
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Short spoken forms



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me Finn...

Catherine

And me Catherine. Today we're talking about short spoken forms.

Finn

That's words like **gonna**, **wanna** and **gotta** that we use a lot in spoken English. Let's start by listening to Jason and Yuki talking about their plans for the weekend.

Catherine

And here's a question: Who is Yuki meeting on Saturday night? Have a listen.

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Jason

Whatcha doing at the weekend, Yuki?

Yuki

I **dunno**. I'm probably **gonna** meet Lucy on Saturday night.

Jason

Oh, right. Do you **wanna** come to the cinema in the afternoon?

Yuki

No, thanks. I've **gotta** finish an English essay for Monday morning.

Jason

OK. **Lemme** know if you change your mind.

Finn

Well that was Jason and Yuki. We asked you: Who's Yuki meeting on Saturday night?

Catherine

And the answer is: she's probably going to meet Lucy.

Finn

That's right. But instead of saying **going to**, Yuki said **gonna**. **She's probably gonna meet Lucy.**

Catherine

Yes, and that's what we're looking at in this programme. English speakers often say the words **going to** very fast – and it sounds like **gonna**. They usually do this in informal situations when they're talking to friends.

Finn

So does that mean that you shouldn't say **gonna** when you need to speak carefully and politely, like in a job interview?

Catherine

Well, not necessarily. If **gonna** comes out naturally, it's probably ok. But a job interview is formal, so it's probably a bit more polite to say **going to**. And you don't usually use **gonna** in writing, unless you're actually writing down a dialogue.

Finn

In fact some people never use it, even informally. Although it's probably more common in American English.

Catherine

That's right. And one other thing about **gonna** is that we only use it to replace **going to** when it's followed by a verb.

Finn

That's true. If you say: **I'm going to Paris**, you can't use **gonna** to say: **I'm gonna Paris**. You'd have to add a verb, like this, and say: **I'm gonna go to Paris**.

Catherine

I'm gonna go to Paris. Let's have another clip with some more short spoken forms.

INSERT CLIP I

Jason

Whatcha doing at the weekend, Yuki?

Yuki

I dunno. I'm probably **gonna** meet Lucy on Saturday night.

Finn

So Jason said **whatcha**. **Whatcha**. That's a short form of **what are you**. Or sometimes **what do you**.

Catherine

And Yuki said **I dunno. I dunno.** That's a short spoken form of **I don't know.**

Finn

Let's have another clip. See if you can spot any more.

INSERT CLIP 2

Jason

Oh, right. Do you **wanna** come to the cinema in the afternoon?

Yuki

No, thanks. I've **gotta** finish an English essay for Monday morning.

Catherine

Did you get them? We heard **wanna.** That's a short form of **want to.** **Do you wanna come to the cinema in the afternoon?**

Finn

And there was also **gotta. Gotta. I've gotta finish an English essay.** Here, **gotta** is short for **got to.** But **gotta** can also be short for the possessive **got a,** like in **I've gotta new mobile.**

Catherine

And now for the last clip.

INSERT CLIP 3

Lemme know if you change your mind.

Finn

Can you guess what **lemme** is short for? It's **let me. Let me know if you change your mind.**

Catherine

Yes. And there are others like **hafta, hafta,** for **have to** or **gimme,** that's **gimme,** for **give me.**

Finn

Now what about **kinda, kinda,** for **kind of?** Like **She's kinda nice.**

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Finn

And we're talking about spoken short forms. So Catherine, **whatcha gonna** do in the quiz?

Catherine

Quiz question number one: what's a more informal way to say **I've got to phone the bank?**

Finn

It's **I've gotta phone the bank.**

Catherine

Good. And number two: you want to know what your friend is doing tonight. How can you ask them, using a spoken short form?

Finn

You can say: **whatcha doing tonight?**

Catherine

And number three: you think it's going to rain. Tell your friend using a spoken short form.

Finn

You could say: **I think it's gonna rain.**

Catherine

And that's the end of the quiz. Well done if you got them all right. Now before we go, here's a vocabulary tip. Try to watch TV, movies and video clips regularly in English. Listen out for short spoken forms and practise repeating them. It will help you to understand better when you listen and sound more natural when you speak.

Finn

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. We've **gotta** go now, but do join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away:

Spoken short forms are ways of saying phrases quickly in informal situations. Some common examples are:

gonna – going to
I'm gonna watch a DVD.

wanna – want to
Do you wanna watch too?

whatcha – what are you
Whatcha doing?

dunno - don't know
I dunno.

gotta – got to (or got a)
I've gotta go now.

hafta – have to
Do you hafta go already?

gimme – give me
Gimme a call tomorrow.

lemme – let me
Lemme know what you think.

kinda – kind of
She's kinda nice.