

The IT Crowd | Awkward Moments

Vocabulary Breakdown

Hollywood English Club

1) "High-End Screeching"

■ This phrase describes a loud, high-pitched noise, often something unpleasant like a scream or squeal.

✓ Used to describe uncomfortable sounds: microphone feedback, a badly played instrument, or someone screaming at the top of their voice.

▶ *"The microphone made a horrible high-end screeching noise the moment she tapped it."*

▶ *"She let out a high-end screech when she saw the spider on her desk."*

2) "I'd Better..."

■ "I'd better" is short for "I had better" and is used to suggest that doing something is a good idea or necessary.

✓ Sounds softer and more polite than "I must" or "I need to." One of the most natural expressions in everyday English.

▶ *"I'd better set an alarm, or I'll sleep through my meeting."*

▶ *"You'd better wear a jacket. It's cold outside."*

3) Simile: "Like Someone's Killing a Cat"

■ A simile comparing two things using "like" or "as." This one describes a very unpleasant high-pitched sound. Not literal.

✓ Use in informal and humorous situations only. Roy uses it to describe the terrible noise Jen made.

▶ *"Her singing was so bad it sounded like someone was killing a cat."*

▶ *"When he played the trumpet, it was like someone was killing a cat in slow motion."*

4) "Euphemism"

■ A euphemism is a polite, indirect, or humorous way of saying something that might otherwise feel too blunt or taboo.

✓ Euphemisms are everywhere in English, especially around death, illness, and bodily functions.

▶ *"Passed away" is a euphemism for "died."*

▶ *"Let someone go" is a euphemism for "fired."*

5) "Aunt Irma is Visiting"

■ A fictional aunt who shows up every month. A light-hearted code for having your period.

✓ The euphemism Jen uses in the scene. Moss takes it completely literally, which is the whole joke.

▶ *"I'm feeling terrible today. Aunt Irma is in town."*

6) "It's That Time of the Month"

■ A very common and relatively polite way to say someone is menstruating.

✓ Widely understood and used across most English-speaking countries.

▶ *"She's feeling a bit grumpy. It's that time of the month."*

7) "High Tide"

■ Hints at cycles and flow without being direct. High tide refers to the natural rise of the sea.

- ✓ Subtle and clever. Uses natural imagery to suggest menstruation without saying it.
 - ▶ *"She's in a bit of a mood. Must be high tide."*
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8) "Closed for Maintenance"

- Used playfully to describe the body being temporarily out of service.
 - ✓ Often said with a deadpan face. Treats the body like a shop or public facility.
 - ▶ *"No swimming for me this week. Closed for maintenance."*
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9) "Fallen to the Communists"

- A reference to "the Red Peril," Cold War-era fear of communism. The colour red is also a pun for menstruation.
 - ✓ Works on two levels: the political reference and the colour red. Brilliantly absurd.
 - ▶ *"I've fallen to the communists. Hand me the chocolate."*
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10) "On the Rag"

- Crude slang referring to using menstrual products like pads or cloths.
 - ✓ Not polite and can be disrespectful. Worth knowing so you recognise it when you hear it.
 - ▶ *"Don't mess with her today. She's on the rag."*
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11) "Code Red"

- A dramatic euphemism that sounds like a military emergency but refers to menstruation.
 - ✓ Often said with exaggerated urgency. Works especially well with a straight face.
 - ▶ *"We've got a code red over here. Pass the chocolate immediately."*
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12) "Shark Week"

- A joke term referring to the idea that there is "blood in the water." Named after the Discovery Channel event.
 - ✓ Popular in internet slang and memes. Widely understood among younger English speakers.
 - ▶ *"It's shark week. I need snacks and a heating pad."*
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13) "Riding the Crimson Wave"

- A surf-inspired euphemism using "crimson" for blood and "wave" to suggest the cycle.
 - ✓ Playful and a little dramatic. Best delivered with flair.
 - ▶ *"Sorry I'm cranky today. I'm riding the crimson wave."*
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14) "The First Scene in Carrie"

- A reference to the 1976 Stephen King horror film, where the opening scene shows a teenage girl having her first period in a school shower.
 - ✓ A dark but very recognisable cultural reference. Only lands if the listener knows the film.
 - ▶ *"It was like the first scene in Carrie in there. Nobody warned her."*
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15) "Mangina"

- Crude slang, a mashup of "man" and "vagina." Used mockingly when Jonah Hill's character gets blood on his pants in Superbad.
 - ✓ Very informal and rude. Worth knowing as a cultural reference, not for polite company.
 - ▶ *"They called him a mangina because of the stain on his pants."*
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16) "Oblivious"

■ If someone is oblivious, they are completely unaware of what is happening around them, even when it is obvious to everyone else.

