

Broken tape player

Episode description

Andrew talks about how he spent the last week and about how his vintage cassette player broke. He also teaches you how to use the expression **to slack off on doing something** and gives an update about what you can expect this week from Culips.

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Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello Culips listeners, it's Andrew here. Thanks for clicking play on your podcast app and joining me today here for an English study session. No matter where you're tuning in from, I hope you're doing well and that you had a great week last week. If this is your first time here at Culips, well, welcome. We make interesting and educational English lessons. And we create them specifically for you to help you become a better English speaker and listener, to improve your communication skills, and also to learn about the culture of English-speaking people. There's a transcript for this episode, and it's totally 100% free for everyone. To get it, just click the link that's in the episode description, or visit our website Culips.com.

All right everyone, so the last time I checked in with you, I told you all about my whirlwind weekend that happened two weeks ago, which included celebrating both my birthday and my anniversary. By the way, thank you to all of the listeners who sent me a message or left a comment to congratulate me on those two things. It was very kind of you. So because that week was so hectic and so busy, this last week I really just wanted to lay low, to recharge my batteries, and to catch up on some of the things that I've been slacking off on a little bit. If you're a long-time Culips listener, you'll know that I'm also a language learner, just like you are. I'm not learning English, but I am learning Korean. And I've been a little bit lazy with my studying the last two weeks. One of my favorite ways to practice and review new vocabulary that I learn by watching TV shows or reading books or listening to podcasts is by using a computer app called Anki. Now no matter how busy I am, I always try to spend at least a little bit of time reviewing my Anki flashcards every day. That is like the one thing with my Korean study that is mandatory every day. And I've been doing my Anki flashcard study every day. But the problem is, I've been slacking off on how many cards I review each day.

So, for example, my app might tell me that I have 100 flashcards to review. But because I'm busy or lazy, I only review 20 of them. So, there's like 80 cards remaining, and those remaining cards pile up and pile up and pile up each day. So right now, I have around 200 cards that I need to study and review. So, it's stressing me out and my goal for this week is to hammer away at my Anki cards and get all caught up. Hammer away at. Hammer away at. I'm going to hammer away at my Anki cards. That's a great phrasal verb to know. To hammer away at something, means to work really hard at doing something so that you can finish it or achieve it to reach your goal. You could imagine a builder who is building something using a hammer, right? And that person just keeps swinging the hammer up and down. Bap, bap, bap, hitting nails, nailing them down until their building project is completed. So, I think that's the imagery behind this phrasal verb expression. You could make a sentence like he hammered away at his university assignment until it was finished. Or, the band went to the recording studio and hammered away at their new album until it was perfect.

So yeah, my plan is to hammer away at my Anki cards, and also to hammer away at the book I'm currently reading. I'm part of an online book club with a community of Korean learners and we're all reading the same sci-fi novel together right now. However, I'm way behind schedule. I'm about 100 pages behind schedule, compared to the other readers. So,

I'm also going to hammer away at the book and do my best to get caught up. So what else is new that I can tell you about?

Well, I think I've mentioned on Culips before that my wife and I have been collecting and listening to many vinyl records a lot these days. I guess you could say this has been our COVID hobby. We started doing this during the height of the COVID lockdown and the pandemic when we couldn't go out as much. We stayed home often. During that time, we started really getting into collecting records, and building up our vinyl record collection, and just listening to a lot of music here at home. Now, maybe what I haven't mentioned before on Culips, is that we've also been collecting and listening to a lot of cassette tapes as well. And I think this hobby is the perfect hobby for people like my wife and me, we both love music. But we also both love old, vintage, and analog things. So, this hobby is great. It combines both of those interests. And it's also kind of affordable, because for the most part, we just buy used records and used tapes, and they're actually pretty cheap. We don't have to invest too much money into enjoying this hobby.

The thing that wasn't really cheap, though, was the actual tape player itself. The tapes are cheap, but the player was expensive. There's a really cool store near our house that is taking advantage of this renewed analog technology trend. I think this is a big trend these days for younger people to become interested again in past technology, vinyl records, cassette tapes, film cameras, all of these kinds of things. So, there is this store near our house that is taking advantage of this trend. And they sell vintage stereo equipment, and old video games and VHS players and old TVs, all of this kind of awesome vintage equipment from, let's say, the 1960s until the 1990s. It's a really cool store and visiting there is almost like going to a museum. It's just really cool to see the old vintage technology from yesteryear. I love going there.

Now my wife and I visited that store for the first time about a year ago. And we went there just to browse and just to look, we had no intention of buying anything. But when we got there, we just couldn't help ourselves and we did end up buying a vintage Sony cassette player. We dropped probably a little bit more cash on it than we should have. But it was just so cool. We couldn't help ourselves. We couldn't resist. So, we brought the tape player home and we set it up in our kitchen and enjoyed listening to music with it whenever we cooked or we ate dinner. But then, can you guess what happened? About a month after, disaster struck, and the tape player just stopped working and died on us. We took it back to the shop and they agreed to fix it. They said we'll fix it for you. We'll, we'll take it here. We'll call you in a couple of weeks. When it's ready, you can come pick it up and, and get it again and use it again. So, we gave it to the store and we waited for a couple of weeks. And finally, the store contacted us. And they told us that the player was totally shot. Totally shot and it couldn't be saved. If something is totally shot, it means it's completely broken and it can't be fixed. So, it was totally shot, S-H-O-T shot.

