



Coffee and Conversation for ESL Listening



with Donielle and Khristyna

Episode 50: Random Thoughts

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 Khristyna discuss random questions about everyday life, travel, social etiquette, and the little things that drive us crazy.

Celebrating 50 Episodes!

We can't believe we've made it to 50 episodes!

Thank you for joining us for the conversations, stories, laughs, and plenty of coffee along the way.

We truly enjoy creating Coffee & Conversation, and we hope the podcast and show notes are helping you build your listening skills, learn real-world English, and feel more confident with everyday conversation.



We'd also love to hear from you! Tell us what you're enjoying, send us ideas for future topics, or just say hello. And if you'd like to help us keep the coffee and conversations going, there are ways to support the show too. **Check out the last page** for all the ways you can connect with us and support the podcast. Here's to the next 50!

Cheers!

Donielle & Khristyna

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

ChapStick	a brand of lip balm used to protect or moisturize dry lips • <i>My lips were so dry in Las Vegas that I was constantly putting on <u>ChapStick</u>.</i>
a minute	Informal: used to express a long amount of time • <i>It takes <u>a minute</u> to edit these podcasts. I haven't been to the beach in <u>a minute</u>.</i>
at the top	at the beginning of something, especially a conversation, meeting, or show • <i>I'm going to mention our coffee links <u>at the top</u> of the episode.</i>
strikes the note	feels exactly right or satisfies a particular desire. NOTE: a more common expression for this idea is: <u>hits the spot</u> • <i>Every once in a while, an iced coffee really <u>strikes the note/hits the spot</u> on a hot day.</i>
It doesn't do it for me	it does not appeal to me or give me the satisfaction I want • <i>I know some people love iced coffee, but <u>it doesn't do it for me</u>.</i>
glance	look at something quickly • <i>She <u>glanced</u> at her phone while we were talking.</i>
fire off	Ph. Verb/Informal: send or do something quickly, often without much preparation. • <i>He <u>fired off</u> a quick text before returning to the conversation.</i>
[come] full circle	returning to a situation or idea similar to where something began • <i>We used to cook from scratch, then convenience foods took over. Now homemade cooking is making a comeback. We've <u>come full circle</u>.</i>
run [sthng] through [sthng]	put something through a process, often to check, test, or improve it. • <i>I <u>ran</u> my email <u>through</u> an AI tool to check the grammar before sending it.</i>
decipher	understand something that is difficult to interpret, such as a secret code • <i>I had to read the message three times to <u>decipher</u> what she meant.</i>
exhausted	completely used up or finished discussing something • <i>We've <u>exhausted</u> that topic, so let's pick another question.</i>
hardly ever OR barely ever	almost never, very rarely • <i>We <u>hardly/barely ever</u> eat out at home, but we eat at restaurants a lot on vacation.</i>
That's a plus	that is an advantage or a positive thing
implemented	put into use or made something start working • <i>The new driverless transportation system had not been fully <u>implemented</u> yet.</i>
be all about it	very enthusiastic or strongly in favor of something • <i>I didn't even hesitate to take the driverless car; I <u>was all about it</u>.</i>
look it up	search for information about something • <i>I wonder what other cities use that service. I'll have to <u>look it up</u>.</i>
sleep in	Ph. Verb: to sleep later than usual in the morning • <i>On vacation, I love to <u>sleep in</u> instead of waking up at six a.m.</i>
discreet	careful not to attract attention or be noticed • <i>She tried to be <u>discreet</u> about yawning during the podcast.</i>
space [sthg] out	Ph. Verb: arrange things so there is time between them • <i>I'm trying to <u>space out</u> my coffee instead of drinking 3 cups in the morning.</i>

