BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak
Hot take

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

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

Becca
And I'm Becca.

Feifei
Becca, I can't help but notice that you're wearing flip flops with socks?

Becca
Well, my work shoes got so wet in the rain yesterday, and I didn't want to show my toes at work!

Feifei
Oh! Socks with flipflops could be considered uncommon here in the UK, you know. It could be common in some places, but I know some people here find it really odd.

Becca
Well, I've got a hot take – socks and flipflops are comfy, and everyone should wear something like this inside.

Feifei
A 'hot take'? That sounds quite dramatic!

Becca
It does, doesn't it? A 'hot take' is simply a controversial or surprising opinion. It's something you say when you think other people might disagree with you.

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Feifei
So, I could say, 'I don't know if this is a hot take, but I think pineapple belongs on pizza'?

Becca
You could definitely say that! Especially if you're talking to someone who is passionate about cooking authentic cuisine. They could be pretty mad at you for saying that!

Feifei
Let's hear some more examples.

Examples

I don't know if this is a hot take, but I don't like going on holiday in the summer. I prefer to go in the winter months when it's cooler.

My hot take is that chocolate is overrated – you think you like, but you don't really.

I always prefer the film adaptations to the book. Anyway, that's just my hot take.

Feifei
It seems 'hot take' is an informal expression?

Becca
Yep! You might hear it online, on social media, in podcasts or in conversations with friends. It's often used to introduce an opinion that's likely to cause a negative reaction.

Feifei
So, you can say 'hot take' or 'I've got a hot take' before giving your opinion, almost like a warning?

Becca
Exactly. And here's an interesting thing about a 'hot take'. A 'hot take' doesn't necessarily have to be completely outrageous. Sometimes people jokingly call an ordinary opinion a 'hot take' because they know it might start a debate.

Feifei
So, saying 'hot take - I like milk' probably isn't going to cause too much trouble.

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Becca
Probably not! Unless you're talking to someone who hates milk or is lactose-intolerant.

Feifei
Haha that's true. And, lastly, could I say I have a 'cold take' for opinions that are kind of ordinary and common?

Becca
You could. A cold take is a safe, obvious, or universally agreed-upon opinion that lacks surprise. But I'll say, Feifei, I haven't ever used the expression 'cold take'.

Feifei
Ah I see. Perhaps it's less common then. Well, that's it for this programme, but join us next time to learn more English phrases and expressions. But for now, it's goodbye!

Becca
Bye!

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