

Transcript

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Section 1 – “I wanted to ask you something” – asking for a favour

Tess: Hello again and welcome to the LearnEnglish Elementary podcast number eight. I'm Tess, from London.

Ravi: And I'm Ravi, from Manchester. You're looking great as usual Tess, how are you?

Tess: Thanks, Ravi. I'm very well thanks. How are you?

Ravi: I'm fine thanks. Actually, I'm very well. You know I told you I was looking for a new flat?

Tess: Yes.

Ravi: Well, I found a new place over on Carswell Road – near the swimming pool. It's really nice. Much bigger than the one I'm in now.

Tess: What's the rent like?

Ravi: Well, it is quite expensive, quite a bit more than I pay now. But it's a lot nicer.

Tess: Great. When are you moving.

Ravi: Well, I wanted to ask you about that. What are you doing on Saturday?

Tess: Nothing special. Why?

Ravi: Well, do you think you could help me move some stuff to my new place? Can you spare two or three hours in the afternoon?

Tess: Yeah, I suppose so.

Ravi: You can say 'no' if you want to you know.

Tess: No, it's OK, I don't mind.

Ravi: That's brilliant. Thank you. I'll tell you what, I'll make dinner for you at the new flat after we've moved my things. Does that sound OK?

Tess: Ooh. That'll be lovely, thanks.

Ravi: Great. Have a think about what you want to eat. Right. Well, we'd better get on. Lots of things for you, as usual. We've got Gordon – hello Gordon

Gordon: Hello

Ravi: Gordon's our producer and king of the bad jokes. We've got the quiz, we've got fish in the bath we've got good and bad TV but first of all we've got I'd Like to Meet.

Section 2 – I'd like to meet

Ravi: And joining us today is Megan. Hello Megan.

Megan: Hi Ravi.

Ravi: Where are you today Megan?

Megan: I'm at home. In Reading.

Ravi: Oh yeah, I know it. Do you like it?

Megan: It's OK. I quite like it, yeah.

Ravi: OK then Megan, tell us, who would you like to meet?

Megan: I'd like to meet David Attenborough.

Ravi: Great choice. I know who David Attenborough is – I think anyone who watches television in Britain will know who he is – but maybe you can explain to people who *don't* watch television in Britain who David Attenborough is and what he's well known for.

Megan: Well actually Ravi, David Attenborough's wildlife programmes have been seen by more than one *billion* people all over the world so I think people *will* know who he is. They might not know his name but I think they'll recognise him. Erm, he's a TV presenter and he makes programmes about nature and wildlife and the natural world and they are just *fantastic*. Erm .. I'll say the names of some of the programmes in case anyone recognises them, erm, there was Life on Earth, the Life of Birds, the Blue Planet, Planet Earth – there's been so many of them.

Ravi: And what is it about David Attenborough that you like?

Megan: Oh, everything. He's getting quite old now – he's over 80 now, but he looks great – he's got really white hair. And I love his voice – he just sounds so interested in the animals that he's talking about and sometimes he gets really close to them and he's almost whispering but you can just see how interested and excited he is. I think the programmes are brilliant. But the other thing is that the programmes are always about the *animals* not about him. Y' know some presenters just talk about themselves all the time. I think his programmes are the best things on TV.

Ravi: So, you like animals then Megan?

Megan: I love them. I want to be a vet.

Ravi: And what would you say to David Attenborough if you met him?

Megan: Well, I'd like to say "thank you" I think for his programmes and tell him that I think they've been really important in telling people about climate change and global warming and the real things that are happening to animals because of what *people* do. I think his programmes have made a lot of people realise the problems animals have to face. And I'd like to ask him what he thinks will happen in the future, y'know, if it's too late to save the planet, kind of thing.

Ravi: Y'know. I think I'd really like to meet David Attenborough as well. I really love those

programmes. Do you know what he said about TV advertisements Megan?

Megan: No?

Ravi: He said he will never do an advertisement on TV. He says if people know you will take money to say you like something then they can't trust you anymore or believe what you say.

Megan: Yeah. You really do trust him when you listen to him.

