

LEVEL
4
Volume 2



English

Intermediate



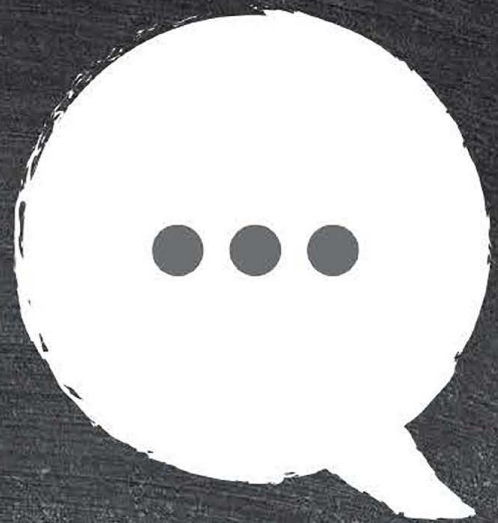
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LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #1

The English Interview

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#1

ENGLISH

1. MARK: Hello, may I ask who's calling?
2. SHEILA: Hello, this is Sheila, I have a phone interview with this office scheduled for now. Can I please speak with Mr. Mark Cantor?
3. MARK: Ah, of course. Hello Sheila, this is Mark, it's nice to meet you. Thanks for calling.
4. SHEILA: It's my pleasure.
5. MARK: All right then, let's get started, shall we? Can you tell me about why you are interested in working at our office?
6. SHEILA: Well, I've been studying politics at university and am graduating this May, I'm looking for a job that has me intimately involved with the legislative process. I'd like to do research, write speeches, and interact with Congressional Members. Working in politics and getting to talk with Senators and Representatives sounds really exciting to me.
7. MARK: Great, and can you tell me a little about your previous experiences?
8. SHEILA: Well, my most recent job was working at the school's newspaper as a politics columnist. It wasn't the best in terms of pay but it was better than my other jobs and gave me a good chance to practice writing about something I liked.
9. MARK: Fair enough. What can you say about your strengths and weaknesses?
10. SHEILA: I think that my best trait is that I am very dedicated and driven. However, at the same time, this can be my worst characteristic — sometimes I have a hard time knowing when to quit.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
politics	the science and art of government and law-making	noun
in terms of	referring to, to talk about a specific characteristic	phrase
shall we	when used with “let’s” a suggestion to do something	phrase
previous	the one before	adjective
Representative	Member of the lower house of the US Congress	noun
Senator	Member of the upper house of the US Congress	noun
legislative	law-making	adjective
intimately	very closely	adverb
to graduate	to finish school	verb
dedicated	never giving up	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

American politics is centered around the fight between Republicans and Democrats.	In terms of travel, working for an international company is a great option.
Shall we dance, my dear?	Her new novel was along the lines of her previous one.
Representatives are assigned by population, bigger states have more and smaller states have less.	In Congress, there are two Senators from each state.

The legislative process in the United States is complicated.	The president must work intimately with his staff to be efficient.
He graduated from a top university.	If you are dedicated, you will have no problems with your studies and finding a good job.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Sheila says "It wasn't the best in terms of pay" about her first job. We can use "in terms of" in order to talk about a specific aspect of something even when it is not true about the whole.

This necklace is very expensive, but in terms of quality, it is one of the best.

Mark says "All right then, let's get started, shall we?" When he says "shall we?" it is a slightly formal rhetorical question and a way to transition to a new action or topic. We often use it with "Let's" and then "shall we" comes at the end. We can use it as a very polite imperative.

Let's board the plane, shall we?

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is Irregular Adjectives

It wasn't the best in terms of pay but it was better than my other jobs and gave me a good chance to practice writing about something I liked.

There are few irregular adjectives in English. Almost all adjectives follow the simple or complicated rules when put in comparative or superlative form. However, there are a few that do not and the example above shows us all of the forms of "good" (good-better-best). The other irregular adjectives are in a chart below. Be careful when you use them in conversation.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
many/much/a lot	more	most

little (few)	less	least
far (physical distance)	farther	farthest
far (abstract distance)	further	furthest
old (when talking about people in a family)	elder	eldest
well (healthy)	better	best

Remember that "elder" and "eldest" and only used when describing family members and that "well" in this case is describing someone who is getting healthy. Also, the difference between farther/farthest and further/furthest is a bit difficult. We use "farther" only when we are talking about an actual distance. We use "further" when we are talking about an abstract concept, often it can take the place of "more."

Here are some examples of using these irregular adjectives in sentences:

1. *I used to think spinach was the worst vegetable, but now I think carrots are even worse.*
2. *My eldest sister is 2 years older than my elder brother.*
3. *New York is far from Washington D.C. but California is farther and Hawaii is the farthest.*
4. *I've already told you many times, we don't need to discuss that any further.*
5. *"Are you feeling well today?" "I'm feeling better, thanks."*
6. *Indonesia has a lot of people but India has more and China has the most.*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Sell Yourself!

Interviewing for a job is a stressful occurrence and varies from country to country and even workplace to workplace. Most interviews are in person, but due to distance, it is increasingly common to hold a job interview over the phone or even via the internet using video-chats. Regardless of with whom you are interviewing, you will want to prepare for your interview by trying to guess what kinds of questions they will ask. Always research the position you are applying for, the skills that it requires, and how you are good for it. In the United States, during

a job interview, it is considered acceptable to talk about yourself in a very positive light. Other countries may see this as boasting, but emphasizing your skills while remaining honest is important during a job interview. Think about yourself as a salesperson—you are trying to sell yourself to this company and you have to show them how you are a good purchase.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #2 English Internships for All!

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ENGLISH

1. DAVE: Hey, Sheila, how are you? Ready for graduation yet?
2. SHEILA: I can't wait to be finished. Do you know what you are going to be doing afterward yet?
3. DAVE: I got an internship with my congressperson's office in D.C.! I'll be working there all summer, and then I hope they offer me a job.
4. SHEILA: What a coincidence! I am going to be interning on the Hill too; I'm going to be working with a committee!
5. DAVE: That's great. Do you know where you are going to be living yet? I still have no idea.
6. SHEILA: I really want to live on Capitol Hill in Northeast. I looked at some townhouses there, but they're all so expensive.
7. DAVE: Yeah, I know what you mean. I'm going to be crashing with my uncle who lives in Georgetown until I find a place of my own.
8. SHEILA: I guess we're in the same boat! I'm going to be staying with a friend too. You know...I was going to be looking for a roommate up there. Maybe we could...
9. DAVE: I'm sold!
10. SHEILA: Ha ha... Hopefully we can work something out.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
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to crash	to stay at a friend of family's home for a short period (days or weeks)	verb
Georgetown	a wealthy neighborhood of North-West Washington D.C.	noun
to have no idea	to be clueless, to not know at all	phrasal verb
roommate (American)	a person living in the same room, apartment or house	noun
coincidence	when two things are the same or similar by chance, a surprising or lucky accident	noun
to work something out	to find a way to do something	phrasal verb
committee	a formal group of elected people that focuses on investigating and taking action on a particular issue or range of issues	noun
congressperson	any Senator or Representative in the US Congress	noun
townhouse	a narrow two or three storied house, usually in a city, the walls are often shared with the houses next to it (North American English)	noun
Capitol Hill	the area that surrounds the US Capitol building in Washington D.C. (the Capitol was built on the top a hill)	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

I'm so tired, do you mind if I crash here tonight?	There is no Metro stop in Georgetown because everyone there can afford a car.
They are lost and don't have a map. They have no idea where they are.	My roommate and I always hang out on the weekends.
This is my roommate, John.	I like to get up early but my roommate likes to get up late. We need to work something out so we both can get enough sleep.
All congresspeople have one goal- to keep their job.	I used to live in an apartment, but I like having a townhouse because I get my own yard.

Let's get lunch on Capitol Hill after the meeting.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Dave says, "I still have no idea." Having "no idea" means that you do not know at all or that you are completely uninformed about something. We usually say this when we are totally clueless or do not know at all about something—often a choice.

For Example:

A: "Where do you want to go this weekend?"

B: "I have no idea; we can go anywhere."

Sheila says, "Hopefully we can work something out." When we say "to work something out," we mean "find a way to do something." Sheila means that she hopes that they can find a

way to be roommates in the future.

For Example:

1. "I really want to go to Iceland this summer. I really hope I can work something out."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Comparing Using the Future Continuous with "Going to."
"What a coincidence! I am going to be interning on the Hill too; I'm going to be working with a committee!"

When we are talking about the future, we can use the future continuous tense to express what we are doing during a specific time frame. Usually, we use "will be" + ___ ing (e.g., "I will be eating steak tonight"), but we can also use "going to be" instead of "will be." Usually we use "going to" when we talk about definite plans, and this is true here as well. Because they are talking about a specific period of time (this summer), they use "going to be."

We do not use "going to be ___ing" all of the time. Often, we can just say "I'm going to work with a committee" instead of "I'm going to be working with a committee," but both are correct, and the "going to be ___ing" makes it more specific and a bit stronger.

For Example:

1. *"At this time next week, I am going to be relaxing next to the Caribbean Sea."*
2. *"I'm very sorry, but I am going to be coming in late for work this morning; my son is sick."*
3. *"What are you going to be doing tomorrow night?"*

Language Tip

Sheila says "I guess we are in the same boat." We do not actually mean that we are in a boat when we say this. It is an idiom that means we are having the same experience and can understand what the other person is going through.

For Example:

A: *"I'm frustrated, I can't find a job."*

B: *"I know what you mean. I'm in the same boat. I can't find anything!"*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Summer Internships

Summer internships are a growing tradition in the United States and many other places in the world. Many university students try to find summer internships at places where they want to work in the future. Internships are often unpaid, but they give the intern great experience in the real world and look very good on a resume when you apply for a job. Internships are increasing as a way for companies and organizations to get a "free sample" of workers, and several companies and organizations hire the majority of their workers from their internship programs.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #3 The Hunt for A Good American Apartment

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ENGLISH

1. DAVE: I think being roommates was a great idea. I think we make a pretty good apartment-hunting team!
2. SHEILA: Ha ha, me too! What did you think of that last apartment?
3. DAVE: It was so nice! It was big, and it's in a really upscale neighborhood.
4. SHEILA: Yeah, it was, but on the other hand, it was a bit out of our price range, don't you think?
5. DAVE: Sadly, yes. The other one we saw was affordable...but it's in kind of a run-down neighborhood!
6. SHEILA: On the plus side, though, it was right next to the Metro.
7. DAVE: That's true; it certainly has convenience going for it. It wouldn't take me more than fifteen minutes to get to work.
8. SHEILA: Yeah, I hate commuting, and it would definitely cut down on my time too.
9. DAVE: I'm just worried that a place like that might have lead pipes or bed bugs.
10. SHEILA: Oh come on, don't be so paranoid; it wasn't so bad!

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
paranoid	irrationally afraid (usually from invented threats)	adjective
bed-bug	a small insect that can live in beds or furniture and that bites humans at night	noun

upscale	high-end, nice, trendy, and expensive	adjective
to worry	to feel concerned about something	verb
price range	the range of prices that you are willing to spend for something, usually expensive things	noun
affordable	not too expensive	adjective
run-down	old and not well maintained, falling apart	adjective
The Metro	the Washington, D.C. light rail system consisting of both subway and above ground tracks.	noun
cut down	to reduce	phrasal verb
lead	a metal that old pipes were made of, lead pipes are no longer used because they can cause health problems	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

My friend is so paranoid; he thinks the CIA is tracking him!	I found a bed-bug in my hotel room last night; I'm so grossed out.
Georgetown is one of the most upscale neighborhoods in Washington, D.C.	You don't need to worry about the spill. I'll clean it up.
That's a little outside my price range.	Do you know where I can buy an affordable car?

That restaurant is more affordable than the other one.	The old house we bought was very cheap but a bit run-down.
Everyday, I take the Metro to work and get off at Capitol South station.	He had to cut down the amount of time he played video games after he injured his thumb.

In the Middle Ages, alchemists tried to turn lead into gold.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Sheila says "it was a bit out of our price range." When we say something is "out of our price range" it means that it is more expensive than we are willing to pay for it. So if we are looking for a \$600 computer but the salesman shows us a \$1,000 model, we can say:

Sorry, that computer is a bit out of my price range.

Dave says "I'm just worried that..." when he expressed his fears and doubts about the affordable apartment. This is a soft way of saying that you are unsure about something and you want to be careful with it.

A: Let's sneak into the old factory and explore.

B: I'm just worried that we might get in trouble....

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Expressing Pros and Cons When Making a Decision.

"Yeah, it was, but on the other hand, it was a bit out of our price range, don't you think?"

Sheila says this when she is talking about the apartment in the upscale neighborhood. She thinks that the apartment was nice, but because it was "out of our price range," they could not afford it. She uses "on the other hand" to introduce a "con" after Dave introduced a "pro." After someone says something, if we want to express an opposite point, we can use this phrase to introduce it. This shows that we understand the person's point, but that we might feel

another way and want to inform the person.

We can use these phrases to introduce our opinion politely when it is different:

1. "On the other hand..."
2. "Maybe, but I think that..."
3. "That's true, but..."

For Example:

1. A: *"That was a boring movie, but, on the other hand, it was really informative."*
2. B: *"Maybe, but I think that if it is boring that I won't pay attention."*

We can also introduce pros and cons by using phrases like "on the plus side," like Sheila did. If we want to reverse this, we just change "plus" or "positive" to "negative."

Try using these phrases to introduce good and bad points about something:

1. "On the (plus/negative) side..."
2. "The (good/bad) point is..."
3. "The (best/worst) part is..."

For Example:

1. A: "This is a beautiful hotel. The best part is the price! It's so affordable!"
B: "The bad point is its location; it's miles from the city center."
A: "On the plus side, it's very quiet here."

Language Tip

Dave says, "I think we make a pretty good apartment-hunting team." Saying that you make a good team with someone else is an informal way of expressing friendship between people.

Because they are "apartment hunting" (looking for an apartment) together, it is a good time for them to become closer friends. When we have a common goal with someone else, we can get to know each other better and be on the same "team."

For Example:

1. A: *"We're almost finished studying!"*
B: *"I think that we'll both get A's on this test."*
A: *"Yeah, we make a pretty good studying team."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Finding a Place to Live in the United States

Apartment hunting in the United States can be a fun but frustrating experience. Usually, the best places are the same ones that you cannot afford. The places that you can afford are in a bad location, too small, in an old building, or have some other negative point.

It is very exciting, though, when you find the perfect apartment at the right price and immediately want to move in. For many people, apartment hunting is almost a sport or a race to find the best place at the best price.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #4 Greeting Your American Boss

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Good morning, are you Mr. Cantor? I was told to report here, I have an internship with this office starting today.
2. MARK: Ah, yes. You must be...
3. SHEILA: Sheila Jones, sir.
4. MARK: Right, I remember speaking on the phone with you. Let's see... We have a cubicle for you right over there. Why don't you get settled in?
5. SHEILA: Thank you, Mr. Cantor.
6. MARK: Oh, by the way, Mr. Cantor is my father; we're on a first-name basis here, so you can call me Mark.
7. SHEILA: Of course, sir.
8. MARK: And you can drop the "sir" too, unless you want me to start calling you "ma'am."
9. SHEILA: Of course not, sir...er...Mark.
10. MARK: That's better, now.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
by the way	also (used when talking about related items)	conjunction
first-name basis	the state of using first names rather than formal titles and last names	noun
to drop	to stop using	verb

to report	to show up, to come to	verb
cubicle	an office made by low dividing walls	noun
to settle in	to put your things down, organize your belongings, get used to the place	verb
sir	polite way to address a man	noun
ma'am	polite way to address a woman	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

My sister's doing well. By the way, did I tell you she moved to Seattle?	In many American offices, bosses and employees work on a first name basis.
You can drop the "Mr", just call me Jack.	My letter of acceptance said that I should report the 1st of May.
The rows of cubicles looked like an experimental maze for a rat to run through searching for cheese.	I settled into my office today by hanging up a calendar, setting up my computer, and putting a picture of my family on my desk.
Excuse me, sir.	Ma'am, would you like a bag?
Thank you, ma'am.	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Mark says "Oh, by the way..." As we learned in the vocab section, "by the way" means "also" or "on a related matter." We can use this as an effective transition between ideas when we are talking about a related topic.

