



ESL Podcast 238 – Traveling Off-Season

GLOSSARY

what I wouldn't give... – I really want to do or have something; I would do almost anything to do or have something

* What I wouldn't give to see my granddaughter! My daughter and her family live in Singapore, and I haven't seen her in a long time.

to get away – to take a vacation; to leave work and other daily activities for a short time

* Ernie and Belina wanted to get away, so they went to Jamaica for a one-week vacation.

to afford – to be able to pay for something; to have enough money to pay for something

* Sharon wants to buy a new car, but she can't afford it with the job she has now.

off-season – the time of year when there are few tourists in a place

* During the off-season, in the winter, hotel rooms near the ocean often cost 50% less than they do during the summer.

doable – able to be done; feasible; possible

* Everyone said that finishing the project by Friday wasn't doable, but Martin stayed at the office late every day and finished it on Thursday evening!

deep – large; big; significant

* Shelly was in deep trouble when she accidentally broke her mother's favorite plates.

low season – the time of year when there are few tourists in a place

* During the low season, there isn't very much to do on Lopez Island, since the shops and restaurants close.

crowded – with many people; with a large number of people in a small space

* The streets in Springfield were crowded yesterday because there was a big party downtown.

package deal – a group of things that are paid for together, such as a tourist's airfare, hotel rooms, and meals

* The vacation cost \$2,000. We had a package deal of \$1,500 that included our travel and hotel rooms, and we spent about \$500 on gifts and food.



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lodgings – accommodations; where one stays (sleeps) when one is traveling

* During our vacation in Costa Rica, our favorite lodgings were small houses near the river, where we could see a lot of animals.

deal – an agreement, usually for buying and selling things; bargain

* Kenuke found a great deal. When he bought his computer, he got a free printer and scanner!

to have one thing going for (someone) – to have an advantage; to have something on one's side; to have something that will help one do something

* Although Yuki was in a bad car accident, she does have one thing going for her: a positive attitude that her doctors say will help her recover quickly.

flexible – able to change if and when needed; able to adjust to changes

* The president thanked Guadalupe personally for being so flexible in her job, always helping other people with their projects even when she was busy.

special promotions – a lower price that is offered for only a short time

* This week, there's a special promotion at the CD store. If you buy five CDs, the sixth one is free.

bargain hunter – a person who looks for the lowest prices when shopping

* Oresti is a great bargain hunter. He found the big-screen TV he wanted for 30% off.

won't be for lack of trying – if it doesn't work, it won't be because I didn't try hard enough

* Fernando might not pass the test, but it won't be for lack of trying. He's been studying almost four hours every day for two months!



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do Bill and Kavita want to travel in the low season?
 - a) Because everything will cost less.
 - b) Because the temperature will be lower.
 - c) Because it will be more crowded.

2. How are Bill and Kavita going to choose a vacation?
 - a) They're going to pay a bargain hunter to help them.
 - b) They're going to shop for deals on the Internet.
 - c) They're going to decide on their travel dates first.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

get away

The phrasal verb “to get away,” in this podcast, means to take a vacation or to leave work and other daily activities for a short time: “Beatrice was very stressed, so she decided to get away from the office for two hours.” “To get away from (a place)” means to be able to leave a place: “He wasn’t able to get away from the office until almost 9:00 p.m. last night.” “To get away from (someone)” means to leave someone, especially someone whom one doesn’t like: “I tried to get here sooner, but my neighbor saw me and started talking, and it was very difficult to get away from him.” “To get away with (something)” means to do something wrong and receive little or no punishment: “The student didn’t go to class all week, but he got away with it because he told the teacher that he had been sick.”

deal

In this podcast, the word “deal” means an agreement, usually for buying and selling things: “We made a deal: I would wash my sister’s clothes and she would let me use her car.” As a verb, “to deal” means to sell illegal drugs: “Karina was scared when she saw people dealing across the street from her school.” The verb “to deal” can also mean to give cards to each person when playing a game of cards: “For this game, you need to deal eight cards to each person and put the rest of the cards in the center of the table.” The verb “to deal in (something)” means to buy and sell something: “He deals in air conditioners during the summer, and heaters during the winter.”



