

AD-FREE

Simplified Speech #172 – What kind of web surfer are you?

Episode description

Do you use tabs a lot? Do you prefer to use keyboard shortcuts or mouse clicks? In this episode, Andrew and Suzanne talk about the different ways to browse the internet. They share their different styles of surfing the internet and explore the pros and cons of each approach.

Simplified Speech is the Culips series for beginner and intermediate English language learners that features easy to understand conversations about everyday topics. These episodes are designed to help you improve your listening skills and expand your vocabulary. We have quality study guides and transcripts available for all Culips members.

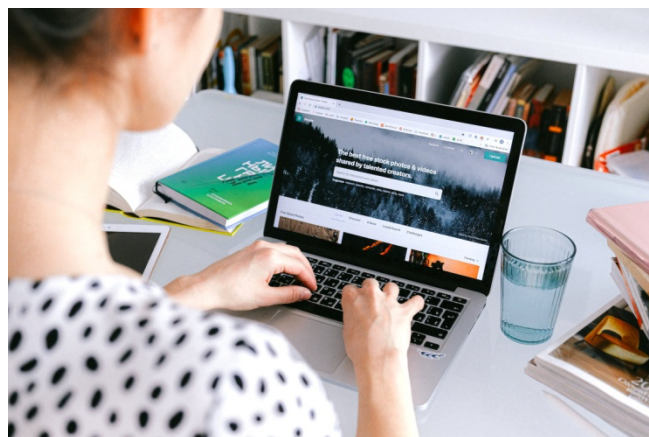
Fun fact

Do you know these handy Windows shortcuts that can make your browsing more efficient?

- To open a new tab, press Ctrl + T
- To close a tab, press Ctrl + W
- To open a previously closed tab, press Ctrl + Shift + T

Expressions included in the study guide

- One thing led to another
- Quirk
- Now that we've established
- Facade
- Willy-nilly
- Funky



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: Hello, Suzanne.

Suzanne: Hey, Andrew. Hey, everybody.

Andrew: OK, so Suzanne, the last time we spoke off the air, and off the air means when we're not recording, right? I think this is an old radio expression, maybe like, if you're on the air, it means you're recording, but if you're off the air, it means you're not recording. And usually, before we start recording, we actually have a few minutes of conversation off the air.

Suzanne: We do. They're always very creative.

Andrew: I think so. And actually, I love these conversations that we have off the air because it usually gives us some inspiration or some ideas for upcoming episodes. And last time, we talked off the air, we both had some bad luck with our computers. And we were complaining about technology problems that we were having. And **one thing led to another** and eventually, we started talking about how we browse the internet and the tabs that we use and the different techniques and styles that we use to browse the internet. And we thought, hey, maybe that would make for an interesting conversation for Simplified Speech. And that was kind of an aha moment for us, right? Like, this will be a good topic for Simplified Speech. So, because of that conversation we had last time, that is exactly what we're going to talk about here in this episode.

Suzanne: Yeah, yeah, it's definitely different for everyone and we all have our **quirks**. So, good inspiration there.

Andrew: So, let's kick off the conversation with just a basic general question just to help give some context and background information to our listeners. So, Sue, this is a self-rating question, OK? I just want to know, on a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel using computers? Are you like a one being like a total noob? Somebody who doesn't feel comfortable at all using computers. Or are you a 10 out of 10? Just like a genius hacker programmer who feels extremely comfortable using computers? Where are you on that scale?

Suzanne: Great question. I would say it can be complicated to determine because I start to think about how good I am with computers, which is a different rating because you're asking about how comfortable I am. How comfortable I am, is probably maybe like a six, I would say, yeah, depends on the day, but maybe like six to seven. But maybe I'm underrating myself a little bit because I tend to do that, but I would say a solid six. Yeah. What about you, Andrew? How comfortable are you?

Andrew: I would say that I'm pretty comfortable using computers, and maybe a little bit more knowledgeable than the average person, but I'm not a programmer. And I know how to do some basic computer repairs. I've fixed my computer before by like taking it apart and putting in new RAM or a new hard drive or once I fixed the glass on my laptop monitor. But that is technically not very difficult, like in terms of doing computer repair those are like the easiest things to do for computer repair.

