

Stop Saying “Tired”: Sleepy, Exhausted or Drained?

English learning resource · EN

Full episode script · English

85 lines

Study task: Listen again and notice the expressions you studied.

Martin, I am tired.

You said that yesterday, Julia.

I know.

But today I am very tired.

That still does not tell me what kind of tired you are.

What kind?

Tired is tired, Martin.

Not always.

Are you sleepy, exhausted, or drained?

At this moment... possibly all three.

Then you need rest. But first, you have given us a vocabulary lesson.

Welcome to Your English Toolbox and Practice Arena Five-Minute English.

I am Martin.

And I am Julia.

Today we are learning three more precise alternatives to tired: sleepy, exhausted, and drained.

Let us begin with my morning.

I went to bed too late and could hardly keep my eyes open at breakfast.

So you were sleepy.

Exactly.

Sleepy means that you feel ready or likely to fall asleep.

We normally say, “I am sleepy” or “I feel sleepy.”

It is specifically connected to sleep, not necessarily to hard work.

Then I spent the afternoon moving furniture.

Heavy boxes and no lift?

Six flights of stairs, Martin.

Then you were exhausted.

Completely exhausted.



Exhausted means extremely tired after physical or mental effort.

It is much stronger than tired.

We can also feel exhausted after studying all night or concentrating for many hours.

Right.

The effort can be physical or mental.

Then I received a difficult call from a friend and worried about her all evening.

And that left you drained.

Yes.

Drained means that all your energy seems to have disappeared.

Imagine energy draining out of a container until nothing is left.

A stressful conversation, a difficult week, or constant worry can leave you feeling drained.

So let us compare them.

Sleepy means you want or need to sleep.

Exhausted means extremely tired after intense effort.

And drained means that your energy has been used up, often emotionally or mentally.

Can I be exhausted and drained at the same time?

Absolutely.

Choosing the precise word helps the listener understand what you need: sleep, serious rest, or emotional recovery.

Time for a quick challenge.

Say the best word before Julia answers.

Situation one.

You are watching television, your eyes keep closing, and it is almost midnight.

Sleepy.

Situation two.

You have just finished a long mountain hike.

Exhausted.

Situation three.

You spent the entire day dealing with conflict and other people's problems.

Drained.

Sometimes more than one word is possible.

Ask yourself: what picture do I want to give?

Now think about how you feel today.

Complete one sentence aloud.

"I feel blank because blank." Choose sleepy, exhausted, or drained.

Quick recap.



Sleepy means ready to fall asleep.

Exhausted means extremely tired after serious effort.

Drained means having little or no energy left, often after emotional or mental pressure.

Before you go, remember that listening is only the first step.

Open this episode at Your English Toolbox dot com and turn these three words into active English.

On the episode page, you can listen while following the interactive transcript, or use Cinema Mode to see each sentence appear in time with the audio.

You can read the transcript in English or compare every line with Spanish, German, French, or Farsi.

Then open the vocabulary section for clear meanings, grammar notes, natural examples, and useful differences that help you choose the right word.

In Practice Arena, you can test yourself, receive immediate feedback, and complete a speaking challenge based on your own life.

And if you prefer to study away from the screen, download the free transcript and vocabulary PDFs in your language.

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Everything is organised to help you listen, understand, practise, and remember.

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The website is free, and every episode gives you more than something to hear.

It gives you tools you can use.

Three better words.

One clearer picture.

And a complete lesson waiting for you online.

Now I really am going to bed.

Good idea, Julia.

You sound sleepy, exhausted, and drained.

Thank you for the diagnosis, Doctor Martin.

See you at Your English Toolbox.

