



ESL Podcast 25 – A Trip to New York City

GLOSSARY

blast – an exciting and fun experience

* There are many fun rides and exciting things to do at the amusement park, so Marika had a blast.

tourist spot – a location in a city where visitors often go; a location in a city that mainly attracts visitors, not the people who live in the city

* Very few people from the neighborhood eat at that restaurant, but it is a popular tourist spot.

guidebook – a small book with information about interesting things to do or see at a specific location, usually used by visitors or tourists

* Jacques had never been to the Grand Canyon, so he got a guidebook to find out what he should do once he arrived.

museum – a building that contains interesting art, historical, and other items, which are displayed for visitors to see

* The art museum has paintings from famous artists like Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh.

play – a dramatic story that is acted out on a stage; a written story that is told by having performers act out the actions on stage

* Kristen acted in a play in which she played a woman with three different personalities.

concert – a music show; an event where an audience or crowd listens to music performed by professional musicians

* Ron's favorite singer will be giving a concert next month and he plans to buy tickets.

whirlwind – an event, series of events, or amount of time that passes very quickly

* There were so many things to do to get ready for the holidays that the month before the holiday was a whirlwind.

exhausted – very tired; in need of a rest

* After exercising all morning and part of the afternoon, Azalee felt exhausted and wanted to go home and sleep.

low key – calm and uneventful; not stressful or busy

* Carlton's weekend was very low key, so he had plenty of time to relax.



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road trip – a visit made by car, especially when it takes several hours or days to travel to the place one is visiting

* Teresa lived in Tennessee and took a road trip to visit her friend living in West Virginia.

to stay over – to spend the night; to sleep somewhere other than home

* It was late at night, so Aurelio stayed over at his friend's house and drove back home in the morning.

to drive straight through – to drive a car from a starting point to an end point without making any stops in between, especially if the trip is a long one

* Santina wanted to get home as soon as possible, so she drove straight through on the trip back and did not make any stops.

to book – to reserve; to schedule for the use of something prior to using it

* Hal booked a hotel room two weeks ago, but the hotel said it could not find his reservation.

cancelled – a situation where a planned event will no longer happen

* Clarice had a dentist appointment, but it was cancelled because the dentist was sick that day.

rebooked – scheduled for another time; planned for a different time other than the time one originally planned something for

* The airport rebooked Darryl for a different flight when he was unable to go on the flight he originally booked.

layover – a stop one makes on the way to another place; for a plane flight to stop in another city before reaching the destination

* The airplane was traveling from New York City to Chicago, but it stopped for a quick layover in Cleveland.

major pain – inconvenience; an event or experience that was very unpleasant

* It was a major pain to find the exact type of chocolate that his wife likes, but he wanted to give it to her as a gift for her birthday.



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CULTURE NOTE

Grand Central Station

Located in New York City, Grand Central Station – technically known as Grand Central Terminal – is the largest train station in the world, if by “largest” we mean the number of “platforms” (places where you get on and off the train) it has. It is, therefore, one of the busiest places in the very busy city of New York, with people “coming and going” (arriving and leaving) all day and all night. When you have a lot of people in one room or area, especially when they are moving about, we say that the place is “like Grand Central Station” – meaning, it’s crowded and very busy.

Grand Central was built in 1913, on the same “spot” (location) as two previous railroad stations in Manhattan, the “downtown” area of New York City. Inside the terminal, which has appeared in many movies and television shows, you will find the Grand Concourse, the main “room” of the terminal, with four large clocks over the “information booth” (area for getting information) in the center. This is a common meeting place for New Yorkers and tourists “alike” (both), since it is so easy to find inside the building. There is also a large American flag that has hung in the terminal since September 11, 2001, which you “cannot fail to see” (can see clearly).

The terminal “spurred” (increased; quickened) development in the “surrounding” (nearby) neighborhood during the early part of the 20th century, with such buildings as the Chrysler Building. Today, you will find restaurants, bars, and stores in the building. For many years, the “studios” (places where audio and video recording is done) of one of the three largest television networks in the U.S., CBS, were located in the terminal as well. According to one travel magazine, Grand Central Terminal is the sixth most-visited tourist site in the world, with more than 21 million visitors each year.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 25 – A Trip to New York City.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 25. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to discuss taking a trip to New York City. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

(The phone rings.)

Lucy: Hello.

Jeff: Hey, Lucy, it's Jeff.

