BBC LEARNING ENGLISH
The English We Speak
Clickbait

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil
Hello and welcome to this beautiful riverside for this edition of The English We Speak. We're going to teach you a new word connected to the internet. I'm Neil and with me is Feifei.

Feifei
Hi there.

Neil
Nothing beats a bit of fishing for relaxation, does it Feifei? Can you pass me the bait?

Feifei
Bait – that's the stuff you use to attract the fish. Worms are often used. OK Neil, but where is the bait?

Neil
Don't say we forgot to bring it. OK, well, let's just have a look on my smartphone for places nearby we can buy some… Oh look at this Feifei – how to earn a million pounds a year working from home.

Feifei
Don't follow that link Neil – it's just clickbait. It'll be some nonsense.

Neil
Clickbait. As we said, 'bait' is something used to attract fish when you are trying to catch them. Clickbait is a link on a website that's trying to attract you – to make you click on it.

Feifei
It's a word made up of two words: click and bait. Clickbait. Here are some examples.

Example
I can never read a long article online. I'm so distracted by the clickbait I always end up on some other site.

I should have known that article wasn't really going to be about Justin Bieber. They're just using his image as clickbait!

I used to love social media but now it's just full of adverts and clickbait. Rubbish!

Neil
Clickbait. A link on a website designed to draw your attention and make you click!

Feifei
It has a quite negative sense. You feel a little like you've been tricked when you click on clickbait.

Neil
That's right. The main aim of the clickbait is to get hits to a site rather than genuinely informing you. Right, now Feifei, how are we going to get some worms to make this fishing trip a success?

Feifei
Let's have another look at your phone – oh look, 'Celebrity clothing failures…'

Neil
Feifei, that's clickbait. I need bait!

Both
Bye!