

The search for the lost ring

Episode description

In this week's bonus episode, Andrew tells a story about losing his wedding ring. Plus, he teaches you an idiomatic expression that native speakers use all the time: **on and off**.



Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello, everyone, my name is Andrew and you're listening to the Culips English Podcast. How's it going, guys? I hope everyone's okay, it's good to be back here with you again for another English study session. Thank you for joining me. So, at the start of each new week, I have been releasing a short bonus episode, where I tell you a little story about what's new with me what's, going on in my life. And I also teach you a useful English expression that will help you build your English listening, speaking, and communication skills. Now, the transcripts for these bonus episodes are completely free for everyone. It doesn't matter if you're a Culips member, or not a Culips member, anyone can download the transcript completely for free. So, if you want to get it and follow along with the transcript as you listen today, which I think is a pretty good idea, it's a nice way to study. To do that, all you need to do is visit our website, Culips.com, C-U-L-I-P-S dot com and there, you can get the transcripts. You could also just check out the link in the description for this episode, and that's an easy way to go right to the website and get the transcript. There are two different formats. There's a PDF format and there's also a digital version. So, if you're studying on your phone or tablet, or computer, I recommend the digital version, it looks really nice on screens. But if you would rather print off the transcript, and you know, have the physical paper in your hand, then I recommend the PDF file, it's great for printing.

Guys, it's been about a week since last week's update, and to be honest with you, not too much has happened since then. It was a really, really rainy week last week here in Seoul where I live. And actually, it's even raining right now, I don't know, in the background of this audio, maybe you can hear the sound of the rain falling against my window, perhaps the sound is coming through. I hope not, but it's possible that you can hear a faint rain sound in the background. But anyways, because of the rain, I didn't really go outside too much. I just stayed at home a lot last week, and on Tuesday evening, we had the live stream for Culips Members and that was really fun. It was great to hang out and spend some time with some of our members. Now aside from the live stream, in other news from last week, I have a big announcement. Personally, this is a big announcement for me, and I think many of you can relate to this as well, because I know our audience is composed is made up of long-term language learners. Of course, some of you are new to English study, but a large part of our audience has been learning English, studying English, maybe even studying other languages as well, for years and years and years. And I've been studying Korean as my second language for, well on and off, for getting close to 10 years now, although I did take about a five-year gap in the middle of that time. But yeah, I've been learning Korean for a long time. And I have a milestone that I accomplished last week

because I completed a one-year streak of using Anki every single day with no missed days.

So Anki is a free flashcard program that I really enjoy. And it's just a program that you can use to learn vocabulary, that's what I use it for. It's for reviewing the key vocabulary that I find or encounter when I'm reading books in Korean or listening to podcasts in Korean, watching YouTube videos in Korean, that kind of thing. Whenever I see a keyword that I think is interesting, and I want to learn, I make a sentence card in Anki, and then I can review it later. And the idea here is that through repeated reviews, you'll be able to get a sense of this word, and then the next time in the future that you hear it, you'll be able to recognize it. And when this happens several times, you recognize it again and again and again—in the wild so to speak, like when you're just consuming content in that language—well, then eventually you'll get a really deep understanding of how that word is used. And then eventually, you'll find that you'll be able to use the word when you're speaking as well, and I've found that repeated Anki study like this has really helped my vocabulary in Korean.

So that's what Anki is in a nutshell, and although I've been using Anki, for years, this was the first time I've been successfully able to complete a one-year streak with no exceptions. So, I felt proud of myself, I gave myself a pat on the back, and the streak continues! The streak is not over, it's continuing, so I'm hoping that I can make it till next year with no breaks as well. And for any of you who are out there that want to use a program like Anki for your English study, I think it could be a really cool way to study with Culips. You know, you could find some sentences that are interesting to you, even from an episode like this, and then copy them from the transcript, make a flashcard with them in Anki, and review them again and again, every day, just kind of like how I do my Anki flashcards in Korean every day. And I think that would be an excellent way to build your vocabulary. So, if you're interested about Anki, just go to YouTube, type it in A-N-K-I, I'm not sponsored by Anki or anything. In fact, it's a free app, free software. It's totally open source, and yeah, it's just an application that I've found to be really helpful, and so, I think maybe you could benefit from it as well. And like I said, if you're interested in learning more about it, just go to YouTube, type in Anki and there will be so many different tutorials and explanation videos about how to use it that can really help you get started.

