



ESL Podcast 246 – Understanding Addresses

GLOSSARY

mailing address – the details of where a letter or package can be sent; either where the business or home is located, or a post office box

* The business is located on Main Street, but its mailing address is a post office box, because the owners prefer to go to the post office to get their mail.

to cut out – to temporarily lose sound or picture on a telephone, radio, or television

* Harold's cell phone always cuts out when he drives in the mountains.

street address – the first line of an address; the details of where a business or home is located

* I can't remember Celina's exact street address, but I know she lives on Third Avenue near the gas station.

boulevard – a wide street

* In the 1800s, many people put on their best clothes and then walked up and down the city's main boulevards in the evenings.

avenue – a street in a city

* In New York City, avenues run north-south and streets run east-west.

street – a paved (hard covered) road in a city or town

* Did you hear that the town closed Tulip Street for its Independence Day celebrations?

court – a paved road with little traffic and many homes

* The Gopal's bought a new home on Marigold Court in a very safe neighborhood with lots of young children.

street number – the number of a house or building

* We drove slowly, looking for 829 Lincoln Avenue, but it was difficult to read the street numbers from the car.

street name – the name of the street where a house or building is located

* I had written down "Seventh Avenue," but the street name was actually "Seventieth Avenue," so I was 63 blocks away!



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You know what? – An expression meaning, “I have something to tell you,” or, “There’s something I want/need to tell you,” or, “I just had an idea I’d like to share with you.”

* I know I said that I didn’t want to go to this party, but you know what? It’s turned out to be the best party I have ever been to! Thanks for inviting me.

in care of (someone); c/o (someone) – a phrase used in addresses to show that a letter or package should be given to someone (who is normally at this address) who will then give it to another person (who is not normally at this address)

* Felipe is traveling in Europe this summer, so all of his mail should be sent in care of his parents, who will give it to him when he returns.

to the attention of (someone); Attn: (someone) – a phrase used in addresses to send a letter or package to a specific person at a large organization

* Please send your resume to the attention of the human resources director.

zip plus four – a 5-digit postal code followed by a hyphen (“-”) and a 4-digit code, used at the end of addresses to help the post office deliver the mail more quickly

* You can find the zip plus four for any U.S. address online at the United State Postal Service’s website.

addressee – the person to whom a letter or package is being sent

* The addressee for this letter should be Mrs. Harriet Samuels-Ellis.

to look (something) up – to look for information in a reference book (like a dictionary or telephone directory) or on a computer

* You can look up the exchange rate online before you travel to another country.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Jacob say that Jim's mail should be sent to the Letty Institute?
 - a) Because Jim works at the Letty Institute.
 - b) Because the Letty Institute will be able to give Jim his mail.
 - c) Because Jim's new address is the same as that of the Letty Institute.

 2. What is the correct street number for Dr. Uemura?
 - a) 300
 - b) 234
 - c) 9272
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

court

The word "court," in this podcast, means a paved road with little traffic and many homes: "They decided to build their new home at 15 Blossom Court, because it's close to where they work and it's near a good school." A "court" is also a place where legal cases are decided: "Corrine and her husband are getting a divorce and they have to go to court to decide who gets the house." A "court" can also be the flat area where sports are played: "The city park has tennis courts that anyone can use for free." Or, "If there aren't people already playing on the basketball courts, we can start a game." A "food court" is a large area inside a shopping center with many fast-food restaurants and tables: "Brenda's boyfriend doesn't like shopping for new clothes, so he's waiting for us in the food court."

to look (something) up

In this podcast, the phrase "to look (something) up" means to look for a piece of information in a reference book (like a dictionary or telephone directory) or on a computer: "We can look up our class schedules on the Internet." The phrase "to look (someone) up" means to make contact with someone whom one hasn't spoken with in a long time: "When Mimi was in Frankfurt, she looked up her mother's cousins, even though she had never met them before." The phrase "to look up to (someone)" means to admire and respect someone: "Gisela looks up to her mother a lot, because she is always honest and caring." Finally, the phrase, "to look up from (something)" means to raise one's eyes from something that one is concentrating on: "Freneli was angry because her husband didn't look up from his newspaper while she was talking to him."



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CULTURE NOTE

The United States Postal Service (USPS) delivers mail to every home and business in the United States. USPS offers special services that help people and businesses receive their mail more “conveniently” (easily and usefully).

One of these services is “Hold Mail Service.” If you are going on vacation or will be away from your home for a short period of time, USPS will “hold” your mail. This means that USPS will keep your mail at the post office and not leave it at your home while you are gone. The “advantage” (good thing) about this service is that it keeps your mail safe. You can “request” (ask for) Hold Mail Service at the post office or online, telling USPS on which dates it should start and stop holding mail for you.

