. Honestly, I was talking to myself for the last 2 or 3 kilometres when things were looking very rough. I was actually talking to myself out loud. "Come on, Andrew, come on, you can do it. You can do it. Go, go, go." I was like a crazy person mumbling to myself on the trail.

Kassy: I wish I could have recorded it.

Andrew: Yeah. So I feel, I feel good about 2020 even though it was a difficult year in so many ways, at least in regard to accomplishing my goals, I did it. I studied Korean and I did my 50K run.

Andrew: What about you, Kassy? Did you set any goals for yourself for 2020?

Kassy: Yes. As you know, I started my new job this year and it was a big learning curve. So I set a lot of goals around that. You know, how to become a better teacher, how to make my lessons more engaging, how to deal with all of the drama that comes with being a homeroom teacher, and it really paid off. I feel like last year was really fulfilling. And it was, it was really crazy at first but, by December, I really **had a rhythm going** and I got so much accomplished, given all the craziness that happened last year.

Andrew: I think all of us can just feel good about getting through 2020. And it sure does feel good to put it behind us, even though it's just sort of this symbolic thing, starting a new year. I don't know, I feel really positive going forward. And I hope that we can carry this good energy with us, all the way through until next year.

Andrew: So, Kassy, we talked about some of our goals for 2020. What are some of your New Year's resolutions and goals for 2021? Did you make any?

Kassy: Well, I made one, and it's super cliché. But I'm just going to say it.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: Everybody always says that one of their New Year's resolutions is to get in shape or lose weight. And that definitely is mine this year. Losing weight is one thing, but I got so lazy during the quarantining and social distancing of 2020 and I really need to get back out there.

Andrew: All right, so just becoming more active. Nice. That's a great goal, actually. And although I do run a lot, one of the things that I noticed, especially when I did that long run a few weeks ago that I just talked about, is that I am really, really stiff and tight, like I'm not flexible at all. And that is affecting my performance as I get older. So like, you know, I'm going to be turning 37 this year, Oh my gosh, it's depressing just saying that number. I'm going to be turning 37 and I'm noticing that my body is not as flexible as it used to be. So one of my goals for 2021 is to start stretching more often, maybe to do a little bit of yoga. I've tried this so many times in the past, but I always just quit after a little while. So if I

could, you know, regularly stretch, that would be a great thing. So I think that's my kind of physical exercise goal for 2021, stretch more, stretch often.

Kassy: Andrew, maybe you and I should have a competition or some sort of check-in thing throughout the year to keep us, you know, on top of our game.

Andrew: I like it. Kassy, are you competitive like I am?

Kassy: I'm super competitive.

Andrew: All right. So this could be good. We could **feed off of each other's energy** and try to defeat each other and that could keep us motivated and keep us focused on our exercise goals. I like it.

Andrew: What about other goals, maybe professional, financial, to do with your studies, or self-development? Do you have any other goals or things you'd like to accomplish in 2021?

Kassy: Well, I told you last year, I started my new job at this school. And it just so happens that this year, in August, I will be starting another new position.

Andrew: Oh wow!

Kassy: In physics and math, which is my major. So I'm very excited, but also very nervous. I'll be moving to the high school and all of my experience is with younger kids. So I'm a little terrified about how they'll react to me, but hopefully it'll go smoothly. And I'm really looking forward to planning really cool physics experiments and math puzzles to get my students motivated to study.

Andrew: That's awesome. They're gonna love you. You'll be great at that, I'm sure of it.

Kassy: Yeah, thanks.

Andrew: That's awesome, Kassy. Congratulations on that new promotion. Could we call it a promotion? Were you promoted at the school?

Kassy: Not a promotion but, you know, a position closer to my interests.

Andrew: Right on. Well, congratulations on that new opportunity. I'm sure that is going to be very exciting for you.

Andrew: Kassy, I realized one more goal that I have for 2021. And because we are a language learning podcast, we help our listeners learn about English, I should share my language learning goal because, guys, I'm right in the thick of it with you. I am learning Korean and have been for about 7 years. And it's always a struggle, every day is a struggle with the language, but it's getting a little bit easier and easier as time goes on, thank god.

Andrew: But my goal for 2021 when it comes to Korean and my language studies is to try and translate a novel. You know, I've been reading a lot of Korean books lately. That's one of my favorite ways to study these days. And when I'm reading in Korean, I'm always kind of translating, you know, I read something in Korean and then I think in my head, oh, how would I say this in English? And I realized, well, I could just write those thoughts down and then I would translate the novel, essentially. And there's some really cool books in Korean that don't have English translations.

Andrew: So it's not like I want to do this to sell the translation or to become a published translator. That's not my goal. It'd just be a fun exercise and sort of polish my skills in both languages at the same time. It would force me to really go deep into understanding the Korean meaning of the original text. But also it would help me become a better English writer, I think, as well, because I would have to be very precise and accurate with the English words that I use. And I don't do too much English writing these days, I don't really do any journaling or anything like that. So it could be, you know, just an interesting way to spend some time with English, as well.