For Example:

1. "My friends from Turkey are coming next week. By the way, did you hear about the riots there?"

Mark says "Mr. Cantor is my father; we're on a first-name basis here, so you can call me Mark." Saying that "Mr. ____"/"Ms. ____" is my father/mother is a very friendly and humorous way for a boss or other superior to say that it is all right to talk on a first-name basis. The indication is that it makes them feel old to be called "Mr. ____" or "Ms. ____," and that the person would prefer to be called by his or her first name.

For Example:

1. A: "Good morning, Ms. Jones."
B: "Ms. Jones is my mother; please call me Ashley. Let's talk on a first-name basis."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Appropriately Formal Language in Introductions.
"Thank you, Mr. Cantor."

When we are introduced to new people, especially clients, customers, or superiors, it is always appropriate to address them using their last name. We have several terms to put before their last name to indicate our respect.

1. "Mr." (for a man, always appropriate)
2. "Ms." (for a woman, always appropriate)
3. "Dr." (for a man or woman who has a Ph.D., not just a medical doctor)
4. "Mrs." (for a married woman, use with caution)
5. "Miss" (for an unmarried woman, use with caution)
6. "Master" (for a young person)

Although all of these terms are appropriate under the right circumstances, it is always safe to address a man by "Mr." and a woman by "Ms." These are the most appropriate terms to use, so

unless told otherwise, use "Ms." for women even if you know whether they are married or single. In a business situation, marital status does not matter, so there is no reason to identify someone as "Miss" or "Mrs.," unless told otherwise. "Dr." is always appropriate to use when you know the person possesses a Ph.D. or other doctorate degree.

When we use these terms, we can use their full name or only their last name. "Mrs." is the exception: occasionally, the wife can be called "Mrs. [full name of husband]"; however, this is growing less common these days.

For Example:

1. Michael Jackson -> "*Mr. Michael Jackson*" OR "*Mr. Jackson*"
2. Hillary Clinton -> "*Ms. Hillary Clinton*" OR "*Ms. Clinton*" OR "Mrs. Hillary Clinton" OR "Mrs. Bill Clinton" (*rare*)
3. Albert Einstein -> "Mr. Albert Einstein" OR "Mr. Einstein" OR "*Dr. Albert Einstein*" OR "*Dr. Einstein*"

The underlined examples are the most appropriate, but there may be more than one that is most acceptable.

When we are talking to someone of higher status, we can use "sir" for men and "ma'am" for women. These terms, while still widely used for strangers, are not used in the workplace as much these days. They still have widespread use in the military and when you are dealing with strangers, however.

For Example:

1. A: "*We need to get this ship cleaned up.*"
B: "*Yes ma'am!*"
2. A: "*Excuse me, sir, but you aren't allowed to park here.*"
B: "*Oh, I'm sorry.*"

Language Tip

Mark says "That's better now" to show his approval after Sheila starts calling him by his first name. This is a friendly and reassuring way to let Sheila know that she is doing well. Usually the superior will say this to ensure the subordinate that doing something less formal is acceptable.

For Example:

1. A: "*You can take off your jacket, it's very hot in here.*"

2. B: *"Ah, thank you."*
3. A: *"That's better now, it must have been uncomfortable."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

What's Appropriate in the American Workplace?

The American workplace is well known for being casual. Many, perhaps even most, bosses and employees interact with each other in a very informal manner and on a first-name basis. Although this is true, it is always better to speak too formally rather than too informally. Especially during introductions, you can leave a positive impression by using "Mr.," "Ms.," or "Dr." when speaking with someone and using "sir" or "ma'am" to elevate their status. This is particularly true if you are meeting with clients or customers for the first time.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #5 Getting Mugged in the US

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ENGLISH

1. ISABEL: Can you explain the incident, sir?
2. DAVE: It happened so fast. I was coming home from work late and walking back from the Metro station; all of a sudden someone jumped out and hit me.
3. ISABEL: Okay. What happened after that?
4. DAVE: Well, as I was falling down, he reached into my pocket and grabbed my wallet and my iPod. Then he ran off.
5. ISABEL: Did you see him clearly? Do you think you could identify him in a lineup?
6. DAVE: No, I was listening to music when he mugged me, and he got me from behind. As he was running away, I could just see his back; he was my height but a lot more muscular.
7. ISABEL: We've been getting a lot of reports lately about this kind of incident. Try and be more careful when you are walking at night. I would recommend not listening to music so you can stay aware. But we'll file your report; at least maybe we can get your wallet back. Usually criminals ditch them after they take the cash and cards.
8. DAVE: I'm just glad I wasn't injured myself.
9. ISABEL: Okay, sir, thank you for filing a report. Here's my card if you have any questions or remember anything else that might help out with the investigation.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
incident	event or occurrence (often negative)	noun

card	business card	noun
to ditch	to get rid of, to throw away	verb
muscular	strong, with a lot of muscles	adjective
to get mugged	to be mugged by someone	verb
to mug	to steal something, usually violently or with the threat of violence	verb
line-up	a group of accused criminals shown to a witness to see if the witness can identify who committed the crime	noun
to identify	to recognize, point out which	verb
to grab	to take something quickly and forcefully	verb
aware	alert, paying attention	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Try as he might, he cannot relegate the embarrassing incident from his memory.	She knew about the incident, but she kept it a secret.
Here's my card, call me if you have any more questions.	The criminals ditched the get-away car in a junkyard after robbing the bank.
A: Wow, has your boyfriend been working out? B: Yeah! He's gotten so muscular since he joined a gym.	If you're not careful, you will get mugged.

The criminal was mugging up to three victims per day.	After they brought in the line-up, I immediately recognized who had stolen my purse.
I can identify most people's hometown by their accent.	The monkey grabbed the pack of chips from the tourist's hand.
She grabbed her coat and car keys and ran out the door.	Are you aware of the problem?

I'm aware how important the contract is.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Dave says, "He was my height but a lot more muscular." When we are being interviewed by police, they will ask us to provide a physical description of the person who committed the crime. Dave says that while this person was about as tall as he was, he was much more muscular and solidly built.

For Example:

1. *"The criminal was described as a very muscular but short man."*

Isabella says, "Usually they ditch them after they take the cash and cards." "Cash" and "cards" are informal terms that we use for paper money (cash) and credit/debit cards (cards). She is stating that criminals usually only care about the money and usually "ditch" the wallet after they take the paper money and credit/debit cards. This is good so that a victim can recover his ID, driver's license, pictures, and anything else important in his wallet. We can also use the terms "cash" and "card" for payment.

For Example:

1. A: "How would you like to pay? Cash or card?"
B: "Hmm... Do you take Visa?"
A: "Of course! Can you swipe your card, please?"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using the Simple and Continuous Past Tenses Together.
"I was listening to music when he mugged me."

This is a review of the simple and continuous past tenses for use when describing an event that happened in the past using multiple verbs. We use a combination of these tenses in order to explain the order in which the events occurred.

We use the continuous tense to describe what we were doing during a specific time. In the dialogue, Dave "was listening to music." Then, when we have another action, we use simple past for "he mugged me." We can link these two verbs using phrases like "when," "as," or "during the time."

For Example:

1. "I was talking on the phone when my friend called on the other line."
2. "We were eating dinner as Dad came home."
3. "Everyone was watching TV during the time the first man walked on the moon."

We can also use two verbs in the past continuous tense when we are describing two things that happened at the same time for the same amount of time.

For Example:

1. "At ten o'clock, I was taking a shower and singing."
2. "During their argument, they were yelling and stomping around."

We can use two verbs in the past simple tense to describe actions that happen after each other.

For Example:

1. "Last night, I watched TV and then went to bed."
2. "I went to the doctor's office and then drove to the pharmacy."

Can you figure out the order of action of the verbs in the sentences below?

For Example:

1. *"I was walking to the bank as the criminal followed me and then mugged me."*
2. *"They were talking and laughing at the party when the neighbors called the police."*

Language Tip

Dave says, "It happened so fast." This is a phrase we use when we are trying to remember an event, but we are having trouble because it was traumatic. Usually we hear this phrase when people are describing something negative.

For Example:

1. A: *"Can you describe the car accident?"*
B: *"It happened so fast...I was driving and the other car came out of nowhere."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

An American Sign to Watch for

Crime in the United States has fallen significantly over the past twenty years, especially in cities, but it still remains a problem in many parts of the country. Depending on the neighborhood, some parts of cities are dangerous to walk alone in at night. Similarly, crowded areas like train stations are infamous for "pickpockets," people who steal your wallet from your back pocket. Be careful to keep your wallet in a safe place when you are in these areas. Sometimes, criminals even post signs that say "Beware of pickpockets" because people usually check their wallets after reading the signs, and the criminals know exactly where to steal them from.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #6

Are you Directionally Challenged in the US?

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- 5 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Hi, Mark, I was looking for the restroom, but I got lost. Could you point me in the right direction?
2. MARK: Oh sure, no problem. To get to the restrooms, you have to go down the hallway to the left and take the escalator up to the third floor. They're the first door on the right.
3. SHEILA: Is that by the vending machines?
4. MARK: No, you take a right out from the escalator and then go past the cafeteria on the right. The vending machines are to the left, so go the other way.
5. SHEILA: Ah, thanks, I think I understand now. Can I get you anything while I'm up there?
6. MARK: Actually, that would be great. Can you pick up a coffee for me. (loud) Anyone else want a coffee? The intern's going on a run! (various voices pipe up). Okay, so that's four black coffees and one with cream and sugar.
7. SHEILA: Uhhh... Okay... Anything else?
8. MARK: Oh yeah, a dozen doughnuts. Here's a couple of extra bucks so you can pick up something for yourself.
9. SHEILA: Heh, okay.
10. MARK: Oh, and please don't forget to wash your hands.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
dozen	twelve of an item	noun/adjective

black	for coffee, without cream or sugar	adjective
direction	the way to go	noun
to go on a run	to go on a trip to get a specific item	phrasal verb
to pick up	to get or to buy	phrasal verb
restroom	bathroom, toilet	noun
buck	slang for dollar	noun
hallway	corridor, hall, long connecting room	noun
escalator	a motorized staircase to get between different floors	noun
vending machine	an electronic automatic selling machine, usually for drinks or snacks	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

If you get a dozen bagels at that bakery, they will give you a free coffee.	I like my coffee strong and black.
Excuse me, which direction do I take to get to the Capitol?	I'm going on a run to get some office supplies, do you need anything?
I went to the store and picked up a carton of milk.	Can you hold my purse while I go to the restroom?
I only have five bucks.	The hallway was long and dark and cold.

We took the escalator to the second floor because the elevator was too crowded.

Did you know that they have vending machines that sell bananas in Japan?

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Sheila says, "Could you point me in the right direction?" When she says this, she is asking Mark to tell her the correct way to go to the restroom. We can use this phrase when we are lost. We can also use it when we just want general directions to somewhere.

For Example:

1. A: "Excuse me, sir, could you point me in the direction of Georgetown?"
B: "Sure, it's just up a few blocks that way."

Mark says, "The intern's going on a run!" but he doesn't actually mean that Sheila is going running. "To go on a run" is a phrasal verb that we use informally to mean that one person is going to go buy or pick up things for several people. When someone is "going on a run," though, he or she isn't buying it on his or her own: everyone who placed an order will pay the person back. Usually, we use this term for food or drink, such as "going on a pizza run" or "making a beer run."

For Example:

1. A: "Oh man! We're out of beer!"
B: "No problem, I was just about to go on a sandwich run anyhow; I'll pick some up."

Mark says, "Here's a couple of extra bucks so you can pick up something for yourself." Even though she didn't expect to be making a coffee run, Mark appreciates Sheila's efforts and is giving her some money to buy something for herself in addition to all of the food and drink that she is buying for other people.

For Example:

1. A: "Hey, man, could you spare a couple of extra bucks?"
B: "Sorry, I don't have any cash; do you want this sandwich?"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Prepositions and Words for Giving and Receiving Directions Indoors.

"To get to the restrooms, you have to go down the hallway to the left and take the escalator up to the third floor."

Giving and receiving directions indoors is a little bit different than outdoors. We often use different kind of prepositions. Sometimes they can have multiple meanings. Here are some of the words that we saw in the dialogue.

1. "Go down": This can mean literally "to go down," as in an elevator or an escalator, or it can mean to go straight along without turning.
2. "Go up": This is almost the same as "to go down." It can mean "to go up" literally, or it can mean to go straight along without turning.

Note: "Go up this corridor" and "go down this corridor" can mean the same thing!

Indoors-only words for directions:

1. "Go upstairs/downstairs."
2. "Go down/up the hallway/corridor."
3. "Take the (elevator/escalator) to the (first floor/sixth floor/basement)."
4. "It's the (second, fifth, next) door on the (right/left)."

Let's look at some examples. Try to draw a map of the directions that this paragraph describes for a cafeteria in a building.

For Example:

1. *"Take the elevator to the fifth floor. Turn to the right and go down the hallway. Take a right at the third door, and take the escalator upstairs to the sixth floor. Make a left from the escalator. The cafeteria is the second door on the left."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Who Is Responsible for Office Errands?

The coffee run is usually the responsibility of the intern or most junior member of the office. It

might not be fair, but this person often has to take everybody's orders for coffee, snacks, etc., and then go out and get it. This comes from the impression that the intern's time is not as valuable as that of other staff members, even if the intern is hardworking and diligent. It is almost a tradition within an office to give this assignment to interns and junior members. Almost everyone who works in an office started at the same level.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #7

Are you a Slave to American Coffee?

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- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

#7

ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Here's your coffee, Mark. Can I get you anything else?
2. MARK: Oh, thanks, Sheila, I don't need anything right now. (slurp) I swear, there is nothing more important than coffee in Washington.
3. SHEILA: Nothing? Not even power or influence or money?
4. MARK: Absolutely nothing. If there were no coffee in Washington, no one would get anything done!
5. SHEILA: Hmm, I don't really understand it. I can drink anything and be fine.
6. MARK: You're young. You just haven't developed a lifelong dependency on caffeine yet. No coffee in this town would mean that half the people in this office couldn't get anything accomplished.
7. SHEILA: Sounds like a dangerous drug! I've seen everyone before their first cup—it's like talking with zombies.
8. MARK: Oh, we are! Once you get hooked on this stuff, you can't operate without it.
9. SHEILA: Hmm... I suppose as bad habits go, it's not so bad, though.
10. MARK: It's definitely better than smoking.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
zombie	a type of monster, a living dead person	noun
get hooked	to become addicted	phrasal verb
operate	to function	verb

influence	power to affect something or somebody	noun
absolutely	in a complete and total way	adjective
dependency	reliance, addiction	noun
caffeine	a chemical in coffee, tea, and chocolate that helps your attention and focus	noun
accomplish	succeed at something	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

The zombies slowly walked out of the graveyard and onto the streets.	Most smokers get hooked after only a pack or two.
The machine stopped operating and production completely ceased.	Many different influences changed the style of her writing.
You can see some European influence in the architecture.	There was absolute silence just as he yelled out the girl's name.
The plan was an absolute failure.	My girlfriend loves me so much that she has developed a dependency on my hugs.
When I drink tea or coffee, the caffeine keeps me awake all night long.	You can accomplish much with hard work.

What were you able to accomplish today?

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Mark says, "You haven't developed a lifelong dependency on caffeine yet." He is stating that although Sheila isn't a coffee drinker yet, she will become one. Most, but not all, professional office workers in America drink coffee and develop "lifelong dependencies," which means they have trouble functioning without a few cups of coffee in the morning. Mark predicts, in a friendly manner, that Sheila will also at some point become the same way.

For Example:

1. "My wife developed a lifelong dependency on hugs. She needs one every morning in order to get out of bed."

Sheila says, "I've seen everyone before their first cup—it's like talking with zombies." She is comparing speaking to people before they drink their morning coffee and fully wake up to talking to undead monsters. This is a lighthearted and funny way to talk about people in the morning.

For Example:

1. A: "Jeez, you're in a hurry? Zombie attack?"
B: "Ha ha, no, I'm just late for a meeting!"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using "Anything" and "Nothing."