Lucy: Hey, welcome back. How was your vacation?

Jeff: Oh, it was great. The seven days in New York were a blast.

Lucy: Oh, yeah? Did you do any sightseeing or just visit with friends?

Jeff: I got to do both, actually. First, I saw my friend Edmundo, who just moved there. He hadn't seen much of the city himself, so we went to all the tourist spots. We got a guidebook and went to the major museums, saw a play, went to a concert in Central Park, and took the Staten Island Ferry. We did all of that in a day and a half. It was a whirlwind, but we got to see a lot.

Lucy: A day and a half?! You guys must have been exhausted.

Jeff: Yeah, we were. But, the rest of my trip was pretty low-key. My friends Pat and Billie rented a car and we took a road trip to Upstate New York to visit some other friends of ours.

Lucy: Did you have to stay over in a hotel along the way, or did you drive straight through?



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Jeff: We didn't bother with booking hotel rooms, so we just drove straight there. It wasn't that far.

Lucy: How long did you stay there?

Jeff: We were only there two days, and we drove back and got back last night. My flight was this morning at 8:00 a.m. The worst part of the whole trip was that my flight was cancelled. I was rebooked onto another flight that had a three-hour layover in Chicago. That was a major pain.

Lucy: It sounds like it. Well, I'm glad you made it back okay. And you even have the weekend to rest up before work on Monday.

Jeff: Yeah, I'll need it. I've got to catch up on my sleep!

[end of dialogue]

We just listened to a telephone conversation between Lucy and me about my trip to New York City. Lucy answered the phone by saying "Hello," which is the standard way to answer a phone in English: "Hello." And I said, "Hey Lucy, it's Jeff." The expression "Hey" (hey) here means the same as "Hello." A lot of people now, particularly young people, will say "Hey" instead of saying "Hello," although not when first answering the phone. You wouldn't answer the phone by saying "Hey." You would still say "Hello," but the other person could then say, "Hey, Bob" or "Hey, Julie" instead of "Hello, Bob" or "Hello, Julie," which might nowadays sound a little bit formal.

I said that my trip to New York City had been "a blast." A "blast" (blast) here means a lot of fun. It is sort of an informal expression that we use to describe a party or a trip or an event that was a lot of fun. After I tell Lucy that my trip was a blast, she says, "Oh yeah?" This expression, "Oh, yeah?" is very common in an informal conversation. It shows the other person that you're listening. "Oh, yeah?" means the same as "Really?" For example, someone says to you, "The price of gasoline is now \$4 a gallon." You might reply, "Oh, yeah?" meaning "Really?" It's very common to hear this phrase in conversation.

I told Lucy that I visited my friend Edmundo and that "we went to all the tourist spots." A "tourist (tourist) spot (spot)" is a place where tourists like to go. The terms "spots" here just means places. I also said we had a "guidebook." A "guidebook" (guidebook) is a book that tells you where the hotels and restaurants are and that lists, or has a list of, the tourist spots that you will want to see. It's also called a "travel book" or a "travel guidebook."



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Edmundo and I “went to the major museums, saw a play, went to a concert in Central Park, and took the Staten Island Ferry.” “Museums” (museums) are places where you can see art and other cultural things. A “play” is a live performance in a theater. And a “concert,” of course, is live music that you go to hear in a public place. Edmundo and I “went to a concert in Central Park.” “Central Park” in New York City is a very large, very famous park. It is located in the middle of Manhattan, which is one of the islands that is part of New York City.

I also said that we went on the Staten Island Ferry. There are five different sections of New York City, called “boroughs” (boroughs). The main downtown borough is called “Manhattan,” which is also the name of the island it is located on, but there's another island that is also part of New York City called “Staten Island.” And there is a famous “ferry” (ferry) that goes between Manhattan and Staten Island. A “ferry” is a boat that takes people and often cars across a short distance of water. In Hong Kong, for example, there is a ferry between the island and the mainland, or the main part of the country. And many other countries also have ferries that go out to nearby islands.

I said that my trip was “a whirlwind.” A “whirlwind” (whirlwind) here means a period of time that goes by very quickly, in which you do many things within a very small amount of time. Lucy says, “You guys must have been exhausted.” The term “guys” can refer to just a man. But we also use it informally sometimes to refer to both men and women. It can mean you two, or you all, or you people. Here it just means you and Edmundo. “To be exhausted” means to be very tired. “I worked all day. I'm exhausted.”