So, I crossed that milestone off of my bucket list, a one-year streak on Anki. I was so happy last week when I was able to achieve that goal. But something else happened last week that wasn't so cool, wasn't so awesome. In fact, it was a little bit stressful. And that is that last week, I lost my wedding ring.

No, I can't believe it, I lost my wedding ring. I recently celebrated my one-year anniversary in May. And to be honest, I was shocked that it took me so long to lose my wedding ring,

like I thought that I would have lost it much sooner than, than this but I made it over a year without misplacing or losing my ring. But last week, I did lose it. Don't worry though, the story does have a happy ending. And I'll share the story with you now. Now, it's a long story. And I'm going to try and keep things brief. So, I'll cut out some of the details and keep it short. As short as I can, at least. I think you guys know that sometimes I tend to go on and on and blabber a lot. But I'll try to keep it brief.

So, last week when I lost my wedding ring, I wasn't initially too stressed out because I knew that I had lost it in the house. It had been raining all day as it has been recently, and I didn't go outside at all that day when I lost it. So, I knew that it must be in the house somewhere, and I had a feeling that I probably misplaced it when I took it off to do the dishes. But where it disappeared to in the house was a complete and total mystery. But it wasn't too stressed out at first because I knew it was in the house and that it would show up sooner or later. Now, I realized that I lost the ring at night. My wife was already sleeping then, so I didn't really want to like wake her up by searching for it right then. So, I actually went to bed and just thought, "Oh I'll wake up the next day and I'll be able to find the ring, and everything will be cool." Well, the next day came, and I looked for my ring pretty much on and off all day, but I couldn't find it. And as the hours went by, I started to get a little bit nervous. And I thought back on the previous day, and it was true that I was home all day, but I also remembered that I did leave the apartment to go outside and take out the garbage. So, I got really panicked all of a sudden, like did my ring somehow fall off my hand when I was taking the garbage out and fall into the garbage bag and get taken away to the garbage dump by the garbage truck? Oh, I started having these negative thoughts. So, I retraced my steps, and I went down to the garbage and recycling area of my building and looked around, but no luck it wasn't there at all. This is a little bit gross, but I even did find my garbage bag from the previous day, and I poked around in the garbage bag a little bit to see if the ring was there, and again no luck, I couldn't find it at all.

And then, I also remembered that the previous day, I had cleaned one of our rugs by beating the rug while I was holding it outside on our balcony. So, I thought maybe my ring, did it fly off my finger while I was beating the rug? Now to beat a rug means to hit a rug, just like you could beat somebody up or like beat somebody by punching them. I was kind of hitting the rug, you know, to clean all of the dust and debris off of the rug. So, our apartment is actually on the fourth floor of our building, and I got really scared like, oh my god, if the ring fell off my finger while I was beating the rug and it fell down four storeys to the ground, then there's probably no way I could find it. Actually, right under our balcony is a parking area. So, I went down to the parking area, and I looked all around, I scoured the area below our balcony, and again, no luck.

I scoured the area. Scoured: S-C-O-U-R-E-D. To scour means to look for something very, very carefully. So, I scoured the parking area below the balcony, and I had no luck at all.

And by this point in the day, guys, I would say that it was almost the evening. And at this point, I did start to get a bit stressed out about not finding my wedding ring. So, I made up my mind to do just a big search, I was like, this is enough, I'm gonna find this ring. I'm pretty confident, like 95% confident that it's inside the apartment. So, I decided to get to work, do a big search of the apartment one more time, and find the ring.

So, I put on some headphones, I selected a good podcast, and I got to work methodically checking my apartment, room by room by room. Now finally, after about 40 minutes of searching, the ring turned up. Thankfully! Turned up, turned up, when something turns up, it means that it was found. So, I found the ring, or the ring turned up, means the same thing. And can you guys guess where the ring was? It was in a really weird location, it was actually wedged between the cushions on the bench for our kitchen table. So, our kitchen table has two chairs plus one longer bench and where the two cushions meet, you know there's the bottom cushion and the back cushion on the bench. In that crack, the ring was way down wedged in the middle.