"Absolutely nothing. If there were no coffee in Washington, no one would get anything done!"

Let's start by looking at the list of "no" and "any" words:

Question	"No"	"Any"
"what"	"nothing"	"anything"
"where"	"nowhere"	"anywhere"
"who"	"no one"	"anyone"

You probably already use these words regularly when speaking English. However, sometimes it can be difficult to know when to use a "no" word and when to use an "any" word. Usually we can express the same thought using either "any" or "no" words but we have to make sure that we use an affirmative verb for "no" words ("I did nothing!") and a negative verb for "any" words ("I didn't do anything!"). Double negatives, which are a "negative" verb plus a "no" word, are common in many languages but incorrect in English. Although we use them sometimes, they

make the speaker sound uneducated. Here are some correct examples of how to use affirmative and negative verbs with "any" and "no" words.

For Example:

1. *"I was so sick, I didn't eat anything." = "I was so sick I ate nothing."*
2. *"The library was empty; there wasn't anyone there." = "The library was empty; there was no one there."*
3. *"I want to go home; I don't want to sleep anywhere else. = I want to go home; I want to sleep nowhere else."*

In these cases, using the "no" word with a negative verb sounds more natural. Although the other way is grammatically correct, it can be a bit awkward. We use "no" words more often as responses to questions (as one-word answers). Following are some examples.

For Example:

1. *"What are you doing?"*
"Nothing."
(*"I am doing nothing."* OR *"I'm not doing anything."*)
2. *"Where are you going tonight?"*
"Nowhere."
(*"I am going nowhere."* OR *"I'm not going anywhere."*)
3. *"Who is in your room right now?"*
"No one."
(*"There is no one in my room."* OR *"There isn't anyone in my room."*)

The biggest mistake you can make is not using a double negative (*"I didn't do nothing"*), but using a double positive (*"I did anything"*), which has a very different meaning. Be sure to use either a negative verb and an "any" word or an affirmative verb and a "no" word.

We can also use these "no" and "any" words together, like Mark did in the dialogue when he said that *"no one would get anything done."* This functions the same way as a negative verb. We can only have one negative or "no" component in a sentence; everything else has to be "any" or positive. Another way to phrase *"No one would get anything done"* would be to say *"Everyone would get nothing done"* or *"Everyone wouldn't get anything done."* In the original sentence, "no one" is the negative aspect, "nothing" is the negative part of the second sentence, and "wouldn't" is the negative part of the last sentence. See below for a few more examples of combinations of "any" and "no" words.

For Example:

1. *"No one wanted to do anything tonight because they were so tired."*
2. *"Everyone from my team didn't like anyone from the other team."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Are You a Slave to the Caffeine?

As you can see in this dialogue, coffee is essential for many offices to function. Whereas tea or other beverages are preferred in other countries, coffee is the number one drink in the United States. Many people drink it continuously through the day for its stimulating caffeine and develop mild addictions to it. When coffee addicts do not drink any coffee for a long time, they can even get headaches! That is why some people call themselves "coffee slaves," as in coffee is their master. Coffee is a major point of casual conversation in an office, and jokes and conversation about making, drinking, and cleaning up coffee are a part of every office.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #8

The White House is Meeting with the Capitol to Talk about Wall Street

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- 6 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Oh, hey, Dave, I'm so sorry to hear that you got mugged. That's terrible.
2. DAVE: Yeah, I'll be okay, though. The police officer was really cute too—I think I am going to ask her out. How's your work going?
3. SHEILA: You dog! Work is all right. I'm super busy, though. I'm on my way to meet with the Congressional Research Service right now.
4. DAVE: Really? You're going over to the Library of Congress? What for?
5. SHEILA: I'm writing this big memo for next week's hearing about Wall Street. The White House is coming over to meet with us, and K Street keeps trying to sneak their way into the discussions.
6. DAVE: Geez, sounds crazy!
7. SHEILA: It is. Ugh, I am so stressed out. If I had a bit more time, it would be so much easier.
8. DAVE: If I were you, I wouldn't whine. It sounds like really interesting work.
9. SHEILA: I know... But if I didn't have so much work, I wouldn't be so annoying!

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
ask out	to ask someone on a date with you	phrasal verb

Wall Street	A street in New York City famous for being the headquarters of many US and world financial institutions.	noun
K-Street	A street in Northwest Washington D.C. famous for being the headquarters of many lobbying firms. Lobbying firms try to influence Congresspeople on behalf of their clients' interests.	noun
whine	to complain	verb
annoying	bothersome, troublesome	adjective
Congressional Research Service	a governmental organization that provides unbiased research requested by the Congress to see the potential impact of legislation, it is based in the Library of Congress	noun
the Library of Congress	the national library of the United States and the largest library in the world, also the home for all Congressional research	noun
sneak in	to gain access to something secretly	phrasal verb
hearing	a meeting of a Committee where experts on an issue are questioned	noun
the White House	the house where the US president lives	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

I want to ask out Amy, but I'm too nervous.	There were protesters on Wall Street after the federal bail-out of financial institutions.
Many people who worked in Congress find a job on K-Street as a lobbyist.	Don't whine; it makes you sound like a baby.
My little sister got annoying after she kept throwing popcorn in my hair.	To work for the Congressional Research Service, you must be fair, dedicated, and extremely detail-oriented.
Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, sold over 6,000 of his books to the Library of Congress after it was destroyed in 1815.	I snuck in to a movie theatre but then got caught and kicked out.
Next week, there will be two hearings, one on proposed oil-drilling regulations, and one on internet gambling.	The White House was burned down by the British in the War of 1812.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Sheila tells Dave, "I'm writing this big memo for next week's hearing about Wall Street. The White house is coming over to meet with us and K-Street keeps trying to sneak their way into the discussions."

We have learned these words, but here we use them differently than their literal meanings. We can talk about some important businesses and government organizations by referring to them using the building or area where they are located. Here are some of the most common examples for the United States, many of which were used in the dialogue.

1. Wall Street: the U.S. financial services sector
2. K Street: U.S. lobbyists

3. The Capitol: the U.S. Congress
4. The Pentagon: the U.S. military
5. The White House: the President of the United States
6. Hollywood: the U.S. film/television industry
7. Detroit: the U.S. auto industry
8. Silicon Valley: the U.S. computer technology industry
9. Washington, D.C.: the United States as a country

For Example:

1. "Pentagon made the decision to withdraw all troops within three years."
2. "Wall Street is fighting new regulations that would restrict some types of trading."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using the Conditional in Positive and Negative Forms.

Sheila: "It is. Ugh, I am so stressed out. If I had a bit more time, it would be so much easier."

Dave: "If I were you, I wouldn't whine. It sounds like really interesting work."

Sheila: "I know... But if I didn't have so much work, I wouldn't be so annoying!"

The conditional tense is most likely not new for you, but we will look at it from a bit different perspective: when we use it in both the positive and negative forms. In the three lines above, we see a positive conditional, a mixed conditional, and a negative conditional. They all share the same form, so it should not be too difficult.

We form a conditional statement with two parts: an "if" statement and a "then" statement. When the "if" statement is true, the "then" statement will be true as well. Let's look at three examples: a positive, a negative, and a mixed conditional.

For Example:

1. *"If I got a million dollars, I would eat sushi every day."*
2. *"If I didn't have a job, I wouldn't have to get up early."*

3. *"If I didn't like meat, I would be a vegetarian."*

As you can see, the "if" statement is in the past tense, but the "then" statement is presented as an infinitive verb. We can always use the form "If I [past tense verb], I would [verb]."

Note: The exception to this is when you use the verb "to be," in which case we always use "were" and "weren't." Dave's sentence, "If I were you, I wouldn't whine," follows this rule, but let's look at two more examples.

For Example:

1. *"If I weren't so short, I would play basketball."*
2. *"If lobbying were outlawed, Washington, D.C. would be a better city."*

Language Tip

Sheila calls Dave "You dog!" when Dave says he is thinking of asking out the police officer who interviewed him after he was mugged. Although in some circumstances her comment could be rude, Sheila is saying this in a friendly and affectionate manner. We can call a friend a dog when he is doing something that usually we would consider mildly inappropriate, like asking out a police officer.

For Example:

1. A: *"Did I tell you I have two dates in a row tonight?"*
B: *"Ah! You dog!"*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Can You Buy Politics in Washington?

Lobbying is a huge industry in Washington, D.C. Lobbyists usually start out as government staff members, but then later they are attracted by the large salary lobbyists receive. Essentially, interest groups (industries, organizations, unions, etc.) pay lobbyists to try to convince Members of the U.S. Congress to pass legislation that their interests support and block legislation they oppose. Lobbyists meet with Members of Congress and their staff, who are often their previous employers and friends, to present their proposals and try to gain their

support. Large industries, like pharmaceutical companies or the financial services sector, spend tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars every year on lobbying, which is a point of controversy for those who believe money is corrupting politicians and feel politicians can be "bought."

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #9

Happy Hours for Happy Days in the United States

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- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: I'm glad we could meet up for happy hour today; I almost couldn't get off work in time.
2. DAVE: Me too. I love drinks that cost less than three dollars.
3. SHEILA: Haha... Oh, Dave... I forget that you were a frat boy.
4. DAVE: Sure was! Delta Tau Chi all the way! So, did you see the State of the Union?
5. SHEILA: Oh my goodness, yeah. He will say anything to be re-elected, won't he?
6. DAVE: He's a total flip-flopper. He said that he was pro-choice. Then he passed a law restricting abortions!
7. SHEILA: Ugh, utterly spineless. It's like his opinion comes straight from the polls.
8. DAVE: Isn't democracy amazing?
9. SHEILA: Sure is! Let's drink to that.
10. DAVE: Cheers to democracy!
11. SHEILA: Long live the Republic!

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
happy hour	a time period at a bar (usually 1-2 hours in the early evening) where drinks are at a lower price	noun

cheers	a common toast	interjection
poll	a survey conducted to measure public opinion	noun
spineless	without firm ideals or morals	adjective
pro-choice	supportive of abortion rights for women	adjective
flip-flopper	a politician that changes his or her views on issues	noun
be re-elected	to be elected again	verb
the State of the Union	A speech by the President of the United States makes every year to talk about his accomplishments and plans	noun
frat-boy	A male who is/was a member of a fraternity, an all-male social organization at universities known for partying. The female equivalent is a sorority.	noun
Republic	a system of government which elects people that then make laws	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

There's a great happy hour at the bar next door; they offer half priced drinks from 5 to 7 in the evening.	Cheers to you, my friend.
The polls indicated that he would win the election by 5 percentage points.	A spineless politician may get elected but will not be remembered.

Most women in the US personally oppose abortion but are pro-choice.	The Republicans labeled the Democratic candidate as a flip-flopper.
Legally, the president can only be re-elected once.	The president is required to deliver the State of the Union once per year in January.
Frat-boys party hard.	The United States is the oldest modern republic.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Dave says, "Cheers to democracy." Here, Dave is somewhat sarcastically toasting the system of government of the United States. "Cheers!" is a common toast in the United States. We can also say "Long live [something]!" in the way that Sheila replied to indicate that we like something and personally want it to last a long time. For example, "Long live the King! Cheers!"

Dave asks Sheila, "Did you see the State of the Union?" The State of the Union is an annual address that the president gives the nation. Previously, it was a written document, but in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, most presidents have delivered it orally, and the broadcast draws tens of millions of viewers every year. Presidents outline their plans for the next year and review their successes and challenges. For example, "The president focused on the economy in this year's State of the Union."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Noun Clauses.

"I love drinks that cost less than three dollars."

A noun clause is a phrase with a subject and verb that functions as a noun in a sentence. When we say, "People who are tall often play basketball," we are using the noun clause "People who are tall." By itself, this phrase is not a sentence, but we use the entire phrase as the subject of the sentence. Let's look at some examples of noun clauses as the subjects of sentences.

For Example:

1. *"Animals that live in people's homes must be well trained."* (Noun clause: "Animals that live in people's homes")
2. *"Bags made in Italy are very expensive."* (Noun clause: "Bags made in Italy")
3. *"People who studied in universities have higher salaries than those who didn't graduate."* (Noun clause: "People who studied in universities")

We use noun clauses to make our writing and speaking more effective. Rather than saying "There are a lot of people who are afraid of water. Those people don't like to swim," we can combine these thoughts into a single sentence with a noun clause: "People who are afraid of water don't like to swim." We can also use a noun clause as the direct object of the action in a sentence, the way Dave did about drinks. Let's look at a few examples of direct object noun clauses.

For Example:

1. *"I want a dog that can do tricks."* (Noun clause: "dog that can do tricks")
2. *"He bought a car made in Japan."* (Noun clause: "car made in Japan")
3. *"We will eat anything that tastes good."* (Noun clause: "anything that tastes good")

Noun clauses are a great way to spice up your speaking and writing. Use them to conserve words and to make your communication more effective and targeted.

Language Tip

Dave talks about his frat-boy past when he says, "Sure was! Delta Tau Chi all the way!" Delta Tau Chi was the name of his fraternity. Fraternities are usually named with Greek letters, and by saying "all the way," he means he supports them completely. We can use "all the way" with anything that we support and are passionate about.

For Example:

1. A: "Are you a baseball fan?"
B: "Oh yeah, Philadelphia Phillies all the way!"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

What You May Hear over Drinks in the District of Columbia

Sheila and Dave sit in a bar here and gossip about politics. Going out to a happy hour and talking about politics is a favorite pastime of many people in D.C. Happy hours usually have cheap drinks and are crowded; a lot of flirting and gossiping is fueled by the alcohol, and happy hours have a culture that surrounds them.

A favorite criticism of political people is calling someone a "flip-flopper," meaning that the person changes his views and does not have a firm moral center. A lot of people see "flip-flopping" as even more negative than simply holding an opposite view. People feel that flip-floppers are people who lack principles and dignity.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #10 English Pickup Lines

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ENGLISH

1. ISABEL: Hello, may I ask who's calling?
2. DAVE: Hi...is this Officer Fuentes? This is Dave Wiseman, I spoke with you after I got mugged, and you gave me your card.
3. ISABEL: Ah, hi, Dave, how are you? Feeling any better? Did you remember anything that might aid our investigation?
4. DAVE: I'm doing fine, thanks, it was just a few scratches and bruises. Actually, I was calling you for another reason.
5. I: Yes, what was that?
6. DAVE: Well, I realize that this might be a little bit inappropriate. But I was wondering... Unless it's against your rules, would you be free to get a drink sometime?
7. I: Are you asking me out?
8. DAVE: I am, unless you think I shouldn't be.
9. I: Well, it's a bit irregular, but it's adorable. Well, in case you want to meet me, I'll be over by the pavilion at the Eastern Market around ten o'clock on Saturday.
10. DAVE: Really? That's great! I'll head over then.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
head over	to go somewhere (casual)	phrasal verb
aid	to assist, to help	verb
actually	as a true fact, really	adverb

bruise	a dark purple/brownish mark you get after being hit	noun
inappropriate	not acceptable, should not be done	adjective
irregular	abnormal, not regular, unusual	adjective
adorable	very cute	adjective
wonder	to think about, to speculate in an uncertain manner	verb
Eastern Market	A historic market in South- East Washington, D.C. known for its wide array of food, used goods, and inexpensive clothing	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

I'm going to head over to my sister's apartment to pick up a book I lent her.	My new NGO will try and aid the homeless population.
He actually prepared for the party all by himself.	Actually, we can walk there since it's not too far.
I got a bruise when I fell off my bike and hit my chest.	My co-worker got fired for making inappropriate comments to the administrative assistant.
Salt and chocolate may sound irregular, but they are delicious together.	The mother dog gave birth to five adorable puppies.

I wonder if there will ever be peace between Palestine and Israel.	The Eastern Market burned down a few years ago but they rebuilt it.
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VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Dave says "I was wondering..." As we saw in the vocabulary, "to wonder" something means to think about or speculate. We often say "I was wondering" before a question to someone to indicate that we had thought about it before asking it.

For Example:

- A: "I was wondering, what city are you from in Russia?"
 B: "Oh, I'm from Vladivostok."

Dave says "actually" before he changes the topic from his mugging to trying to ask Isabel out. "Actually" means "really," but we often use it as a transition from one topic to another when we are trying to guide the conversation.

