

# Q and A of the Week 你问我答

## Choke and suffocate 呛和窒息



- 关于台词的备注:  
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- 请注意: 中文文字内容只提供簡體版

- Jackie:** Hello, welcome to Question and Answer of the Week. I'm Jackie. And with me is Li.
- Li:** (makes loud gasping noises)
- Jackie:** Li?
- Li:** (more gasping)
- Jackie:** Li, are you okay? Are you choking?
- Li:** (between coughs) 你看我像开玩笑吗? Does it look like I'm joking?
- Jackie:** Not 'joking' with a j – 'choking' with a ch.
- Li:** (one big cough) 啊, 好了没事了。What's choking – isn't it the same as joking?
- Jackie:** Choking is what you were just doing, it's when you have problems breathing and you can't get enough air.
- Li:** Ah, **choking** 这个词的意思是呛着了, 卡着了。刚才我不小心, 一块糖卡在我嗓子眼儿, 好难受! **It made me choke.**
- Jackie:** Your poor thing, but there's one person who will be grateful for your little choking episode. Ho from Qingdao in China.
- Li:** 真的? 我这儿卡得难受, 他却高兴? 这不是幸灾乐祸吗! 他不喜欢我的节目是吗?
- Jackie:** Of course he does. He has written to us, saying I like your programme very much, but he has a question about the word 'choke' and the word 'suffocate'.
- Li:** 今天我们要来回答 Ho 提出的问题, 即如何区分 **choke** 和 **suffocate**.
- Jackie:** Well Ho, as we said, if you choke, or if something chokes you, you can't breathe any more because it is blocking your throat.

- Li:** 是的 **to choke** 意思是呛着了或卡着了，一时喘不过气来。
- Jackie:** And, we also use it in a slightly different sense: you can choke someone else by blocking their throat so they can't breathe anymore – although we don't recommend it.
- Li:** 这个词也可以用来形容一个人掐住另一个人的脖子，让对方窒息 – 不过我们不提倡任何人那样做！
- Jackie:** Listen to some examples.

### Examples

*My son choked on a peanut.*

*She choked when a fishbone got caught in her throat.*

*John put his hands around Neil's throat and started to choke him.*

- Jackie:** You might sometimes hear the expression 'to choke back the tears'.

- Li:** 是的 **to choke back something** 是忍住，不让情感流露出来的意思。

### Examples

*He choked back his anger as he tried to speak calmly.*

*I choked back the tears as I told my husband about the terrible accident.*

- Jackie:** We also might hear the word 'choke' in a sports context.

- Li:** 另外 **choke** 这个词也可用来形容一个人在关键时刻卡壳了。俗话说，就是关键时刻掉链子，比如网球比赛。

### Example

*Ah come on Andy! He could have won this set already, but it looks like he's choking!*

- Li:** So what about the word 'suffocate'.

- Jackie:** To suffocate has a very similar meaning to choke, it means not being able to breathe due to a lack of air. But usually if we say someone suffocated, it means they actually died as a result.

- Li:** To suffocate 也是喘不过气来的意思，不过它比 **choke** 更为严重，**to suffocate** 就是窒息，甚至憋死或闷死。**Choke** 只是呛着了，不一定导致死亡。

- Jackie:** However, we also sometimes use the word informally to mean something is making us uncomfortably hot or unable to breathe properly.

- Li:** 在非正式的口语中人们也用 **suffocate** 这个词来比喻窒息。请听以下例句，注意 **to suffocate** 这个词的正式时用法和非正式用法：

### Examples

*The victims had suffocated in the fumes of the fire.*

*The murderer suffocated her, putting a pillow over her face until she stopped breathing.*

*Can we open a window? It's suffocating in here!*

**Jackie:** Well, Li I hope you don't choke on a sweet again.

**Li:** I'll be careful!

**Jackie:** Remember, you can send your language questions to [questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk](mailto:questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk)

**Li:** 是的，如果你也碰到了英语学习上的问题，请随时给我们发邮件或登陆我们的网页 [bbcukchina.com](http://bbcukchina.com).

**Jackie:** Until next time!

**Li:** Bye!