So, on the scale, I'd say maybe seven and a half. I feel pretty comfortable. But yeah, I'm not a programmer, and I'm not an engineer by any stretch of the imagination. But that just goes to say the reason I'm asking this question, Suzanne, is I wanted to establish that we're not newbies, right? We know how to use computers, to a pretty good extent. So, we can talk about this topic with some authority, I suppose.

Suzanne: Yeah. I mean, there's definitely things I don't know, I don't know all the programs. I don't know, Final Cut Pro and things like that. Video editing, for example, that's not something I do with my computer. I do a lot of sound editing. So, we're like, somewhere above a four.

Andrew: Somewhere above a four.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: OK. And so **now that we've established** a little bit about how well we can use computers, I wanted to transition more into talking about our web surfing style and Suzanne, last time we talked, we were specifically talking about having browser tabs open. And that was interesting for me, because my kind of web surfing style is, I'm the kind of person who doesn't use tabs very much. At any given time, I'll have one or two, maybe if I'm feeling really wild, three or four tabs open. But I really don't use tabs when I surf in my web browser.

And for listeners who don't know what a tab is, it's essentially just like, you can have multiple windows open in your browser, but you can organize them by just having a little pop up at the top, right? And you can switch from one window to the next window to the next window very easily with the tabs that are at the top of your web browser, mostly on desktop, although you can use tabs on your smartphone as well. But in fact, I never use them on my smartphone. It's only on my desktop that I'll use them from time to time. But Suzanne, you said that you are more of a power user with tabs, if I'm recalling correctly, is that right?

Suzanne: Oh, yes. Do you want to know how many tabs I have open right now as we speak?

Andrew: Yeah, lay it on us.

Suzanne: See if you can guess. I'd love for you to guess.

Andrew: Ah well, so you said that you use quite a few. I'm gonna say that you have at least 20 tabs open?

Suzanne: It's at least that, yeah.

Andrew: At least?

Suzanne: One could maybe multiply that by three.

Andrew: Can you even see them all at the top of the screen when you have that many?

Suzanne: Nope, you have to kind of inch your way over, you have to, you know, click, and it moves over. So, it's kind of like, you know, if you're like looking at Netflix or something, and you want to choose the top 20 movies or whatever, you know, you're browsing through some movies, and you have to scroll to the right, you know?

Andrew: Right, you have to scroll along to see the options, because there are too many to display in one screen view.

Suzanne: Exactly. So right now, I have 63 tabs open. 63, everyone. That's kind of a record though, because you know, when I'm stressed out the level of stress or the amount of things I have on my plate, right? So, when you have a lot on your plate, it doesn't mean your literal plate, as far as the food you're eating, it means like, you have a lot of things going on, maybe you're organizing an event and you're doing homework, you know, there's a lot of activities that you have to do, or that you have responsibilities that you're working on.

Andrew: So, if you have a lot of tabs open in your web browser, then it means that you are very, very busy. It's directly connected.

Suzanne: Exactly, exactly. So, right now I'm planning a big event, I'm also writing a script. I'm also buying lots of gifts for people for birthdays, and wedding stuff. And you know, there's all of these different aspects of my life in sequential order of these tabs. So, it's quite funny, if you looked at them, you would be like, OK, this is the section of tabs where you are looking for your vacation. And this is the section where you are organizing your wedding. And this is the section where you might be looking at gifts for friends. So, it's quite a large collection of tabs right now.

Andrew: So, if I were you, I'd be a little bit stressed that if my web browser crashed—and the more tabs open, the more likely it would be to crash I would imagine—that you would lose all of your research, all of the things that you have been searching for online.

Suzanne: Whatever browser you're using, they remember. So, all you have to do is click on like the plus button and then a list of your recent places where you've searched, or your recent websites will come up. So, you shouldn't have a problem.

Andrew: OK, so you can restore the tabs after a crash?

