

## Bonus episode #133 - Not so fast

### Episode description

In this week's bonus episode, Andrew shares a story about how his New Year's plans took an unexpected turn. After a fun trip to Canada, he returned to South Korea feeling under the weather. Despite his plans to start the year with a bang, he spent the first few days battling jet lag and coming down with something. Andrew also talks about celebrating New Year's Eve with his wife and gives us a glimpse of his gift exchange. As you listen, you'll learn useful English expressions like "coming down with something" and "start with a bang," while improving your vocabulary, fluency, and listening skills.



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Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** Hello, everyone, and welcome to bonus episode number 133 of the Culips English Podcast. How is it going? I hope you're doing better than me. Maybe you can hear in my voice that I have a little bit of a cold, and I'll talk about that in a moment, but I hope you're doing well. Great to be back here with you for another bonus episode.

If you're new to our series, I'll just briefly outline what we do here in our bonus episodes. It's the place where I hang out with you each and every week, and I tell you some stories from my everyday life as a Canadian living abroad in South Korea. And I hope that by listening to these real-life stories of mine, you will be able to build your English fluency, and increase your cultural knowledge, grow your vocabulary, and become a better and clearer English communicator.

We also give away, 100% for free, an interactive transcript and vocabulary glossary for all of our bonus episodes, plus if you're a Culips member, well, then we'll also give you a comprehension quiz so you can test how much you are able to understand from the episode after studying with it.

All right, so everyone, today I woke up to **Winter Wonderland** outside of my front door. We got a huge dump of snow here in Seoul this morning, and I spent the morning outside in my front yard shoveling the yard. It's kind of funny, as a Canadian, usually we have to shovel our front driveway, but here in my house in Seoul, we don't have a driveway, we have a yard instead. And our yard doesn't have any grass or a lawn at the moment, it's just kind of a cement yard.

And hopefully at some point in the future, my wife and I will do some landscaping and install some gardens, or we want to plant some trees, or make it a little bit more natural than it looks right now. But we haven't had time to do that, so it's just kind of a cement yard, which I don't mind, it's nice for doing exercise in, but anyway, when it fills up with snow, like it did this morning, it's important for me to shovel the snow and remove the

snow so that front yard doesn't flood when the snow melts. Now, that's never happened to us before, but it's a worry of ours that if we get too much snow in there, if we're too lazy after the snowfall and we don't remove the snow, well then it could flood, potentially.

So, this morning, as soon as I woke up, I put on my toque, I put on my winter jacket, I put on my gloves, and I got outside and started shoveling the snow. So that took me maybe 30 minutes or so, the snow was pretty heavy, which means there's a lot of moisture in the snow. And I think that means it's going to melt soon, it's not that cold outside, probably now that I'm recording this episode, most of it has already melted, in fact. But it's a good workout to start the day, to get outside in that crisp, cool air, and to do some shoveling and throwing the snow, wow, it was a good workout. So, I did that for the first 30 minutes to start the day, and I worked up quite a hunger, an appetite, I **worked up an appetite**.

So, after I came back inside, I made myself some pancakes, blueberry pancakes. My aunt, my dad's sister, older sister, my dad's older sister, she gave me a bottle of maple syrup while I was back home in Canada to celebrate Christmas. And I'll tell you guys about my Canadian Christmas adventure maybe next week, it's a bit of a longer story, and I want to try and keep today's story on the short side. Because as you can hear, I'm not feeling quite so good, so I'm going to try and keep this episode short.

But my aunt gave me a bottle of Canadian maple syrup, so I had my coffee, I had my pancakes, and I sat down and looked outside at the falling snow, and the beautiful winter landscape outside my window, and it was just a nice, cozy way to spend the morning after being a little bit chilly outside.

But anyways, the story that I want to tell you this week is about how my year has started. And I have to say, I haven't gotten off to a great start this year, in fact, I've maybe **started on the wrong foot**. By no fault of my own, by no fault of my own! Anyways, that's the story that I've got for you this week, so without any further ado, let's jump into it and get started. Here we go, enjoy.

So, as I hinted about just a second ago, I spent Christmas back home in Canada. And I

had a wonderful time, I've got lots of details and information to tell you about my time in Canada, but I'll save that for next week. This week, I want to tell you about how my new year has started, how 2025 has started for me. And I actually returned from Canada back to Seoul on New Year's Eve, December 31st. And I had a morning flight, I left Vancouver early in the morning, maybe 9 or 10am in the morning.