Ravi: Well, thanks Megan – that was great. And remember that we're always happy to hear from you so if you'd like to tell us about a TV presenter in your country you can send it to us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org, that's learnenglish - all one word - at- britishcouncil – all one word DOT org, that's o-r-g.

Section 3 – Quiz

Tess: OK now. It's time for our quiz, as usual. Our players this time are Amy. Hi Amy.

Amy: *(on phone)* Hello

Tess: And Brandon. Hello Brandon.

Brandon: *(on phone)* Hi Tess.

Tess: Let's start with you Amy. Where are you calling from?

Amy: From Leeds. I'm from Yorkshire.

Tess: And what do you do?

Amy: I'm studying to be a nurse. I've just started.

Tess: Oh. Are you enjoying it?

Amy: Yeah, it's great so far.

Tess: OK. Great. Now how about you Brandon. Where are you calling from?

Brandon: I'm in Penzance in Cornwall.

Tess: Wow – the very tip of the country. I used to go to Cornwall on holiday when I was a kid.

Brandon: We still get loads of holidaymakers every year.

Tess: Well, it's such a beautiful area. Anyway, we've got a new quiz for you this time – a numbers quiz. How are you with numbers Amy?

Amy: Well, I'll do my best.

Tess: OK. Here's what you have to do. You're going to work together to answer some riddles. I'll give you an example. There are 7 D in a W. Can you tell me what the 'D' and the 'W' stand for?

Brandon: Is it 7 days in a week?

Tess: OK, so you get the idea. Now, either of you can answer and if, together, you can get five correct answers, you both win a prize. OK you two?

Brandon & Amy: OK / Yes

Tess: So, here's the first one. There are twelve M in a Y.

Amy: Twelve months in a year?

Tess: Well done! One out of one. Next one.

Twenty-four H in a D.

Brandon: Twenty-four hours in a day.

Tess: That's it. Two out of two. Three more to get. Next one. Sixty S in an M.

Brandon: It's sixty seconds in a minute, isn't it?

Tess: It is. Two more to get. Normally, there are 30 or 31 D in an M.

Amy: Days in a month?

Tess: Right! Four out of four. One more to get. Sixty M in an H.

Brandon: Sixty minutes in an hour!

Tess: Yes Well done you two! Five out of five. OK – you've both won a book token and we'll be sending them to you very soon. Thanks for playing – and well done. Ravi – I've got one for you. Eleven P in an F T.

Ravi: Easy. Eleven players in a football team.

Good game though. Remember if you're listening that you can send your ideas for games we can play to learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Section 4 – Our person in

Ravi:

OK. Time now for Our Person In. At the start of the podcast I promised you fish in the bath – and here they come. Bill Steadman is our man in Prague.

Bill: When the huge fish tanks appear outside supermarkets here in Prague you know that it must be almost Christmas. The tanks are full of carp – the fish traditionally eaten at Christmas here in the Czech Republic and in other central European countries.

For my first Christmas in the Czech Republic I found this tradition a little strange. Carp isn't usually eaten in Britain – it's a fish that is often full of small bones and the flavour is a little, well, *different*. But what I found really strange about the Czech habit of eating carp at Christmas is *how* they do it.

People usually buy the fish from tanks outside supermarkets and take them home – *alive* – and put them in the bath. Spending a few days in clean bath water cleans the carp and makes it taste better when it is eaten on Christmas Eve. A friend of mine told me that when her son was four years old he asked why they were keeping the carp in the bath. "To clean it" she told him. Later that day my friend went to look at the carp in the bath and saw, to her horror, a bath full of bubbles. Her helpful son had added a generous handful of

soap powder to the bath to make sure their carp was lovely and clean. That was one family that didn't eat carp that year.

All my friends with children tell me that there is one golden rule – never give your carp a name. When Christmas Eve arrives you'll find it very difficult to explain to your children why their pet has suddenly disappeared.

Tess: Ahh. So the poor children think they've got a fish as a pet and then it disappears and they have to eat it for Christmas. Poor things.

Ravi: What I want to know is how do they have a bath when the fish is in the bath? Do they just have a bath with the fish? Very strange. But anyway, if any of you has something interesting to tell us about what you eat at festivals in your country then write and let us know. The address is learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Section 5 – Your turn

Tess: Now, let's move on to Your Turn, the part of our podcast when we find out what *you* think. This time round we asked a two part question – what are the best – and worst – things on TV. Let's hear some answers.

