
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Smombie

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

Neil

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Neil and joining me today is...

Feifei

Argh! Ouch!

Neil

...Feifei ...who's just walked right into a door.

Feifei

Hi. I was just catching up on some messages on my phone and I sort of lost track of where I was.

Neil

Hmm yes, you were walking around like a zombie – a smartphone zombie. A smombie is a person who walks around with their head bowed down, writing messages or playing games on their phone and not paying any attention to the world around them!

Feifei

Even if they're in a situation which might be dangerous – like crossing a road.

Neil

Or walking into a radio studio door! How's your nose?

Feifei

OK, OK, Neil. You've made your point. Let's hear some examples.

Examples

I'm too terrified to drive past the college these days. You never know when a smombie's going step into the road in front of the car!

I was knocked flying the other day by a smombie as I was trying to get a bus. I don't even think she knew she'd bumped into me!

People don't know how to communicate with each other face-to-face any more. They are such smombies!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and in this programme we're learning a really new word which is made up of two words – smartphone and zombie.

Neil

The word is smombie. It's actually from German and has won Germany's 'Youth Word of the Year' competition.

Feifei

But people are now starting to use it in English too. It describes people who walk around totally absorbed by their smartphones.

Neil

You know, the kind of people who walk into the road without looking at the traffic... Or into studio doors.

Feifei

Enough now Neil!

Neil

Bye!

Feifei

Bye.