

Movie marathon

Episode description

In this week's bonus episode, Andrew shares some stories about what he did last week. Plus, he teaches you a useful and common idiomatic expression that native speakers use all the time: **to be at the top of your game**.



Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello there, everyone, it's Andrew here and you're listening to the Culips English Podcast. Thank you for pressing play on this episode and joining me for another English study session. If this is your first time listening to Culips, welcome to the podcast. It's great to have you here. I'm an English teacher from Canada, but I live and work in Seoul, South Korea. And here at Culips, we make lessons for intermediate and advanced English learners from all corners of the world that are designed to help you upgrade your English skills and reach your fluency goals. At the start of each week, I make a short bonus episode and share a couple of stories about what I've been up to, and I also teach you a useful English expression. The transcripts for the bonus episodes are 100% completely free for everyone, and we recommend following along with the transcript while you listen. To get it, just click the link in the description or visit our website, which is Culips.com. C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

So, guys, how are things going? How was your week last week? I hope everything went well for you. I kicked off last week with a really great bike ride, it was a fantastic way to begin the week. Regular Culips listeners will know that one of my hobbies is riding my bike. But lately, I just haven't been able to get out and ride as often as I'd like. But on Monday, I was finally able to remedy that. To remedy something means to fix something. So, I was finally able to fix not being able to ride my bike for a long time.

So, I got outside, and I went for a wonderful ride on Monday morning. It was a nice, long, peaceful ride. These days, it's been incredibly hot here in Seoul and so, so humid as well. So, to beat the heat, I woke up really early in the morning, 4:45 in the morning, so that I could get outside and ride before the temperature got too hot. So, I woke up early, I had a cup of coffee, of course, got to have my coffee. And then I checked my bike to make sure it was in good condition and the tires were all pumped up. And then, I hit the road just after sunrise. I rode for about two and a half hours around the Han River here in Seoul, and it was really nice. There weren't too many people on the bike path that early in the morning. And while it was still really hot and humid out, the weather was bearable. The weather was bearable. Have you heard that word before bearable? If something is bearable, it means that you can accept it or deal with it. Even if it's not perfect, it's still not a deal breaker. It's still acceptable. So even though the weather was hot, it was bearable, I could handle it. And I was able to have a great ride.

Now the nice thing about waking up that early in the morning is that when your ride is finished and you come back home, it's still early in the morning. So, I got home by like 8am, and I felt like I already won the day. I had done this big activity, I got some exercise, I

got outside, and it was just a really awesome feeling. So, I'm definitely going to try and make this more of a habit, and to get out for more early-morning rides as often as possible, at least whenever the weather cooperates with me.

And then on the weekend, my wife and I went to the movies twice, two times. I haven't been to the movies for quite a while, but yeah that changed last weekend when we went both on Friday night and Saturday night. So, on Friday, we watched *Top Gun: Maverick*. Have you seen this movie? Or have you heard about this movie? It's the new Tom Cruise military action drama about a group of jet fighter pilots. To be honest with you, I'm not really a huge fan of this kind of action movie. It's the kind of movie that my wife calls a quote, unquote, "killing time movie." So, what she means by that is it's a movie that's fun and it's entertaining, but that's about it. It's not really deep, or serious, or artistic anything like that.

Actually, I thought *Top Gun* was pretty cheesy. And what I mean by cheesy is that the story was really predictable, and unoriginal, and a little bit boring too. But it made up for the cheesy parts with some fantastic action scenes and the jet-flying scenes and the special effects were just amazing, and that made the movie more enjoyable. So, if you're an action movie fan, or an aviation fan, then definitely you're not going to want to miss *Top Gun: Maverick*.

And then the very next day, on Saturday, we saw another movie, this time a Korean movie, and the movie's name, at least the English translation is: *Decision to Leave*. The original title is *Haeeojil Gyeolshim* in Korean. Now this movie was incredible. It was made by a director named Park Chan-wook, who is one of Korea's top directors, a favorite of mine, and an absolute master artist who's really at the top of his game right now. The movie stars Chinese actress Tang Wei and Korean actor Park Hae-il. And I loved everything about this movie, from the story, to the acting, to the set designs and costume, the soundtrack. Even the translation of the English subtitles was fantastic, so everything was incredibly well done. And I was absorbed in the story the whole time. It really sucked me in. Now Park Chan-wook, the director of the movie, he won Best Director award at the Cannes Film Festival for this movie. And you guys, if you get a chance to see it, I highly recommend it. I know it's not available in every country to watch right now, but I think it will have a worldwide theatrical release in the near future. And I won't be surprised if this movie wins many more awards, maybe at the Oscars or the BAFTAs. The BAFTAs, by the way, that is the British Academy of Film and Television Arts. It's a very highly regarded film award in the United Kingdom. The movie is part romance part murder mystery, and just fantastic.