So, they gave us an option. They said oh you guys can either get a refund, or you could pick out a different player to replace it. So we went back to the store and we ended up choosing a really cool vintage Sony cassette player from the 1970s as a replacement. It's a really

beautiful machine. And in my opinion, a really cool piece of audio equipment. So, my wife and I, we were really happy with this tape player and we've been enjoying it so much. But then last week, on Thursday night, disaster struck again. Oh, no. And the tape player suddenly died, and it won't play tapes anymore. So, we contacted the stereo store again, and we're gonna go visit them this week. And they said they'll take a look at it for us and let us know if it can be fixed or not. I'm hoping it's going to be an easier repair, fingers crossed. But we'll have to wait and see what they say. One of the things that I love about old stereo equipment is all of the cool mechanical parts, you know, the gears and the belts and the pulleys. But unfortunately, those are also the parts that seem to break really easily. So, I don't know maybe we'll have to give this hobby up and just listen to music the easy way by streaming it from the internet. I don't know, we'll have to see what happens.

So, everyone, that's what's new with me personally. But I also wanted to give you an update about some of the cool things happening here at Culips as well. Coming up very, very soon on Tuesday, May 31st, just around the corner. Tuesday, May 31st at 7:30pm, Korea time. So of course, you'll have to check and see what time it is in your corner of the world. But here I live in Korea, so I'm updating you with Korea time. On May 31st 7:30pm Korean Standard Time, Kassy and I we are going to be hosting the Culips Member live stream for May. So, if you don't know what this is, Kassy and I we do a live video and we stream it and interact with Culips Members in real time. We hang out, we communicate, we practice English with each other. It's always really, really fun and I hope many of you can join us here on the final day of this month, May 31st.

Now to participate in the live stream, you do have to be a Culips Member. This is one of the benefits that we want to give all of the very wonderful Culips Members who support us and allow us to keep making English lessons for everyone. So, this is our kind of thank you to the Culips Member community. So, you do have to be a member to participate. If you want to sign up and become a member, you can just do that by visiting our websites Culips.com. If you are already a Culips member, and you would like to join the live stream and hang out with Kassy and I on Tuesday, May 31st, then all you have to do is log into your Culips account and follow the link from the dashboard. We also have some really exciting new episodes that will be released soon. A little later this week, we'll be releasing the newest Simplified Speech episode, which is all about Kassy's wedding story. So, I'm sure you're going to want to tune in and hear that. I'm also working on a brand-new Fluency Files episode. And we'll be uploading that as soon as it's finished. So, if you're a Culips member, and you have access to the Fluency Files, then make sure to check your dashboard for an update about that episode very, very soon.

And now it's time for today's vocabulary lesson. So, everyone, I want to teach you about an expression that I used a few times in this episode. It's a really natural expression and a great one to add to your vocabulary. It is to slack off on doing something. To slack off on doing something. Okay? Slack. S-L-A-C-K. Off. O-F-F. On. It is a phrasal verb, and it has two particles: off on. To slack off on. So, what does it mean? Well, to slack off on doing something means to be lazy and to not work hard. So why don't we rewind and go back to

the part of this episode where I used this expression. And we'll listen to that part a couple more times, and then break it down and talk about the meaning.

The problem is I've been slacking off on how many cards I review each day.
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Okay, so let's break that sentence down. Did you notice the verb tense? It's in the present perfect progressive tense. We use this verb tense when we're talking about an action that started in the past and is still continuing now in the present moment. So, I said I've been slacking off on how many Anki cards I review each day. And so, this means that starting in the past, starting a couple of weeks ago when I started getting really busy, and now still in the present moment continuing into the present moment. I have been lazy and not studying hard. I haven't been working hard at doing my Anki flashcards study.

I also prepared some additional example sentences with this expression, to slack off on doing something. Let's listen to the first one.

If you keep slacking off on the report, we're gonna miss the deadline.

Let's break this one down. In the sentence, the speaker is telling a coworker that the coworker needs to hurry up and work harder because the coworker is slacking off on doing a report, on writing a report. And if this coworker continues to be lazy, then the deadline will pass, and they will miss the deadline. So, the speaker of that sentence is saying kind of hurry up. If you keep slacking off on the report, we're gonna miss the deadline. So hurry up, work harder. It's got this kind of meaning.

Example sentence number two.

Sally's the hardest working person I know. You'll never see her slacking off on anything.

Okay, and now I'll break this example down. So, in this sentence, we learn about a woman named Sally and Sally is a very hard-working person. She never slacks off on anything. That means that she always works hard, and she's never lazy.

Final example sentence, let's do it.

My personal trainer told me the key to success is never slacking off on eating healthy meals and exercising regularly.

So, in this example, we hear from somebody who is telling us about what his personal trainer said. And the personal trainer said that the key to success and living a healthy lifestyle is never slacking off when it comes to eating healthy meals and regular exercise. So here the personal trainer is communicating that they want their clients to always eat healthy and to always exercise regularly, to not be lazy about doing these two things. All right everyone,

that's it for this week's mini episode. Thank you again for joining me and great job at getting some English listening practice accomplished today. You can feel good that you didn't slack off on studying English, at least for today. So, I hope you guys all have a great week. Please take care and we'll talk to you soon in the next edition of the Culips English Podcast. Goodbye!

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