And as I arrived at the airport, I was like, "I think this is going to be a bad flight." I just didn't feel very good once I arrived at the airport. In fact, while I was in Canada, most of my family were sick. My sister was sick, my dad was sick, my mom was coughing a bunch, so there's definitely **something going around** in Canada. A lot of people were not feeling so great. And actually, as I was on my way to the airport, my throat started feeling a little scratchy and itchy, and I don't know about you, but for me, that's my body's warning sign, telling me that I'm about to get sick. It's really annoying though, because usually, once it's hit that point, there's nothing I can do to stop it.

But it's my body's way of telling me, like, "Andrew, you've got 24 hours to prepare your life, because after 24 hours, you're going to be **knocked out** and sick, so get ready for that." But there's nothing I can do to avoid it. So, I felt that feeling, that tingle in my throat, and I was like, "Oh man, I think I'm **coming down** with something. I think I'm coming down with a cold or with a flu." And coming down with something means that you are experiencing the first signs or symptoms of an illness. So, I felt like I was coming down with a cold.

And so luckily, at the airport gift shop, I was able to buy some cold medicine and some cough drops, just to prepare myself, because it's a long flight from Vancouver back to Seoul. I think it's almost 12 hours that we were in the air, 11 or 12 hours. And so, I thought, it's possible that while we're in the air, then that's when I will start to feel sick. And my prediction came true. As we took off and were into our flight, suddenly, I just started feeling worse and worse and worse.

I had the chills, you know, when you get really, really cold and you're shivering, and you have the chills. But then five minutes later, you're boiling hot, and I could feel sweat

coming out of my forehead, like I was sweating on my forehead. And then I would be back to chilled and really cold. So, I was like, "Oh man, this is not so good." And I was really congested. I had a stuffed nose, and I couldn't breathe very well. I couldn't breathe out of my nose. I had to keep blowing my nose, and it was just a bad situation. I felt really, really not so good.

Of course, the nice thing about that situation is that you don't really have to do much on an airplane. You just sit there, right? Although some people might say, "Oh, it's really hard to travel when you're sick." I mean, it's not that bad. You just sit there. You don't have to like work or do any movement or anything, right? I would way rather just sit in a seat while I was sick and try to sleep and relax rather than have to like work outside or something like that. So that wasn't so bad, to be honest with you, and I was able to sleep on and off during the flight.

But one thing that was really, really difficult was the landing. As we were landing and descending out of the air to make our touchdown at the Incheon Airport, my ears felt like they were going to explode. There was so much sinus pressure, I guess, in my head and changing altitude, descending to a lower height really, really, really just made my ears feel like they were going to explode. It was the first time I had ever experienced something like that. I think maybe that's why babies cry on an airplane. I don't know. I was thinking to myself when I felt that pain, "Is this what babies feel?" I don't know, but it was really, really painful and there was nothing that I could do to **alleviate** the pain.

Alleviate means to relieve or to release the pain. So, I was trying to give myself a little massage behind my ears and plug my ears and **pop my ears** by yawning and chewing. Nothing helped. But thankfully, we got through it. We landed on the ground. We were OK. And that pain went away. So, I somehow made it back to my home. And when I made it back to my home, I was like feeling really like full-blown sick at that point.

But it was New Year's Eve and my wife, and I had plans to celebrate the New Year's together. In fact, I went to Canada alone. My wife didn't come with me, so we didn't get to

celebrate Christmas together either. So, we had plans for a nice New Year's Eve dinner and Christmas gift exchange and celebration. And when she saw and heard how sick I was, maybe you can hear it in my voice a little bit now. It's still lingering in my voice, still there a little bit, but it's much, much better than it was before. So, my voice was just really clogged and congested, and I sounded like a different person in fact.

And so, when she heard my voice and saw me, she was like, "OK, let's just take it easy. We don't have to have a fancy, elaborate New Year's Eve dinner or anything like that." So, we just had a really chill New Year's Eve celebration. It was nice. We ate dinner together. I told her some stories about my time back in Canada. We had our gift exchange. I ended up giving my wife an Apple Watch for Christmas. As I told you guys maybe several weeks ago in one of these bonus episodes, my wife's Apple Watch was stolen recently. So, I felt so bad that her watch got stolen. So, I replaced that and gave it to her as a Christmas gift.