Actually, when my wife and I were going to the movie theater to watch *Decision to Leave*, our bus got stuck in a traffic jam, and we ended up being about 10 minutes late for the movie. So, we had to awkwardly and embarrassingly squeeze ourselves through the rows of people sitting and watching the movie to find our seats, which of course, were right directly in the middle of the theater. So, because I missed the first 10 minutes or so of the movie, and because the movie was just so good overall, I'm definitely going to go watch it at least a couple of more times while it's still in theaters.

Here at Culips, we released a brand-new Chatterbox episode last week, featuring me and my cohost Anna, about the topic of decision paralysis. Now, decision paralysis is what happens when you overthink making a decision, and instead of making the decision, you just keep thinking about different options that are available to you. But you don't actually make a decision for a really long time. I think this topic is interesting, and it made for a great episode. So, if you haven't heard the episode yet, please make sure to check it out. And when you do, let me know what you think about it. And then coming up this week, we'll also be releasing a brand-new Simplified Speech episode about the topic: prized possessions. And in that episode, I'm joined by my cohost, Kassy, and we share some stories about some of our most treasured and prized possessions. So definitely keep your eyes and ears open for it when it comes out a little bit later this week.

And now it's time for this week's vocabulary lesson. So, for this week's vocabulary lesson everyone, I'm going to teach you a useful idiomatic expression. It is: **to be at the top of your game**. To be at the top of your game. And that *your* we can change that to any possessive pronoun. Could be be at the top of my game, your game, his game, her game, their game, whatever the situation is, we can change the possessive pronoun to match it. Did you hear when I use this expression in the episode? How about we rewind, go back, and listen to when I used it a couple more times.

It was made by a director named Park Chan-wook who is one of Korea's top directors, a favorite of mine, and an absolute master artist, who's really at the top of his game right now.

So, I was talking then about the movie director Park Chan-wook, and I said he is really at the top of his game. When you're at the top of your game, it means that you're doing something incredibly well at the moment. You're at your peak, you're performing at your absolute best, as best as you can. We can use this expression to describe all sorts of people: athletes, musicians, artists, workers, politicians, etc, etc. Anyone who is doing

something really well at the moment, can be described as being at the top of their game. I prepared some example sentences for us that will help us to understand this expression more deeply. Let's take a listen to them now.

Example sentence number one.

If I had a time machine, I'd love to go back and see a Rolling Stones concert from when they were at the top of their game. That'd be so amazing!

Let's break that sentence down. In that sentence, we heard the speaker say that he'd love to go back and see a Rolling Stones concert. You know the band The Rolling Stones, right? The famous British rock and roll group. Well, they've been a band for a really long time. However, I think it would be safe to say that they were at the top of their game back in the 60s and 70s. They were at their peak, their best, at that time. So, the speaker of that example sentence then says if he had a time machine, he would go back and see one of their concerts from when they were at their peak, when they were at their best, when they were at the top of their game.

Example sentence number two.

Our sales department is at the top of their game right now. I heard they just closed another deal last week.

Let's break that example sentence down. So, the sales department is at the top of their game. That means that they are performing really well. They are performing better than ever. They are the best right now. And the speaker said that he heard they closed another deal last week. To close a deal means to make a deal or to sell something. You know, if you work in the sales department, your job is to make deals, close deals, make sales. And I guess that's what the sales department did. They closed the deal, which means they finalized all of the final details for an agreement. Both parties sign the contract, and then the sale was complete.

Example sentence number three.

When Mike Tyson was at the top of his game, he was unstoppable. No one could beat him.

So, the speaker said that when Mike Tyson was at the top of his game, he was unstoppable. Do you guys know who Mike Tyson is? He is a former professional boxer who was really active in the 1980s and 1990s and into the 2000s as well. Now, Mike Tyson was a very good boxer. He was a dangerous guy and an excellent, excellent boxer. And when he was at his best, when he was at his peak, when he was at the top of his game, no one could defeat him. He would just win every boxing match that he did.

That brings us to the end of this episode, everyone. Thank you for checking it out and for studying English with me. I hope you have a fantastic week. And please remember that if you enjoy Culips, we would love your support. There are several ways that you can support us. The best way is to sign up and become a Culips Member. When you are a Culips Member, you get full and unlimited access to the study guides that we make for all of our regular episodes. You also get complete access to all of our previous episodes, and we have an archive of like 600+ previous episodes, so you get access to so much great English study content, as well as some fantastic bonuses, such as invitations to our monthly live streams, plus so much more. But that's not the only way you can support us, you could also tell your friends who are learning English to check Culips out, or to follow us on social media, such as Instagram, or Twitter, or YouTube. Or you could leave us a five-star rating and a positive review on your favorite podcast app. We'll be back with another brand-new episode a little bit later this week featuring me and Kassy and we'll talk to you all then. Take care and see you next time. Goodbye!

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