

---

# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### To reinvent the wheel

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**

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

**Neil**

... and... hi there... I'm Neil.

**Feifei**

Err... Neil, could we have your attention please?

**Neil**

Sorry Feifei – I'm still trying to finish the script for this programme.

**Feifei**

What? You're still writing the script for this programme! So what's going to happen today then?

**Neil**

Well, I thought that you could pretend to arrive late... I've lost my coffee...I just need to think of an authentic real English phrase to use now...

**Feifei**

Oh come on Neil, there is no need to reinvent the wheel!

**Neil**

Feifei, you're amazing – **to reinvent the wheel** – that's a great English phrase. I'll use that in my script.

**Feifei**

**To reinvent the wheel** means 'to waste time trying to create something that has already been made'. So I'm saying, don't waste time writing a script that has already been written – all your ideas have been written before!

**Neil**

Really?

**Feifei**

I'll show you – but first let's hear some more examples of this phrase...

### Examples

Don't reinvent the wheel; we already have a plan that seems to work well.

He spent days working out the new course syllabus when we had planned it already – he's just reinvented the wheel!

Nancy's new idea is just the same as the old one – she's just reinvented the wheel!

### Feifei

So **to reinvent the wheel** means 'to waste time and effort doing something that someone has done before'. Now let me show you that old script...

### Neil

Oh yeah. Let's have a look. Arrives late... drinks coffee... I tell a joke... you're right Feifei, this is almost the same script. I'll just copy the idea for today's script.

### Feifei

Actually, maybe you shouldn't reinvent the wheel - and start writing something new and original.

### Neil

Sorry - we're out of time Feifei. I just need to say something funny and we can go... I've had a 'wheely' good time!

### Feifei

That wasn't funny.

### Both

Bye!