For Example:

- A: "So, is our meeting to talk about my promotion?"
 B: "Actually, I wanted to discuss some problems we've been having with your clients."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Adverb Clauses with the Conditional.

"Unless it's against your rules, would you be free to get a drink sometime?"

Adverb clauses, like noun clauses, are phrases that take the place of an adverb and contain a subject, a verb, and a conjunction. Here are some examples.

For Example:

- "I will get that to you when I have free time."* (adverb clause: "when I have free time")

2. *"They ate dinner together once they both got home."* (adverb clause: "once they both got home")

You are already probably quite familiar with this type of adverb clause in practice if not in name, and you probably understand that it answers the questions "When?," "How?," or "Why?" This lesson focuses on using adverb clauses with the conditional tense. We use these regularly with the conditional tense to express the conditions under which something can occur. Often, we see "if" being used for the beginning of an adverb clause in this case.

For Example:

1. *"If I didn't have to work on Sunday, I would go play golf."* (adverb clause: "if I didn't have work")
2. *"They would love to eat a slice of pizza if there are any left."* (adverb clause: "if there are any left")

We can also express the conditional tense, as this dialogue showed, by using "unless" as the beginning of the adverb clause. "Unless" is a somewhat tricky word that is easy to confuse with "if." Essentially, we use "unless" for negative statements in questions.

For Example:

1. *"Unless there is rain, the picnic will be tomorrow."* ("If there is no rain, the picnic will be tomorrow.")
2. *"I'm going to go unless I have to work."* ("If I don't have work, I'm going to go.")
3. *"Unless it's prohibited, I would like to go fishing in the stream."*

By using this structure, Dave asks Isabel out, but he gives her the opportunity to decline by saying that he realizes it may be against the rules of being a police officer. This is a very polite and timid way for Dave to ask her out.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Are You Looking for a Date in America?

It is likely if you travel to the United States that, at some point, someone will ask you out. Asking someone out over the telephone the way Dave did is certainly not the most common manner, but the language that Dave used is very common. The most common way to ask someone out

on a first date is to ask them to coffee or a drink. However, it is important to know that just because someone is asking if you are free for a drink does not necessarily mean he or she is asking you out on a date. It is perfectly acceptable to do as Isabel did and clarify what Dave's goal was. Sometimes, the answer may just be that the other person is interested in getting to know you better and be friends, even if he or she is of the opposite gender.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #11

Are you Running Late in the United States?

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- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. MARK: So nice of you to finally join us. Please sit down.
2. SHEILA: I'm sorry! The bus was late, and I didn't make it to the Metro station in time.
3. MARK: Please don't let it happen again.
4. SHEILA: It won't. I promise.
5. MARK: I hope at least you have that memo that I asked you to prepare.
6. SHEILA: Of course. It's right here. Oh my goodness! My roommate was sick this morning, and I was distracted. I must have left my folder with it at home.
7. MARK: Save the excuses; we're fortunate this time because we had someone else researching it who can write it quickly, but please be more vigilant in the future.
8. SHEILA: I'm so sorry, sir. I'm such an idiot.
9. MARK: It's okay. To err is human. Just try to be more careful next time.
10. SHEILA: Of course.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
memo	a memorandum, a short document informing recipients on a specific topic	noun
excuse	explanation for mistakes or bad behavior	noun

prepare	to write	verb
briefcase	a professional bag used to carry documents	noun
distracted	not focused, not paying attention	adjective
vigilant	aware, careful, paying attention	adjective
err	to make a mistake	verb
idiot	a stupid person, a fool	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Did you read the memo on the new policies?	Giving apologies is better than giving excuses.
I'm tired of your excuses for your behavior. Grow up!	I prepared a speech for the Senator but she decided to rewrite it herself.
A nice leather briefcase can cost a lot of money.	The noise distracted him from work.
She distracted her friend to ask a question.	Soldiers must always be vigilant when on guard.
Excuse me, I erred when I said that the meeting is today, it is tomorrow.	My sister is such an idiot; she always locks herself out of her car!

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Mark says "Save the excuses." This is also a somewhat harsh comment for Sheila, telling her he does not want to hear the reasons why she failed at her task. We can say "Save the ____" to tell someone not to tell us something. Again, this can be considered kind of rude, so never use it for a superior, and be careful when using it to not offend someone.

For Example:

1. A: "Good morning, sir. Great weather we're having today, isn't it?"
B: "Save the small talk. What's the news on our quarterly profits?"

Mark says "To err is human." This is a much softer comment by Mark after being harsh with Sheila earlier. A common idiom in English is "To err is human, to forgive divine," meaning that everybody occasionally makes mistakes, but it is good for us to forgive others when they make errors. By saying even just the first part of this saying, Mark shows that he forgives Sheila for her mistakes.

For Example:

1. A: "Oh dear, I spilled juice on your newspaper."
B: "That's okay. To err is human."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Explaining Without Conjunctions.

"I'm sorry! The bus was late, and I didn't make it to the Metro station in time."

Often when we are constructing excuses, reasons, or arguments, we use connecting words like "because," "on account of," or "as a result of." However, these types of words are not always necessary. This is especially true of spoken English, when simply listing your reasons in a logical order is sufficient to explain. Sometimes, this makes your verbal statement clearer and more logical. Here are some examples of excuses using connecting words and then the same ideas without them.

For Example:

1. *"On account of the bus being late, I missed my flight." = "The bus was late, and I missed my flight."*
2. *"Because we didn't have enough time and the budget was too small, we couldn't finish the project." = "We couldn't finish the project. The budget was too small, and we didn't have enough time."*

It is usually quite simple to construct reasons in this way and can sometimes give your

arguments more emphasis. It is especially effective to use this phrasing when you are apologizing and want to explain why something happened, but you do not want to look like you are trying to make excuses. It is useful to put an apologetic statement in front of the reason, as in the following examples.

For Example:

1. *"I'm sorry, we won't be able to finish the project with the current budget. Material costs rose, and we can't afford it with the old amount."*
2. *"Unfortunately, James won't be coming in today. He's out sick with the flu."*

Language Tip

Mark says "So nice of you to finally join us" to Sheila when she enters the meeting. This is a somewhat harsh criticism of Sheila's lateness. Mark uses sarcasm to mockingly elevate Sheila's status and "thank" her for her presence. This shows that Mark is upset that Sheila is late to the meeting. In order to show disapproval, sarcasm is sometimes used to "thank" people for things that they should do automatically. It can be rude and should never be used to a superior.

For Example:

1. Employee: *"I know it is two weeks overdue, but I just contributed an e-mail to the group discussion."*
Boss: *"Why, thank you so much for honoring us with your input. Please try and do so on time in the future."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

"To Err Is Human"

People make mistakes in every country. What differs from country to country is how you respond. In the United States, it is usually sufficient to simply apologize for your mistake and explain why it happened. However, with a more serious error, it is often a good idea to try to explain what steps you will take to ensure that it will not happen again. If you have been late to a meeting twice in a row because you overslept, it is a good idea to get a new alarm clock to make sure that you wake up on time in the future.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #12

How a Bill Becomes a Law in the US, Part 1

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- 6 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. MARK: Hey, Sheila, could you tell me what you know about this new tax bill?
2. SHEILA: Well, it's an extension of the payroll tax cut. It was passed last time with bipartisan support, but this time it's more complicated.
3. MARK: How so? If I remember correctly, the bill was amended and a bunch of earmarks were added.
4. SHEILA: Exactly, there were earmarks added by both parties while it was in committee. Two big earmarks—one funding a new military base in the Chairman's home state, and one for a big grant for a university in the ranking member's district were added.
5. MARK: Those greedy Representatives... Now it's gridlock I assume?
6. SHEILA: Yes, Democrats and Republicans are refusing to give up on their projects, and the President has threatened to veto the bill if the earmarks aren't removed.
7. MARK: (Sigh) Business as usual, I'm afraid. Any idea how it will be resolved?
8. SHEILA: Well, I think if they can remove the biggest earmarks, it won't be vetoed.
9. MARK: Yeah, the President will probably compromise on the smaller ones.
10. SHEILA: It's just going to be difficult to get the Representatives to let go of their pet projects.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
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bill	a proposed law or action being considered by Congress	noun
let go	to release, to abandon, to leave alone	phrasal verb
veto	a presidential action canceling a law that Congress passes	verb
gridlock	when no progress can be made because conflicting sides will not co-operate	noun
ranking member	the most senior member of committee from the party in the minority (with less than half the seats)	noun
amend	to change a bill or other political document	verb
chairman	the head of a committee	noun
earmark	language inserted into a bill but unrelated to the bill that gives funding to a special project, usually in Congresspeople's home states	noun
bipartisan	both Republican and Democratic parties together	adjective
tax cut	a reduction in taxes, an elimination or lowering of tax rates	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

The Senator proposed a bill to make hunting illegal in national parks.	After being accused of misconduct, the Senator let go of control of his committee and resigned.
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The president can veto a bill he does not like. But the Congress can override the veto with a 2/3 majority.	Due to the political gridlock, no progress could be made.
The former chairman of the committee became the ranking member when the Democrats lost control of the House.	The Constitution of the United States has been amended 26 times.
When the Republicans gained a majority, they got to appoint all of the committee chairmen.	My representative tried to add an earmark to the bill that would provide funding for a new space center in our district.
Changing the voting age from 21 to 18 was a bipartisan measure and passed the Congress with 95% support.	You can't cut taxes and continue to spend without increasing government debt.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Sheila says, "Well, it's an extension of the payroll tax cut." As we learned from the vocabulary section, a tax cut is a reduction in taxes. The payroll tax cut is a particularly large tax cut that was passed to lower everybody's taxes. It is very popular, and without it, everyone would pay a lot more in taxes out of every paycheck. Sometimes, Congress tries to attach other items to the payroll tax cut extension bill. Because the tax cut is so popular, members of Congress feel that if they attach their amendments to this bill, they will pass automatically.

For Example:

1. "The Republicans tried to link the payroll tax cut extension to the approval of an oil pipeline project."

Sheila says, "It's just going to be difficult to get the Representatives to let go of their pet projects." As we learned, "to let go" means to leave alone or abandon. A "pet project" is a project to which someone pays an unusual amount of effort and attention. Even if it is small, a pet project of a member of Congress may be his or her biggest issue, and he or she may be

unwilling to compromise where the project is concerned. Often, pet projects are funded by earmarks and supported by the people from the member's home district or state.

For Example:

1. A: "Why won't the Representative let go of the Support Milk bill?"
B: "He has a lot of dairy farmers in his district; it's a bit of a pet project."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Passive Voice.

"It was passed last time with bipartisan support."

Active voice is always the preferred style of communicating when writing, but we will often hear passive voice in conversation. We can use passive voice with an explicit (spoken) subject or an implied (unspoken) subject, but we always utilize the "to be" verb. When we have an explicit subject, we always use "by" to show who did the action expressed in the sentence.

For Example:

1. *"The bill was passed by the House and the Senate."*
2. *"The new telephone was made by Nokia."*
3. *"The pizza was eaten by a dog."*

In these cases, we know who did the action and can easily put the sentence in active voice if we are confused by the meaning ("The House and Senate passed the bill," "Nokia made the new telephone," "a dog ate the pizza"). Having an explicit subject in the sentence makes it easy to understand the action. However, we often use the passive voice to express sentences with an implied, or unspoken, subject.

For Example:

1. *"The project was completed on time."*
2. *"The bank was robbed on Tuesday at around noon."*
3. *"The criminal was found hiding in an empty house."*

In these three sentences, we cannot "know" who the subject is with one hundred percent certainty, but it is not important. We use passive voice to emphasize the object of the sentence. Looking at these sentences, we are emphasizing the project's completed status, the bank

having been robbed, and the criminal having been found. It is not so important who completed the report, who robbed the bank, or who found the criminal. Often, we know the answer to these questions based on context.

Sheila's comment "It was passed last time with bipartisan support" came during a conversation about the House and Senate's actions. In this case, based on context, we can imply that the subject of the sentence is "the House and Senate" and therefore could rewrite the sentence as "The House and Senate passed the bill last time with bipartisan support." However, because the emphasis of the sentence is that the bill was passed, we can use passive voice to emphasize this point rather than emphasizing the House and the Senate. Try to avoid using passive voice when writing, but when you're speaking it sounds very natural to use phrases like the examples listed above and in the dialogue to change the emphasis from the subject to the object of a sentence.

Language Tip

Mark says, "Business as usual I'm afraid" to Sheila when they are discussing the problems of passing legislation in the House. This is an expression that conveys frustration with the political process. Senators and Representatives often slow bills and modify them in order to benefit their home states and districts. By saying "Business as usual," we mean that we expect something, even if we do not like it.

For Example:

1. A: *"James is late with the reports again."*
B: *"Ugh, business as usual I see..."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Political Gridlock

Democracy can be messy. Just as in any system of government, every Representative and Senator has his or her own interests that he or she tries to take action on. This results in a lot of time in the House and Senate being spent on what are essentially local or state issues. Senators and Representatives add "earmarks" to bills in order to fund pet projects, and such projects are a major point of controversy. Many people want to eliminate earmarks as they feel that the national government and taxpayers should not pay for local projects. Others believe that this system helps provide federal assistance to areas that cannot afford it themselves. Especially when one party does not have a large majority, the minority party can slow down the actions of the majority party by opposing everything that it proposes. This wastes a lot of time, and we refer to it as government or political gridlock.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #13

Making Tough Choices in the US

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- 6 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Hey, Dave, did you hear about the decision in the Supreme Court case?
2. DAVE: Yeah! I was shocked!
3. SHEILA: I can't believe they said that it was unconstitutional...
4. DAVE: Yeah, I was listening to a political radio show about it.
5. SHEILA: What did they say?
6. DAVE: Well, the host said that the majority of the justices felt that any gun control was a violation of the Second Amendment.
7. SHEILA: The second amendment states, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."
8. DAVE: Yeah, I don't really get how the government requiring an ID check to buy an assault weapon violates this...
9. SHEILA: Me neither... All the liberal journalists say that the court has gone way off the deep end.
10. DAVE: It sure sounds like it...

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
militia	small, informal army made of non-professional soldiers	noun

unconstitutional	does not obey the rules of the Constitution, the founding document of the United States	adjective
to bear	to hold, to keep, to support	verb
case	a legal dispute brought to a court	noun
liberal	on the left side of the political spectrum	adjective
amendment	a change to the Constitution	noun
arm	weapon, gun	noun
infringed	violated, impeded on, taken away	adjective
in violation	against, not in accordance with	adjective
deep-end	the deeper side of a pool	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

The militias fought against the British army in the Revolutionary War.	Many argue that the health care law is unconstitutional because it violates individual rights.
He bears a strong resemblance to Margaret Thatcher.	The man who got fat after eating too much fast food brought a case against the restaurant that he ate it at.
Liberals and conservatives rarely vote for the same candidate.	There are 26 amendments to the United States' constitution.

He was an arms dealer and sold weapons to dictators.	The police infringed my right to free speech when they deleted my blog posting that criticized them.
He couldn't play football at his university because he was in violation of the college's policies by being too old.	When he started talking about moon colonies, everyone knew that Newt Gingrich had gone off the deep-end.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"Amendment"

Dave says, "The majority of justices felt that any gun control was a violation of the Second Amendment." As we learned in the vocab, an amendment is an official change to the Constitution, the basic law of the United States. Justices of the Supreme Court have the ability to decide whether laws obey the Constitution. If they believe they do not, they can declare them unconstitutional, which makes them invalid.

For Example:

1. "The justices all agreed that spying on American citizens without a warrant was a violation of the Eighth Amendment."

"deep end"

Sheila says, "The court has gone way off the deep end." As we learned, the deep end is the deeper part of a swimming pool. When we say someone has "gone off the deep end," it is an expression to say that someone is acting in an unusual or crazy manner.

For Example:

1. A: "What is Fred doing?"
B: "I don't know...looks like he finally went off the deep end..."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Reporting Speech.

"I can't believe they said that it was unconstitutional."

When we want to talk about what someone else said, we use reporting speech. There are two basic ways that we can report somebody else's words. We need an introducing verb like "say," "state," "report," "tell," etc. to frame the speech. Depending on which tense we put this verb in, we report the speech in a different way.