Suzanne: Right. But what does happen, Andrew, is that the other day, for example, when we were about to record, I was having issues with having to restart the computer. And one of the reasons why I didn't want to restart the computer was because I would have to say goodbye to all of this research and tabs that I had open. So, I sat there for 20 minutes copying and pasting all of those links into an email.

Andrew: No! No! There's got to be a better way.

Suzanne: Right, I think I didn't need to. That's why I'm saying, I think the browser remembers, and I don't think I needed to do that. But I was scared, I was kind of in a bind.

Andrew: It's just your insurance policy, just in case.

Suzanne: Yeah, this is where I think if I went to like the Apple Store and was sitting at the Genius Bar, the genius would look at me like I'm crazy. Like the genius might be like, "Lady, take a deep breath, like just have 10 tabs open at once at the most like, that's all you need. What are you really looking at all of these things all at once?" No, he'd probably do an intervention, a tab intervention.

Andrew: So OK, I'm curious, because this is so different than the way that I surf the internet. So, I have lots of questions.

Suzanne: Yeah, how do you do it?

Andrew: Yeah, I guess I don't use very many tabs. And the reason why is because I feel like if I'm multitasking, trying to do too many tasks at once, then I just get confused. And I am not very focused and can't really complete what I'm trying to do, my goal, or my mission gets diluted, and it's not so clear. So yeah, it's not like I never use tabs, but they're usually all related to the same task.

For example, if I'm working on a Culips episode, maybe I'll have several tabs open. But it's all related to the work that I'm doing on that Culips episode. And then once I finish that job, then I'll close all those tabs related to that task and just start with a new one.

Another thing that I've done more recently, is to use different browser profiles. So, in the web browser that I use, you can set up different profiles. So, I'll have a Culips profile, I'll have my personal profile, I'll have my work-related profile. And if I'm doing something for my day job, then I'll use that profile. If I'm doing something for Culips, I'll use that profile. If I'm just surfing around for my personal life, I'll use my personal profile. And I've set up many different profiles. I've set up one for my wife and I for like when we're working on our house renovation project that we're doing right now, I have a profile for that. I have a profile that we share for when we're like shopping online or making travel plans or something like that. So yeah, I use these different profiles to try and keep my digital life organized.

But yeah, keeping tabs open, to be honest, kind of stresses me out, just thinking about it.

Suzanne: It's so interesting because I feel like it makes me feel better. Like for example, say my client is running late and we like reschedule and I have like an extra half hour or something. I'm like, OK, great. I'm going to jump into this project over here and look at whatever decoration for this party that I'm planning. And I can like do a little bit of work with that, close some of the tabs. No, I don't like that. And then I can just come back. OK, great. I'm ready for my client. So, if I'm not done with that project, it's still there, you know? Like, I can jump into it when I need to finish it.

Andrew: I think the awesome thing about this is there's no right or wrong answer, right? It's like, there's different options and different styles for managing and organizing our digital lives. And everybody just kind of finds their own way because it's not like we learned this in high school, right? Or university even. It's not like there's some class like, this is how you should surf the internet. This is how you should use a computer. We're just given these tools, and then we have to figure it out for ourselves. And everybody finds their own different way of doing it. So, it's really interesting to find out how other people use computers, at least for a geek like me, I find this very interesting.

Suzanne: Yeah, it is. It's funny. It's very **quirky**, right? Because talking about this is like, as if we were talking about how we maybe handle travelling to work or folding our laundry, it's how we live and move around and organize our life in the virtual world. It's another space where we live. It's interesting.

Andrew: Absolutely. So, Suzanne, I have a couple more questions for you if you don't mind. OK, so first question is, why not bookmark? Why not use a bookmark because we have this other tool in the web browser, a bookmark, which is for saving a web address, and saving a web page so that you can visit it again later? Why would you prefer a tab instead of a bookmark?

Suzanne: It's funny, so I use bookmarks for things that I'm going to use long term. Like I have a bookmark for my citizenship application for Canada, a bookmark for you know, academic dates for the calendar at the university where I teach. So, I have bookmarks for sort of things I need to save that are more ongoing and long term.