To be wedged somewhere means like squished in between two pieces of something. So, the ring then was wedged in that crack between the cushions, and I was able to find it there. Now, that seems like a pretty normal place, I guess for like something to fall out of your pocket and slide into. But the weird thing was I don't remember sitting on the bench at all the previous day. So, I was a bit miffed, a bit surprised, a bit confused. OK, all of those words we can use in this situation when you don't really understand you can say I was miffed, I was confused, I was surprised. But all in all, at the end of the day, I didn't really care too much about how the ring got there, I guess that'll remain a mystery for all time. But I was just happy that I ended up finding it and got it back, it was a big relief.

And now it's time for this week's vocabulary lesson. I'm going to teach you all about a common idiomatic expression. It is on and off. We use this expression to talk about situations when you start doing something and then you stop, and then you start again, and then you stop. You're on and then you're off. Did you hear when I used it in this episode? In fact, I used it in two separate spots. Why don't we rewind, go back, and listen to those parts of the episode a couple more times?

I've been studying Korean as my second language for, well on and off, for getting close to 10 years now.

The next day came, and I looked for my ring pretty much on and off all day.

So, I talked about learning Korean, on and off. And also, about searching for my ring, on and off. Maybe you guys could say that you've studied English, on and off. I'm sure many

of you have taken long breaks in your study at some point, and if you have, well then you could say something like, I've been learning English on and off for five years, or however long you've been learning English for, you have to change the time based on your specific situation. A sentence like this communicates that the time you've been learning English until now has in total been five years, but that you haven't studied continuously that whole time. That during that time, at some point, you've taken some breaks. I've prepared some example sentences for us to study with that will help us to learn this expression a bit more deeply. Why don't we take a listen to them now?

Example sentence number one

When I was a university student I worked on and off as a bartender.

Let's break that example sentence down. So, the speaker of that sentence said that when he was a university student he worked on and off as a bartender. So, this means that he worked for a bit, and then stopped working, and then started working, and then stopped working. Maybe like during the summer vacation time, he would work more. And then when he was busy with school, he would work less? We're not exactly sure about when he worked, and when he took breaks, but we do know that he had this pattern because he worked on and off, and that's what this means, right? That he worked for a time, then he stopped working. And then he started again. This kind of pattern.

Example sentence number two

It's been raining on and off all day, so you better bring an umbrella with you when you leave.

Let's break this sentence down. The Speaker said, "It's been raining on and off all day." So, this means that it rains and then it stops raining. And then it starts raining, and then it stops raining. So, because of this unpredictable weather, it could rain, it could not rain, the rain has been on and off starting and stopping all day. So, because of this unpredictable weather, the speaker says that, "You better bring an umbrella with you when you leave." This is a way that we can make a very strong suggestion, you better bring an umbrella. It's like a really strong suggestion, guys. And if you want to say that doing something is highly, highly, highly recommended, then you can use that phrase: you better do something. You have to be almost careful with this because it is a really strong suggestion. For example, maybe a parent when they are threatening their child, like they could say something like,

"You better do your homework, or else no video games for a month", right? It's almost like they're threatening them. So, it is a suggestion, but we use it in this way, as a very, very strong suggestion. So just be careful when using that expression to suggest something to someone because you don't want to give somebody the wrong impression by being too strong with your speech.

Example sentence number three

Jack and Jill have been dating on and off for three years, and currently, they're on.

Let's break down that example sentence. So, Jack and Jill have been dating on and off for three years. Do you know any couples like this? They date and then they break up, and they're dating again, then they break up and they get back together, and they break up. They're on and off, on and off. So, this couple, Jack and Jill, they are dating on and off. They're together, they break up, and currently they're on we heard the speaker say, "Currently they're on." So, that means that they are together right now. It's like that point in their relationship cycle where they are currently together.

That's it for this episode everyone, thank you for listening. Great job at making it to the end of today's lesson and getting some English practice in today. You can feel proud about yourself for doing that because this is what you need to do to get fluent in English. So, you're doing the work, you're taking the right steps that you need to take. Great job. If you liked Culips, we would really appreciate your support. You can support us by following us on social media, telling your friends who are learning English to check Culips out, or by signing up and becoming a Culips Member. For all the details just visit our website Culips.com. Hope you have a great week everyone, take care. I'll catch you next time. Goodbye!

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