If we place the verb in present tense like "he says," "they tell me," or "she is stating," then we use exactly what the person said, except sometimes we have to change the pronoun to make sure the listener understands whom we are talking about. Here are some examples of changing direct speech to reported speech without using backshift (which we will discuss later).

Direct Speech	Reported Speech (No Backshift)
Dave: "I love peanuts."	"He says that he loves peanuts."
Children: "We will go play at the playground."	"They are telling me that they will go play at the playground."
Mother: "I ate breakfast already."	"She says that she ate breakfast already."

Note:

After the verb, we are using a "that." This is correct but not always necessary. Sometimes you can simply say "He says he loves peanuts," but it is safer to use "that."

The above examples did not use backshift because the verb was always in present tense. However, it is more common for us to hear reported speech using simple past verbs like "he told me," "she said," etc. When we do this, we have to change the tense of the original statement (direct speech). Let's see some examples:

Direct Speech	Reported Speech (Backshift)
Dave: "I love peanuts."	"He said that he loved peanuts."
Children: "We will play at the playground."	"They told me that they would play at the playground."
Mother: "I ate breakfast already."	"She said that she had eaten breakfast already."

As you can see, reported speech with backshift is much more complicated than without it. The above examples are in various tenses, but today we are just going to cover the present simple

and present progressive tenses for use with backshift. We will cover future and past tenses in a later chapter in more detail.

When making a sentence into reported speech with backshift with present simple or present progressive, the verb change is quite simple: it just changes to the past version.

Let's see some examples:

Direct Speech	Reported Speech (Backshift)
Me: "I am walking home."	"I said that I was walking home."
You: "I am working hard."	"You said that you were working hard."
Boy: "I am sleepy."	"He said that he was sleepy."
Girl: "I like unicorns."	"She said that she liked unicorns."

Try reporting some speech that you hear! Listen to a news program and try and tell someone what the different people said using reported speech with both backshift and without!

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Gun Control and the Second Amendment in the United States

Gun control, or lack thereof, is a big issue in the United States. With one of the highest rates of gun violence for industrialized countries in the world, many would like to restrict or forbid many types of weapons. However, there are many who fight gun control under the idea that the American Constitution protects the rights of citizens to maintain weapons. Some of the early leaders of the United States maintained that a well-armed populace was necessary for freedom. The struggle between gun owners and gun-rights supporters and those who see guns primarily as a threat to public safety is an important debate in the United States.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #14 American Date Night

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ENGLISH

1. DAVE: Wow, you're all dolled up! Do you have a date tonight too?
2. SHEILA: I don't know... I met this cute guy from the World Bank who came in to brief us for next month's hearing. He gave me his card and asked whether I wanted to get a drink sometime. I figured why not since you're going out with that cop tonight.
3. DAVE: Woooo... Sounds fun. I hope you have a good time!
4. SHEILA: Thanks, me too! I really hope that he turns out to be a nice guy. My last few dates have been duds. I wish I hadn't gone out with them at all...
5. DAVE: Yeah, I know, you showed me their pictures.
6. SHEILA: Oh, shut up! You can be such a jerk sometimes...
7. DAVE: Relax. I'm only kidding. But seriously, I wish you the best of luck with this one. At least he has a good job.
8. SHEILA: Ha ha... I hope you have a good time with Isabel too. I've never seen you like this before! You seem head over heels for this girl.
9. DAVE: I am! There's just something I can't put my finger on with her...
10. SHEILA: I know what you mean. Good luck!

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
to put (my) finger on	to touch, to feel, to understand, to realize	phrasal verb
heel	the back and bottom part of the foot	noun

to shut up	to stop talking (usually rude)	verb
to kid	to make a joke or to poke fun	verb
jerk	a mean and nasty person	noun
dud	a failure, an unfortunate event	noun
to brief	to quickly prepare by communicating essential information and answering questions in a meeting	verb
the World Bank	an international governmental organization that works on many international financial issues	proper noun
dolled up	to have put a lot of effort into your appearance, to be well-groomed and dressed	adjectival phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

I didn't understand it at first, but then I was able to put my finger on exactly what I love about Beethoven's music.	I stepped on a staple and got a cut on my heel.
Would you shut up? We've all heard quite enough about your girlfriend.	My grandfather loved jokes, he was always kidding around.
In high school I was a bully and acted like a jerk.	The bomb that fell near the school fortunately turned out to be a dud.
The staffers only had ten minutes to brief the president on the defense issues before his speech.	The World Bank provides loans to developing countries if they adopt liberal economic principles.

My girlfriend got dolled up before we went out to the movies.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"heel"

Sheila says, "You seem head over heels for this girl!" As we learned from the vocabulary section, the "heel" is the back and bottom part of the foot. "Head over heels" is a common expression for the sense of giddiness, or tumbling feeling, when you are in love. We usually use it for when we are deeply and helplessly in love with people, and we have that dizzy or lightheaded feeling; but, we can also use it more casually when talking about objects.

For Example:

1. "I am head over heels with these new chocolates! They are simply delicious!"

"to put (my) finger on"

Dave responds to Sheila by saying, "There's something I can't put my finger on with her..." As we learned, this phrase means to understand or realize something concretely. When we say people have "something (we) can't put (our) finger(s) on," we mean that they have some hard-to-identify quality that makes them appealing, but it is not necessarily very clear why or how.

For Example:

1. "I'm not sure what it is about him that I like. He has something I can't put my finger on that makes him irresistible."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using "Hope" Versus "Wish."

Sheila: "Thanks, me too! I really hope that he turns out to be a nice guy. My last few dates have been duds. I wish I hadn't gone out with them at all..."

"Hope" and "wish" are two words that share some similarities but are easily confused. In the present tense, we use "hope" to express desires about future events that are uncertain. We use "wish" in the present tense with hypothetical situations, and we usually use the subjunctive mood. In general, we should use "hope" when we have reasons to believe something will occur, whereas "wish" is for situations where we want something to occur but do not expect it.

For Example:

1. *"I'm lonely; I wish I had a dog to keep me company."*
2. *"They hope the new iPhone will be released soon."*
3. *"The children wish they could fly to the moon."*
4. *"What grade are you hoping to get?"*

When we use "wish" with a past-tense phrase, we can express regret that a situation happened the way it did or express a desire that it had happened differently.

For Example:

1. *"I wish I had studied harder for that test."*
2. *"He wishes that he could have gotten the day off to go fishing today."*

We can also use "wish" and "hope" for greetings and on special occasions like holidays or birthdays. We can use them both, but they have slightly different constructions. With "hope" we use the phrase, "I hope you have a _____. " With "wish" we say, "I wish you a _____."

For Example:

1. *"We wish you a merry Christmas."*
2. *"I hope you have a happy birthday."*

"Hope" and "wish" can be easy to mix up, but by following the above rules, you will be able to use them appropriately.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

American Beauty

Because the United States is such a diverse country, it is easy to make overgeneralizations about its citizens. With this warning, it is interesting to see what people in the United States value in terms of beauty. It is well known that Americans often strive to be thin, but it may surprise you that there are differences in what is "beautiful" when you compare the United States to other countries, even in Europe. The emphasis that Americans put on clean, white, and straight teeth is greater than in many other places; similarly, while body hair may be more

groomed in the United States, makeup, when compared with many countries, tends to be lighter. In general, the goal is to look beautiful but appear like you did not have to try to do so. This applies to both men and women, with women striving for subtle and understated makeup application, and men spending a great length of time perfecting a "just got out of bed" hairstyle.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #15 American Date Night, Part 2

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ENGLISH

1. ISABEL: You know, I have to admit, when you first asked me out, I thought you were kind of creepy. But this is a nice place. So I apologize for misjudging you.
2. DAVE: Yeah, I can understand that. I'm sure that you have gotten a lot of invitations from witnesses before, though.
3. ISABEL: Not exactly... So where are you from? How long have you been in D.C.?
4. DAVE: I'm originally from Oregon; I have only been living in D.C. for a few months now. Before coming here, I had been living in Virginia when I went to school. Where did you go to college?
5. ISABEL: I'm a proud alumnus of the school of hard knocks!
6. DAVE: Oh, I see...sorry for asking.
7. ISABEL: Why? For all my life I had wanted to be a cop. No need to go to college for that, so I went to the academy instead.
8. DAVE: That's cool. So you have lived in D.C. your whole life?
9. ISABEL: Born and raised!
10. DAVE: A true Washingtonian.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
academy	an institution of learning that focuses on a specific trade or skills (like science or the military)	noun

knock	a loud noise created by hitting with the fist	noun
alumnus	a graduate	noun
Washingtonian	somebody from Washington, D.C.	proper noun
to be raised	to grow up	verb
to misjudge	to assess or judge incorrectly	verb
witness	a person who saw something (often a crime)	noun
creepy	makes you feel uncomfortable, inappropriate	adjective
to admit	to concede the truth of something, to confess	verb
originally	firstly, from the beginning, at the very start	adverb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

We learned tactics and strategy at the academy.	We all froze when we heard three knocks on the door.
	I just moved to D.C. so I still don't really feel like a Washingtonian.
I was raised in six countries on four continents.	I misjudged the distance from the boat to the dock and when I jumped I fell in the water.
She was a witness to the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon.	That guy over there keeps looking at us. He's really creepy.

She will have to admit she's wrong when she sees the video playback.

The singer originally came from Denmark.

The cafe was originally a pub.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"knock"

Isabel says "I'm a proud alumnus of the school of hard knocks." As we learned from the vocabulary section, a knock is a hit that creates a loud noise, and it is usually caused by striking your fist against something like a door. However, the "school of hard knocks" is an idiom that describes "real life" for people who did not attend university or college. The phrase refers to living life in a difficult manner; perhaps the person saying it got "knocked" herself and learned through that process. We usually use it in a lighthearted manner.

For Example:

1. A: "Where are you planning to go to college next year?"
B: "College? Man, I'm goin' to the school of hard knocks for a degree in causin' trouble."

"to raise"

Isabel says, "Born and raised!" when Dave asks her if she has lived in D.C. for her whole life. As we learned from the vocabulary section, being raised somewhere refers to where we grew up. We can use the phrase "born and raised" to tell someone that we spent our entire childhood in one place?

For Example:

1. "In West Philadelphia, born and raised. On the playground is where I spent most of my days."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Past and Present Perfect Continuous Tenses.

"I'm originally from Oregon; I have only been living in D.C. for a few months now. Before coming here, I had been living in Virginia when I went to school."

This is a review of using the past and present perfect continuous tenses. You probably have already learned them previously, but these are two of the most difficult tenses to use correctly. Let's start by looking at the present perfect continuous tense.

"I have only been living in D.C. for a few months now."

We use the present perfect continuous tense to describe things that began in the past but continue today. We often use it followed by "for" or "since." "For" tells us how the action has been going on, and "since" tells us when it started.

For Example:

1. *"I have been reading this book since last month."* ("I started reading this book last month; I am still reading it now.")
2. *"They have been thinking about it for years."* ("They first thought about it years ago; they are still thinking about it.")

"I had been living in Virginia when I went to school."

The past perfect continuous can be even trickier to use correctly. We use this when we are talking about something that happened for a length of time in the past: something that started and ended before now. We often use it with another statement that provides the reference for the time.

For Example:

1. *"He had been drinking since nine a.m."* ("He started drinking at nine a.m., but now he is not.")
2. *"The baby had been crying for three hours when they fed it."* ("The baby was crying for three hours; then they fed it, and it stopped.")

It can be helpful to use these two tenses with another statement to give the listener a better idea of when the statements happen.

For Example:

1. *"She had been working for a competitor for three years before she started working here."*
2. *"I had been a vegetarian for twelve years until I went to Argentina; since then, I have been eating meat."*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Getting to Know You

In the United States, just as in many other countries, some of the first questions you ask when getting to know new people are about their background. The questions that Dave asked Isabel were generally very typical of the kinds of questions people ask. Especially in the high-powered world of Washington, D.C., people often ask about the university or college that you attended. This can be a tricky topic, as we saw in the case of Dave and Isabel. That someone did not go to college (either they did not want to or could not afford to) can be seen as a negative, and someone might be offended if it is brought up. Generally, though, small talk when you are getting to know new people centers around where you and they have lived, worked, and attended school. After that, you and they both can ask more interesting and relevant questions.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #16

Do American Media Pundits Rub you the Wrong Way?

CONTENTS

- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

16

ENGLISH

1. DAVE: These cable-news talking heads rub me the wrong way sometimes! All they do is yell at each other; there is no actual debate. They are so unproductive and uninformative.
2. ISABEL: Yeah, I know what you mean. It seems like their only purpose is to see who can yell inside-the-Beltway jargon louder.
3. DAVE: I really wish there were a channel that actually fostered legitimate debate and discussion. I find this kind of media very unappealing.
4. ISABEL: I agree. The hosts and the commentators all seem so immature and irresponsible.
5. DAVE: Exactly, and they have the nerve to call their channel "Impartial and Even."
6. ISABEL: What a joke!
7. DAVE: More like "Partial and Uneven."
8. ISABEL: What about the channel that brands itself as "NNC = Politics?"
9. DAVE: Haha, more like "NNC = Terrible."
10. ISABEL: Well, at least C-SPAN is pretty fair.
11. DAVE: Yeah, if you can stay awake! It's so uninteresting sometimes.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
unproductive	useless, futile, inefficient	adjective

debate	discussion of an issue from opposing sides, civil argument	noun
legitimate	real, genuine, actual, proper	adjective
nerve	courage	noun
impartial	balanced, not taking sides	adjective
unappealing	undesirable, disgusting, unwanted	adjective
to foster	to encourage, to cultivate	verb
to rub	to touch, to pet, to stroke	verb
the Beltway	the ring of highways that surround Washington, D.C. and provide access to the city.	proper noun
talking head	someone who has little to say but talks a lot (often used for those on television slang)	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Having 4-hour meetings is totally unproductive.	Debate is a critical skill for any politician. It is essential to communicate and persuade others to your ideas.
I wasn't sure if the job opportunity was legitimate or a scam.	I didn't have the nerve to ride the roller coaster; I was too scared.
The Congressional Research Services provides impartial analysis of political events.	The meat looks a bit old and unappealing.

A good pre-school fosters learning and imagination among its students.	Can you rub your stomach and pat your head at the same time?
The traffic on the Beltway is usually terrible at rush hour.	I can't tell these newscasters apart; they are all just talking heads to me.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"to rub"

Dave says, "These talking heads really rub me the wrong way sometimes." As we learned from the vocabulary section, to rub something is to stroke or pet it. However, when we add "the wrong way" to "rub," we create a common phrase that means "to annoy." It comes from petting a cat. If you rub a cat one way, it will like it, but if you rub it the wrong way, it will get annoyed.

For Example:

1. A: "What do you think about the new boss?"
2. B: "I don't know...I'm not a big fan. He kind of rubs me the wrong way."

"the Beltway"

Isabel says, "It seems like their only purpose is to see who can yell inside-the-Beltway jargon louder" when they are talking about cable news channels. "Inside the Beltway" is a phrase that we use to talk about Washington insiders. If we label something as "inside the Beltway," it means that it may be disconnected from reality and only relevant to people working in the field of politics. That means it has nothing to do with the lives of ordinary people.

For Example:

1. A: "The Senate minority is filibustering the movement to vote to end discussion on a motion that would allow them to vote on the bill brought from the House!"
B: "Sounds like an inside-the-Beltway problem..."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Prefixes with Adjectives.

"I agree. The hosts and the commentators all seem so immature and irresponsible."

We can often modify adjectives with the use of prefixes. In this lesson, we will learn several prefixes that can change the meaning of an adjective to the opposite of what it means. Several of the examples were addressed in the vocabulary section, but let's first look at a chart of all the adjectives from the dialogue that used prefixes, plus some extra common adjectives with prefixes.