Andrew: Right. OK. Yeah, that makes sense to me. And how do you decide when to close a tab? Do you wait until your task is finished and it's totally done? What's the determining point of when to close one of the open tabs?

Suzanne: So, there's a couple of things that determine this. One is the project is over, the task is done. I bought the gift for my sister, we can close all these tabs, we've purchased it, it's done. The second thing would be, I just get sick of it. I'm like, I'm tired of seeing this. I

don't care anymore. You know, I'm gonna deal with that another time. Maybe I write it down on my to-do list, and it's not something I can handle right now. So, it gets deferred for a later date.

Andrew: Yeah, Sue, I can't wait to hear the comments and feedback from our listeners on this one, because I'm sure people are either going to be like you, or maybe like me, but I don't know if there will be too many in the middle. But who knows, really, it'll be interesting to see, and listeners out there, please do leave a comment on our website, or send us a message to let us know about your web surfing style too because I really don't know how other people surf the internet, like this is something I have no idea about. So, it'll be really, really interesting to find out what everybody's different way of doing this is.

And Sue, we're getting a little bit long on this episode. So, I think we'll wrap it up soon. But I've got one final question that I'm curious about. And that's something that we touched on a little earlier, actually, about mobile browsing versus desktop computer browsing. So, I said that when I use my smartphone to surf the internet, I never use tabs, like it just feels not as user friendly, I suppose to use on my smartphone. And in fact, if I have an option between using my phone, and using my computer, I'll almost always use my computer. I don't know if that's just like a generational thing and it's just because I grew up with a computer. And this new technology is too fresh for the old guy, I'm not sure. But you know, there's some times of course, when I use my phone, and don't get me wrong, I still use my phone all the time, unfortunately. But when I have to do some research, or you know, book a travel plan, or something like that, I always prefer to use a computer, just feels more comfortable. But what about you, what's your like mobile versus desktop surfing style like?

Suzanne: I use my phone too, I should say this, most of the time I can use my computer because I work from home pretty much. And I will yeah have access to my computer, just like you said, Andrew, I prefer it, I guess. But in the last few years, I've become very comfortable with using the browser on my phone. Well, my computer's pretty fast now because it's new. But my old computer was sometimes annoying and slow. And so, my phone was faster. And I would sometimes just quickly search on my phone. And I feel very

comfortable using my browser ordering things online on my phone, you know, looking at flights, like I feel very comfortable with that. I probably have done that more than you.

I also have been influenced by people on Instagram, those influencers they get you and like I'll click on the link and look at the products or whatever that they're trying to endorse. So, I've used my phone for that stuff too. And sometimes when you click on links, it takes you to your browser or you can open it in your browser. And so, I do sometimes have quite a bit of tabs open just because I've clicked on links, but I forgot you know what I mean? And I'll just go back once in a while and just close them all. I think I use my phone probably a little more than you as far as surfing. I also find it's helpful like when I'm coaching someone and if I need to like search for something quick, but I don't want to go into my computer, open another tab and kind of not see them on my Zoom, I'll just use my phone. But hopefully there's less tabs open on my phone. Let's hope. I don't know. I'll have to count and get back to you.

Andrew: Probably not 63, right? Probably not 63 on the phone?

Suzanne: I don't know, Andrew, there might be some from like, you know those random hair products or whatever that I clicked on on Instagram.

Andrew: So, Suzanne and I have kept our conversation going for a little bit longer here as a thank you to all of you wonderful members out there in the Culips community. And Suzanne, what we'd like to do in the bonus content is just to have a quick, short conversation that is related to what we've been talking about, I guess, keeping the conversation going, right? So, I've got three rapid fire questions here for you that should be fun to talk about. So, rapid fire #1, Suzanne, this might even be hard to answer. I'm not sure. What are the top three websites that you visit daily? Top three websites?

Suzanne: Oh, that's easy, Andrew, come on, that's easy! I would say Gmail, my Gmail.

Andrew: Oh, yeah. Gmail. Wow, good one. I never even thought about that. But obviously Gmail, OK, good.

