

# Something Came Up: 4 Natural Ways to Change Plans

English learning resource · EN

## Full episode script · English

106 lines

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

Martin, are you already at the café?

Yes.

Our meeting starts in fifteen minutes.

I am afraid something has come up.

Is everything all right?

Yes.

My train has been cancelled, and the next one leaves in an hour.

Then we need to change our plans.

And we need to do it in natural, polite English.

Fortunately, that is exactly what today's episode is about.

Welcome to Your English Toolbox.

I am Julia.

And I am Martin.

This is episode three of Everyday Useful Expressions.

Our series gives you ready-made English for real situations.

Today we are learning four natural expressions for changing a plan without sounding abrupt or careless.

Our first expression is: Something has come up.

Something has come up.

It means that an unexpected situation has appeared and now affects your plans.

You may not want or need to explain every detail.

For example: I am sorry, but something has come up at work.

Or: Something has come up, so I cannot meet you this afternoon.

The present perfect is important: something has come up.

Not "an unexpected has come up".



And not simply “I have a problem” if you want to sound calm and natural.

Is the expression formal?

It is neutral and useful with friends, colleagues and clients.

But it can sound vague, so add a little context when appropriate.

Our second expression is: I’m sorry for the short notice.

I’m sorry for the short notice.

Short notice means that you are giving someone very little time to prepare for a change.

If you cancel a meeting three weeks in advance, it is not short notice.

If you change it fifteen minutes before it begins, it definitely is.

For example: I’m sorry for the short notice, but I need to leave work early today.

Or: I’m sorry for the short notice.

My train has been cancelled.

This expression recognises that the change may inconvenience the other person.

It is an apology, not a long explanation.

Now we need to suggest a solution.

Our third expression is: Could we move it to...?

Could we move it to Friday?

Or: Could we move our meeting to three o’clock?

“Could we” sounds collaborative and polite.

You are suggesting a new time, not ordering the other person to accept it.

What does “it” represent?

The meeting, appointment, lunch or other plan that both people already understand.

Could we move it to tomorrow morning?

Exactly.

Be careful with the preposition.

Move it to Friday.

Not move it for Friday.

Our fourth expression checks whether the new plan is convenient.

Does Friday work for you?

Or: Does three o’clock work for you?



Here, “work” means to be suitable or convenient.

You can also ask: Would Friday work for you?

“Would” sounds slightly more tentative.

How should the other person answer?

“Yes, that works for me.”

Or: “I’m afraid Friday does not work.

How about Monday?”

A useful rescheduling message often follows four simple steps.

First, explain: Something has come up.

Second, acknowledge the timing: I’m sorry for the short notice.

Third, suggest an alternative: Could we move it to Friday?

Fourth, check: Does eleven o’clock work for you?

Let us hear the complete message.

Something has come up at work.

I’m sorry for the short notice.

Could we move our meeting to Friday?

Does eleven o’clock work for you?

Clear, polite and practical.

Time for a quick challenge.

Complete each response before we answer.

Situation one.

An unexpected responsibility appears.

Something has come up.

Situation two.

You are changing the plan at the last minute.

I’m sorry for the short notice.

Situation three.

You want to suggest Thursday instead.

Could we move it to Thursday?

Situation four.



You want to know whether two o'clock is convenient.

Does two o'clock work for you?

Now create your own complete message.

Begin with: Something has come up.

Remember: a good rescheduling message does not need a dramatic excuse.

It needs clarity, respect and a practical alternative.

On the episode page at [yourenglishtoolbox.com](https://yourenglishtoolbox.com), you will find five additional expressions for changing plans.

Each one includes its meaning, tone, examples and active practice.

The direct link is in the episode description.

Now, what should we do about our café meeting?

Something has come up.

Yes.

We know that part.

I'm sorry for the short notice.

Also correct.

Could we move it to tomorrow morning?

Tomorrow morning works for me.

Excellent.

And I will pay for the coffee.

That is not part of the expression, but it is an excellent rescheduling strategy.

See you next time, friends.

Goodbye.

