Coffee and Conversation for ESL Listening
with Donielle and Khrystyna

Episode 42: Talking About Movies

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.

In today's episode, Donielle and Khrystyna discuss movie preferences and watching habits.

Here are a few words and phrases about the topic that you may find useful:

Genres (types of movies)	Drama Action Horror/Thriller Sci-Fi (science fiction) Comedy Rom-Com (romantic comedy) Mystery/Suspense Animated film/Animation Biopic (a film about a real person's life)
Misc. movie vocabulary	*Blockbuster* – a very popular, high-earning movie *Indie film* – independently produced movie *Cult classic* – a movie with a dedicated fan base, often developing over time *Cast* – all the actors in a movie *Plot* – the story *Soundtrack* – the music used in the movie *Trailer* – the promotional preview *Box office hit/flop* (financially successful/unsuccessful) *Critically acclaimed* – praised by movie critics *Mixed reviews* – some good, some bad *suspension of disbelief* – willingness to temporarily ignore logic to accept something as real for the sake of enjoying a story, movie, or play *dubbing/dubbed* - Replacing the original audio with voices in another language (the *dubbing* was excellent/the movie was *dubbed* in English)
Ways to watch movies	*Go to the movies* (Specific to U.S.: go to a movie theater to watch a movie) *Watch on the big screen* (to emphasize the theater experience vs. on TV) *Stream* – watch online at home (Netflix, etc.)

You can also read the transcript for this episode.

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

Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation

[the] third time's a charm	often said when two attempts failed and the third attempt is (or you hope will be) successful • *We tried recording twice, but third time's a charm—we finally got it right.*
long for [something]	strongly wish for something you miss or want (use is a bit formal or dramatic) • *Sometimes I long for quiet, boring days.*
paradox	a statement or situation that appears self-contradictory but may reveal a deeper truth upon closer examination
paradox of choice	when too many options make it harder to choose – It's a paradox because it would seem that having many choices would be a good thing, but the reality is that too many choices are overwhelming, making it difficult to decide.
butcher [something]	do a very poor job at something - in this case, pronouncing a word • *We borrow words from other languages and then butcher them.*
spin	a unique or altered version of something • *English speakers put their own spin on foreign words.*
[every] once in a while	much more common way to say "occasionally" • *I enjoy a good rom-com every once in a while.*
full-blown	complete and intense • *I like movies that are a little scary, but not full-blown horror.*
creepy	strange or scary in a subtle way • *The movie wasn't terrifying, just a little creepy.*
eerie	unusual in a way that feels spooky (unsettling, suggestive of something supernatural) • *The soundtrack made the whole scene feel eerie.*
old timey	old-fashioned; from a long time ago • *I enjoy old timey, classic films.*
cheesy	overly sentimental or silly in a way that feels low-quality • *Some rom-coms are so cheesy they make me laugh.*
corny	Silly, sentimental, or predictable • *The ending was so corny that it ruined the whole movie.*
cliché	an overused idea that isn't original anymore, making something feel low quality • *The plot was such a cliché.*
roll your eyes	to react to something silly or annoying, by looking upward • *The predictable ending made me roll my eyes.*
petty	overly focused on small, unimportant things; a petty person is often unnecessarily mean or takes an exaggerated and harsh response to something that is insignificant. • *My petty boss makes a note if we are occasionally 2 minutes late and includes it on our employee evaluations.*
thermos	a container that keeps drinks hot or cold • *We brought a thermos of tea and scones to watch Downton Abbey.*
scone	a type of baked pastry, often eaten with tea

Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation - Cont'd

sappy	overly sentimental, emotional, or sweet (often used negatively) • *I'm not in the mood to watch a <u>sappy</u> romance.*
dork	silly or socially awkward person (often used light-heartedly to describe oneself) • *I'm sure we looked like <u>dorks</u> with our tea and scones in the theater.*
guilty pleasure	something you enjoy, but might feel embarrassed to admit because it's something often ridiculed or considered low quality • *Cheesy 1980s rom-coms are my <u>guilty pleasure</u>.*
one-liner	a witty and funny joke that is delivered in a single line • *Back to School is filled with hilarious <u>one-liners</u>.*
"the one"	the person you know you want to marry or spend your life with • *He knew she was <u>"the one"</u> when she thought his favorite movie was hilarious.*
remedy [something]	fix or correct something • *It has been so long since I've watched Office Space; I need to <u>remedy</u> this.* (In other words, I need to watch it again soon.)
check [something] **out**	investigate, examine, get more information, or see what something is like • *I definitely think you should <u>check</u> [movie name] <u>out</u>.*
It hits different.	[informal] it feels more meaningful or relatable than usual • *Office Space <u>hits different</u> if you've ever worked in an office.*
replenish	fill or replace what is empty or used up • *The printer error just meant we needed to <u>replenish</u> the paper.*
break down [and do something]	decide to do something after initially hesitating or refusing to do it • *I might <u>break down</u> and watch the new Superman movie.*
close down	to stop operations permanently, such as with a business • *I'm always waiting for the theater to <u>close down</u> since it's usually empty.*
ahead of time	very common way to say "in advance" • *You can buy your tickets online and pick your seats <u>ahead of time</u>.*
pet peeve	a minor annoyance that an individual finds particularly irritating to a greater degree than most people do • *My movie <u>pet peeve</u> is when they show people talking on the phone and then hang up without saying goodbye. (note: for more about pet peeves, check out Episode 14)*
stands out	is easily noticed or memorable • *What really <u>stands out</u> to me about that movie is the incredible acting*
yap	talk a lot, often when someone should be doing something else • *Characters at a bus stop always <u>yap</u> forever, while the bus driver just waits patiently.*
spotless	completely clean; without any marks • *Her house is always <u>spotless</u>.*
rapid fire	quick questions asked one after another, with answers to be given quickly and without much time for thought • *Let's end the episode with a <u>rapid-fire</u> round.*

Movies Discussed in this Episode

The following is a list of movies mentioned in this conversation with a short description of each. Watching movies is a great way to practice language skills, so click the links below to find out more about the movies we discussed, and maybe even choose one to watch!

[Downton Abbey](#)	A drama following the wealthy Crawley family and their household staff. The films continue the story from the popular TV series.
[Big Trouble in Little China](#)	An action-fantasy movie where a truck driver gets pulled into a magical battle in Chinatown involving ancient spirits and martial-arts chaos.
[Back to School](#)	A comedy about a loud, over-the-top businessman who enrolls in college with his son and causes trouble while trying to prove himself.
[Mannequin](#)	A department-store mannequin magically comes to life at night, and a young window-dresser falls in love with her as they transform the store's displays.
[Anchorman](#)	A goofy comedy about a 1970s news anchor and his newsroom team competing for attention, full of silly one-liners and exaggerated characters.
[Star Wars](#)	An epic sci-fi adventure about heroes fighting against powerful evil forces in a galaxy far, far away, featuring space battles, Jedi knights, and iconic characters.
[Office Space](#)	A workplace comedy about frustrated office employees who rebel against their boring corporate jobs, malfunctioning printers, and annoying bosses.
[The Wedding Singer](#)	A rom-com about a wedding singer who falls for a kind waitress even though she's engaged to someone else, filled with 1980s music and humor.
[My Best Friend's Wedding](#)	A woman realizes she loves her best friend only after he becomes engaged, and she tries to stop the wedding while dealing with her own feelings.
[Dog Man](#)	An animated movie based on the popular children's book series about a half-dog, half-man police hero who fights silly villains in a cartoon-style world.
[Superman (2025)](#)	A modern superhero film following Superman as he discovers his identity, protects the world, and faces forces that challenge both his powers and his humanity.

Join the Conversation

- What movie <u>genres</u> do you enjoy watching the most, and why?

- What are your favorite English-language movies? What do you like about them? What are some of your least favorite movies? What didn't you like about them?

- What kinds of unrealistic things or bad <u>clichés</u> have you noticed in American movies? Do you have any <u>pet peeves</u> about movies?

- Do you prefer watching movies at home or in the theater? Explain your choice.

- If you've been to movie theaters in both your home country and an English-speaking country, how are they similar or different? If not, what differences do you think might exist?

- Do you ever <u>go to the movies</u> alone? How was the experience? If not, would you want to?

- What snacks do you usually get at the movie theater? Do you ever bring your own snacks?

Thanks for checking out our podcast!

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

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💬 We would love to hear from you with any <u>comments or suggestions</u> for future episodes.

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