BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

In a tizzy

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

Feifei
Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, where we explain expressions used by fluent English speakers so that you can use them, too! I'm Feifei, and I'm joined by Georgie. How are you?

Georgie
I'm very well, thank you Feifei. How are you?

Feifei
I'm well, thank you Georgie. So, the expression we're learning in this programme is 'in a tizzy'. What does it mean to be in a tizzy?

Georgie
Well, I actually used this the other day. My sister was getting stressed because she lost her house keys. I said to her, 'Don't get yourself in a tizzy. I saw you with them yesterday. They'll be in the house.' In the UK, it's also common to say, 'in a tizz'.

Feifei
Right, so if you're in a tizzy, it means you're in a state of panic or confusion. So, when you said to your sister, 'Don't get yourself in a tizzy', it's like saying 'don't worry'.

Georgie
Yes exactly, but when you're in a tizzy, it's usually over something minor, and the reaction is often bigger than the problem requires. I'm quite a calm person, so I don't often get myself in a tizzy. What gets you in a tizz, Feifei?

Feifei
Well, in the morning, if I miss my train and then I'm late for work, that gets me in a tizz. OK Georgie. Time for some more examples.

©British Broadcasting Corporation 2026

Examples
I got myself in a right tizzy yesterday when my crush didn't respond to my text. Turns out, they were just busy with work.

I lost my friends at a concert. I was in a right tizzy, but then I saw them dancing at the edge of the crowd.

I got myself in a tizzy when I thought I would fail the driving test, but when we got out of the car, the examiner told me that I'd passed!

Feifei
What else do we need to know about 'in a tizzy', Georgie?

Georgie
Well, there are some other useful, similar expressions. 'I'm in a tizz' can mean the same as 'I'm flustered' or 'I'm worked up'.

Feifei
OK, let's recap. 'In a tizzy' or 'in a tizz' means in a state of worry over something minor. Join us again next time for another useful expression.

Georgie
See you then. Goodbye!

Feifei
Bye bye!

©British Broadcasting Corporation 2026