✓ Moss is the perfect example. He has no idea what Aunt Irma means or why Roy is desperately signalling him to stop.

▶ *"He was oblivious to the danger and kept walking straight toward it."*

▶ *"She's totally oblivious to how rude she sounds when she says that."*

17) "Get on Someone's Nerves"

■ The idiom "get on someone's nerves" means to annoy or irritate someone, especially repeatedly over time.

✓ Dates back to the late 1800s. Very common in everyday English with friends, family, and coworkers.

▶ *"That clicking sound is really getting on my nerves."*

▶ *"He knows exactly how to get on her nerves without even trying."*

Awkward Moments in English

Vocabulary Worksheet — The IT Crowd Hollywood English Club

Part 1: Vocabulary Match

Match each phrase on the left with its correct definition on the right.

Phrase	Definition
1. _____ screeching	A. To annoy or irritate someone over time
2. _____ euphemism	B. An indirect or polite way to say something awkward
3. _____ oblivious	C. Completely unaware of what is happening around you
4. _____ simile	D. A comparison using "like" or "as"
5. _____ get on your nerves	E. A euphemism for menstruation using the sea
6. _____ high tide	F. A loud, high-pitched, unpleasant sound
7. _____ I'd better	G. A phrase suggesting urgency or responsibility

Part 2: Fill in the Blanks

WORD BANK

euphemism	oblivious	screeching	simile	I'd better	get on your nerves	Aunt Irma
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1. Jen said "Aunt Irma is visiting" — a clever _____ for her period.
2. Moss was completely _____ to the fact that Jen was in a bad mood.
3. Roy said it sounded like someone killing a cat — that is called a _____ in English.
4. The noise from the drawer was a horrible high-pitched _____ sound.
5. ' _____ fix this drawer before it drives me mad,' said Roy.
6. Jen warned the boys not to _____ while Aunt Irma was visiting.
7. When Jen said " _____ is visiting," Moss thought a real relative was coming.

Part 3: Rewrite in Your Own Words

Rewrite each sentence using the word or phrase in brackets.

1. "She had no idea what was happening around her." (use: oblivious)

2. "That sound is really annoying me." (use: get on my nerves)

3. "I should probably leave now or I'll miss the bus." (use: I'd better)

Part 4: Multiple Choice

1. What does "get on your nerves" mean?

- A. To touch someone physically
- B. To annoy or irritate someone
- C. To make someone happy
- D. To calm someone down

2. Which phrase is a SIMILE?

- A. "Aunt Irma is visiting"
- B. "I'd better fix this drawer"
- C. "Like someone's killing a cat"
- D. "Code red"

3. What is a euphemism?

- A. A direct and blunt way to say something
- B. An indirect or polite way to say something awkward
- C. A type of grammar rule
- D. A word that sounds like what it means

4. What does "oblivious" mean?

- A. Very intelligent
- B. Angry and upset
- C. Completely unaware
- D. Extremely tired

5. Which phrase is NOT a euphemism for menstruation?

- A. High tide
- B. Code red
- C. Riding the crimson wave

D. Going bananas

Part 5: True or False

1. "Aunt Irma is visiting" is a euphemism for menstruation.

Answer: _____

Correction (if false): _____

2. Moss immediately understands what Aunt Irma means.

Answer: _____

Correction (if false): _____

3. A simile compares two things using "like" or "as."

Answer: _____

Correction (if false): _____

4. "I'd better" means exactly the same as "I must."

Answer: _____

Correction (if false): _____

5. "Shark week" refers to the idea of blood in the water.

Answer: _____

Correction (if false): _____