Adjective	Prefix	Modified Adjective	Modified Meaning
"replaceable"	"ir-"	"irreplaceable"	nothing can take its place
"responsible"	"ir-"	"irresponsible"	can't be depended on
"mature"	"im-"	"immature"	childish, not sophisticated
"possible"	"im-"	"impossible"	not achievable, not doable
"informative"	"un-"	"uninformative"	not valuable for getting information
"interesting"	"un-"	"uninteresting"	boring, not interesting

As you can see from the table above, there are three common prefixes for adjectives that change their meaning to the opposite. Of these, "un-" is the most common, and you can probably think of several adjectives that begin with this prefix. Unfortunately, adjectives do not follow strict rules. However, in general, if the adjective starts with an "r-," it will take "ir-" as the opposite prefix. With "im-," it usually takes adjectives that start with "p-" or "m-."

With these general rules, can you make these sentences correct by changing the adjectives to their opposite using a prefix?

1. *"The Congressmen went to jail because they acted in a proper manner."*
2. *"I couldn't understand the computer, the language sounded very natural."*
3. *"When people get older, sometimes they become mobile."*
4. *"It's hard for him to find clothing because he wears a regular size."*

Did you change "proper" to "improper," "natural" to "unnatural," "mobile" to "immobile," and "regular" to "irregular"? If so, congratulations! Remember that these rules are not always consistent though, and you must be careful to check a dictionary before writing them to make sure you use the right prefix.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Politics on Television

The United States is the original home of cable-news networks, and a large percentage of Americans get their daily news from news shows every day. While they are popular, their reliability and methods are often questioned. Some people accuse the majority of news sources (and cable in particular) of being biased. Rather than balanced debate on important topics, cable news channels feature shows that are mostly just people yelling at each other. Others criticize the entire system of getting news from cable news channels. Because television has tight time regulations, news programs are criticized for never delving very deeply or into the details of stories. Some say that Americans' attention spans are growing shorter and that cable news is partly to blame. The one exception to this is C-SPAN, a public service channel provided by the cable companies. C-SPAN supplies twenty-four-hour coverage of the American legislative system. Although it is certainly unbiased and often has healthy debate, C-SPAN usually carries just live footage from the House of Representatives and Senate, and it is known for being very boring and difficult to watch for a long time.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #17

How a Bill Becomes a Law in the US, Part 2

CONTENTS

- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 5 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

17

ENGLISH

1. MARK: We just got word that the president vetoed the bill. I can't believe what an utter failure it was.
2. SHEILA: Oh no...we worked so hard on it. Do you think there's a chance Congress could override the veto?
3. MARK: Getting a two-thirds majority in both the House and Senate in these times?
4. SHEILA: I know it sounds pretty unrealistic, but the bill is popular with the public.
5. MARK: Maybe I'm just a cynic, but that seems like a total pipe dream.
6. SHEILA: I guess you're right...
7. MARK: Congresspeople are acting like absolute clowns these days. They never compromise anymore! It wasn't like this in the good ol' days.
8. SHEILA: I can see what you mean.
9. MARK: And without compromise, these jokers can't make the changes that this country needs!
10. SHEILA: I'm completely with you on that.
11. MARK: Jeez, if the intern can understand that, why can't the lawmakers?

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
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to compromise	to negotiate a solution between two sides with different goals and view points	verb
good ol' days	the past, when remembered fondly	phrase
joker	person who is not serious	noun
to be with	to agree with	phrasal verb
lawmaker	a politician involved in the legislative process, a Congressperson	noun
utter	complete, total	adjective
to override	to go over someone's blocking action	verb
cynic	a pessimist	noun
pipe dream	an unrealistic unattainable goal	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

The Democrats and Republicans compromised so that they could both pass the laws that they wanted.	In the good ol' days, I only cost five cents to watch a movie...
Every class has jokers that never stop kidding around.	When it comes to health care reform, I'm with the president.
When he was a child, he dreamed of being an astronaut and never thought he would end up in Congress as a lawmaker.	When the lights went out, we were left in utter darkness.

My boss tried to fire me, but his boss overrode his decision and I kept my job.	My wife is an optimist, but I am a bit of a cynic.
---	--

I'd like to design and build a house with my own hands but everyone tells me it's a pipedream.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"good ol' days"

Mark complains that "It wasn't like this in the good ol' days." As we learned, the "good ol' days" is a phrase we use to refer to the past in a positive light. Talking about the "good ol' days" is common, especially among older people as they compare and contrast the present times to when they were younger. This phrase is most frequently used when we are complaining about something in the present.

For Example:

- A: "Look at that young man over there, his pants are so low his underwear is showing!"
 B: "In the good ol' days we wore belts! None of this sagging pants nonsense."

"to be with"

Sheila says "I'm completely with you on that" when she is agreeing with Mark's point of view. As we learned in the vocab, it means "to agree." This phrasal verb is simple but can be confusing when you are talking about location rather than agreement. We have to look at context when guessing whether the speaker is physically "with" that person or whether the speaker is indicating that he or she understands and agrees with what that person is saying.

For Example:

- A: "I think we need to get started right away, we don't have much time."
 B: "I'm with you."

"pipe dream"

Mark says "That seems like a total pipe dream" when referring to the possibility of Congress overriding the veto. As we learned, a pipe dream is an unrealistic or unattainable goal. From

that definition, we can see that while Mark might like that outcome, he finds the possibility of that actually happening very low.

For Example:

1. A: Do you think we'll be able to finish the project in two hours?
B: "That's a pipe dream; two days is much more realistic."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Intensifying Adjectives.

"Congresspeople are acting like absolute clowns these days."

We can use an array of adjectives to make other words stronger without otherwise changing their meaning. In the example above, we see Mark using "absolute" to intensify "clowns." He doesn't change what *kind* of clowns as other adjectives would (like "big," "hot," "cold," etc.), but instead makes the word itself stronger. Often it is useful to think about the adjective as meaning "100 percent." There are a number of adjectives that we saw in the dialogue; let's take a look at some additional examples.

For Example:

1. "The rocket launch was an absolute success." (absolute success = 100% success)
2. "We expect kids will be put in complete terror by the film." (complete terror = 100% scared)
3. "Kids are told not to talk to utter strangers." (utter strangers = 100% unknown)

Talking about the success or failure of something is probably the most common use for these types of adjectives. We can indicate a huge degree of success or failure by describing them with these types of adjectives. Since our topic is politics, let's look at some political examples.

For Example:

1. "In the last election we barely won, but this time we are hoping for a complete victory in every demographic."
2. "After the Republicans won 70% control of the Senate, 60% control of the House, and the presidency, they gained absolute control over the legislature."
3. "The president's budget was an utter failure after it was rejected three times."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

A System of Checks and Balances

The U.S. governmental system is one of checks and balances. The "founding fathers" of the United States wanted to make sure that no one person or one branch of government could become too powerful. To ensure this, they developed a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government: the executive (the president), the legislative (the Congress), and the judicial (the Supreme Court). The Congress is the only branch that can make laws by proposing bills; if they are passed, the president must sign them to take effect. If the president does not like a law, he or she can cancel it by vetoing it. After a veto, the bill goes back to Congress where it either dies or can be "overridden" if two-thirds of Congress votes for it. Then, Congress can bypass the presidential veto. The last stage is the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court can decide a law is in violation of the Constitution, which is the basic document of the government, and declare it invalid. It is a complicated system of government but is designed so that the United States could never have a king or tyrant.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #18 Take a Tour of Washington, D.C.

CONTENTS

- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Oh man, my parents are coming next weekend. They want me to show them around D.C.
2. DAVE: Sheila, the tour guide... I like it!
3. SHEILA: What should we do...? What should I show them?
4. DAVE: You have to go to the museums. The Smithsonian is superb. And I think no trip to D.C. is complete without a tour of the White House.
5. SHEILA: Definitely. And I think we have to go to all the presidential monuments... Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington...
6. DAVE: Don't forget the memorials for World War II and Vietnam.
7. SHEILA: Oh yeah, I forgot about them. What about the Pentagon?
8. DAVE: I don't think you have to go there...it's just a big office building.
9. SHEILA: Yeah, but my dad was in the Navy. I'm pretty sure we do have to.
10. DAVE: Fair enough. Also, the cherry blossoms by the Potomac are lovely.
11. SHEILA: That's true! And my mom said we have to take a stroll on the National Mall.
12. DAVE: It would be great to go on a dome tour in the rotunda, but that's difficult.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
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memorial	a sculpture or place remembering a dead person or an event where many people died such as a war or natural disaster	noun
Navy	the part of the military that works on sea	proper noun
Potomac	the river that flows by Washington, D.C.	proper noun
to take a stroll	to take a leisurely walk	phrasal verb
the National Mall	a large rectangular park in the middle of Washington, D.C. bordered by the Smithsonian museums, the Capitol, and the Washington Monument	proper noun
rotunda	a round building, usually with a dome on top	noun
the Smithsonian	a group of public and free museums owned and operated by the government in Washington D.C.	proper noun
superb	excellent, great	adjective
monument	a building or sculpture built as a memorial to someone or something	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

There were scores of fans at the pop star's memorial ceremony.	A solemn crowd gathered together for the memorial.
The US Navy has a military base in Yokosuka, Japan.	The Potomac River is lined with cherry trees that bloom every spring.

We took a stroll in the park in the evening.	An estimated 24 million people visit the National Mall from around the world every year.
The rotunda of the Sistine Chapel is famous for its paintings by Michelangelo.	On my day off, I love to go to the Smithsonian to check out the new exhibits.
Superb speech! That was your best this year!	There is a monument for victims of the First World War in London.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Potomac

Dave says, "The cherry blossoms by the Potomac are lovely." As we know from the vocabulary, the Potomac is a river that runs by Washington, D.C. In 1912, the United States received a gift of hundreds of cherry trees from Japan, and springtime in Washington D.C. is popular for tourists as the trees bloom beautifully.

For Example:

- A: "When should we visit?"
B: "Come in April; the Potomac is absolutely beautiful then."

rotunda

Dave says, "It would be great to go on a dome tour in the rotunda." As we know from the vocabulary, a rotunda is a round building, usually with a dome. In this case, Dave is referring to the rotunda and dome of the Capitol building. Located in the exact middle of Washington, D.C., the Capitol rotunda's dome offers some of the best views of the city. Unfortunately, only Members of Congress can give tours of the dome, so most visitors to the city never get to experience them.

For Example:

1. A: "Did you hear about Jeff? He went on a rotunda tour with his Senator!"
B: "I'm so jealous; I've wanted to do that for years!"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using "Have to" As a Modal Verb.

"You have to go to the museums."

Modal verbs are useful words that are essential for sounding natural when writing and speaking. By choosing correct modals, we can convey the correct level of urgency and necessity. "To have" is an unusual modal verb because it has such a different meaning, which is "to possess." However, as we can see in the dialogue from this lesson, we can use this modal in the same manner as "should," "must," or "need to." The biggest among these modals is their level and tone. Refer to the chart below to see how some common modal relate in terms of strength. Note where "have to" is in the middle.

weaker stronger

"could" "should" "have to" "need to"
"ought to" "must"

Note: "Need to" and "have to" are not true modals (they conjugate like regular verbs) but function in the same way, so we group them together.

As you can see from the chart, "have to" is in a very useful position: it's stronger than "should" but not as strong as "need to" or "must." In spoken English, it is one of the most common expressions you will hear when talking about obligations and recommendations. Let's look at some examples of it used as an obligation.

For Example:

1. *"I'd love to come to the party, but I have to work."*
2. *"They have to finish the report by midnight."*

We also frequently use "have to" when advising someone on our recommendations for something.

For Example:

1. *"If you go to Paris, you have to go up the Eiffel Tower; the view is amazing."*
2. *"The new Clint Eastwood film is so great, you have to see it!"*

Try going through the dialogue and identifying the different ways that Dave and Sheila use "have to" as a recommendation.

Dave: "You have to go to the museums." (recommendation)

Sheila: "I think we have to go to all the presidential monuments..." (recommendation)

Dave: "I don't think you have to go there." (recommendation)

Sheila: "I'm pretty sure we do have to." (obligation)

Sheila: "And my mom said we have to take a stroll on the Mall." (obligation)

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Sightseeing in Washington, D.C.

Tourism in Washington, D.C. is a big business. Other than government, tourism plays a huge role in the city's economy as millions of people come each year to see famous government buildings, tour the wonderful museums, see the famous monuments and memorials, and visit places of power and importance for the U.S. government. Certain Metro stops are more popular with tourists, and there is sometimes minor conflict between Washingtonians and tourists as they try to get to work or someplace but masses of tourists slow them down.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #19 Hitting the Dusty American Campaign Trail

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- 2 English
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- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. DAVE: Hey, Sheila, big news.
2. SHEILA: What's up?
3. DAVE: I just got a call from Oregon. My district is fairly conservative, but there is this very popular moderate Democrat businessman. He is going to try and unseat the incumbent representative in the fall.
4. SHEILA: OK... So what does that have to do with you?
5. DAVE: He called me up today and asked whether I wanted to be his campaign manager.
6. SHEILA: What? Are you serious? Are you going to do it?
7. DAVE: I don't know... If he wins, I will get to work in his office. But if he loses, I will be completely unemployed.
8. SHEILA: Yeah, but that seems like such a great opportunity.
9. DAVE: It is. If I do it, it will look great on my resume too. Anyhow, I have to get going.
10. SHEILA: OK, when you get home, we will talk about this more.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
district	an administrative division of an area	noun
résumé	a document detailing a person's professional experience	noun

conservative	on the right of the political spectrum, favors less government and traditional morals	adjective
moderate	not extreme, towards the center	adjective
incumbent	currently serving, previously elected	adjective
campaign	an effort to get elected to office by making speeches, meeting voters, and delivering a message about why the public should support you	noun
unemployed	not working, without a job	adjective
opportunity	a chance; a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

There are many clothing factories in the Garment District of New York City.	I'm applying for a job soon and need to update my résumé.
Liberals and conservatives rarely vote for the same candidate.	Most Americans are moderate and do not identify with the extreme right or left.
Once elected, and incumbent Representative has a 90% chance of getting re-elected.	The presidential campaigns usually start in Summer for the November election.

At the height of the recession, one in every ten people was unemployed.	We may see increased opportunities for jobs and commerce next year.
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VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"incumbent"

Dave says, "He is going to try and unseat the incumbent representative in the fall." As we learned in the vocabulary, incumbent representatives have a very high percentage of getting re-elected. This means that it is quite difficult to unseat, or defeat, an incumbent. This rule is changed when there are large waves of popular sentiment change, like when Obama was elected president or again in 2010 when the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives.

For Example:

1. "In 2010, Republican challengers unseated over sixty incumbent Democrats."

"campaign"

Dave says, "He called me up today and asked whether I wanted to be his campaign manager." We learned in the vocabulary that a campaign is an effort to get elected to political office. Every campaign needs a campaign manager. This individual is responsible for running the day-to-day operations of the campaign such as the candidate's schedule, ballot registration, media appearances, advertisements, and any aspect of his campaign. It is extremely important for any candidate to have a strong campaign manager in order to be effective.

For Example:

1. "The candidate was good, but his campaign manager messed up: his advertisements were terrible and he didn't even get on the ballot!"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using the Future Real Conditional.

"I don't know... If he wins, I will get to work in his office. But if he loses, I will be completely unemployed."

Dave has a big decision to make. If he accepts this job and his candidate wins, he will be rewarded with a great long-term job and good experience. But if his candidate loses, then he will be unemployed and have nothing to show for it.

When we talk about future possibilities, it is very useful to use the future real conditional tense. This tense is a bit misleading because we can use it to talk about hypothetical situations rather than concrete "real" events. To use this tense, we use an "if/when" statement followed by a verb in simple present tense to indicate the condition. After the conditional phrase, we place a simple future statement with the action. Let's look at that in some examples.

If/when condition, future result.

For Example:

1. *"If I eat dinner out tonight, I will not make dinner at home."*
2. *"When they return to the United States, they will fly through London."*

We can also reverse the order in this manner:

Future result if/when condition.

