

Summary

When is a kiss not a kiss? Neil and Feifei explain a certain type of greeting and farewell which is like a kiss but doesn't involve touching lips!

Transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English, I'm Neil and with me is Feifei.

Feifei

Hello. You seem a bit tired Neil. Late night?

Neil

Yeah I had to go to this old university reunion thing - which was fine - but by the time all the goodbyes and air kisses were over it was really late.

Feifei

Air kisses? You were kissing the air?

Neil

You know, those kisses people give each other where their lips never actually touch each other's? They just make the noise.

Feifei

Ah yes I know. When you meet up with people you know at a social event and to greet and say goodbye you pretend to kiss.

Neil

That's it. Usually you touch cheeks on either side and make a kissing noise but the lips never touch. Sometimes the cheeks don't touch either. And that is an air kiss.

Feifei

Let's hear some examples.

Examples

I always feel so awkward at parties. I hate all those air kisses and small talk. Urgh, so phoney!

Charles, so wonderful to see you, mwah! Mwah! Charles?! No lips, please. Let's stick to air kisses.

Woman: So, go on, tell me - did you kiss her?

Man: Well, I air-kissed her. Does that count?

Woman: No it does not!

Neil

An air kiss. A type of greeting and farewell between friends at social events.

Feifei

A kiss in which the two people's lips do not touch!

Neil

That's it – cheek to cheek and a big kissing noise into the air. Mwah! Shall we end with an air kiss to our audience? After all, they are our friends.

Both

Bye! Mwah, mwah, mwah, mwah.