
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Cheap and cheerful



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Li

Hi and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Li and with me today is my colleague Neil.

Neil

Hello everyone. How was your Christmas, Li? Did you receive lots of nice presents?

Li

Yes, loads. Nothing that was really expensive. Everything was cheap and cheerful.

Neil

Oh, that's a nice phrase you used. When people say that something is cheap and cheerful, they mean the product doesn't cost much but it serves its purpose. The customer is happy with it!

Li

So it is a positive phrase. Let's hear some examples of how it is used:

Examples

She enjoys shopping for cheap and cheerful presents.

He made a lot of money from designing cheap and cheerful toys for children.

Li

Some people design very clever little gifts. Look at this nice bracelet. It's actually a USB stick!

Neil

Oh, that reminds me of the smart watch my wife bought me online. In less than a week the battery has completely gone! It's useless.

Li

Oh dear! If the quality is bad, I would use another phrase: 'cheap and nasty'! Let's hear a couple of examples:

Examples

Everything in this shop is cheap and nasty. Don't buy anything.

My boyfriend is very stingy. The hotel where we stayed was cheap and nasty. I wouldn't recommend it.

Neil

To be honest I don't like online shopping because you can easily be fooled by their wonderful-looking pictures.

Li

I know. When people want to save some money by buying something cheap and cheerful they often end up wasting their money because the goods can turn out to be cheap and nasty.

Neil

No one likes a product that is cheap and nasty, but I hope everyone likes the two phrases we have taught today.

Li

Cheers!

Neil

Bye!