Another service is “Premium Forwarding Service.” If you are going to be away from your home for a period of time, but you would like to receive your mail while you are gone, USPS will “forward” your mail from your “permanent” or regular address to your “temporary” address. Mail is sent to your temporary address once a week until you “cancel” or stop using the service.

USPS also offers a “Change of Address Service.” When you move in the United States, you will need to fill out a change-of-address “form” or a document with spaces for your current address, the address that you are moving to, and the date when you are moving. For several weeks after your move, if people send mail to you at your old address, it will automatically be forwarded to your new address. After that time, any mail sent to you at your old address is returned to the sender with a yellow sticker that shows your new address.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 246: Understanding Addresses.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 246. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Go to our website at eslpod.com to download the Learning Guide for this episode. You can also take a look at our new ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses you may be interested in.

This episode is about understanding addresses of houses and buildings. Let's get started.

[start of story]

I was away from my office and needed to send some letters to clients. Unfortunately, I didn't have their addresses, so I called the office secretary.

Christina: Hi, Jacob. I need your help getting the mailing addresses for a couple of clients.

Jacob: Sure. Which ones?

Christina: I need addresses for Jim Kelly and for Dr. Uemura.

Jacob: Okay. Jim Kelly's address is...

Christina: I'm sorry Jacob, but my cell phone cut out and I didn't hear you. Could you repeat the street address?

Jacob: Sure. It's 1212 South Peabody Court, Lansing, Michigan, 48908.

Christina: I didn't catch the end of the address. Did you say boulevard, avenue, or street?

Jacob: It's actually court, and the street number again is 1212.

Christina: Thanks. I've got that. Could you also spell the street name?



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Jacob: Sure. It's P-E-A-B-O-D-Y. You know what? I see a note here that he's in North Dakota until June. Let me give you that address. Mail should be sent to him in care of or to the attention of The Letty Institute, P.O. Box 345, Fargo, North Dakota, 58102.

Christina: Got it. How about an address for Dr. Uemura?

Jacob: Here it is. It's 300 Goodman Building, University of Massachusetts, 234 Hitch Way, Amherst, Massachusetts.

Christina: Do you have the zip plus four?

Jacob: It's 01003-9272.

Christina: Oh, I just realized that I only have Dr. Uemura's last name. I want to include his first name, too, on the addressee line. Can you look that up for me?

Jacob: I've got it right here. His first name is Brent.

Christina: Thanks a lot, Jacob. You've been a big help.

Jacob: Don't mention it.

[end of story]

This episode is called "Understanding Addresses." The dialogue begins with Christina saying that she was away from her office and she "needed to send some letters to clients," or customers, but she "didn't have their addresses," so she called her office.

She says, "Hi, Jacob," Jacob works for her; he's her assistant or her secretary. "I need your help getting the mailing addresses for a couple of clients," she says. Normally we use the word address to mean the same as mailing address, the information you need to send a letter or a package to someone at their house or at their work. You can also use address for email, your email address. So now, sometimes we say mailing address to mean the physical place where you can send a letter.

Jacob says, "Sure," he can get these addresses for Christina. "Which ones," he asks - which addresses do you want? Christina asks for the address "for Jim Kelly and for Dr. Uemura." Jacob says, "Jim Kelly's address is," and Christina, who is obviously calling on a cell phone, says, "I'm sorry, but my cell phone cut



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out and I didn't hear you." When we say your cell phone or your mobile phone cuts out, we mean that it temporarily loses the sound. That happens a lot with some cell phone companies here in the United States.

"Could you repeat the street address," Christina asks. Here we see another way of using the word address. Christina asks for the street address meaning usually just the number and name of the street. Jacob actually repeats the entire address - the complete address. He says, "It's 1212 South Peabody Court, Lansing, Michigan, 48908." This is one of those podcasts where it would be useful to look at the script for our podcast. If you have the Learning Guide, there's even more information to help you understand these addresses as we read them.

Christina says, "I didn't catch the end of the address. Did you say boulevard, avenue, or street?" Boulevard, avenue and street are three of the several different ways that you can name a street. All of them mean street, but sometimes we use different words depending on where they are located. Sometimes it's just whatever the city that has the streets decides to name that particular place where you drive on. The street and the use of street is the most common. For example, I live on a street. An avenue is also possible, and sometimes avenues in some cities are bigger than streets. Avenue is, "avenue." You could also have something called a boulevard, "boulevard." A boulevard is usually like an avenue; it's often even wider and sometimes has trees in the middle, separating the lanes.

