



Episode 2: Vacations & Travel

Hi! If this is your first time listening to our podcast, this is an opportunity for upper level English learners to practice listening skills and learn new vocabulary by listening to authentic conversations. For more information about ways to use this podcast, download notes for [students](#) or [teachers](#).

In today's episode Donielle and Khrystyna discuss some of their favorite vacation destinations and those that are still on their bucket lists.

Here are a few words and phrases about vacation and travel that you may find useful:

<p>go on holiday (UK) go on vacation OR take a vacation (US)</p>	<p>to travel somewhere for enjoyment and relaxation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the meaning of "holiday" in U.S. English: a special day of celebration (may or may not be a day off from work or school)
<p>pack (light)</p> <p>Note that "suitcase" is understood in this context, so it's not necessary to say it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to prepare your suitcases with everything needed for vacation. If you're packing light, it means you are only bringing the necessities so you don't have a lot of heavy bags. <i>Ex. Have you <u>packed</u> for your vacation yet? No, but I'm <u>packing light</u> so it won't take long.</i> We also say "travel light" when speaking generally. <i>Ex. I like to travel light.</i>
<p>on a tight budget</p>	<p>having a very small amount of money to do something.</p> <p><i>Ex. We are going to stay at a hotel outside the city because we're on a tight budget.</i></p>
<p>staycation</p>	<p>a vacation that is spent at home or nearby, rather than traveling somewhere away from home; often done you're on a tight budget.</p> <p><i>Ex. If you're on a tight budget, consider taking a staycation.</i></p>
<p>go on foot</p>	<p>walking rather than traveling by car or using other transport. Note the difference when discussing other modes of transport, where we use BY (by car, by plane, by taxi, by boat, etc.)</p> <p><i>Ex. The road was narrow and dangerous, so we decided to go on foot.</i></p>
<p>tourist trap</p>	<p>A location or attraction that brings many tourists in, but is not worth the money, or there are much better things to do or places to see.</p>

See the following pages for vocabulary and language focus from this episode.



Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation

installment	one of several parts (such as a publication) presented at intervals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the second <u>installment</u> of the podcast.
fingers crossed	something we say to express that we hope something will be true <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Fingers crossed</u> we won't have any audio problems.
to recap	give a quick summary Ex. <u>To recap</u> the main points from our last meeting...
[feel] the itch to [do something]	have an interest or desire to do something, often in an impatient way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm feeling <u>the itch</u> to get out and travel. Also: <u>I'm itching</u> to get out...
sue (v.)	seek justice [often in the form of money] from someone by legal process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He <u>sued</u> the police for wrongful arrest.
turn things upside down	change things completely in a negative way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid has <u>turned things upside down</u> for the last couple of years.
end up	do something or reach a situation that was unplanned or unexpected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We <u>ended up</u> going to different destinations than originally planned.
upscale	used to describe products or services that are very good quality and more expensive than the usual variety Ex. We went to an <u>upscale</u> restaurant.
pricey	synonym for expensive Ex. The restaurant was a little <u>pricey</u> .
run into [someone]	meet someone in a location by chance Ex. I <u>ran into</u> my boss last weekend. (Note that in this case, she said "run into" as a joke because in reality, we planned to meet there.)
the ins and outs of [something]	the details or facts relating to something, or how something works or is done <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One day we can talk about <u>the ins and outs of</u> New Orleans.
get sucked into [something]	be unable to stop yourself from getting involved in something bad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's easy to get <u>sucked into</u> the tourist traps when traveling.
shove	in this context: put or store (something) somewhere, especially roughly, hurriedly, or haphazardly Ex. I <u>shoved</u> the butter in my purse.
be drawn to [sthg]	be fascinated by or attracted to something. Ex. I'm <u>drawn to</u> unique places.
off the grid	not connected to one or more public utilities, often used to mean that they are away from the internet or other modern conveniences/communication methods. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I kind of felt like I was <u>off the grid</u>, and it was nice.
make do	manage with the limited or inadequate means available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's too cold to go out for groceries; we'll <u>make do</u> with what we have.
don't get me wrong	used to make sure that someone does not get an incorrect idea about what you are saying. Ex. Chicago is a great city, <u>don't get me wrong</u> , but I love NYC.
bucket list	comes from the idiom: <i>kick the bucket</i> , which is a humorous way to refer to dying. Your bucket list is everything you want to do before you die.
stranded	in a place with no way of leaving Ex. I don't want to be <u>stranded</u> at sea.
It's no picnic	it is quite difficult or unpleasant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>It's no picnic</u> preparing for a flight into space.

