

Why Do We Change the Clocks? | Curious English

English learning resource · EN

Full episode script · English

60 lines

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

Julia, imagine it is Sunday morning.

My phone says eight, but the oven says nine.

Have I travelled through time, or is breakfast just late?

Your oven probably needs your help, Martin.

Today we are asking a curious question: why do we change the clocks?

Welcome to Curious English, from Your English Toolbox.

I am Martin.

And I am Julia.

Before we explain, make a prediction.

When summer time ends in autumn, do we move the clocks forward or back?

Back, by one hour.

In Spain and the United Kingdom, the change in twenty twenty-six is on Sunday, the twenty-fifth of October.

That is the date in those countries, not a rule for the whole world.

Some places do not change their clocks at all.

But why move the hands on a clock?

We cannot move the sun.

Exactly, and we do not create any extra daylight.

During summer time, putting the clocks forward shifts daylight into a later part of the clock day.

There is more light in the evening by the clock, and less in the morning.

So if sunset would have been at eight, the clock calls it nine instead.

The sun has not worked an extra hour.

That is the idea.



In Britain, William Willett promoted changing the clocks in nineteen oh seven.

Britain introduced summer time in nineteen sixteen, during the First World War, partly to reduce fuel use.

An old idea with a very modern problem: remembering which devices change themselves.

And our first expression helps you talk about it: put the clocks back.

It means move the time shown on the clocks one hour earlier.

We put the clocks back in autumn.

The opposite is put the clocks forward, which happens in spring in Britain and Spain.

You can also say the clocks go back.

That describes the change without saying who does it.

And does putting them back mean an extra hour in bed?

That is our second expression.

An extra hour in bed means one additional hour spent resting or sleeping in bed.

You might say: I am hoping for an extra hour in bed on Sunday.

Hoping is important if you have a hungry cat.

My cat does not read the official calendar.

Neither does your body clock.

That is our third expression: your body clock.

It means your body's internal sense of timing, including when you feel ready to sleep or wake up.

So I could say: The clock says seven, but my body clock thinks it is eight.

Yes, as an everyday way to describe how you feel.

We are practising an expression, not giving sleep advice.

Let us check the three ideas.

In autumn, the time changes from three to two.

Do the clocks go forward or back?

Back.

Now you stay in bed for one additional hour.

Complete the phrase: an extra...

Hour in bed.

Finally, you wake up before the alarm because your internal timing has not caught up.



Which expression describes that timing?

Your body clock.

Now make it personal: When the clocks go back, I usually...

Our answer today: summer time changes how daylight fits our daily timetable, not how much daylight exists.

And when summer time ends, we put the clocks back again.

Find the dates and our three expressions on the episode page at yourenglishtoolbox.com.

The link is in the description.

Keep your English curious.

And remember the oven!