Suzanne: I visit every day my Acuity Scheduling app. So, my scheduler for my clients, they book their sessions there. So, I check that every day to verify my schedule. And thirdly, this one I don't think you know, I exercise every day to Betty Rocker. She's pretty awesome. I know that we don't necessarily endorse different, you know, people on there, but that is a website that I visit every day to get in my workout. My 20 to 30ish minutes workout, sometimes with weights, sometimes without, you know, we switch it up.

Andrew: Nice. OK. Well, yeah, I guess for me, definitely Gmail, that's probably the first thing that I open every day. But I do view it as a website. But I guess I also view it as an app. And when I wake up in the morning, the first thing I check is my phone, not my computer. So, I would think of Gmail more as an app. But it's true, it's a website as well and I use it as a website. So yeah, Gmail, and YouTube. I think I watch YouTube every day and probably Reddit. So, Suzanne, you have these great apps related to productivity and exercising and business, mine like wasting time on Reddit and YouTube.

Suzanne: You're reading all about the nerd culture stuff. Is that what you're doing? I love that, too. I listen to podcasts about nerd culture, so.

Andrew: I guess that's where I'm at, yeah. OK, let's go to rapid fire question #2. And I'm really curious to see if there's going to be a correlation between our browser style and our desktop style. So, your desktop on your computer, which is kind of like the home screen where you put all of your icons and shortcuts to different apps and folders and files. If you were to think of your computer's desktop, is it clean, like a Zen garden? Or is it more like a crowded market or a crowded bazaar? How would you describe it?

Suzanne: Well, here's what's funny, I'm actually going to look at it right now, because I haven't looked at it in a while. Actually, I'm just going to check. You'd be surprised, it's pretty clear. I have a couple of things I need to erase that they're all in like this one little corner just because I'm designing like the welcome signs and the, you know, like all the things for my wedding. So, there's the French version and the English version and all that. If I look at it, I really only have some things on one side, like I really could probably count, like, maybe there's just like 20 things.

Andrew: So, that's interesting, because I have a lot of icons and files and shortcuts on my desktop. So, although my browser is pretty organized, my desktop is not that organized. Now, thankfully, Mac, I use an Apple computer. So, Apple has this feature in their operating system called Stacks. And you can really clean up all of your files really neatly and cleanly. So, because of that my files look like they're organized, but it's a **facade**, really, it's chaos on my desktop. And I've been meaning to go through and clean it up for a while and I just haven't had the time but it's on my to do list and I'm going to clean it up soon. But yeah, I would say mine is more like a crowded market than a Zen garden.

Suzanne: OK, can we say that mine is like a section of the botanical garden where there is a Zen garden? And then there's one little corner that I haven't cleaned up yet that's like the line to get in. It's like the crowded line to get in, just there's like five things that are like kind of **willy-nilly**.

Andrew: All right, final question here. And this will really display, I think, how big of power users we are on the computer. We've talked about that at the very start of the episode. So what team are you on, Suzanne, are you on team keyboard shortcuts? Or are you on team mouse clicks? So, to break that down for our listeners, when I asked like, what team are you on, just a casual way to ask which method do you prefer? Do you prefer to navigate through your computer by using keyboard shortcuts? Or would you prefer to use your mouse and point and click your way through when you're navigating on your computer?

Suzanne: I would say I'm a point and click, because I use a laptop, I would say, I'm a trackpad person. I do use some shortcuts here and there. But I'm pretty much a point and click. I'll say I'm like 95 percent point and click and 5 percent shortcuts. And how about you?

Andrew: Well, I'm a little bit of both. And the reason I'm a little bit of both is because I have this **funky** mouse. It's like a really special kind of geeky mouse that has, I don't know, I'm looking at it now Suzanne, I can show you as well, you can see it's got all these buttons on it. And the reason why is because when I'm doing audio editing for Culips, I can set all of those buttons to perform a keyboard shortcut for me. Just helps me to edit audio

so much more quickly and more efficiently by setting all of those little extra buttons to perform a keyboard shortcut. So, I have it set up to do this custom task or custom job. So, if I click one of the extra buttons, then it will automatically do the keyboard shortcut for me. And so, I started using that just in my audio editing program. But then I started using it in other applications as well. So, it's kind of like I'm doing a keyboard shortcut but it's even lazier because I'm not physically hitting the buttons on the keyboard. I'm just hitting one button on the mouse. And it's doing that shortcut for me automatically so.