Kassy: That sounds like such a cool goal. If you're not embarrassed by it or anything, I would totally read both the Korean and the English translation to see how you do.

Andrew: Actually, there's a book that I read last year that is short stories. It was a book of short stories. A really cool book, just about, like, modern life and especially focused on, like, relationships and love and also corporate life, like working in an office. So I think I might start with translating a short story, actually. Maybe a novel is too ambitious. But a short story I think is something I could get done.

Kassy: You should totally do it. I'm behind you on that one, too.

Andrew: And, listeners, of course, our Culips New Year's resolution for 2021 is to keep providing you with high-quality material that you can use to accomplish your English study goals. So we're going to be here with you all through 2021. You can expect more great audio lessons from us, as well as we have some big surprises **in store**. And of course, we are always working hard to try and bring you the best English lessons that we can. So we thank you for sticking with us all through that difficult year of 2020. And we're excited about this year here, guys, and we hope that you will stick with us throughout 2021 as we move forward together.

Kassy: That's totally right, Andrew. Last year was such a blast working with Culips. This was my first year as a host and I felt like I could really interact with you, the audience, the listeners, in such a different way. And I really look forward to continuing to make videos with Andrew and the rest of the Culips team and hearing from the listeners and answering their questions in the new year.

Andrew: Yeah, well, Kassy, we are certainly happy to get you out from behind the computer and in front of the microphone. For anyone that doesn't know, before Kassy was a Culips host, she was a study guide writer for us. So she was working behind the computer, behind the scenes for us for a while. But now it's great that she can come and join us on air, so to speak, and be a host with me. So, Kassy, that was one of the big developments for us here at Culips last year. And, yeah, we're very happy to have you on the podcast now officially. And me, as well, I'm really excited for all of the things that we're going to do this year at Culips.

Andrew: So I think we'll leave it here for now everyone. Thanks again for tuning in. Remember the study guide for this episode is available on our website, Culips.com. And if you have any questions or comments for us, then feel free to send us an email. Our address is contact@Culips.com.

Andrew: We'll be back soon with another brand-new episode and we'll talk to you then. Happy New Year! Bye-bye everyone.

Kassy: See ya.

Detailed Explanations

To stack up against [something]

Idiom

At the beginning of this episode, our hosts decide to share their own goals and plans for the upcoming year. Kassy is interested to see how her goals **stack up against Andrew's**. **To stack up against [something]** is to compare two or more things. The verb to stack is to pile things on top of each other, usually neatly. Think of comparing the amount of paperwork you have with that of your colleague. One easy way is to put your stack of paper beside your colleague's and see whose is higher.

Here are a couple more examples with **to stack up against [something]**:

Dave: How do you feel about your tennis match today?

Lyle: I'm pretty nervous.

Dave: Really? I thought you would be confident. I think you **stack up well against him**.

Lyle: Thanks. But I'm always nervous. I always think I'm going to lose.

Dave: And yet you keep on winning!

Carla: Have the quarterly reports been posted?

Fran: Yes. I just finished printing them out.

Carla: Great. Let's see how we **stack up against the competition**.

Fran: From what I've seen so far, we're doing all right.

Carla: Good to hear. Can you please send me a copy?

Fran: Sure. No problem.

To get fired up

Phrasal verb

At the beginning of this episode, Andrew says he is someone who likes to make New Year's resolutions. In fact, he gets inspired and **fired up** around the end of the year. **To get fired up** is to get excited about something. Think of that warm feeling you have in your heart when you get excited thinking about a thing or event. It is common to add a modifier, as in **to get all fired up** or **to get so fired up**.

To get fired up can also mean you got angry about something. For example, people can **get fired up** because they don't like a new law. You can use **to get fired up** in situations of anger or annoyance.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get fired up**:

Nadia: I guess I won't see you on our trip to Niagara Falls this weekend?

Patty: Actually, I'll be there.

Nadia: Really? What made you change your mind?

Patty: Mike was talking about all the good things we can do over there. He **got me all fired up**.

Nadia: Cool. See you there.

Patty: For sure!

Dom: I heard you had some words with Johnson.

Yousef: Yeah. He told everyone that the White campaign was his idea.

Dom: What? That's not true at all!

Yousef: I know! I **was so fired up**. I almost yelled at him in front of everyone.

Dom: Oh, it's good that you didn't. Just talk about it with the boss. That'll be good.

To cross [something] off [one's] list

Idiom

Early in this episode, Andrew talks about running an ultramarathon this year. It was something on his list of things to do this year. Now that he has run it, he can **cross it off his list**. **To cross [something] off [one's] list** is to accomplish something. Think of having a to-do list written on paper. Every time you complete an item on your list, you can use your pen to **cross it off your list** with a straight line. The term **to cross [something] off [one's] list** can be used to refer to your bucket list, your daily list of things to do, or your goals in general.

Here are a couple more examples with **to cross [something] off [one's] list**:

Gary: I was calling you all weekend. Where were you?

Chet: Oh, I'm sorry. I was busy.

Gary: What were you doing?

