

## Curious Question #18 – Call it a day

### Transcripts

Jessie: Hi everybody, this is Jessie...

Maura: And this is Maura...

Jessie: And today we're bringing you the **Curious Questions** podcast at Culips.com.

Maura: That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Jessie: And if you want to know more about this episode, or listen to any of our other episodes, just visit us at that website.

Maura: And if you want to see the transcript and more explanations, you can go to our Lipservice.

Jessie: Yeah, you just have to click on the big green button that says "become a member."

Maura: That's it! So, today's episode is the Curious Questions episode where we take a question from you and we answer it for you. We give you lots of explanations and examples, too.

Jessie: OK, so, what's our question for today?

Jessie: *"I know of the following expressions: one – 'let's call it a day,' two – 'let's call it a night,' but I'm not sure about how to use them. For example, it's 9 p.m. and the workers in the office have finished their work. At this time, could they say 'let's call it a day'?"* What do you think, Maura?

Maura: I think, yes! The end of a workday is a perfect time to use this expression, "**let's call it a day.**" It means that the workday is done.

Jessie: Right, so we use this expression to mean that we're going to stop working and hopefully start **relaxing**.

Maura: Yes, **relaxing** is good. We could use it in any situation where you're working. It doesn't have to be at your job. For example, maybe you are a student and you've been working on a school project with your friends and you've been working all afternoon. So, you could continue working all

night too, but you decide that that's enough studying, that's enough work. You can say, "**let's call it a day.**"

Jessie: So, it kind of means the same thing as, "let's stop working now."

Maura: Exactly.

Jessie: So, if it was late at night, but we'd been working all day and into the night, could we still say, "**let's call it a day.**"

Maura: I think so, yeah!

Jessie: I think so, too. Pretty much any time that you're going to stop working.

Maura: Yup, the day is done. But, we can also say...

Jessie: "**Let's call it a night.**"

Maura: Exactly. We could use "**let's call it a night**" in exactly the same way and maybe you are working at night, in this case, of course, because it's night, you could say "**let's call it a night.**"

Jessie: But there's something a little bit different about "**let's call it a night.**"

Maura: Yes.

Jessie: In general, it more means "let's go to sleep" than "let's stop working." So, if you're going to stop working and go to sleep, you can say either "**let's call it a day**" or "**let's call it a night.**"

Maura: Yes. And also with the expression "**let's call it a night,**" you don't always have to be working.

Jessie: That's right.

Maura: Right. So, an example could be, you're sitting at home, Jessie, chatting with your roommate, you're tired and then what could you say?

Jessie: Well I could say, "Oh, it's already 8 p.m., I'd better go to bed. I'm going to **call it a night.**"

Maura: Right. So, in that case you weren't working, you were just talking, but it's the end of the night, you're going to go to sleep.

- Jessie: To be honest, I usually don't go to sleep at 8 p.m.
- Maura: Good, good. We could also use it if you are not at home. You're out at a bar, you're out with friends, having a good time, and you could say "**let's call it a night**" or "I'm going to **call it a night.**" It means you're going to go home and, yeah, probably go to sleep soon, too.
- Jessie: OK, so, you bring up a good point. "**Let's call it a night,**" that's not a fixed expression. We can use it in a lot of different ways.
- Maura: Right. You can say, like you said, "I'm going **to call it a night,**" or "Do you want to **call it a night?**"
- Jessie: Yeah. I think sometimes I would use "Do you want to **call it a night?**" or "Should we **call it a night?**"
- Maura: Right, you could use it as a suggestion. There's one more thing I wanted to mention, too. It's a similar expression to "**let's call it a night,**" and "**let's call it a day.**" Another one: "**let's call it quits.**"
- Jessie: Oh, that's a good one!
- Maura: Yeah, it is similar, but how is it different?
- Jessie: Well, it kind of means to stop doing something permanently. And yeah, you are not going to start it again the next day. If you're in a relationship with somebody and it wasn't working out, you could say, "Hey, I don't like you anymore, **let's call it quits.**"
- Maura: Oohh. But you're right. Or maybe you're trying to make a business work. It doesn't work out. You could **call it quits** too, in the same way.
- Jessie: Yeah. So the word "quit" just means "stop." That's pretty straightforward, right?
- Maura: That explanation makes sense. "**Call it quits.**" So, just to repeat it one more time, "**call it a day**" means you're going to stop working, "**call it a night**" could be used with work or could just mean that you're going to sleep soon.
- Jessie: That's right, and "**call it quits**" means that you're going to stop doing something permanently.
- Maura: Perfect. So what do you think? Should we **call it a day?**

Jessie: Well, we definitely shouldn't **call it quits**.

Maura: Yeah, exactly, this isn't the last podcast.

Jessie: Nope, we'll be back.

Maura: OK, so if you want to see the transcript, or anything else, remember to visit our website. This has been the Curious Questions podcast.

Jessie: We'll talk to you next time.

Maura: This has been Maura...

Jessie: And Jessie.

Maura: Bye.

Jessie: Bye.

## Detailed Explanation

### To call it a day / To call it a night

In this episode, we talked about the expressions “**to call it a day**” and “**to call it a night**.” There are two main differences between the ways that we use these expressions.

1. “**To call it a day**” means to stop working for the rest of the day, while “**to call it a night**” means to go to bed. If you’re going to stop working and go to bed, you can use either expression.
2. We can use the expression “**to call it a day**” any time we’re going to stop working for the rest of the day, but we use the expression “**to call it a night**” only when it’s actually night time.