Suzanne: That's so cool. So, does it use less power to use shortcuts on your keyboard?

Andrew: Yeah, I think the idea is that, you know, like, sometimes you have to move your mouse from one side of the screen to the other and that takes effort. But if you just hit the keyboard shortcut, you can do it right away without having to move your hand. And I know that sounds lame. But if you're working on your computer for like 8 hours a day, and you need to do a lot of work, those little movements add up and can amount into a lot of time. So, having the keyboard shortcut setup can just be a time saver when you're talking about, you know, months or years of work added up together.

Suzanne: I should do that with my editing. Yeah, yeah, you're right, like that probably would make my audio editing a lot faster.

Andrew: One of my music buddies recommended this mouse to me. And he said, "You got to do it for audio editing." And I was like, "OK, I'll give it a try." And yeah, it really changed my workflow, and I think has sped things up a lot. I actually broke the mouse by spilling a cup of coffee on it. And then I went out and bought another one right away, because I was like, I can't live without the mouse. Going back, I tried going back to the previous method. And it was just like, oh my god, this is so much slower, I went out and bought another version of the same mouse right away.

Suzanne: That's so cool. That is a good mouse, I might need that link, I might need that tab, to open that tab.

Andrew: I'll send you the link Suzanne and you can open it, open it in a tab in your browser. So, everyone, that's gonna bring us to the end of this episode. Thanks for listening. Great job on completing an English study session here with Suzanne and me today and we'd love to know what you think, what your thoughts are? Are you on team shortcut or are you on team mouse click? Are you on team tab or team bookmark? Tell us all about your computer using style, we would love to know. You could just send us a message. Our email address is contact@culips.com. Or of course you can use our comment feature and discussion forum on our website Culips.com.

So, take care everyone, and we'll talk to you next time. Goodbye!

Suzanne: Bye!

Andrew: That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time, bye!

Detailed Explanations

One thing led to another

Phrase

At the start of the episode, Andrew shares how the idea for this episode came about. He explains that while he and Suzanne were talking about some technology problems, **one thing led to another** and they started talking about different techniques they use to browse the internet.

One thing led to another is a common phrase we use to explain how things happened, but without getting into too much detail. It helps to connect the initial event in a series of events with the eventual result, and to make sense of the events by showing their logical order. So when Andrew uses this expression, he means that as he and Suzanne talked about technology problems, their conversation naturally turned into a discussion about browsing styles.

This phrase is often used when talking about things that happened unexpectedly or spontaneously. For example, if someone wants to explain how they got interested in gardening, they might say, "I saw a video on YouTube, and **one thing led to another**. Next thing I knew, I was turning my back yard into a garden." This means that the initial event of watching the video sparked their interest in gardening, leading to a series of connected events that resulted in them creating their own garden.

Here are a couple more examples with **one thing led to another**:

Kevin: I love your shots! How did you become a photographer?

Nora: Thank you! I once borrowed a camera from a friend for a vacation. **One thing led to another**, and now I can't imagine my life without taking photos!

Mike: I heard you started your own handmade jewellery business. How did it happen?

Mindy: Well, I started making bracelets and earrings as a hobby, and **one thing led to another**. Now I have my own online shop and it's going so well!

Mike: Amazing!

Quirk Noun

After Andrew introduces the topic for this episode, Suzanne says, “It’s definitely different for everyone and we all have our **quirks**.” **Quirks** are unusual or strange habits or characteristics that make a person different and interesting. What Suzanne means is that we all have our own ways and techniques when it comes to surfing the internet, some of which could be unusual or strange to other people.

If someone is described as **quirky**, it means they’re unique and different in an interesting way. Their **quirks** are things that make them stand out from others. **Quirk** is usually used in a positive way; **quirks** add uniqueness and depth to individuals.