For Example:

1. *"I will go home when the boss leaves the office."*
2. *"He won't get on the train if it is too crowded."*

An important thing to remember is the difference between "if" and "when" in these instances. When we use "if," we are talking more about an uncertain future. "When," on the other hand, is more for when we are certain about the future and are just giving a reference of time for when you will do something. Let's look through the examples of future real conditional from the dialogue and find when they are talking about hypothetical situations and when they are certain about the future. (hypothetical)

For Example:

1. Dave: "If he wins, I will get to work in his office." (hypothetical)
2. Dave: "But if he loses, I will be completely unemployed." (hypothetical)
3. Sheila: "OK, when you get home, we will talk about this more." (certain)

CULTURAL INSIGHT

American Political Campaigns

Campaigns are big events in the United States. Unlike parliamentary systems, people vote for individual candidates rather than just parties. This means that a candidate who is well-liked and popular can win in a district that maybe does not share his political views strongly. Campaigns spend millions of dollars organizing events, buying advertising time, calling voters, sending out information, and generally trying to "sell" their candidate to voters. The most effective campaigns start with appealing politicians, but they try to emphasize the candidate's strengths and minimize his or her weaknesses.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #20

At the Heartbreak Motel in the US

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- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Hey, Dave, you look quite the sight. What's the matter?
2. DAVE: Isabel broke up with me today. Never have I felt more miserable.
3. SHEILA: Oh, you poor thing. Do you want to talk?
4. DAVE: We went out to dinner last night to celebrate my new job and got in a quarrel.
5. SHEILA: What about?
6. DAVE: Well, she just said that she was upset that I was leaving so soon. She was hesitant to get in a relationship in the first place, and no sooner did we start getting close that I decided to leave.
7. SHEILA: Such is life... You'll be back post-election though, right?
8. DAVE: Yeah, I thought a few months apart would be no big deal. Little did I realize! When I got home I checked my voicemail and had a message from her saying it was over.
9. SHEILA: I'm sorry, honey, do you want a hug?
10. DAVE: Thanks, but I'd rather have a drink...

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
deal	situation, issue, problem	noun
quite	very; exceptionally; to the utmost, entirely, wholly	adverb
miserable	unhappy, very discontent	adjective

to break up	to end a relationship	phrasal verb
quarrel	an argument, a fight	noun
upset	unhappy or angry	adjective
hesitant	cautious, slow, careful, unsure	adjective
post-	after something	prefix
voicemail	a virtual mailbox for telephone voice messages; a message left in said box	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

The deal is that we have only seven dollars and three people that are hungry...	This food is actually quite delicious.
He was miserable when his girlfriend broke up with him.	She was known to be pretentious and miserable.
He broke up with her during their trip.	They fought so much that in the end they broke up.
My brothers and I used to always have quarrels about who got to sit in the front seat of the car.	You look upset. Is something wrong?
They were all upset about the change in plans.	Everyone told the Senator to run for president, but he was hesitant because he didn't feel a strong desire.

The post-surgery recovery usually lasts 3-5 weeks.	I called you yesterday—did you get my voicemail?
--	--

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"quite"

Sheila says, "Hey Dave, you look quite the sight." As we know from the vocabulary, "quite" means "to a heightened degree" or "absolutely." We can use "quite" combined with a noun to emphasize that a person seems a particular way. "Quite the sight" is a phrase to say someone's appearance is surprising.

For Example:

- A: "Oh dear, have you gotten sick? Your hair is all messed up and you're so pale."
B: "Ugh, yes. I know I'm quite the sight right now."
- A: "Wow, he is really fast!"
B: "Yeah, Jim is quite the runner."

"deal"

Dave says, "I thought a few months apart would be no big deal." As we learned in the vocabulary, a "deal" is a "situation," "issue," or "problem." When we say something is "a big deal," we mean that it is an important issue or situation. Similarly, we use "no big deal" kind of like we use "no problem" to mean that it's okay.

For Example:

- A: "Hey, sorry that I'm late."
B: "That's okay, it's no big deal."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Inversion to Add Emphasis.
"Never have I felt more miserable."

Inversion is a somewhat tricky grammatical structure that is not very common in spoken

English, but it is nevertheless important to understand it for when you do hear or read it. Inversion means "upside down," so when you see the use of inversion, you see something with its normal order reversed. Most commonly, we change the regular word order of a sentence to emphasize something. We do this by putting the most important thought first.

For Example:

1. *"Under no circumstances should an employee leave early."*

Here, we could have said, "An employee should leave early under no circumstances," but we want to emphasize that it is never all right to leave early, so we use inversion to put the "under no circumstances" first. That way, we make it clear that this is the most important part of the sentence.

For Example:

1. *"Rarely have I been so tired."*

In this case, we could have said, "I have rarely been so tired," but if we wish to stress that it is a rare or uncommon event, we can use inversion to make this clear.

There were two examples from the text where Dave spoke using inversion constructions. Let's interpret what he meant by them.

1. Dave: "Never have I felt more miserable."

Because "never" comes first, we know that Dave is choosing to emphasize it. He truly has never been more miserable than right now.

2. "Little did I realize!"

Dave here is emphasizing "little" to show how he didn't realize much at all and was very surprised by the result.

We need to be careful when we use inversion as a technique because it can make us sound overdramatic. It is more commonly used in literature than speech, but it is important to understand for when we hear it. We usually use phrases such as Dave's "Little did I realize" or "Never have I dreamed of doing that" in situations where people are acting emotionally. Try to avoid using inversion in normal conversation, but it is appropriate when you are upset or defending yourself.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Expressions of Friendship in the United States

Every culture has its own way of expressing friendship and understanding. When you look at the language that Sheila used in this dialogue, you may think that it is not very appropriate for a friend to use such language. A lot of the language made it seem that her relationship with Dave was more like a romantic relationship than a friend relationship. Although this may be true in some situations, especially when we are comforting a friend who has gone through a difficult emotional situation, we can use this type of language safely. Just because Sheila used words like "honey" and offered to hug her friend did not mean there is any kind of romantic relationship between them. In particular, hugs are very common greeting and parting gestures between friends, including male friends, female friends, and mixed friends. When we see two people hugging, we cannot assume that they are in a relationship.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #21

Do You Need to Escape from your American House?

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- 6 Cultural Insight

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ENGLISH

1. DAVE: I'm bored. We should do something after work to get out of the house tonight.
2. SHEILA: Agreed! I have a colleague who said he could get us into that new club in Dupont Circle; you in the mood to shake your booty?
3. DAVE: I do love to get down...but I haven't really been in the mood for dancing since Isabel dumped me.
4. SHEILA: Aww, did she trample your heart? I didn't realize you hadn't gotten over her yet.
5. DAVE: Yeah... I'd rather do something more low key.
6. SHEILA: What about that bar in Adams Morgan? It's always packed, and it has lots of microbrews.
7. DAVE: Sounds good. I get off work around six-thirty and can be home around seven.
8. SHEILA: Okay, well, I better get going to work.
9. DAVE: Yeah, me too!
10. SHEILA: Hope you feel better!

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
Dupont Circle	An area of Northwest Washington D.C. known for its art community and gay/lesbian establishments	proper noun

colleague	coworker, somebody who works with you	noun
to trample	to step on harshly and repeatedly	verb
to get over	to recover, to accept, to move on	verb
low-key	relaxed	adjective
Adams Morgan	An area of Northwest Washington, D.C. known for its nightlife and many bars	proper noun
packed	crowded	adjective
microbrew	beer made by a small company, usually local and released to a small market	noun
booty	slang for your rear end	noun
to dump	slang for "to break up with someone"	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

There are lots of bookstores and good clubs in Dupont Circle.	He was my colleague when we were both teachers.
Seven people were killed after being trampled at the soccer match.	I felt bad when I didn't get the job I wanted; but I got over it pretty quickly.
I prefer low-key parties; I don't like loud music and yelling.	Adams Morgan is an ideal neighborhood for a bar crawl.

The train was so packed that I couldn't even turn around.	In my opinion, the best beers are microbrews. Small brewers can spend more time perfecting the taste of their beers.
Come on, we're late! Get your booty moving!	After I found out he cheated on me, I dumped him.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"to trample"

Sheila asks Dave, "Did she trample your heart?" As we learned from the vocabulary, "to trample" means to step on harshly and repeatedly. So, when we say someone "trampled my heart," we mean that he or she hurt us deeply and emotionally.

For Example:

1. "He trampled my heart when he left me."

"booty"

Sheila asks Dave, "You in the mood to shake your booty?" to ask him whether he wants to go out dancing. As we learned in the vocabulary, "booty" is a cute slang term for your "rear end" or "behind." When we say, "shake your booty," we are referring to "dancing." There was even a hit dance song in the 1970s called "(Shake, Shake, Shake) Shake Your Booty." Since then, it has been a cute way to refer to going out and dancing and having a fun time.

For Example:

1. "I feel like going out and shakin' my booty to some disco tonight!"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is the Many Meanings of "to Get."
"I do love to get down..."

"To get" is an incredibly common part of phrasal verbs. Throughout this series, we have learned several, but in this lesson we will be focusing on many different ways to use "to get" as a part of a phrasal verb. There are dozens of ways, but let's just look at some of the most common examples.

Phrasal Verb	Meaning	Example
"to get across"	"to communicate effectively"	"She didn't speak English, so it was difficult to get across my meaning."
"to get along"	"to cooperate," "to not fight"	"My sister and I get along pretty well."
"to get away"	"to escape"	"I couldn't get away from the meeting."
"to get by"	"to survive," "to manage"	"I didn't like living in Canada, but I got by."
"to get down"	"to party," "to dance"	"Are you in the mood to get down today?"
"to get into"	"to gain entrance to a place"	"I couldn't get into my house because the door was locked and I forgot my key."
"to get off"	"to finish," "to dismount"	"Get off your horse before you talk to me."
"to get out"	"to leave"	"Get out of my room!"
"to get in"	"to arrive"	"I got in from Tokyo yesterday."
"to get up"	"to arise," "to wake up"	"I got up at ten o'clock today."

The above examples are not even half of the ways that we can use "to get" with prepositions to make phrasal verbs. But as you can see, the prepositions often match the meaning, but not always. Also, sometimes we can use these same phrases for different meanings (e.g., "to get down" can mean "to go from a higher place to a lower place"). When you see an unfamiliar "to get" phrasal verb, try to guess what the meaning is based on the preposition and context. If it makes no sense, online dictionaries usually can help with long lists of phrasal verbs.

Let's look at the "to get" phrasal verbs from the text and try to replace them with a non-phrasal verb.

1. "We should do something after work **to get out** of the house tonight."
"We should do something after work **to leave** the house tonight."
2. "I have a colleague who said he could **get us into** that new club."
"I have a colleague who said he could **help us gain entrance** to that new club."
3. "I do love **to get down...**"
"I do love **to dance and party.**"
4. "I didn't realize you hadn't **gotten over** her yet."
"I didn't realize that you hadn't **recovered from your breakup with** her yet."
5. "I **get off** work around six-thirty."
"I **finish** work around six-thirty."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Nightlife in Washington, D.C.

In a previous lesson, we learned about happy hours as a popular destination for young professionals. In addition to after-work drinks, Washington D.C. has a wide variety of nightlife options that range from hip-hop dance clubs and jazz bars to gay and lesbian clubs and bars that serve hundreds of kinds of beer. Whatever your preferred nightlife style, Washington, D.C. is bound to have a good option for you.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #22

An Unexpected English Call

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Hi, this is Sheila; may I ask who's calling?
2. ISABEL: Oh, hi, Sheila, this is Isabel.
3. SHEILA: Isabel? Well this is certainly unexpected...
4. ISABEL: Yeah, I suppose so...is Dave available?
5. SHEILA: Uh, sorry, he just left to go to the pharmacy; he has a pretty bad migraine.
6. ISABEL: Oh, that's terrible... Would you mind telling him I called when he gets back?
7. SHEILA: Not at all... Do you want me to tell him anything else?
8. ISABEL: Just tell him that I had an epiphany. I will be at the diner around nine tonight. He should join me if he wants to talk.
9. SHEILA: The usual place? Okay...I'll tell him that when he gets home. Take care, Isabel.
10. ISABEL: Thanks a lot... Bye.
11. (SOUND OF DOOR OPENING)
SHEILA: Oh, hey, Dave...I just hung up the phone. It was Isabel... She said that she had an epiphany and that she would be at the diner tonight; you can join her if you want to talk...
12. DAVE: Whoa...

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
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epiphany	sudden realization, moment of awareness	noun
to mind	to have a problem with, to be bothered by	verb
diner	A café that serves quick and inexpensive food, often 24 hours a day.	noun
usual	regular, normal	adjective
unexpected	surprising	adjective
available	not busy, easy to get or use	adjective
pharmacy	store that sells medicine and other things	noun
migraine	a severe, painful headache	noun
suppose	guess, assume that something is the case	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

I had an epiphany and decided I wanted to go back to school to study art.	I don't like going to bars; I don't mind the loud music, but I hate the smell of cigarettes.
I ordered a grilled cheese sandwich and French fries and the diner.	The usual time for breakfast in the United States is between 7:00 and 9:30 a.m.
An unexpected visitor came today.	The room was available, but only for a short while.
Solar power is the world's most available energy source.	I bought makeup at the pharmacy.

Migraines affect a large minority of Americans.	I suppose that I could get off work early today but I'd have to ask my boss.
---	--

I suppose you are right.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"to mind"

Isabel says to Sheila, "Would you mind telling him that I called...?" When we ask someone whether he or she "would mind" something, it is a polite way to request that he or she does something. If we are asked whether we "would mind" something, then we should respond with "no," "not at all," or another negative response if we *can* do the task because we "don't mind." If we say "yes," we are saying that we do not want to do what the person is asking of us.

For Example:

A: "Would you mind if I used your computer to check my e-mail?"

B: "Not at all. Go right ahead."

"usual"

Sheila confirms the diner by asking "The usual place?" to Isabel. With friends or people we know, the "usual place" is the restaurant, bar, diner, etc. where you meet most regularly. We can use it when we meet someone regularly at some place.

For Example:

A: "Are you available tomorrow?"

B: "Sure, want to get lunch at the usual place?"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Reported Speech in the Past and Future Tenses.

"She said that she had an epiphany and that she would be at the diner tonight; you can join her if you want to talk..."

Previously, we discussed how to report speech both with and without backshift. During that lesson, we focused only on reporting speech that was in the present tense. Let's look at a

review of the tenses we learned to report in the present tense with and without backshift.

For Example:

Original Phrase	Tense	Reported Phrase (No Backshift)
Sam: "I love fish."	present simple	"Sam says that he loves fish."
Sam: "I am eating fish."	present progressive	"Sam says that he is eating fish."

Original Phrase	Tense	Reported Phrase (Backshift)
Sam: "I love fish."	present simple	"Sam said that he loved fish."
Sam: "I am eating fish."	present progressive	"Sam said that he was eating fish."

Reporting speech in the past tense is very easy. In the past simple tense, we do not have to worry about the verb changing, and we just change the pronoun to the correct third-person pronoun. You will notice that the past progressive tense in reported speech with backshift looks the same as the present progressive tense in reported speech with backshift.

For Example:

Original Phrase	Tense	Reported Phrase (Backshift)
Angela: "I ate dinner."	past simple	"Angela said that she ate dinner."
George: "I slept in."	past simple	"He said that he slept in."
You: "I am eating less junk food."	past progressive	"You said that you were eating less junk food."
Children: "We were just playing."	past progressive	"They said that they were just playing."

The past simple and progressive tenses are quite easy! The future tense is not too difficult either. When we report future tense with backshift, we replace "will" with "would." If the original phrase used a "going to" construction, we add "was" or "were" (depending on the

pronoun) to report it.

For Example:

Original Phrase	Tense	Reported Phrase (Backshift)
I: "I will help you."	future simple	"I said that I would help you."
Man: "I will have a beer."	future simple	"He said that he would have a beer."
Girl: "I will be sleeping."	future progressive	"She said that she would be sleeping."
Group: "We will be touring the city."	future progressive	"They said that they would be touring the city."
Children: "We're going to eat dinner."	"going to"	"They said that they were going to eat dinner."
Katie: "I'm going to talk a walk."	"going to"	"Katie said that she was going to talk a walk."

Reported speech looks and sounds more difficult than it actually is. Usually it makes sense, so just try and use it naturally; soon, you will report speech without even thinking about it!

