
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Have a go

The logo for BBC Learning English, featuring the letters 'BBC' in a white box above the words 'LEARNING ENGLISH' in white capital letters, all on a teal background.

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Morning Neil. In a rush today, were you?

Neil

Just a bit, Feifei. You know, kids, breakfast, commute. The usual. Why?

Feifei

Well – I noticed your shirt isn't ironed.

Neil

Very attentive of you.

Feifei

And your shirt has – ketchup on it?

Neil

Oops, yes – beans for breakfast.

Feifei

And you haven't shaved, have you?

Neil

Well, no. Erm...

Feifei

You really do need to make more of an effort.

Neil

Feifei, why are you having a go at me?

Feifei

Relax, Neil. I'm just giving you the opportunity to use the phrase we are teaching, which is: 'have a go'!

Neil

Well that's a relief.

Feifei

'To have a go at someone', as we've just seen, means to criticise someone.

Neil

That's right. Here are some examples.

Examples

The boss really had a go at Michaela after she offended our clients.

Susie had a go at her husband last night. He'd forgotten all about her birthday.

Why do you always have a go at me? Why can't you say something nice?

Feifei

That's our phrase. 'To have a go at someone' - which means to criticise someone.

Neil

There. Can we be nice to each other now?

Feifei

Well, we can have a go!

Neil

Ah, very clever. 'To have a go' has another meaning – 'to try'.

Feifei

Yes – if you have a go at something, you try it.

Neil

Why don't you have a go at making an example sentence, Feifei?

Feifei

Ok then. I'm going to have a go at cooking a Thai curry from scratch.

Neil

Tasty. 'To have a go' meaning 'to try'. And one last thing, Feifei. Do I really look scruffy?

Feifei

Not at all. Though you could shave once in a while.

Neil

I'll have a go. Just for you Feifei.

Feifei + Neil

Bye.