Now I’m worried that you won’t have any interesting expressions to use if you’re really tired and decide to go to bed at one o’clock in the afternoon. If you want a couple of idioms about going to bed that you can use at any time—night or day—you can say you’re going “**to hit the sack**” or you’re going “**to hit the hay**.”

### To hit the sack / To hit the hay

“**Hitting the sack**” and “**hitting the hay**” are slang terms for going to bed, and the two terms are related to each other in an interesting way. A long time ago, people used to make mattresses by stuffing **hay** (a type of dried grass, like what horses and cows eat) into a sack (a big bag made out of cloth). In those days, when people got into bed, their bodies literally hit a sack, and the hay inside the sack, too!



### To call it quits

In this episode, we also talked about the expression “**to call it quits**.” Unlike “**calling it a day**,” if you’re **calling it quits**, it means you’re quitting something permanently. This expression is almost always used only with the noun “it.”

*For example:*

**Correct:** I tried to start my own business, but I didn’t make any money, so I’m calling it quits.

**Incorrect:** I tried to start my own business, but I didn’t make any money, so I’m calling the business quits.

**Correct:** My girlfriend is really annoying me lately. I think we should call it quits.

**Incorrect:** My girlfriend is really annoying me lately. I think we should call the relationship quits.

Two other phrases that mean the same thing as “**to call it quits**” are “**to give up**” and “**to throw in the towel.**”

#### To throw in the towel

Like the expression “**giving up,**” “**throwing in the towel**” is another way of saying quitting forever. This phrase comes from the sport of boxing, in which a fighter can give up and admit defeat by throwing a towel into the centre of the boxing ring. We can use this idiom any time someone quits something and admits they cannot succeed.

#### To call something off

We didn’t talk about this expression in the episode, but another expression with a meaning kind of similar to “**calling it quits**” is “**calling something off.**” When we **call it quits**, it means we’re quitting something that we’re already doing, but when we **call something off**, we’re usually cancelling plans that we have for the future.

Example:

Is your wedding planned for next month, but you’ve decided you’d rather stay single? **Call the wedding off!**

Did you have plans to play baseball outside later today but now it’s raining? You should probably **call the game off.**

#### Relax

Jessie talks about **relaxing** after work, but where does the word “**relax**” come from?

Some words that start with “re” mean that you are doing something again. For example, if you write your friend a letter, but your handwriting is too messy, you might have to **re**write the letter. If you can’t even find a pen to write that letter because your desk isn’t organized very well, you might have to **re**organize.

But “**relax**” isn’t one of those doing-something-again words! The word “**lax**” on its own is an adjective that means “loose” or “not strict.” If your boss is **lax** about employees being on time, it means that she doesn’t care if you get to work late. We can see that the words “**relax**” and “**lax**” are related, because they’re both about being calm and not stressed.

Hey! “**Related**” is another “re” word—like “**relax**”—that doesn’t have anything to do with doing something again!

### Pretty

I’m sure you know about the word “**pretty**,” as in “Wow, Maura is so **pretty**, she should be a model.” But the word “**pretty**” is used very commonly in another way too, to mean the same thing as “rather,” “quite,” or “somewhat.”

As an example, here’s a joke that little kids sometimes make. If you try it at home, be careful! You might get in trouble.

Boy:            You’re pretty ...  
Girl:            Oh, what a nice thing to say! Thank you!  
Boy:            ... Pretty ugly!

The meaning of the expression “**pretty much**” is a little different than the word “**pretty**” on its own. If you want to know more about the expression “**pretty much**,” check out the Detailed Explanation for our Curious Questions podcast on email endings.

### Similar / The same

Here at Culips we talk a lot about expressions and meanings that are **similar** or expressions that mean **the same** thing.

Things that are **similar** are alike, but things that are **the same** are identical.

For examples, we could say that two girls named Jessie Cox and Jennie Cox have **similar** first names, because they both start with “Je” and end with “ie,” but we would say that they have **the same** last name, because both last names are “Cox.”

So, the meaning of the words “**similar**” and “**the same**” are similar, but not the same. Confusing!

### Work out

In the podcast, Maura talks about trying to make a business **work**, but **calling it quits** if the business doesn’t **work out**.

In this situation, the verb “**to work**” means “to function well” or “to be successful.” If your TV **works**, you can watch your favourite show! If your business **works**, you’ll make lots of money.

The expression “**to work out**” in Maura’s example above means “to end well.” If something doesn’t end well, like a relationship or an idea, we can say that it **didn’t work out**.

**Quiz** (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)

1. **When can we use the expression, “Call it a day”?**
  - a) only at the end of a day
  - b) only after 5 p.m.
  - c) any time work is finished
  - d) any time, just like “bye”
  
2. **When can we use the expression, “Call it a night”?**
  - a) only at the end of the day
  - b) when we want to go to bed
  - c) any time work is finished
  - d) any time, just like “bye”
  
3. **When could you use “Let’s call it a night” and “Let’s call it a day” at the same time?**
  - a) At night, when you are finished work and want to go to sleep
  - b) In the morning, before you start the work day
  - c) Any time you finish work
  - d) Before you sleep
  
4. **Which expression means that you are stopping something forever?**
  - a) call it quite
  - b) call it quiet
  - c) quit calling
  - d) call it quits

5. Fiona: I think it is getting late. I think I am going to call it a night?

Which expression below could replace call it a night?

- a) hit it
- b) call it a hit
- c) hit the sack
- d) call it quits

6. Holly: Jeff looks \_\_\_\_\_. Maybe he should call it a night.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) pretty tired
- b) not tired
- c) freaky tired
- d) retired

**Answers:** 1.c 2.b 3.a 4.d 5.c 6.a