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CULTURE NOTE

In the United States, there are many ways to get travel “discounts” or prices that are less than they normally cost. Buying airline tickets online is often cheaper than buying them in an office or over the phone, because sometimes the Internet has special deals that aren’t available in other places. Also, buying tickets from a “discount airline” is usually cheaper than buying tickets from a regular airline. A discount airline is often a smaller company, has fewer flights, and has fewer “amenities” (things that make a flight more enjoyable, such as food and extra space for one’s legs), but it also has better prices than large airline companies do.

People traveling in large groups sometimes use “chartered flights” where they pay for the plane to go to a certain place and then find all of the “passengers” (people who travel on the airplane). A “chartered flight” is a good option if you have a large family traveling together, or if you know a lot of “immigrants” (people who have moved to the United States from another country) who want to go home to the same country for vacation.

People who have a lot of free time and like to travel alone can fly as an “overseas courier,” taking important “documents” (official papers) to another country for a person or company. The courier doesn’t get paid for this work, but he or she does get a free airline ticket.

Students can often use their “student ID cards,” identification cards from their school or university, to get travel discounts. Many bus and train companies give students a 10% or 15% discount, trying to “encourage” (motivate) students to travel more often using their companies’ services.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – a; 2 – b



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 238: Traveling Off-Season.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 238. Hello, I'm your host Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Just a reminder that ESL Podcast now has a store on our website, where you can download several new premium courses. These are special courses that we think you'll be interested in. Take a look at our website at eslpod.com. You can also sign up for the Learning Guides for this podcast. This is a 10-page guide to each episode of the podcast. You can now also purchase individual Learning Guides from our ESL Podcast Store.

Our topic in this episode is taking a trip or a vacation. Let's get started.

[start of story]

Kavita: What I wouldn't give to get away for a little vacation!

Bill: Me, too, but we can't afford it.

Kavita: Oh, I don't know. It's off-season in a lot of popular places right now, so it may be doable.

Bill: Maybe. We'd have to find some pretty deep discounts. There is a big advantage to traveling during the low season, though. It's a lot less crowded.

Kavita: Yeah, I like that. I'll see if I can find a package deal that includes airfare and lodgings. That may give us the best deal.

Bill: We have one thing going for us. We have flexible travel dates, which should make it easier to take advantage of any special promotions.

Kavita: That's true. I'm start looking online and I'll let you know what I find.

Bill: I know what a good bargain hunter you are, so if anyone can find a good deal, it's you.



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Kavita: I'm not at all sure I can find something we can afford, but it won't be for a lack of trying. I really need that vacation!

[end of story]

Bill and Kavita are taking a vacation in this episode. The title of the episode is "Traveling Off-Season." The expression off-season refers to traveling somewhere during the months when it isn't busy - when there aren't very many people there. The opposite of off-season is high season, "high," high. High season is usually the summertime for most places. June, July and August in the northern hemisphere, and off-season are the months outside of that particular season, or those particular months.

Kavita begins the dialogue by saying, "What I wouldn't give to get away for a little vacation!" This expression, what I wouldn't - or would not - give, means I really want to do something - I would do almost anything to be able to do something. So, you could say, "What I wouldn't give to travel to Los Angeles and lay on the beach in Santa Monica." What I wouldn't give means I really want to do that - I would do anything to do that.

Kavita says that she wants to "get away." To get away usually means to take a vacation - to leave your work for a short time, not a long vacation, usually a short vacation. Kavita calls it "a little vacation." The expression to get away has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at the Learning Guide for today for more information.

Bill says, "Me, too," meaning I as well, but in conversational English, we say, "me, too" even though it isn't grammatically correct. Bill says, "but we can't afford it." To be able to afford something, "afford," means to be able to pay for it - to have enough money to do it.