Jacob says, in responding to Christina's question, "It's actually court, and the street number is 1212," or 12 12. Jacob is saying that the name of the street where Jim Kelly lives is not called boulevard, avenue or street, it's called a court, "court." A court is usually a street where there is very little traffic, that's sometimes how it is used. Many cities, again, use names that aren't necessarily directly related to these definitions. The word court has a couple of different meanings; take a look the Learning Guide for this episode for some additional definitions.

The streets number that Jacob gives Christina is just the number of the street. In almost all of the addresses in the United States, the number goes first and then the name of the street, or boulevard, or avenue, or court, or whatever it's called. So, in this case, the address is 1212, those numbers are the street number. Notice we call it the street number even if it's actually called a court. South Peabody Court is the name of the street in this example.



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Christina says, “Thanks. I’ve got that. Could you also spell the street name?” Jacob says, “Sure,” and he spells it for her. Then he says, “You know what?” That’s a common expression - “You know what?” Usually it means I have something to tell you, or there’s something that I need to tell you, or even I just had an idea that I would like to tell you - you’ve just thought of something new. So, it can be used in all those different cases.

Here, Jacob is discovering some new information that he wants to give Christina, so he says, “You know what? I see a note here that he’s in North Dakota until June,” meaning he is not at his regular address in the state of Michigan, but he’s at a different address in the state of North Dakota, which is located in the northern central part of the United States. Michigan is also in the northern part of the United States, but it is a little more towards the east. North Dakota is next to the state of Minnesota, which, as you probably know, is the most important state in the United States; that’s where I’m from!

Jacob says that he will give Christina the address in North Dakota. He says, “Mail should be sent to him in care of or to the attention of The Letty Institute, P.O. Box 345, Fargo, North Dakota, 58102.”

I should say that we are making these addresses up - these are not real addresses. Please don’t send a letter to one of these addresses!

The expression, “in care of,” is one that we use when we are mailing something to someone who is not permanently at that address. So, if you are, for example, sending something to someone who is staying at a friend’s house for six months you would probably say the name of your friend, and then “in care of,” and then the name of the person where your friend is staying. We do this so that person who delivers the mail - who goes around to each house and gives you your mail - knows that this is the right place for that letter. If they see a wrong name and the correct address, sometimes they will not deliver it. So, that’s why we use the “in care of.”

You can also send something “to the attention of.” That means basically the same thing, except that it sometimes is used for someone who works at a particular company. So, you send a letter to the company, but you want it to go to one particular - one specific - person in that company, you could send it “to the attention of,” or simply, “attention.” Take a look at Learning Guide, it explains the differences between these - shows you what they look like on an actual letter.



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Christina says, “Got it,” meaning I understand. “How about an address for Dr. Uemura?” And Jacob then gives the address for the doctor; he's located in Massachusetts.

Christina then asks Jacob, “Do you have the zip plus four?” The zip, “zip,” or the zip code - they're the same thing - are the five numbers that we use in United States after the name of the state in order to help the Post Office deliver the mail. Every area in the United States has its own zip code, and in a big city like Los Angeles, there are usually dozens, maybe 30, 40, 50 different zip codes for the different parts of the city.

Zip plus four is a new system that was started, oh, maybe twenty years ago, I'm not sure exactly the year it started. Zip plus four is when you add four numbers on that gives the Post Office even more specific information about where you are located. Most people don't use the zip plus four, but businesses will usually use it. Sometimes they can get a lower price of a stamp - that it will cost them less money if they give the Post Office the regular zip code - the five numbers - and the four - the plus four numbers. That's usually written the five numbers (dash or hyphen) and then the four numbers.

Christina says that, “I just realized that I only have Dr. Uemura's last name. I want to include his first name, too, on the addressee line.” The addressee, “addressee,” is the person to whom you are sending the letter or the package. So you have the addressee - the name of the person - you have the street address, which includes the street number and the street name - that goes on the second line - and on the third line, you put the city (comma) the state, and then the zip code or the zip plus four, if you know it.

In US letters, you may know that every state has a two-letter abbreviation. So, you don't normally write, for example, California, when you are sending a letter in the United States to California. You would just write (capital) “C” (capital) “A” (CA). Most people now know the two-letter abbreviation for most of the states.

Christina says, “Can you look that up for me,” she's asking him to look up the first name of Dr. Uemura. To look something up means to find it, usually to find information. You can look it up in a book; you can look it up on the Internet, for example. Jacob gives the doctor's first name to Christina, and they end their conversation.

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



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Jacob: Don't mention it.

[end of story]

The script for this podcast was written by Dr. Lucy Tse.

Again, if you have the Learning Guide for this podcast, you'll want to take a look at that. It explains more about how we use addresses in the US.

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

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