The Language of Informal Conversation

There are certain language patterns that are found only (or mostly) with informal speech. When we are telling a story about something that happened and we want to introduce what someone says at that point, we could say, “and then I said” or “and then he said,” etc. but to keep the story moving quickly, we often say “I go” or “he goes,” etc. This is one of many uses of the verb **go** and it simply means “said” in this context and is followed by a quote or paraphrase of the words the person said.

Another similar pattern is with the word **like**. Sometimes we say, “I’m like” or “he’s like” to introduce the quote. This happens especially as a response to a situation or something that was said.

Ex. I said, “We’re going to France.” He goes, “Oh you want to see Paris?”
I’m like, “No, I want to see this medieval castle that has a town inside it.”

However, we can also use “like” to convey what a person was thinking, rather than what they said.

Ex. I had extra butter left over and I was like, “This butter is so good; I need to take it back with me.”

Another expression you will hear a few times during this conversation is, “Are you kidding me?” This is a very common phrase that can be used to express a variety of emotions. Here are a few meanings: to show (A) surprise (B) shock that something shouldn’t be true but is, or (C) annoyance or anger with someone. Which one do you think best fits the example below?

K: It was March, I think, that we went to New Orleans, but I can’t believe it has been 12 years.
D: Oh my gosh, are you kidding me?*

For a stronger variant of this, you might hear, “You’ve got to be kidding me” to emphasize someone’s intense feeling of shock, disbelief, or annoyance. Finally, sometimes people will tell a story that they realize is shocking and hard to believe, so they follow it up with: “I kid you not.”

Join the Conversation

- How often do you generally go on vacation? Where did you go for your last vacation?
- What are some of your favorite travel destinations? What do you love about them?
- Discuss the following types of vacations. What are the pros and cons of each?

beach mountains staycation modern city historic area camping road trip cruise

- What was the best vacation you ever took?
- Where have you traveled in the U.S.? What are some places in the U.S. you would like to visit?
- What’s on your bucket list? What places do you dream of visiting in your lifetime?

*B: In this case, it is used to express shock that it had been so many years; it doesn’t seem possible that it was so long ago.

Thanks for checking out our podcast!

We are enjoying these discussions, and we hope that you are finding them helpful!



Get tips for ways to use this podcast as a [learner](#) or [teacher](#) of English.




We would love to hear from you with any [comments or suggestions](#) for future episodes.



If you are listening on a podcast platform, we would be super grateful for your review.



And if you're enjoying these conversations and want to [support the podcast](#), you know we'd never turn down a cup of coffee! 

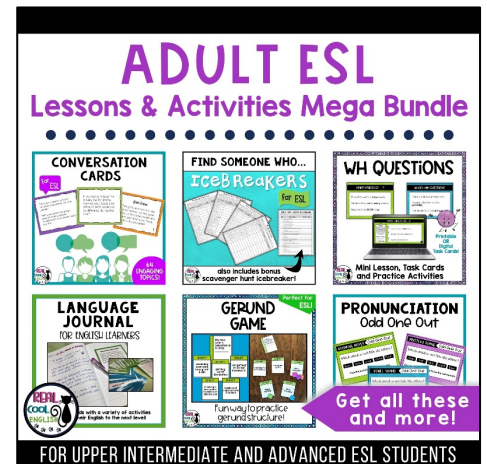
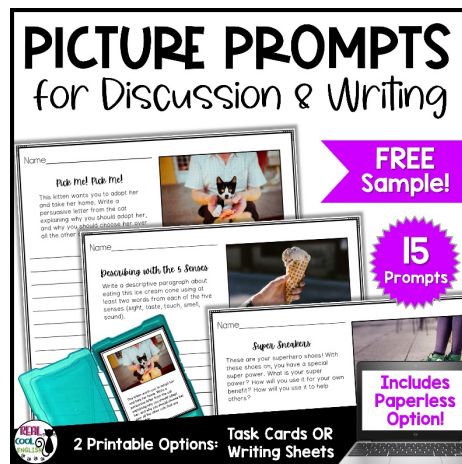
Are you a teacher using this podcast with your students?

Here are more resources that we think you and your students will love!

Conversation cards based on the discussions in this podcast

Subscribe for a FREE sample!

Get ALL the writing prompts, conversation cards and MUCH more!



CLICK HERE
to buy now or
add to wish list

CLICK HERE
to get your
FREE Sample!

CLICK HERE
to buy now or
add to wish list