

“ Road Podcast ”
Cramp my style



BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Cramp my style

The logo for BBC Learning English, featuring the letters 'BBC' in white on a dark teal square background, with the words 'LEARNING' and 'ENGLISH' stacked below it in white capital letters.

Jiaying

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Jiaying...

Neil

...and I'm Neil. You look really busy. Is everything OK?

Jiaying

Yes, but I'm having a dinner party for my friends on Saturday, but I'd forgotten my parents were coming to stay this weekend.

Neil

Have you considered postponing the dinner?

Jiaying

No, in fact my parents were more concerned they would cramp my style.

Neil

Your style is giving you cramp? That sounds painful.

Jiaying

No, Neil – I said ‘cramp my style’ – which is an expression used to mean that someone or something is stopping you from doing what you want or behaving in a way that makes you feel free!

Neil

Ahh, that makes sense. Your parents were worried they would stop you having the type of party where you could be yourself. Now I understand.

Jiaying

Well, let's talk more about my party after these examples.

Examples

I don't want to cramp your style, but could you wear a shirt and tie to work rather than a T-shirt?

I had to move out of the house share. I didn't feel free there, and my old housemates were cramping my style.

I don't want to go to the party. I'm worried she thinks I'm uncool and that I'll cramp her style.

Jiaying

You're listening to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English, and we're talking about the expression 'cramp my style'. We use this expression to say that someone or something is preventing someone from behaving the way they want.

Neil

So, hang on – why didn't I get an invite to your dinner party? Are you worried I'd cramp your style?

Jiaying

Errr – no, Neil. It's just last time you in brought that parrot and it kept making inappropriate jokes. Maybe your invite got lost in the mail?

Neil

Oh – It wasn't a real parrot though – just one of my son's toys I like to wear on my shoulder. OK – so I'll wait to see if my invite arrives.

Jiaying

Only joking. I was tricking you. I really wanted to invite you in person. You'll be the guest of honour along with my parents! Would you like to come?

Neil

Of course – I'd love to. And I promise not to cramp your style!

Jiaying

I know you wouldn't – just don't bring the parrot. Bye!

Neil

Bye!

Road Podcast

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