



WORDS AND THEIR STORIES

It's Not the End of the World

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And now, *Words and Their Stories* from VOA Learning English.

Each week on this program, we explain expressions often used in American English. We give you lots of examples. This way, you can learn how to use the expressions when you speak English.

Today we talk about a very serious thing: the end of the world. In both popular culture and religious works, the end of the world is sometimes called the **apocalypse** or **Armageddon**.

You do not need me to tell you that the end of the world is a bad thing. It is also not likely to happen during our lifetime. (*fingers crossed*)

As an expression, we use “the end of the world” to be **dramatic**, to overstate, or to sell rock-n-roll songs.

It's the end of the world as we know it.

It's the end of the world as we know it.

It's the end of the world as we know it.

And I feel fine...

Now, let's listen to these two people using the term “the end of the world.”

What is wrong with Theo? Why is he crying so hard?

Sarah broke up with him.

But they were going out together for only a month.

I know. I know.

Listening to him cry like that, you would think it was the end of the world.

Now, this expression is not all bad. In fact, we often use it in the **negative** form. When you want to say that things are *not* so bad, you can say “it’s *not* the end of the world.” In other words, whatever the situation is, it could be much worse.

Here is an example:

Our football team was hoping to finish in first place. But it won't be the end of the world if we don't.

If I say that something bad is “not the end of the world,” I am trying to make myself or someone else feel better about it.

And here are a more examples:

*I will be **disappointed** if we cancel our trip to Spain this year. But it won't be the end of the world. There is always next year!*

*A rainy **wedding** day is not the end of the world. People will have fun no matter what the weather does!*

Losing your job does not have to be the end of the world. You will find another one!

If your English studies are coming along slowly, do not worry. It is not the end of the world! And to help, you can join me again next week for another *Words and Their Stories!*

Until next time. I'm Anna Matteo.

*Don't they know it's the end of the world?
It ended when you said goodbye.*

Anna Matteo wrote this story for VOA Learning English. George Grow was the editor. The song at the top of the show is REM singing “It’s the End of the World (And I Feel Fine.)” The song at the end is Skeeter Davis singing “End of the World.”

Words in This Story

apocalypse – *n.* a great disaster : a sudden and very bad event that causes much fear, loss, or destruction

Armageddon – *n.* the site or time of a final and conclusive battle between the forces of good and evil

dramatic – *adj.* attracting attention : causing people to carefully listen, look, etc.

negative – *n.* an expression (as the word *no*) that denies or says the opposite

disappointed – *adj.* defeated in expectation or hope

wedding – *n.* a marriage ceremony usually with its accompanying festivities