A person can have **quirks** in their behaviour or appearance. For example, someone might dress in an unusual way, and this would be their **quirk**. If someone talks about a particular subject all the time, you can call it a **quirk** as well.

Quirk isn’t an easy term to define because it’s a subjective matter. What one person finds **quirky**, another person may not. It’s often a matter of personal opinion and depends on the person.

Here are a few more examples with **quirk**:

Scott: I’ve noticed that John wears his watch on the inside of his wrist.

Rachel: Oh, it’s his **quirk**. He says it feels more comfortable that way.

Scott: That’s kind of cool! I like that.

Seth: Do you always eat your pizza crust first?

Natalie: Yeah. I know it’s a bit strange, but I guess we all have our **quirks**. I just like it better this way.

Ben: Hey, what’s the story with that girl Maura? Is she from France?

Ann: Maura? No, she isn’t. She just likes to say French words sometimes. It’s her little **quirk**.

Now that we've established

Phrase

As Andrew moves on from discussing how comfortable he and Suzanne feel using computers, he says, “**Now that we've established** a little bit about how well we can use computers, I wanted to transition more into talking about our web surfing style.”

When we use the phrase **now that we've established**, it means we've made something clear or we've agreed on it. It's like saying, “OK, now that it's clear, we can keep going.” To establish means to make something official, to clarify something. **Now that we've established** is a good expression to use when you want to transition the conversation to the next thing. So when Andrew uses this phrase in the episode, he simply means that now that it's clear that he and Suzanne are good with computers, they can talk about the next thing.

This phrase can be particularly useful in business situations. For instance, if someone in a meeting says “**Now that we've established** the deadline, let's discuss the details,” they mean that now that everyone's agreed on the deadline, they're going to talk about the next thing. However, you can use it in informal situations as well, just like Andrew does in this episode.

Here are a couple more examples with **now that we've established**:

Sam: So, do we agree on a date? September 12th?

Megan: Yes, sounds good to me.

Sam: Great! **Now that we've established** the date, let's talk about the guest list. Who should we invite to the party?

Astrid: Have you figured out what went wrong with the latest product launch?

Quentin: Yes, we have. Our marketing strategies were ineffective and we didn't have a clear target audience.

Astrid: Right. **Now that we've established** that, let's schedule a meeting to brainstorm ideas and find solutions to improve our marketing approach.

Facade

Noun

Facade literally means the front of a building, the part that is visible from the outside. However, when used figuratively, it refers to the way someone or something appears to others. It suggests that there's a difference between how something looks on the surface and its true reality. It might seem one way on the outside, but it's different on the inside.

This expression can be used when talking about things or people. For instance, if someone is feeling sad but puts on a cheerful smile to mask their true feelings, their smile becomes a **facade**.

In this episode, **facade** refers to an object. When talking about his desktop, Andrew says, "My files look like they're organized, but it's a **facade**." He means that behind that organized appearance, it's actually chaos on his desktop.

You might see this word spelled with a cedilla: **façade**. This is because the word originates from the French language. Its pronunciation is French as well; it sounds like "fuhsaad."

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

Lucas: Do you remember Ken from high school?

Caroline: Sure I do.

Lucas: I found him on Instagram. His life seems perfect! He's always happy, eating in luxurious restaurants, and travelling places. I wish my life was the same.

Caroline: Well, it's just a **facade**. I heard from someone that he's actually dealing with financial problems and constantly borrowing money to maintain that image.

Emma: How is your new job going?

Dave: To be honest, it's quite disappointing.

Emma: How do you mean?

Dave: Well, they claimed to be environmentally friendly. But it's just a **facade**. They talk about sustainability, but don't practice it. All they care about are profits.

Willy-nilly

Adverb, informal

Willy-nilly is an expression that describes doing something randomly or without careful consideration. If someone does something **willy-nilly**, it means they do it without much thought or planning.

It can also refer to a situation where things happen by chance or without a specific intention. For example, if you decide to take a road trip and choose your destinations **willy-nilly**, it means you're selecting them without much planning or thought.