And my wife always spoils me at Christmas or really anytime she has to give me a gift. She goes all out and she's really generous in giving, which it's great to have a generous wife like that. My wife gave me this hoodie that I'm wearing right now, actually. If you're watching the YouTube version of the podcast, you can see me wearing this beautiful black hoodie, which will replace the old black hoodie that I had in my closet for several years. So, a new black hoodie. That's awesome. She also bought me a really beautiful sweater made from a really high-quality wool. And I believe this sweater was crafted in Scotland as well from 100% wool. So, a beautiful sweater.

And she got me the new album of a Korean rapper who I really like. His name is Beenzino. And so, his newest LP, which I think won Album of the Year and Hip Hop Album of the Year at the Korean Music Awards from last year. So, a really great album and I'm a fan of his. So, it's cool to have that. So yeah, totally spoiled this year from my wife at Christmas. So, we did our gift exchange. We had our nice dinner and then we counted down to the new year. And we were like, "Three, two, one, Happy New Year." And then I went right to bed. That was it. It was like 12:01. By 12:01am I was in bed and sleeping. And I think I slept for like 20 hours after that. I really slept for a long time.

And I woke up just again, not feeling so great. The next day I probably should have gone to the hospital, but of course it's the holiday, New Year's Day, so the hospital was closed. So, I just stayed at home and relaxed and tried to take it easy and drink lots of fluids and take some vitamins, all of these things. And then the next day I went to the hospital, or I guess I should say the clinic. The clinic is a better word to use in English. I went to the clinic to see the doctor and to get some medicine.

And it was just jam-packed full of people. Like cold season, flu season is really hitting Korea hard right now as well. It was kind of funny. There's seating in the waiting room of the clinic, maybe for about 20 people. But then the staff had set up all these additional chairs in the waiting room as well. There were all these extra chairs set up. So, I guess they've been experiencing just a high volume of patients coming into their clinic. And everybody was coughing and **hacking up a lung** in the clinic waiting room. Not the best place to be.

But I saw the doctor and he was like, "Yeah, you don't have the flu. You just have a bad cold." So, he gave me some medicine and I've been taking the medicine and I feel a lot better now. But it's just not the greatest way to start the new year, right? Feeling sick. You have all of these goals that you want to accomplish, and you have all of this motivation and energy, internal energy to try and do some of the things that you want to do. Like I was really hoping to **start New Year's off with a bang** and go for some long runs and take advantage of the holidays so I could do some extra running. But I haven't even run one kilometer yet this year. Just because I want to make sure that I fully recover and I'm healthy before I go and do something stupid like running in the winter weather in the snow and extending my illness for even a longer time.

This week I also participated in a couple of the Culips small-group conversation classes, and it seems like from talking with some of our Culips members that people all over the world are quite sick these days, suffering from colds and flu. So, guys, if you're feeling sick out there, I hope you feel better soon. And if you aren't sick, well then please take care of yourself so that you don't catch what I caught and that you can have a better start to the



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New Year than I've had so far.

One more thing before I let you go that's been a pretty crazy start to my New Year is my sleep schedule. I guess I'm quite **jetlagged** right now coming back from Canada to Korea. Usually doesn't affect me that much. Usually, I'm able to adjust to the time difference and it's a pretty big difference. I think 17 hours difference between Canada, my time zone in Canada and Korea. So, it's a big difference, but usually it doesn't affect me too much and I can get back into a Korean way of life and snap back into the time zone really quickly.

But this time it's taking me a while and I still haven't adjusted to Korean time yet. Maybe it's because I've been doing some extra napping trying to get better. You know, sleep is the best medicine in my opinion, so I've been trying to get some extra sleep when I can. But for whatever reason, I haven't adjusted back yet to the Korean time zone and so I've been staying up until like 3 or 3:30 in the morning and then sleeping until 11 in the morning or noon. It's really crazy and unnatural for me to have this kind of sleep pattern. So that also feels really weird for me. I mean, I'm trying to go to bed at a regular time, but I end up just lying in bed, **tossing and turning** and unable to sleep until, yeah, well into the early morning hours.

So, I hope that changes for me soon as well. That will be part of feeling back to normal, I guess. So yeah, that's something that I'm hoping that by next time I talk to you in next week's bonus episode has returned to normal. Thank you for listening all the way to the end of this episode and I'm going to give you a completion code as I always do.