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

squeeze [smthg] in	Ph. Verb: find time for something when your schedule is busy • <i>I managed to <u>squeeze in</u> a quick coffee break between meetings.</i>
ponytail	a hairstyle in which the hair is tied together at the back of the head
embrace	accept or welcome something willingly • <i>Sometimes you just have to <u>embrace</u> the ponytail and stop worrying about your hair.</i>
sidetracked	distracted from what you originally intended to do • <i>I got <u>sidetracked</u> while cleaning and ended up organizing the entire closet.</i>
on the same page	having the same understanding, opinion, or plan • <i>I thought we were <u>on the same page</u> about cleaning, but I guess not.</i>
whip through [smthg]	Ph. Verb, Informal: to complete something quickly and easily • <i>I thought I could <u>whip through</u> the podcast editing, but it took several hours.</i>
tedious	boring or tiring because something requires a lot of careful, repetitive work • <i>Editing every little detail of an audio recording can be <u>tedious</u>.</i>
rude awakening	an unpleasant surprise that makes you suddenly realize something; in this case, it's a play on words; the drink cart literally wakes you up in an unpleasant way
snooze	a short, light sleep • <i>I like the window seat because I can lean against the wall and have a little <u>snooze</u>.</i>
the luck of the draw	a result determined by chance rather than choice or skill (as in drawing something random from a bag) • <i>We picked two travel questions in a row, but it was just <u>the luck of the draw</u>.</i>
take [one's] sweet time	to do something slowly, especially when someone else wants you to hurry; often used to show annoyance or to tease someone about being slow • <i>My husband <u>takes his sweet time</u> getting ready to go out.</i>
caught onto [someone]	realized what someone was doing, especially something they were trying to hide • <i>I told my husband the party started 30 minutes early, but I think he <u>caught onto me</u>.</i>
fashionably late	arriving a little late to a social event because it is acceptable or stylish to do so
roll up [to a place]	Ph. Verb, Informal: arrive at a place, often in a vehicle • <i>I <u>rolled up</u> to the college and wondered why the parking lot was empty.</i>
earth shattering	extremely important, surprising, or life-changing • <i>My towel problem isn't <u>earth-shattering</u>, but it annoys me every day.</i>
bonkers	crazy or extremely annoyed • <i>The kitchen towel keeps falling on the floor, and it drives me <u>bonkers</u>.</i>
slit	a long, narrow cut or opening
rod	a long, thin, straight piece of metal, wood, or another material
friction	the resistance created when two surfaces rub or move against each other • <i>The rubber would create <u>friction</u> and keep the towel from sliding off.</i>
grip	the ability to hold something firmly or prevent it from slipping • <i>A rubber material with good grip would help keep the towel in place.</i>

Everyday Reactions

Everyday English is full of short reactions that express surprise, frustration, agreement, or sympathy. These informal expressions can make conversations sound more natural, but their meaning and appropriateness often depend on the situation and tone of voice. Here are some from the conversation used in the episode, plus a few other common ones.

Holy cow! / Holy moly!	surprise, astonishment, delight, or dismay
I hear ya.	I understand, or I agree with you.
Go figure.	Something is strange, surprising, or hard to explain. • <i>It was the worst movie I've ever seen, but it broke box office records. Go figure.</i>
Shoot! Darn [it]! Dang [it]!	Mild disappointment, frustration, surprise, or irritation
[What a] Bummer!	disappointment or sympathy about a minor problem or unfortunate, but not serious, situation. • <i>My flight was delayed 3 hours. What a bummer!</i>
Tell me about it!	Strong agreement, especially about a shared frustration • <i>This week has been exhausting. Tell me about it!</i>
Yikes!	Surprise, alarm, or concern. • <i>The repair is going to cost \$800. Yikes!</i>

Join the Conversation

- Do you think it's rude to **glance** at your phone while talking to someone? Does it depend on the situation? What are some situations where it would be especially rude?
- What is one rule of courtesy or good manners that you think people should follow more often?
- What do you enjoy doing on vacation that you **hardly ever** do at home?
- Do you prefer to **sleep in** or get up early when you are on vacation? How is that different from your normal routine?
- What everyday task always seems to take longer than you expect?
- Are people in your country generally punctual, or is arriving a little late considered acceptable?
- Have you ever arrived somewhere and discovered that the event was canceled or you had the wrong date or time?
- What everyday problem do you find frustrating, even though other people might think it is silly?
- If you could invent a simple product to solve one everyday problem, what would it be and how would it work?

Thanks for checking out our podcast!

We're enjoying our discussions, and we hope that you are finding them helpful!



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