VOCABULARY · EPISODE 241

What Does That Even Mean? Quite Good: Was That a Compliment?

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

8 learning entries

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

1

quite good

DEF

Good to a degree that depends on the speaker and context.

With a gradable adjective, quite can mean fairly or, for some speakers and contexts, very; it is not a reliable measure of enthusiasm by itself.

The plan is quite good, but the timing needs work.

Your idea is quite good; I would love to join.

2

quite sure

DEF

Very or completely certain, depending on context.

With sure, quite commonly strengthens certainty; this differs from its possible softening effect with good.

I am quite sure the meeting starts at six.

Are you quite sure you locked the door?

3

not quite

DEF

Almost, but not completely.

This expression marks a small remaining difference or unfinished step.

I am not quite ready to leave.

The answer is close, but not quite right.

4

quite a surprise

DEF

A considerable or unexpected surprise.

The pattern quite a before a noun can strengthen the noun; it does not work exactly like quite good.

The result was quite a surprise.

Finding her at the station was quite a surprise.

5

soften an opinion

DEF

Express a view in a less direct or forceful way.

A speaker may soften criticism to sound considerate, but wording and tone alone cannot prove their intention.

She softened her opinion by saying the draft was fairly good.

You can soften an opinion before suggesting changes.

6

look for clues

DEF

Notice details that might help you understand something.

Clues suggest a possible interpretation; they are not proof of another person's thoughts.

Look for clues in the words that follow.

We looked for clues in her response.

7

sign up

DEF

Register to take part in an activity or service.

Use sign up for an activity; sign up can also appear alone when the activity is understood.

Where can I sign up for the club?

He signed up for a conversation class.

8

follow-up question

DEF

A question asked after an earlier answer to obtain more information.

A friendly follow-up can clarify meaning without assuming what the other person intended.

Ask a follow-up question about the timing.

Her follow-up question helped us understand the idea.