Voice 1: Best thing – sport. I know people complain about it but it's all I watch, really. Worst thing – reality TV shows – definitely. There are *hundreds* of them and they are all *completely* stupid.

Voice 2: Well, I like soap operas. I watch two or three of them, you know. You really feel like you know the characters. I've watched them for years. What do I always switch off? Probably the weather forecast. It's never right so what's the point in watching it?

Voice 3: I don't watch much TV but I do like the nature documentaries. I saw one about whales and it was just amazing. I don't know how they do it. But apart from that, I don't know. There's too much sport on television. I just turn it off straight away.

Voice 4: I can't really go to the cinema very often now I've got children so I like to watch films on TV. They don't have the most recent films but, you know, it's OK. That's what I watch mostly. I can't stand all the sport on TV though. It never ends!

Voice 5: Erm.. what do I like? Have you seen *Silver Fox*? I love action programmes like that, you know, exciting things. It's better than the news and the political programmes and that. Boring!

Tess: How about you Ravi. What would you say?

Ravi: Sport, I'm afraid. That's pretty much all I watch on TV. I watch DVDs most of the time. Let us know what you think – what are the best – and worst – things on TV? Send your answers to learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Section 6 – Carolina

Ravi:

OK. It's time now to catch up with Carolina. Carolina, you'll remember, is from Venezuela and she's come to England to live, study and have fun. She wasn't having much fun last time because she had a really bad cold but she's feeling better now and she's going out to the pub with some friends.

In the pub

Jamie: Carolina! Hi! We're over here!

Carolina: Oh hi! I couldn't see you!

Voice: ... And the man says "I know. It *is* amazing. He *hated* the book".

Jamie: Come and sit down. There's a space next to Henry.

Carolina: Excuse me, sorry. Hello Henry.

Henry: Hi.

Jamie: And this is Helen, and Nigel, and Gemma and Jake.

All: hi, hello, hi Carolina etc

Carolina: Hello everybody.

Jake: Right. It's my round.

Carolina: Round? I don't understand.

Jamie: Haven't you ever been to a pub before?

Carolina: No, it's the first time.

Jamie: We take it in turns to buy a round – that's what you do in a pub. Everyone buys a round.

Carolina: But is a round a drink?

Jamie: No. One person buys a drink for everyone at the table – that's called a round. Then next time someone else buys one. Henry bought the first one and now Jake's buying the next one, so it's his round. But you don't have to.... not if you don't want to....if you don't want a drink or something.

Carolina: Oh... no, that's OK. I'll buy a round later.

Jake: So, same again everybody?

All: yes, yes please, yep, same again, same for me please.

Jake: Carolina? What are you drinking?

Carolina: Oh dear I don't know. What is everyone else having?

Jamie: I'm having Newcastle Brown. It's a really good beer. From Newcastle of course.

Carolina: Ugh! It doesn't look like the beer I know. It's very dark!

Jamie: No, probably not. You probably drink lager – that's the pale beer, you know the light coloured one. We call it lager. Would you like one?

Carolina: No, I don't think so. I'll have a fruit juice – what have they got?

Jake: Well, pineapple – that's what Helen's drinking, but besides that, I'm not sure. Come up to the bar with me and we'll ask. You can give me a hand with the drinks. OK, so that's two bottles of Newcastle Brown, a pint of lager, a half of lager, a Diet Coke, a pineapple juice – and whatever Carolina wants.

At the bar

Jake: So, are you enjoying Newcastle?

Carolina: Yes I am. I haven't seen much of it yet. I've just started classes and I had a really bad cold for a few days. But I like what I've seen.

Barman: Y' being served?

Jake: No. Um, two bottles of Newcastle Brown, a pint and a half of lager, a Diet Coke and a pineapple juice please. And what other fruit juices have you got?

Barman: Pineapple, cranberry, mango, apple, and orange.

Carolina: Um, mango please.

Jake: And a packet of crisps please – cheese and onion.

Barman: Right you are.