I mentioned that “the rest of my trip was pretty low-key.” “Low-key” (low-key) means very relaxed, very calm. We sometimes use this term to describe someone who doesn't get excited easily: “He's very low-key.” I said my friends “rented a car and we took a road trip to Upstate New York.” “To rent a car” means to pay money so that you can drive a car that belongs to a car rental company. You can rent a car. You can rent a motorcycle. You can – well, you can't really rent a horse easily in the city, but I suppose it's possible in some places.

A “road trip” is a trip we take by driving somewhere. “I'm going to drive from Los Angeles to San Francisco. It's about a five-hour road trip.” Road trips usually are vacations. We don't talk about taking a road trip if you are traveling somewhere for business, typically. Upstate New York is the part of New York State that is north of New York City. So, when we say “Upstate New York,” we mean a part of New York State that is not in New York City.



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Lucy asked, “Did you have to stay over in a hotel along the way, or did you drive straight through?” “To stay over” is a two-word phrasal verb that means to stop and spend the night somewhere. You could stay over in a hotel or you could stay over at a friend’s house. It means to stay there overnight. “Along the way” means on the route or on the way to where you are going. “We are going to the beach, and along the way we are going to stop and buy some soda and some food.” “To drive straight through” means not to stop. “I’m going to drive straight through from Los Angeles to Phoenix” means I’m not going to stop and stay overnight anywhere. I’m going to drive the whole distance in one day.

I told Lucy that “we didn’t bother with booking hotel rooms.” “To book (book) a room” means to reserve a room. You can book a hotel room. You can also book an airline ticket. “I booked a ticket to New York” means I reserved or I bought an airplane ticket. I said that we were only in upstate New York for two days and that we “drove back and got back last night.” “To drive back” means to return by car from someplace, and “to get back” means simply to arrive, to come back to where you started from. “So, what time did you get back last night?” means “What time did you return last night?”

I had some problems with my trip to Los Angeles. First, “my flight was cancelled.” “To be cancelled” (cancelled) means to not occur, to not happen – to be “called off,” we might also say. So, if your flight is “cancelled,” it means that the airline has decided that your airplane, your flight, is not going anywhere. Since my flight was cancelled, “I was rebooked onto another flight that had a three-hour layover in Chicago.” “To be rebooked” means to be issued a ticket for a different flight – to be booked again.

I said I had “a three-hour layover in Chicago.” A “layover” (layover) is when you are traveling by airplane and you have to stop at another airport and wait before you continue flying to where you are going. For example, if I am going to fly to London from Los Angeles, I might have a layover in New York City, which is in between Los Angeles and London when you fly there. The flight – my airplane – will stop in New York City, and I may have to get on a different airplane to continue on to London. The opposite of a layover is a “direct flight.” “I have a direct flight to Tokyo” means there will be no stops between here and Tokyo. There will be no layovers, except maybe in Hawaii if I’m lucky.

I described my return trip as “a major pain.” To say something was “a major pain,” or simply “a pain,” means it caused a lot of problems. It caused a lot of trouble. Lucy responded by saying, “It sounds like it.” The expression “It sounds like it” means it sounds that way, or it appears that way, or simply, “I understand.”



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It's an expression we use in conversation. It is similar to "Oh, yeah?" in that it shows you are listening to the other person. Someone might say, for example, "I had to work late last night. I got home and I was very tired. I was exhausted." And you might say, "Oh, yeah? It sounds like it."

Lucy said, "I'm glad you made it back okay." "To make it back" means to come back or to arrive back safely, to return safely. "What time did you make it back last night?" means the same as "What time did you return last night?" or "What time did you get back last night?" Notice that the word "back" can be used with a lot of different verbs to mean return.

Finally, Lucy said that I had the weekend "to rest up for work on Monday." And I said that I needed "to catch up on my sleep." "To rest up" is a phrasal verb that means to get some sleep, to relax, to rest. The verb "to rest up" means the same, really, as to rest, but as with many verbs in English, we sometimes add a preposition like "up" or "over" or "back" to add emphasis to the word. "To catch up on my sleep" means to get back some of the sleep that I am missing. "I need to catch up on my sleep" means I haven't slept enough in the last few nights, and so now I need to sleep a lot so that I will feel rested.

Now let's listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

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[end of dialogue]

Thanks to our fantastic scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all her hard work. And thanks to you for listening.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again right here on ESL Podcast.

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