



ESL Podcast 29 – Staying In

GLOSSARY

roommate – someone with whom one shares a home, but is not a member of one's family or someone with whom one is in a romantic relationship

* When Roy could no longer afford to live alone, he asked one of his friends to move in and be his roommate.

to stay in – to stay at home to eat or for entertainment; to remain at home instead of doing something somewhere else

* The neighbors were having a party, but Catarina decided to stay in and read a book at home instead.

low-key – quiet and calm; uneventful and not exciting

* Dwight wanted to keep his birthday celebration low-key, so he only invited a few close friends to enjoy a quiet evening of playing cards and watching movies.

video rental store – a store where one pays money to borrow a movie in a form that can be watched at home, such as a DVD

* The nearby video rental store has a small selection of movies, but the video rental store in the next city has a much larger selection.

new release – a movie that was recently made available to watch, borrow, or buy

* Porsha wanted to borrow a movie that she had not seen before, so she looked at the new releases.

classic – a movie that has been available for many years but is still popular and considered of high quality

* Jose enjoyed watching classics made in the 1950s.

membership card – a small rectangular card, usually made of cardboard or plastic, which shows that someone is part of a group and can use that group's services

* Brianna did not have her membership card when she went to the gym and they wouldn't allow her to enter without it.

late fee – extra money that one must pay when returning an item after the time/date that it is due

* Wilmer returned the book three days late, so he was required to pay a late fee.



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handy – useful; convenient; a quality that one can benefit from

* The new computer came with free technical support for 30 days, which came in handy when Jelissa had trouble getting it to work.

to order in – to call a restaurant and order food, having that food delivered to one's home

* Mrs. Piedra did not feel like going out to a restaurant to eat, so she told her husband that she wanted to order in.

take-out – food that can be ordered and carried out of a restaurant instead of being eaten in the restaurant

* Most of the dishes on the restaurant menu were available for take-out.

delivery service – a service provided by a restaurant, in which the food ordered by customers is delivered to the customer's home

* Instead of using the pizza restaurant's delivery service, Bernie decided to go to the restaurant and pick up his pizza on the way home from work.

crapshoot – a gamble; a situation where the result cannot be predicted or guessed

* Kent likes to experiment with cooking and it's always a crapshoot what his family will be served for dinner.

slip – a piece of paper; a copy of a receipt (a document listing the cost of something and the payment made for it) kept by the seller

* The payment slip showed that Russell paid the \$25 fee with his credit card.

starving – very hungry

* Gidget had not eaten anything all day, so by dinner time, she was starving.

to veg out – to become very relaxed; to allow one's mind to relax completely

* After a long, busy day, Esteban wanted to sit on his couch and veg out.

hectic – chaotic; very busy; stressful, usually caused by having a large number of tasks to finish

* Mackenzie had a lot of work to do to prepare for her company's special event, so her entire day was hectic.



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CULTURE NOTE

English Through Murder

Before the 1960s, radio dramas were very popular. “Radio dramas” were short stories, usually 30 to 60 minutes long, in the form of a play, read by professional actors and actresses, with “dramatic” (exciting or powerful) music and “audio special effects” (sounds and noises that represent things happening in real life). Before the “era” (period; time) of television, radio dramas were popular in many countries, including in the United States. Some now-famous writers and actors helped make some of these dramas, including science fiction writer Ray Bradbury and many popular actors. The dramas or radio plays were sometimes “adapted” (taken from) famous books and plays, and sometimes original stories.

By the late 1950s, however, with the “advent” (coming) of television, people listened to the radio less and less for entertainment, preferring instead to watch their dramas rather than just listen to them. Famous writers and actors left the radio world for television and the movies, and radio dramas “all but” (almost) disappeared from the “airwaves” (broadcasts of electronic signals, such as radio).

But in the 1970s, there was a “brief” (short) “revival” (return of something once popular) of the radio drama in the form of a nationally broadcast series called the CBS Radio Mystery Theater. Each evening in many cities, Monday through Friday, you could hear a one-hour radio drama. These were mystery stories with professional actors, just like you could watch on television, except that the sound painted the pictures for you. The host, E.G. Wells, introduce the mystery story.