Jake: And how long have you known Jamie?

Carolina: We met on the train coming up from London.

Jake: Well he seems to like you.

Carolina: Oh, does he?, Well I

Barman: That's eleven pounds fifty please.

Jake: Here you are.

Barman: And that's eight fifty change.

Jake: Thanks. OK, let's get these back to the table. I'll take the lagers –if you can bring the

Tess: Oooh. Jamie seems to like Carolina. Well, well.

Ravi: I knew you'd say that. Do you buy rounds if you go to the pub, Tess?

Tess: I don't usually. It can be really expensive, can't it? Anyway, at least Carolina knows what a round is now. I don't really go to the pub much anyway. I prefer to be outdoors.

Ravi: Gordon. I bet you're often in the pub.

Surrounded by people laughing at your jokes.

Gordon: That's right Ravi.

Section 7 – The Joke

Ravi: Is it time for your joke now? Come on then. I hope it's a good one.

Gordon: They're all good, Ravi. Ready for it?

Ravi: Go on.

Gordon: OK then. There were these two married couples, OK? And one couple invited the other for dinner one night. So, they have a lovely meal and after dinner the two men were in the kitchen doing the washing up and chatting and the two women were in the living room, having a chat.

One of the men says to the other, "We went to a great restaurant last week – had a fantastic meal. The best Indian food I've had in ages. Excellent. And really cheap too".

And the other man says "Sounds great. I love Indian food. What was the restaurant called?"

And the first man says, "Oh gosh. My memory's terrible. Now, let me think for a minute. You know that flower? It's red – smells nice. Romantic – you give it to people you love on Valentine's Day. What do you call it?"

"A rose" says the other man.

"Yes! That's it!" and he shouts into the living room, "Rose! What was the name of the Indian restaurant we went to last Saturday?"

Tess: My dad's like that. His memory's awful.

Ravi: Yeah, mine too. Actually I forget things as well. Thanks for the joke ...erm ... what's his name again?

Tess: Very funny Ravi. Thanks Gordon. And that's all from us for today but don't go away because our English teacher, Tom, will be here in a little while talking about what you heard and ways to help you learn. So, it's goodbye from me and Ravi ...

Ravi: Bye

Tess: ... but don't go away and keep sending your emails to learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. Bye!

Tom the teacher

Tom: Hi, my name's Tom. At the end of every podcast, I talk about some of the language that you heard, and some ways to help you learn English.

Today I want to talk about prepositions – words like 'on', 'at' and 'in'. It's very difficult for learners to use these words correctly in English. We use prepositions all the time – in lots of different ways. But today I'm only going to talk about one situation – using prepositions in time phrases – with words like 'Saturday', 'Christmas' or 'December'.

Listen to Ravi. Which preposition does he use before 'Saturday'?

Ravi

Well, I wanted to ask you about that. What are you doing on Saturday?

Tom: That's right – he uses 'on'. We say 'on Saturday' – or 'on' any other day of the week. 'On Sunday', 'on Monday', 'on Tuesday' – all of the days. Now listen to part of Gordon's joke. The man in the joke is trying to explain what a 'rose' is. Listen to the preposition with 'Valentine's Day'.

Gordon: Romantic – you give it to people you love on Valentine's Day.

Tom: He said 'on Valentine's Day'. Valentine's Day isn't a day of the week, but it is a day – a single day. So we use 'on' again. Now listen to one more. This is Bill in Prague talking about the fish that they eat. Listen for the time phrase.

Bill: Spending a few days in clean bath water cleans the carp and makes it taste better when it is eaten on Christmas Eve.

Tom: Yes, it was 'on' again. He said "on Christmas Eve". Can you guess why? Christmas Eve is what we call the day before Christmas day – the 24th of December. So, Christmas Eve is a single day. So we use 'on'. So – when we're talking about a single day, we use 'on'. We can say "on my birthday" or "on the first of December" or "on the day I met you".

And we use it for dates too – because they're single days – 'on the first of January', 'on the twenty-fifth of April', 'on the tenth of July'. There's just one more thing I need to tell you about using

(or not using!) 'on' in time phrases. Listen to this line from Gordon's joke.