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Telephone Etiquette in the United States

"This is [Your Name]," "Hello?," "Yo," and "[Your Name] speaking" are all ways that people in the United States answer their phones. "Hello" asked as a question is the most common way, but it's polite to identify yourself when you answer the phone and ask who is calling. Sheila must have been raised in a very proper household, because while what she said is very correct, it is not that common to hear people answer the phone like this. Answering the phone like this has its advantages, though: you present a professional and gentle front for anyone contacting you.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #23 American Politics as Usual

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: I don't understand. Why did we abandon the bill?
2. MARK: There was no possibility that Congress could pass it.
3. SHEILA: What do you mean? We have a majority in the House and the Senate!
4. MARK: That's true, but our majority isn't filibuster-proof.
5. SHEILA: But the bill already survived the House! We worked really hard to pass it!
6. MARK: I know, I know...but the fact of the matter is that we don't have sixty votes in the Senate.
7. SHEILA: (sighs) But we aren't even trying to get it through!
8. MARK: The leadership said that they would filibuster any legislation that even smells like a tax hike. It would be a waste of time.
9. SHEILA: Ugh...it's just so frustrating!
10. MARK: Chill out, Sheila! You still have a job! It will be okay!
11. SHEILA: I know...I just put a lot of effort into that bill; it's sad to see that it was for naught.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
to abandon	to leave, to allow to die, to ignore	verb
naught	nothing	noun

tax hike	a raise in taxes	phrase
to smell like	to appear to be	phrasal verb
fact	true statement, actuality	noun
to survive	to live through, to persist after	verb
-proof	resistant to something	suffix
filibuster	a legislative strategy in the Senate that prevents a bill from being passed by not allowing debate to end on a bill	noun
possibility	chance, opportunity	noun
to chill	to cool down	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

We abandoned the car after it broke down and we couldn't get it started again.	When his hard drive crashed, he realized that all his work was for naught.
A tax hike on the wealthiest Americans would do little to address the nation's large national debt.	Something about this situation smells like a trap...
The fact is that I saw you take my bike.	Cockroaches are able to survive many situations.
This watch is waterproof so I can wear it when I swim.	The longest filibuster in history took place when Senator Strom Thurmond talked non-stop for over 24 hours.

There is a slight possibility that Mars once supported life.	White wine should be chilled but red wine should be served at nearly room temperature.
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VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"to smell like"

Mark says, "They would filibuster any legislation that even smells like a tax hike." When we say that something "smells" like something else, we mean that it appears to be like something. Even if it is not exactly the same, if two items share characteristics or traits, we can use the term "smells like." Usually it is not a positive indication.

For Example:

A: "What do you think of the President's new spending proposal?"
 B: "I'm not so sure; it smells more like a political move than an actual plan."

"to chill"

Mark tells Sheila to "chill out." This is slang, or jargon, for telling someone to relax. It is quite informal and suggests that the person should "cool down."

For Example:

A: "Dude, I can't believe we lost the football game."
 B: "Hey man, chill out, it was only a friendly game..."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Active Voice.

"There was no possibility that Congress could pass it."

Quite a while ago, we discussed the use of the passive voice when we are emphasizing the object of an action rather than the actor. However, the active voice is a much more common and clear way of communicating. When we are writing, it is almost always preferable to use the active voice rather than the passive voice. Using the active voice allows the reader or listener greater clarity about the actor and the action. Unlike with the passive voice, which can use an implied subject, the active voice always clearly states the actor. Let's look at some examples of converting passive phrases into active ones.

For Example:

Passive	Question and Answer	Active
"The computer was repaired."	Who repaired the computer? "An IT company."	"An IT company repaired the computer."
"My ticket will be replaced."	Who will replace your ticket? "The airline company."	"The airline company will refund my ticket."
"The test is being taken."	Who is taking the test? "They are."	"They are taking the test."

It is pretty clear in the above examples *who* or *what* is doing the action, so it is not so difficult for us to convert the phrases into the active voice. However, in other situations, the passive voice does not use a subject, and it is more difficult to convert them into the active voice. In this case, it is best to ask *who* or *what* did the action and then make an active phrase.

For Example:

Passive	Question and Answer	Active
"The computer was repaired."	Who repaired the computer? "An IT company."	"An IT company repaired the computer."
"My ticket will be replaced."	Who will replace your ticket? "The airline company."	"The airline company will refund my ticket."
"The test is being taken."	Who is taking the test? "They are."	"They are taking the test."

Sometimes we encounter a situation where we know that an object has had an action done to it, but we are not sure who or what exactly did it. In these cases, it is usually best to leave the sentence in the passive voice. However, we *can* make an active voice phrase by using "something" or "someone" as the subject of the sentence.

For Example:

Passive	Question and Answer	Active
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"The problem was solved."	Who solved the problem? "I don't know."	"Someone solved the problem."
"I will be given a copy of my diploma."	Who will give you a copy of your diploma? "I don't know."	"Someone will give me a copy of my diploma."
"The rice in the cabinet was eaten."	What ate the rice? "I don't know."	"Something ate the rice in the cabinet."

Using "someone" or "something" is not ideal, as it makes you seem a bit like you don't know what you are talking about. When writing, especially for a work or academic situation, be sure to do your best to get as much information as you can to use the active voice appropriately.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Congressional Debate and Discussion

The Senate and the House of the United States Congress have a lot of differences. Historically, the Senate is smaller, and usually the senators have had more personal relationships with each other, which has allowed more bipartisan work. Because of its size and relative flexibility, the rules for debate and discussion in the Senate are very different from the House. In the House, there is a specific amount of time that each representative can talk about a bill, and the representative cannot use more than his or her own time. In the Senate, every senator is allowed to speak as long as he or she desires, and it takes sixty (out of one hundred) votes to stop debate on a bill. In the House, a simple majority can stop discussion, but the Senate requires sixty percent. A senator can talk without stopping in order to stop a bill from being passed, which is a strategy known as "filibustering." Until recently, senators rarely used this tactic, but now it seems as if almost every action by the Congress must be approved by sixty votes in the Senate.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #24 A Long-awaited American Reunion

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ENGLISH

1. DAVE: Isabel, I'm so happy we got back together.
2. ISABEL: Me too, sweetie, I was being impulsive before.
3. DAVE: And I really should have considered your feelings more when I was talking to you.
4. ISABEL: Anyhow, it's ancient history now. I'm glad I got to come out to see you in Oregon for election night...
5. DAVE: Oh look, the polls are closing soon! I'm so excited! This campaign has been such a rush, and election nights always give me pins and needles.
6. ISABEL: Calm down! I know what you're talking about, though. It is fun to watch the returns come in. I don't think quite as much is at stake for me though...
7. DAVE: Yeah, that's for sure. It's going to be close too; I'm so nervous that I'm shaking like an earthquake. What do you think about the rest of the country? Who do you think is going to win nationally?
8. ISABEL: I think that if the Democrats can win in Ohio, they'll win nationwide; it's such a bellwether state.
9. DAVE: Maybe, but if they take Ohio but lose in Florida, it will be really tough to see who gets a majority.
10. ISABEL: Yeah, it's just a shame that the Democrats struggle in the South. If the Democrats won in Alabama, they could win anywhere. This year it's a toss-up; anything could happen.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
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impulsive	hasty, not careful, too quick	adjective
bellwether	predictor, indicator	noun
at stake	at risk, good or bad depending on the result	phrase
return	result from the polls on election night	noun
pin	a small, sharp metal object for holding fabric together	noun
rush	an exciting feeling, from "rush of adrenalin", adrenalin is the chemical that makes you feel excited	noun
poll	voting location	noun
ancient	extremely old	adjective
to consider	to think about, to take into account	verb
tossup	unknown result, unpredictable situation	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

I impulsively bought a new car that I couldn't afford.	Ohio is a reliable bellwether state for predicting the presidential election in the United States.
I have a lot at stake when I take this test. If I do well, I will get a promotion, if I fail, I will lose my job.	The returns will be reported within an hour of the polls closing.
I used a pin to attach the flower to my jacket.	I got a huge rush when I found out that I got the new job.

The polls in Virginia closed at 7:00 p.m.	The pyramids of Egypt are ancient.
I should have considered my financial situation before I bought my car.	I'm not sure who will win this year's championship game, it's a real tossup.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"pin"

Dave says, "Election nights always give me pins and needles." As we learned from the vocabulary section, a "pin" is a sharp metal object. You probably also know what a "needle" is. When we say something "gives us pins and needles," we are referring to the exciting sharp feeling we get when we are nervous and unsure about the outcome of something.

For Example:

1. "I can't sleep! I'm waiting for the result of my job interview, and it's giving me pins and needles!"

"ancient"

Isabel says, "Anyhow, it's ancient history now." As we learned, "ancient" means extremely old. So when we call something "ancient history," we mean that it is old news and does not really matter anymore. We usually say this about a negative event to show that we have gotten over it.

For Example:

1. A: "I'm really sorry I was late to the meeting last week."
B: "Don't worry about it. That's ancient history."

"toss-up"

Isabel says, "This year it's a toss-up. Anything could happen." As we learned, a toss-up is an unpredictable situation. We use this word to indicate when we can't predict the result, usually in something that is a competition, like an election, a sports event, or an important decision. We can use the preposition "between" to talk about whom the decision is affecting.

For Example:

1. A: "Who do you think is going to get Employee of the Month in January?"
B: "I think it's a toss-up between Jack and Ahmed."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Using Similes and Metaphors to Express Strong Feelings.
"I'm so nervous that I'm shaking like an earthquake."

Similes and metaphors are literary devices we can use to enhance the way we express our emotions. They are useful to make our speech more creative and stronger and to express our feelings in interesting ways. While it is great to use similes and metaphors sometimes, try not to overuse them, or you will sound unnatural.

A **metaphor** is a comparison made between two unrelated objects to highlight a common characteristic.

A **simile** is a metaphor that highlights a similarity between the two objects with "like" or "as."

Let's look at a couple of common similes and metaphors you might hear:

Metaphors

1. "*She was in a stormy mood.*" — "Stormy" means unstable and potentially dangerous. Someone in a "stormy" mood might be the same way.
2. "*My heart froze when I saw him.*" — When you feel scared or nervous, you can say your heart "froze."
3. "*We were in the dark about the rescheduled meeting.*" — "In the dark" means you cannot see what is going on, so it means that they did not know about the rescheduled meeting.

Similes

1. "*That dog is as big as a horse!*" — No dog is as large as a horse, but by making this comparison, we express how large it seems.
2. "*The teacher screamed at me like a drill sergeant.*" — Drill sergeants are known for being loud and mean.
3. "*He ran like a cheetah.*" — Cheetahs are extremely fast, so this means he ran very quickly.

Here are four similes and metaphors. Try to figure out what they mean!

For Example:

1. "I felt like a bird soaring in the sky."
("I felt very happy and free.")
2. "She slept as soundly as a log."
("She is a very deep sleeper.")
3. "He is a monster when he plays baseball."
("He is very strong.")
4. "We're so hungry, we could eat a horse!"
("We are extremely hungry.")

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Election Night Parties

Most candidates hold large gatherings for their campaign staff, supporters, and volunteers so that they can watch the returns come in, and, hopefully, celebrate their candidate's victory. In addition to official election night gatherings by the candidates, many politically active people gather with friends to watch the results of important elections together. It can be a fun social experience for those who love politics.

LESSON NOTES

Upper Intermediate S1 #25 English Congratulations are in Order!

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ENGLISH

1. SHEILA: Congratulations! I just saw they called the race for your candidate!
2. DAVE: Thanks! I am so relieved! It's been a crazy, long night.
3. SHEILA: I imagine so! How do you feel?
4. DAVE: Sheila, you can't imagine how pumped I am. I bought a three-hundred-dollar bottle of fantastic old French champagne.
5. SHEILA: Whoa! Big spender! You deserve it though; you have been working so hard.
6. DAVE: Thanks! We popped it open and sprayed it everywhere. I wish you could have been here!
7. SHEILA: You silly little boy! That's such a pointless waste!
8. DAVE: Haha, it was great! Straight out of the movies!
9. SHEILA: I guess I am a bit jealous...
10. DAVE: Anyhow, I have to get back to the festivities!
11. SHEILA: Enjoy your special night!

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary	English	Class
to call	to declare someone the winner of something	verb
jealous	feeling of envy toward someone or their achievements	adjective

relieved	relaxed after a experiencing a lot of stress	adjective
pumped	excited	adjective
to pop open	to open something under pressure (like soda or beer)	phrasal verb
to spray	to squirt, to drive liquid through the air	verb
pointless	without meaning or purpose	adjective
festivity	celebration	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

They called the race for the Republican candidate as soon as the polls closed.	I felt jealous when she told me how great her trip was.
I was relieved that my anticlimactic summer was finally over.	I'm so pumped to go skiing next weekend.
After work, we popped open a few sodas and relaxed.	He sprayed his dog with water every time he misbehaved.
Let's stop this pointless arguing.	The festivities on Christmas are always big.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"to spray"

Dave says, "We popped it open and sprayed it everywhere." As we learned from the vocabulary section, "to spray" is "to drive liquid through the air." A strange tradition in the United States is to pop open bottles of champagne and spray them into the air to create a

fountain. It is a bit wasteful but considered fun to do after a big victory.

For Example:

1. "After the baseball team won, they celebrated in the locker room by spraying each other with champagne."

"pumped"

Dave says, "You can't imagine how pumped I am." As we learned from the vocabulary section, "pumped" means "to be extremely excited." In the last lesson, we learned about "adrenalin," and this phrase also comes from the idea of being "pumped full of adrenalin," meaning that we are so excited we are full of adrenalin.

For Example:

1. "I was so pumped, I couldn't sleep at all!"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is the Order of Adjectives in a Sentence.

"I spent 150 dollars on a bottle of delectable old French champagne."

When we use several adjectives in a single sentence, we need to be careful about their order. Place your adjectives according to the order below in order to make your sentence correct.

- 1) Adjectives that describe **what you think** about the subject ("cool," "interesting")
- 2) Adjectives that describe the **size** or **scale** of the subject ("tall," "immense")
- 3) Adjectives that describe the **age** of the subject ("ancient," "cutting-edge")
- 4) Adjectives that describe the **shape** of the subject ("circular," "rectangular")
- 5) Adjectives that describe the **color** of the subject ("red," "brown")
- 6) Adjectives that describe the **location** where the subject is from ("Japanese," "local")
- 7) Adjectives that describe the **material** of the subject ("cotton," "glass")

Let's examine Dave's statement again. The subject of the adjectives is "champagne." He describes the champagne as "delectable, old, and French." "Delectable" is what he thinks about the champagne, so it comes first. This is followed by "old," which obviously describes the age of the champagne. Lastly, he says the champagne is "French," so it describes the location of where it is from.

Let's look at some other examples from the text:

Dave: "It's been a crazy, long night."

"Crazy" describes what Dave thinks about the night, and "long" describes the scale of the night.

Sheila: "You silly little boy!"

Sheila thinks Dave is "silly" for spraying champagne everywhere, so this adjective comes first. Second is "little," referring to his immature actions and, therefore, his age.

Now, let's give you a subject and some adjectives to describe it. Put them in the correct order to make a phrase.

1. "a *necktie*" ("blue," "long," "fashionable," "silk")
2. "a *sports car*" ("Italian," "sleek," "compact," "yellow")
3. "a *teacher*" ("strict," "Russian," "elderly")

Here are the correct answers to check your work:

1. "a fashionable, long, blue, silk necktie"
2. "a sleek, compact, yellow, Italian sports car"
3. "a strict, elderly, Russian teacher"

In the examples above, we used a lot of adjectives. However, it is uncommon to use more than two or three in a phrase. If you wish to describe the subject in more detail, create a new sentence or use another way to describe it rather than listing many adjectives in a row. Let's look at the second example from above:

"I saw a sleek, compact, yellow, Italian sports car." This might sound better if we broke it into two sentences. "I saw a yellow Italian sports car. It was sleek and compact." This is easier to understand than listing all the adjectives in a row, which might confuse some listeners.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Celebratory Champagne in the United States

Winning is fun. Celebrating your victories is fun. In the United States, everyone celebrates in a

different way. In the Phrases section, we learned that some Americans celebrate their victories by spraying each other with champagne. However, this is not that common of a practice. While we do not usually spray it, champagne is the traditional drink of celebration; we use it for toasts on New Year's and at weddings and when we have a big personal or team victory. Because champagne is more expensive than other types of drinks, it is usually reserved for these types of special happy occasions.



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