In 2012, the miracle of the Internet brought the old radio dramas “back to life” (made them live again). As of 2012, you can listen to all of the old CBS Radio Mystery Theater shows (almost 1,400 of them), and even download the MP3s for them. In addition, there are now several places, including podcasts and websites where you can listen to other old dramas in English from the 1920s to the 1950s for free or at a very low price.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 29 – Staying In.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 29. 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 staying in on a Friday night. Let's get started.

[start of story]

It was Friday night, and my roommate and I felt like staying in. We both had had a tough week at work and decided to have a low-key evening. On my way home, I stopped at the video rental store and rented a couple of movies. I got a new release and a classic. I thought I had left my membership card at home, but I found it at the last minute. I like going to my local rental store because it doesn't charge late fees. That's handy when I don't have time to return the DVDs the next day.

My roommate and I were feeling too tired to go out to eat, so we decided to order in. We mulled over the take-out menus from restaurants that had delivery service, but couldn't decide which restaurant to order from. The trouble was that we had never eaten at the two restaurants nearby. Ordering from either one would be a crapshoot. In the end, we decided to just order a pizza. I called the restaurant and placed our delivery order.

About a half hour later, the delivery person came to the door. I asked him if I could pay with a credit card, and he said, "Sure." I handed him my card and he wrote down the number. I signed the slip and added a tip to the total. He gave me a copy of the slip as a receipt and then handed me the pizza. I was really glad to get it; I was starving.

With our movies and the pizza, we were all set. There's nothing like a night at home, vegging out to get over a hectic week.

[end of story]

We heard me talking about what my roommate and I did on Friday night. A "roommate" (roommate) is a person who lives with you. You could also call that person a "housemate." Normally, when you say "roommate" or "housemate" you



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are referring to someone you are not romantically involved with and who is also not one of your relatives.

My friend and I “felt like staying in.” The expression “to stay in” means to stay at home, not to go anywhere. The opposite of “staying in” is “going out.” When someone says, “I’m going out tonight,” they mean they’re not going to stay at home. They’re going to go to the movies or to a party or wherever they’re going.

I said that my roommate and I “had had a tough week at work.” A “tough (tough) week” means a difficult week, a hard week, a week with many problems. So, we decided to have a “low-key evening.” “Low-key” (low-key) means calm, relaxed, without a lot of excitement. You can use that term “low-key” to describe an evening or a morning or any time of the day. You can also use it to describe a person. “He’s very low-key” means he’s very calm, he’s very relaxed.

I went to the “video rental store.” A “video (video) rental store” is a place where you can rent movies – nowadays, mostly DVDs, though some video stores in the United States still have the old VHS tapes. I got “a new release and a classic.” A “new release” (release) is a movie that is just now available on DVD. We use the term “new release” for movies, and we also use it for songs; a new song that has just come out is also a “new release.” A “classic” is an older movie that is still considered a very good movie. We use the expression “it’s a classic” to describe movies or books or anything that is old but considered to be of very high quality, to be very good.

I thought I had left my “membership card” at home, but I “found it at the last minute.” A “membership (membership) card” is a card like a credit card, except it is used to show that someone is a member of a club or a group or, in this case, a video store. You need to have a membership card in order to rent movies at the video store. You can also have a membership card for other places, like a gym, for example. If it’s a commercial or a private gym, you have to pay to become a member of the gym, and then you get a membership card so you can use that particular gym. And while you’re working hard at the gym, I’m home watching a movie!

“At the last minute” means right at the very end of when something is possible. So, we sometimes say to students, “Don’t wait until the last minute to do your homework,” meaning if your assignment is due tomorrow morning, don’t wait until 10 p.m. tonight to start it. That would be waiting until the last minute.

