

Stop Saying “Scared”: Nervous, Anxious or Terrified?

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

3 learning entries

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

1

nervous

DEF

worried or tense before a specific event, performance or experience

Nervous often combines worry with anticipation or excitement. Use nervous about + noun and nervous before + event; it is usually less persistent and less intense than anxious or terrified.

Martin felt nervous about his presentation.

I always get nervous before an important interview.

2

anxious

DEF

worried, uneasy or tense because the outcome of a situation is uncertain

Anxious about is useful for continuing uncertainty and possible problems. In ordinary conversation it can describe a temporary feeling and does not automatically refer to a medical anxiety disorder.

Martin was anxious about the medical result.

Employees are anxious about the possible changes at work.

3

terrified

DEF

extremely frightened by an intense or immediate danger

Terrified is already a strong adjective, so very terrified is normally unnecessary. Use terrified of + noun, terrified by + cause, or terrified that + clause; absolutely terrified adds natural emphasis.

Martin was terrified when the large dog ran towards him.

She is terrified of heights and cannot look down.