Gordon: What was the name of the Indian restaurant we went to last Saturday?

Tom: Hmm. He said "last Saturday" – he didn't use 'on'. The reason is simple. We don't use a preposition when we use 'last'. We just say 'last Saturday'. No 'on'. And it's the same with 'next' and 'this'. We just say "What are you doing next Saturday?" or "Let's have dinner this Saturday". No 'on'. So now you know how to use 'on' in time phrases!

In other time phrases we might use 'at' or 'in' – for example we say "at the weekend" or "at Christmas", and we say "in December" or "in the afternoon". It's quite difficult to remember them all. But if you can remember that we use 'on' for single days, it will make life a lot easier for you!

People often make mistakes with prepositions because they aren't thinking in English. They think in their own language and then translate the words into English. And that's when they make mistakes – and not only with prepositions – with lots of different things.

When you're writing you have time to think – you can look at grammar books, or your notebook, for help. But speaking is different – you often don't have time to think. If you want to speak English well – you have to start trying to *think* in English. You can do this with practise. Look at things that you see around you – at home or in the street and say the words in English. You can say them out loud if you're alone – if not just *think* them. Then start trying to say or think sentences – 'I'm going to the kitchen now. I'm going to make my lunch'. Talk to yourself about what you're doing in English – out loud or in your head. Try to do this for a short time at first – then you can increase the time. Try to do it for an hour every day – it will soon get easier. And your brain will learn to think in English. Try it. I'm sure you'll notice the difference after a while.

And now for something different. In this podcast we heard Carolina meeting some people in a pub. She learnt a new word. Listen.

Carolina: But is a round a drink?

Jamie: No. One person buys a drink for everyone at the table – that's called a round. Then next time someone else buys one. Henry bought the first

one and now Jake's buying the next one, so it's his round. But you don't have to.... not if you don't want to....if you don't want a drink or something.

Tom: Pubs are a big part of British culture. British people often go to the pub, and you will often be invited to go too. This doesn't mean that you have to drink alcohol. You can drink lots of different things in a pub – and you can do a lot of different things too. You can have a meal for example. A lot of pubs serve very good food – at lunchtime or in the evening – and it's usually cheaper than eating in a restaurant. A lot of pubs have live music, or maybe karaoke evenings. Another popular thing is a pub quiz. Teams of people try to answer questions to win a prize. That's a good way to practise your English! So, it's good to know some phrases in English that you need to use in a pub. In this podcast Carolina learnt what 'to buy a round' means. Now listen to Jake. Can you understand all of the drinks that he's going to buy?

Jake: Come up to the bar with me and we'll ask. You can give me a hand with the drinks. OK, so that's two bottles of Newcastle Brown, a pint of lager, a half of lager, a Diet Coke, a pineapple juice – and whatever Carolina wants.

Tom: The word 'pint' is probably new for you. Jake is going to buy a pint of lager. 'A pint' is a British measurement – it's a little bit more than half a litre – point five seven of a litre in fact. We use it informally to mean a pint of beer. And 'a half' means *half* a pint of beer – so that's more or less a quarter of a litre. Now one more useful phrase. Listen.

*Jake: So, same again everybody?
All: yes, yes please, yep, same again, same for me please*

Tom: You'll hear 'same again' a lot in the pub, especially when people are buying rounds. It means 'another of the same drink that you had before'. If someone says "What would you like to drink?" you can say "Same again please".

Now, just before I go, I noticed a useful phrase that you can try and use this week. It's a phrase that means 'I'm sure'. Listen and see if you can hear it.

*Ravi: Gordon. I bet you're often in the pub. Surrounded by people laughing at your jokes.
Gordon: That's right Ravi.*

Tom: The phrase is 'I bet'. We use it informally and it means 'I'm sure'. For example, we can say "I bet it's going to rain tomorrow" or "I bet Ana forgot her homework again". Try and use 'I bet' in your conversations in English.

OK. That's all from me today. I'll talk to you all again on the next podcast. Remember you can send your questions to me at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. I'll be happy to answer your questions! Or write to me about any interesting language that *you* noticed. In a moment you'll hear the address for the website where you can read everything you've heard in this podcast. So bye for now! See you next time.