In this episode, Suzanne uses the expression **willy-nilly** when describing a corner of her desktop. This means that the corner is disorganized, that things are placed randomly or without much thought.

This phrase is often used in a negative way to describe actions or situations that are unplanned, impulsive, or lacking order. However, just like in this episode, it can be used humorously or informally to describe a relaxed or carefree approach to something.

Here are a couple more examples with **willy-nilly**:

Julian: What do you think of the cake?

Clara: I don't want to be offensive, but it tastes strange. Did you follow a recipe?

Julian: Not really. I just threw in some ingredients **willy-nilly** without measuring or following any specific instructions. I wanted to see what happens if I improvise.

Clara: I guess that's why it's not even sweet. Try following the recipe next time, it should work better.

Will: I can't find the report. I've been looking for it all morning!

Jess: I think I saw our intern putting it away. Why don't you ask him?

Will: I did, but he said he couldn't remember where he put it. He just placed it somewhere **willy-nilly**.

Jess: Oh, that's frustrating. Let me help you, I'm sure we'll find it somewhere here.

Funky

Adjective, informal

Funky is a versatile word that describes something as cool, stylish, or unique in an interesting way. It's often used to talk about things that have a special charm. For example, if something has a **funky** design, it means it looks cool and different. It's used in a positive way and expresses a sense of fun, creativity, and individuality.

When talking about navigating on his computer, Andrew mentions his **funky** mouse. In this example, the word **funky** means that the mouse is unique and unconventional, and has special features that make it different from a typical mouse.

This word can be used to describe all sorts of things, from clothes to home decor. For instance, if someone has a **funky** sense of fashion, it means they have a unique and individualistic way of dressing that stands out from the crowd. In this context, the word **funky** is similar to quirky, as it emphasizes uniqueness and individuality.

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

Daniel: Are you coming to Paul's birthday party tomorrow?

Sarah: I am! I just need to buy a present. Have you already bought one?

Daniel: Yes, I have. I got him a pair of retro sunglasses from that new shop downtown. They sell all sorts of **funky** accessories and vintage-inspired items. It's a great place to find unique and stylish gifts. You should definitely check it out!

Sarah: I will! Thanks for the idea!

Peter: Welcome to my apartment. Make yourself at home!

Kelly: I love it here! The mix of different colors, decorations, and furniture is so unique. I've never seen anything like it before. It's got such a **funky** vibe!

Peter: Thank you. I wanted to create a space that reflects my individuality and has a unique atmosphere.

Kelly: You did an awesome job!

Quiz

1. Which of the following phrases could you use to explain how something happened?

- a) one led to another thing
- b) one thing led with another
- c) one thing led to another
- d) one thing led to the others

2. If someone says, “We all have our quirks,” they mean _____.

- a) we all surf the Internet
- b) we all have unusual or strange habits
- c) we are all the same
- d) we all fold laundry

3. True or false? “Now that we’ve established” is a phrase we use to show that something isn’t clear and we have to keep discussing it.

- a) true
- b) false

4. What word do we use to talk about a false appearance that hides the true reality?

- a) facade
- b) facility
- c) funky
- d) face

5. Which of the following is a good example of doing something willy-nilly?

- a) comparing different phones before buying one
- b) writing a list when packing for a trip
- c) following a recipe when cooking
- d) putting books on a shelf randomly

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What kind of web surfer are you? Are you more like Andrew or Suzanne when it comes to browsing the web?
2. Do you have any quirks that make you stand out?
3. Can you think of a situation when someone or something was just a facade?
4. Can you give an example of a time when you did something willy-nilly?
5. Is there a place or a thing that you would describe as funky? What is it?

Quiz Answers

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

Episode credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Suzanne Cerreta

Music: *Something Elated* by Broke For Free

Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates

Audio editor: Marshall Vaillancourt

Transcriptionist: Heather Bates

Study guide writer: Alina Morozova

English editor: Stephanie MacLean

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

Image: Anna Shvets (Pexels.com)