The completion code is just a vocabulary word that you can use on its own or in an example sentence and share in the comments for this episode. Either on Instagram or YouTube or on our Discord community. And the completion code that I'm going to use for this week is curveball. Curveball. C-U-R-V-E-B-A-L-L, curveball.

And why am I using the completion code curveball? We have this saying in English, **"Sometimes life throws you a curveball."** And a curveball is a kind of pitch that a baseball pitcher can make. You know, when they throw the ball towards the batter, but the



ball doesn't go straight all the way to the catcher, but it kind of curves and goes in a curved pattern. And sometimes this can confuse the batter, right? They think that the ball is coming at them in a straight line, but then at the end it kind of curves and it changes direction. And so, when they swing, they end up striking. They're unable to hit the ball. This is a curveball.

And when life throws you a curveball, it just means sometimes life doesn't go according to plan. We can make all the plans in the world, but there are so many different factors in life that can change our plans. And when that happens, we can say sometimes life throws you a curveball. So, I had all of these plans for the new year. You know, I talked about some of those in last week's episode and I was ready to get started with my new year's resolutions for 2025. But then life threw me a curveball. I got really sick, and I haven't been able to do any of those things yet. But hey, that's fine. That's just the way it is. Sometimes life throws you a curveball and you just have to deal with it, **rest up**, and come back better and stronger in the future. So that's what I'm going to do. And go, go, go.

Now you have your homework for this week. You have to leave a comment with this completion code curveball. OK, so I'm going to go. Please take care, everybody. And I'll talk to you in the next episode. Until then, bye bye.

## Glossary

1. **Winter Wonderland:** A beautiful, snowy landscape often associated with winter. In the episode, Andrew describes waking up to a snowy view outside his home. *Example: After the heavy snowfall, the park looked like a winter wonderland.*
2. **Work up an appetite:** To become hungry after physical activity. Andrew mentions feeling hungry after shoveling snow in the morning. *Example: After hiking all day, we worked up an appetite for a big dinner.*

3. **Started on the wrong foot:** To begin something poorly or with difficulties. Andrew shares how his new year started with sickness and jet lag. *Example: The project started on the wrong foot when the team missed the first deadline.*
4. **Something going around:** An expression to describe when many people are sick with the same illness. Andrew noticed that many people around him were unwell during his travels. *Example: There's definitely something going around at work. Half the office is out sick.*
5. **Knocked out:** To feel extremely tired or to fall asleep quickly. Andrew was knocked out after feeling sick and battling jet lag. *Example: After running a marathon, I was knocked out and slept for 12 hours.*
6. **Coming down with something:** To begin feeling symptoms of an illness. Andrew felt he was coming down with a cold during his flight. *Example: I think I'm coming down with something, my throat feels scratchy.*
7. **Alleviate:** To reduce or relieve pain or discomfort. Andrew tried to alleviate the pressure in his ears during the plane's descent. *Example: The doctor gave me medicine to alleviate the pain in my back.*
8. **Pop my ears:** To equalize ear pressure, often during changes in altitude. Andrew experienced difficulty popping his ears during the flight landing. *Example: I chewed gum to help pop my ears while the plane was descending.*
9. **Hacking up a lung:** A dramatic way to describe someone coughing very hard. Andrew noticed many people at the clinic were coughing and "hacking up a lung." *Example: The cold was so bad that I felt like I was hacking up a lung all night.*
10. **Start with a bang:** To begin something in an exciting or energetic way. Andrew hoped to start the new year with a bang by achieving his goals. *Example: The concert started with a bang, featuring fireworks and a lively performance.*
11. **Jetlagged:** Feeling tired or disoriented due to traveling across time zones. Andrew described struggling with being jetlagged after returning from Canada. *Example: After flying to Japan, I felt jetlagged for a few days.*
12. **Tossing and turning:** To struggle to fall asleep, moving restlessly in bed. Andrew mentioned tossing and turning at night due to jet lag. *Example: I was tossing and turning all night, worried about my exam.*

13. **Sometimes life throws you a curveball:** Life can be unpredictable and bring unexpected challenges. Andrew felt that getting sick was a curveball that disrupted his New Year's plans. *Example: We planned a picnic, but life threw us a curveball when it started raining.*

14. **Rest up:** To take time to recover by resting, especially when someone is sick or hurt. "Rest up" is often used for healing, while "rest" is a general word for relaxing when tired. Andrew said it's important to rest up to feel better and get ready for the new year. *Example: After getting the flu, she stayed in bed to rest up and get her energy back.*

## Episode credits

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