Chet: I went paragliding with my girlfriend.

Gary: You went paragliding with your girlfriend? Aren't you afraid of heights?

Chet: I am, but I always wanted to do it anyways.

Gary: Wow. Good for you. I guess you can **cross that off your list**.

Chet: Yeah. But my list is still pretty long.

Marsha: Those are such lovely pictures of you and your mother. Where did you take them?

Sherry: I took my mom to the south of Italy.

Marsha: That's so nice of you. What was the occasion?

Sherry: Actually, her mother was from that region. She always wanted **to cross that off her list** before she got too old to travel internationally.

To feed off [something]

Phrasal verb

In this episode, Andrew talks about running an ultramarathon on his own. He says it was especially difficult running alone because he couldn't **feed off other people's energy**. In this sense, **to feed off [something]** is to be energized by something or someone else. Runners often like running together for both the competition and the moral support. Likewise, it's good for team members **to feed off each other** when working on a group project. You can also **feed off of things**. An artist can **feed off of the ideas of other artists**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to feed off [something]**:

Ivan: Mark has been a really good addition to our team this season.

Freddie: I know. The others have responded well to his style of playing.

Ivan: I'm glad you noticed that too.

Freddie: It's amazing how much they **feed off his energy** on the court.

Ivan: Here's hoping it continues like this for the rest of the season.

Georgia: Hey, are you still studying Vietnamese?

Carly: Yes, I am. Why do you ask?

Georgia: I studied it a little bit years ago, and I'm looking to take it up again.

Carly: Cool.

Georgia: I was thinking it would be good if we could study together.

Carly: For sure. I always study better when I can **feed off of someone else**. It's great for practice and learning new things.

Georgia: I agree. When do we start?

To have a rhythm going

Idiom

In this episode, Kassy talks about her new position at work and how difficult it was at first. However, by the end of the year, she says she really **had a rhythm going**. **To have a rhythm going** is to thrive in your situation. Kassy is now at ease and in sync with the demands and daily life of her job.

To have a rhythm going can apply to many situations. Runners talk about **having a rhythm** when running. When musicians talk about **having a rhythm going**, they are playing well together. You can even say you **have a rhythm going** when you're having a lively conversation with good exchanges, as opposed to an awkward conversation with long pauses. This expression often includes the adjective good: **to have a good rhythm going**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to have a rhythm going**:

Antonia: How has work been?

Lorraine: So-so. There have been so many holidays this month.

Antonia: I know, right?

Lorraine: Taking all those days off really disrupts workflow.

Antonia: Well, there aren't any holidays next month. You'll be able **to have a rhythm going** then.

Esther: How was your jam session yesterday?

Olivia: It was good. We have a new drummer. She's awesome.

Esther: Really? That's cool.

Olivia: Yeah. We were a little out of sync at first, but after 30 minutes or so, we really **got a good rhythm going**.

Esther: That's good to hear. Drummers are so important.

In store Phrase

As Andrew prepares to sign off for this episode, he says that Culips has a lot of big surprises **in store** for 2021. This does not have the same meaning as having things in a store, like in a market. To have something **in store** is to have something planned for future use. People often use the phrase **in store** along with nouns like surprise or change. For example, you can say to a family member, “I have a surprise **in store** for you when you come home.”

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

Vera: Do you guys have anything planned over the winter vacation?

Ahmed: We have big changes **in store** for around the house.

Vera: Really? Like what?

Ahmed: We’re going to renovate the kitchen and the living room.

Vera: That sounds like a big job.

Ahmed: We can manage. If we have enough time, we’ll try to renovate a bathroom as well.

Marie: Are you excited about the new year?

Hyeonju: Not really. I’m kind of pessimistic about the future.

Marie: Why do you say that?

Hyeonju: This year was really difficult for everyone.

Marie: I know. But 2021 surely can’t be worse than 2020.

Hyeonju: Who knows what’s **in store** for us next year? Things can always get worse.

Marie: Wow. You really are pessimistic. Here, I’ll bet you anything that 2021 will be amazing.

Quiz

1. **According to the expression in this episode, if you have something in store, you have ____.**
 - a) something you need to buy at the store
 - b) something in your store
 - c) something planned for future use
 - d) something to keep forever

2. **What does it mean to stack up against something?**
 - a) you are comparing two things
 - b) you are building a tower
 - c) you are counting your achievements alone
 - d) you are against other people's ideas

3. **To feed off of someone is ____.**
 - a) to not like them
 - b) when they don't make you want to do something
 - c) when you cook for your friends or family
 - d) to be energized by them

4. **Generally, is it a good thing to have a rhythm going with other people?**
 - a) yes
 - b) no

5. **What does it mean to get fired up about something?**
 - a) you are thinking about forest fires
 - b) you are cooking with fire
 - c) you are excited about something
 - d) you are near a campfire

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What's in store for you in 2021?
2. Whose energy do you like to feed off of?
3. What are some things you want to cross off your list?
4. Who are the people with whom you usually have a good rhythm going?
5. What gets you all fired up?

Quiz Answers

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

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