

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

Neil

Hello, this is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

Beth

And I'm Beth. It seems people around the world are in love with snacks! From old favourites like popcorn and crisps to new inventions like the chocolate sandwich, snacks are big business, with an estimated \$1.5 trillion a year spent globally on snacking.

Neil

Let's listen as British food historian Annie Gray and Argentinian chef Barbara Oievari tell BBC World Service programme The Food Chain what they like to snack on between meals:

Annie Gray

I like salted peanuts and I love a banana – preferably together, actually. I find that they **hit the spot**.

Barbara Oievari

My favourite snack is called 'chipa'. It's a small, round bun made with cassava, cheese, butter, milk and salt.

Beth

Barbara's favourite snack is a cheese bread called 'chipa', while for Annie, it's the combination of peanuts and banana that **hits the spot** – an idiom meaning that it's exactly what you want. Neil, what's your favourite snack?

Neil

Well, I want to say something healthy, but actually, you know, I really love a bag of crisps.

Beth

Oh, me too! Yeah, crisps are good. Well, whatever you like to nibble on, in this episode we'll find out why we are so in love with snack food. As usual, we'll learn some useful new words and phrases. And remember – you'll find all the vocabulary and a quiz on our website, bbclearningenglish.com.

Neil

OK. But first I have a question for you, Beth. According to a recent YouGov survey, which of the following snacks is most popular among Brits? Is it:

- a) crisps,
- b) confectionary and chocolate, or
- c) savoury snacks and biscuits?

Beth

Well, we both just said crisps so I'm going to say crisps.

Neil

Well, we'll find out the answer later in the programme. Someone with a professional interest in snacking is Christine Cochran, president of SNAC International, the trade association for the industry. Here, Christine shares her ideas about why we love to snack with BBC World Service programme The Food Chain:

Christine Cochran

A snack is an **affordable** luxury, so if you've had a bad day or **money is tight**, this is something that you can turn to, and I think that is why you see it as so popular. Consumers, especially in the United States, are looking for smaller, more convenient portions. They're not always going to be able to sit down and have three meals a day, right? So, they're eating **on the go**. And the other thing that you see is this desire for very specific functional ingredients, right? So, **mental clarity**, gut health, muscle development, these sorts of things. Again, they're nicely packaged in snack sizes.

Beth

Snacks are often seen as a little luxury, but to be successful a snack must also be **affordable** – an adjective meaning not expensive.

Neil

Snacks which are cheap enough for most people to buy will sell even if **money is tight** – a phrase used to describe a situation where there's only just enough money to live on.

Beth

Thanks to snacks, today fewer people sit down to eat a proper meal. Instead, they eat **on the go**. If you do something **on the go**, you do it while you're busy travelling or moving around, rather than at home.

Neil

Many modern snacks target a specific function. For example, an energy drink might claim to improve your gut health or your **mental clarity** – a term describing a state of mind which is focused and engaged, not dull or foggy.

Beth

But not everyone is a fan of modern packaged snacks, such as the bags of crisps and chocolate bars which fill our shops. Originally from Argentina, Barbara Oievari, now lives in Florida, USA. Here, Barbara tells BBC World Service's The Food Chain how she encourages her 9-year-old son to choose more natural snacks:

Barbara Oievari

Personally, I enjoy cooking and eating more natural, simpler snacks, but of course I can't **swim against the current**, and if my 9-year-old wants to eat the little baked snacks that have cheddar... ironically it is something baked with cheese in it, which is similar to what I enjoy – it's just the modern twist.

Neil

Barbara wants her son to eat healthy, homemade food, although he prefers modern, packaged snacks. Barbara complains she can't **swim against the current**. The idiom **swim against the current** means to act differently from other people, often because you do not mind being different.

Beth

Well, Neil, all those snacks have made me hungry! Now, isn't it time to reveal the answer to your question?

Neil

Yes, it is. I asked, "According to a recent YouGov survey, which of the following snacks is the most popular amongst Brits? Crisps, confectionery and chocolate, or

savoury snacks and biscuits." And the answer was... b) confectionery and chocolate, which 45% of Britons indulge in weekly, according to that survey. OK. Let's recap the vocabulary we've learned, starting with the phrase **hits the spot**, which describes something which is exactly what you want or need.

Beth

If something is **affordable**, it's cheap enough that most people have enough money to buy it.

Neil

The phrase **money is tight** means you only have just enough money to live.

Beth

The idiom **on the go** means doing things while you are busy travelling or moving around.

Neil

Mental clarity is a state in which your mind is fully focused and active, not dull or foggy.

Beth

And finally, people who **swim against the current**, or **the tide**, do or say things differently from most other people. Once again, our six minutes are up, but why not head over to our website, bbclearningenglish.com, to try the quiz and worksheet for this episode? See you again soon!

Neil

Goodbye!

VOCABULARY

hits the spot

(idiom) is exactly what you want or need

affordable

not expensive; cheap enough that most people can buy it

money is tight

there is only just enough money available to pay for the basics needed to live

on the go

(idiom) done while busy travelling or moving around, rather than at home

mental clarity

state in which your mind is fully focused, active and engaged, not dull or foggy

swim against the current/tide

(idiom) do or say things which are different from most other people, because you do not mind being different