



PODCAST

TRANSCRIPT

Episode 22:

“Synonyms for ‘difficult’”

Duration: 09:17

How to use this transcript:

1. Print this transcript:

We try to reduce our paper consumption, but we really recommend that you print out this document.

2. Write on it and take notes:

Circle, highlight and note anything that you want. We have even provided space for you to do so!

3. Listen first **without** the transcript:

Don't worry about understanding every single word. Just focus on training your ears to the sound of English.

4. Listen again **with** the transcript:

Listen a second time with the transcript, pausing whenever you want to

	<p>Hello there, language lovers! Welcome to another episode of the Décllic Anglais podcast. My name is Tom, and I'm so glad you could join me today. My students often tell me:</p> <p><i>Tom, I'm forever using the same words. I feel embarrassed, I need a hand expanding my vocabulary.</i></p> <p>Well, I can help you there. And let me make it crystal clear to you, there is no shame in not knowing or being confused. I am also a language learner just like you, I know exactly what it feels like to be lost for words, to not be able to express myself clearly. So, relax. This podcast is a good place to start.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
01:00	<p>In today's episode then, we will be looking at some alternative vocabulary for the word "difficult". For your everyday English it's good to have a range of synonyms, because of course, when we are talking about difficulty, there are a range of nuances of difficulty, nuances or levels of difficulty, aren't there?</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
01:27	<p>Like, learning a new process at work is difficult. Getting out of bed at 6am on a Monday morning is difficult. Running a marathon is difficult. Raising a child is difficult.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

01:41	<p>We have difficult, difficult and difficult. But these aren't at all the same <i>kind</i> of difficult, are they? At least for me, running a marathon is a totally different kind of difficult to learning a new process for work! I can learn a process in one day. Sure, it might be difficult at first, but in one week it's easy. But running a marathon (for me at least) would take weeks of preparation and even on the day of the marathon, I would be sure to suffer!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
02:22	<p>So, let's get down to business (<i>mettons-nous au travail</i>), let's get down to business. Let's look at three alternative words for "difficult". We will start with the easiest first. Ready?</p> <p>Word number one: tricky. <i>T-R-I-C-K-Y</i>. Tricky.</p>
02:54	<p>So, when we say that something is tricky, it's not so difficult, it's certainly not impossible. If something is tricky, then it means that it's a little delicate and requires extra attention.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
03:10	<p>A great example of this could be making macarons, those delicious little French patisseries. Certainly not impossible to make, but there are so many factors that could make things go wrong: humidity, temperature, how you mix ingredients etc. It's very delicate, there are lots of traps (<i>des pièges</i>), so you need to be careful. Making macarons is tricky.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

03:43	So, I suppose you could translate <i>tricky</i> as <i>délicat, épineux</i> .
	For example: "learning how to use a computer is tricky at first, but you soon get used to it."
03:58	Now, the word <i>tricky</i> can also be applied to people. It can mean that a person is difficult, but it also means that someone maybe can't be trusted, that they are deceitful. For example, if I say "Watch out, David is tricky." In French it would mean that David is <i>fourbe, rusé</i> . (Ecrivez vos notes ici).
04:26	Ok, that's one word down. Ready for another?
	Word number two: tough. <i>T-O-U-G-H</i> . Tough.
04:44	So, don't be intimidated by the spelling (<i>l'orthographe</i>) the spelling of this word. It's similar to the French word <i>teuf</i> , like <i>faire la teuf</i> , to party. It's not too hard to say. (Ecrivez vos notes ici).
05:00	<i>Tough</i> has a few different meanings but when we talk about difficulty, it is something that is genuinely difficult. For example, it's tough to get out of bed at 6am on a cold Monday morning. Learning Japanese is tough. Lockdown (<i>le confinement</i>) being under lockdown is tough.
05 31	Again, <i>tough</i> doesn't mean impossible, but if you describe something as <i>tough</i> it is genuinely quite difficult. (Ecrivez vos notes ici).

05:42	<p>The same with <i>tricky</i>, we can use the word <i>tough</i> to describe a person. Maybe you have already heard the expression <i>a tough guy</i>? A person who is strong, can handle violent or difficult situations, like Jean-Claude Van Damme or Arnold Schwarzenegger. Well, you can describe anyone as <i>tough</i> if they are physically or mentally strong and can endure a lot of pain or difficulty.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
06:18	<p>Ok, let's see our final synonym for difficult. Now, in the order of difficulty this is the most difficult. First we had <i>tricky</i>, (difficult but you just need to be careful, like learning a new process). Then we had <i>tough</i>, (which really does mean challenging).</p> <p>And our final word: <i>formidable</i>.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
06:49 07:18	<p>Yes, this one can be a false friend in English and French. It's a French word that came to English many years ago, but now the meaning has changed. In English, <i>formidable</i> isn't like "<i>ah ce repas était formidable</i>". No, in English <i>formidable</i> means extremely difficult, extremely challenging. Climbing Mt Everest, the highest mountain on Earth, is a formidable challenge. For me, running a marathon this year would be formidable. So in French, you could say that formidable is <i>colossal</i>.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

07:38	<p><i>Formidable</i>, can also mean that something is very impressive (<i>impressionnant</i>). You could say that Picasso was a formidable artist, Albert Einstein was a formidable scientist. My dog is a formidable eater (no, really. Our dog here will eat <i>anything</i>!)</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
08:02	<p>So, there we have it dear listeners. Three new words to help you describe levels of difficulty in English. Those words, one more time from the easiest to most difficult are:</p>
08:19	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tricky. Making macarons is a tricky process.2. Tough. It's tough to get out of bed at 6am on a Monday morning.3. Formidable. Running a marathon is a formidable challenge. <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
08:52	<p>Well, ladies and gentlemen. I challenge you to try to use these three new words this week! Practice makes perfect, so don't be frightened of making mistakes.</p> <p>Have a great day and I look forward to seeing you next time. Bye for now!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

How did it go?

Take a moment to revisit the notes that you took.

List here 3 words or expressions (minimum) that you would like to remember from this podcast. We recommend that you consult a free, online dictionary like

www.wordreference.com to ensure that you have the correct definition and context.

WORDS/EXPRESSIONS THAT I WANT TO REMEMBER:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.