Kavita says, "Oh, I don't know," she thinks that they may be able to afford it. She says, "It's off-season in a lot of popular places right now, so it may be doable." The word doable, "doable," comes from the word to do, which means it is possible - it is able to be done. If someone says, "That is doable," they mean that it can be done. For example, "Can anyone teach Jeff McQuillan to sing?" And someone says, "Well, it's going to be very difficult but it's doable" - it is possible - maybe in about a thousand years!

Bill says, "Maybe. We'd have to find some pretty deep discounts." A deep, "deep," discount is a large or big discount, so you would get a lot of money off - you would save a lot of money. Bill says, "There is a big advantage," or a large



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advantage - a major advantage, “to traveling during the low season. It’s a lot less crowded.” The low season, “low,” means the same as the off-season. Remember, the opposite of off-season and low season is high season.

Bill says, “It’s a lot less crowded.” When we say it is crowded, “crowded,” we mean there are a lot of people, usually too many people in a small area. “I went to the dance club last night and it was very crowded” - there were lots of people there.

Kavita said, “Yeah, I like that,” meaning I like the idea of going during low season. She says she’s going to try to “find a package deal that includes airfare and lodgings.” A deal, “deal,” is an agreement usually for buying something or selling something. A package deal, “package,” means a deal - an agreement - that includes many different things. We usually use this expression when talking about vacation. We say, “I’m going to get a good vacation package,” or “a good vacation package deal.” It means I’m going to buy something that includes my airplane ticket and my hotel and, maybe, a car rental; that would be part of a package deal.

Kavita uses the word lodgings here, “lodgings.” Usually, this is a singular noun. We say, “I’m looking for lodging tonight,” that means I’m looking for a place to sleep - a place to stay. It can also be in the plural.

Kavita says, “This may give us the best deal,” once again, the deal being an agreement. This word deal has a couple of different meanings; take a look at the Learning Guide for some additional meanings of that word.

Bill says, “We have one thing going for us.” The expression to have one thing going for you means that we have an advantage - we have something that will help us do something. Bill says, “We have one thing going for us. We have flexible travel dates.” When we say flexible, “flexible,” we mean that it is easy to change them - it is easy to adjust them - to make them different. So, flexible travel dates means there are different days that they can travel - they don’t only have to travel on certain dates.

Bill says this makes “it easier to take advantage of any special promotions.” Special promotions usually are lower prices for something. You could say, “It’s a special deal,” meaning you are going to get a discount. So, special promotions means the price is lower. Companies will often - we use the verb - run promotions to get people to buy more of their product, and they lower the price to do that.



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Kavita says that she will “start looking online.” Bill says that he knows that Kavita is “a good bargain hunter.” A bargain, “bargain,” is a good deal - when you get something for a low price. A hunter, “hunter,” is someone who, in this case, looks for something, so a bargain hunter is someone who looks for a low price. I, for example, am a bargain hunter; I love to save money!

Kavita says, “I’m not at all sure I can find something we can afford, but it won’t be for a lack of trying.” This is a common expression; it won’t be for a lack, “lack,” of trying. A lack of something means that you don’t have something. So, when Kavita says, “it won’t be for a lack of trying,” she means if it doesn’t work, the reason will not be because I didn’t try hard enough. Sometimes when people talk about something that is very difficult that they tried but were not successful at, they’ll use this expression. For example, when I was in high school I could not get any of the girls to go on a date with me, but it wasn’t for lack of trying. Actually, that was true in college, too!

Well anyway, now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a native rate of speech.

[start of story]

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Bill: Me, too, but we can’t afford it.

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Kavita: I'm not at all sure I can find something we can afford, but it won't be for a lack of trying. I really need that vacation!

[end of story]

Our wonderful script today was by the wonderful Dr. Lucy Tse.

If you have a question or comment for us, you can email us at eslpod@eslpod.com.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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