I said that I like going to the local video rental store because “they don’t charge late fees.” “Late fees” (fees) or a “late fee” is money that you have to pay if you



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bring something back late, after it is due. Libraries in the United States, for example, charge a late fee if you bring a book back a day late. You have to pay a late fee, also called a “fine,” for bringing it back late. But in the story, the local video rental store doesn’t charge late fees.

I said that it’s “handy” not to have late fees. When we say something is “handy” (handy), we mean it is convenient – it makes our lives easier. We also use the term “handy” to describe someone who is good at fixing many different things. The old expression is “handyman” (handyman). A “handyman” is very good at fixing things.

My roommate and I were “too tired to go out to eat,” so we “decided to order in.” “To go out to eat” means to go out to a restaurant, to go somewhere to eat other than your house. “To order in” means to stay at home and have food delivered to you by the restaurant. I said we “mulled over the take-out menus.” “To mull (mull) over” means to look at closely and to think about very carefully. We mulled over the take-out menus.

There are three ways you can buy food from a restaurant. You can “eat in,” meaning you eat at the restaurant. You can have it “delivered,” which means the restaurant brings the food to your house. Or, you can get “take-out.” “Take-out” (take-out) means you order your food from the restaurant and then you go and pick up the food and take it back to your house. Many restaurants that have take-out menus also deliver.

My friend and I found two nearby restaurants that had delivery service, or the ability to bring the food to you. But “the trouble was” that we had never eaten at either of those restaurants before. The expression “the trouble was” is a common way to introduce a problem that you have. For example, if you are having difficulty deciding which pen you want to buy, you could say, “The trouble is, I don’t know if I want black ink or blue ink.” So, it’s the way you can introduce or describe a problem.

We had never eaten at those two restaurants before, so I said that ordering from either one would be a “crapshoot.” A “crapshoot” (crapshoot) is a word that comes from a gambling game called “craps,” in which you roll two dice down a long board, hoping to get certain numbers. Dice are those little white cubes that have numbers or dots on each side and are used in gambling and board games. One of them is called a “die,” and two or more are called “dice.” So, “craps” is a game that uses dice.



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A “crapshoot” here, however, just means that you are gambling. You don’t really know how it will turn out – it’s something that is unknown. So, if you are deciding between two things, and you don’t know which one you should choose, you might pick randomly – you might just say, “I’ll take that one.” That’s a crapshoot. You’re not sure what the results will be; you just hope that you will be lucky and get something good.

The word “crap” is also a vulgar term in English, very similar to garbage. When we say, “That’s crap!” it means that something is bad, terrible, garbage. But it’s a vulgar, informal expression. You do not want to say that to your teacher or to your boss, at least not if you still want to work at that job.

My roommate and I decided to just order pizza instead. I gave the delivery person my credit card, and I “signed the slip and added a tip to the total.” The “slip” (slip), or the credit card slip, is a little piece of paper that you sign when you pay with a credit card. We call that a slip. And a “tip” (tip) is the extra money that you give a service person or a waiter for giving good service. In the United States, it’s usually between 10 and 20 percent, depending on the service.

I said that I was glad the pizza arrived, because I “was starving.” “To starve” literally means not to have any food to eat – to die from not having enough food. But here we use it informally to mean very, very hungry. I said that with our movies and the pizza, we were “all set.” When we say we are “all set,” we mean we are completely ready for something. “Are you all set for your trip to San Francisco?” means “Are you ready? Have you done everything you need to do in preparation?”

I said, “There’s nothing like a night at home, vegging out to get over a hectic week.” “To veg (veg) out” means to relax and not do anything very intellectual or anything that requires any work. So, “vegging out” would mean coming home, sitting down, and watching some stupid television program for an hour or two and not doing anything very active. “To get over” means to recover from. “To get over an illness” means to get better from that illness.

Finally, a “hectic week” is a week that has a lot of activity, too much activity. If you are too busy, then you are having a “hectic week.”

Now let’s listen to our story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]



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[end of story]

Thanks to our wonderful scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for her hard work. And thanks to you for listening. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.

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